MALACHI

Chapter 1

Verse 1. [[@bible:Malachi 1:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The burden**. That is, the burdenous prophecy (as Tremellius renders it): a burden, as, 1. Enjoined and imposed upon the prophet to utter, to cry aloud and not spare, to lift up his voice as a trumpet, &c., straining every vein in his heart to do it; declaiming lustily against sin and sinners, and proclaiming hell-fire for them in case they amend not. This is a business of some burden, *onus ipsis etiam Angelis tremendum.* This was typified in the staffrings that were made to continue upon the ark; the Kohathites' shoulders felt wherefore. If God had not helped those Levites they could never have borne the ark, ***1 Chronicles 15:26***. St Paul was very sensible of the ministerial burden rolling upon him daily, ***2 Corinthians 11:28***. And Latimer leaped when lighted of his bishopric. 2. As burdening the people with their sins, and breathing out threatenings for the same; for sin (how lightly soever accounted of) hales hell at the heels of it, and procures Divine vengeance, which is a burden unsupportable. It brake the angels' backs, and made the Son of God groan piteously then when he "bare our sins in his body on the tree," ***1 Peter 2:24***. His soul was heavy therewith even to death; and had he not had the better shoulders, had not God laid help on one that was mighty (even the mighty strong God, as he is styled, ***Isaiah 6:6***), he had fainted and failed under his burden. David complains that his sins were gone over his head, and, like a sore burden, were too heavy for him to bear, ***Psalms 38:4***. That which comforted him was, that no sooner he had said *Peccavi,* I have sinned, but the prophet Nathan said, *Transtulit Deus peccatum tuum,* ***2 Samuel 12:13***, God hath translated thy sin upon Christ, hath caused thy sin to pass over to him, and (as it were) by a writ of removal, hath cast thy burden upon his shoulders. And this incomparable mercy David afterwards celebrateth, ***Psalms 32:4-5*** "For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me"; the guilt of sin and sense of wrath quelled him and killed him almost; for his natural moisture was turned into drought of summer; he was turned into a very skeleton, or a bag of bones, a bottle of smoke, woefully wanzed he was, and wasted. But for remedy, "I acknowledged my sin unto thee," I fled by faith to the true scape goat, Christ Jesus, on whom was laid as a burden the iniquity of us all, ***Isaiah 53:6; Romans 5:8***, and thou presently forgavest the iniquity of my sin, that is, the guilt of it, that till then lay like a load upon my conscience, and, as an obligation, bound me over to condign punishment. Cain, for want of this comfort, ran roaring up and down, my sin, that is, my punishment "is greater than I can bear," ***Genesis 4:13***. And a far better man than Cain (even holy Job, with whom God was but in jest, as it were) cries out that his calamity was "heavier than the sand of the sea," ***Job 6:3***, and that "yet his stroke was heavier than his groaning," ***Job 23:2***. Those that have ever felt the masery of a laden conscience can tell what an evil and bitter thing sin is, ***Jeremiah 2:19***. Those that now run away with it, and make as light of it as Samson did of the gate of Gaza, shall one day groan out, woe and alas, when God shall set himself to load them with tortures in hell who do now load him with their sins, and weary him out with their iniquities, ***Isaiah 43:24***. For prevention, oh that they would be persuaded to believe the prophets, that their souls might prosper; to be sensible of sin's burden, that Christ might ease them; to take upon them his burden, which is *onus sine onere,* and would be no more burden to them than the wings are to the bird, whereby he is borne aloft; that they would imitate porters, who being called and offered money to bear a burden, will poise it and weigh it in their hands first, which when they see they are not able to stand under, no gain will entice them to undertake it. Do we provoke the Lord to anger? are we stronger than he? Is it not a fearful thing to fall into the punishing hands of the living God? ***Hebrews 10:31***. Is the wrath of

a king as the roaring of a lion, as the messengers of death? surely they that tremble not in hearing shall be crushed in pieces in feeling, as that martyr (Bradford) said, and let all those scoffers that make children's play of God's dreadful menaces, (as St Peter's word ἐμπαῖκται, ***2 Peter 3:3***, importeth), that, leviathan-like, esteem God's iron as straw, ***Job 41:27***; that read his prophetic burdens as they do the old stories of foreign wars, or as they behold the wounds and blood in picture or piece of arras, [1] which never makes them smart or fear; let all these, I say, read and ruminate that flaming place, ***Jeremiah 23:33, 37***, and let them know, that if they belong to God he will cripple their iron sinews by the sense of their many and massy or bony sins, ***Amos 5:12***. As if otherwise, he will fall upon them with his full weight, and grind them to powder, ***Matthew 21:24***. *Cavete; cavebitis autem si pavebitis.* Beware, you shall beware if you are terrified.

To Israel. The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with those few of the ten tribes that returned among them from the Babylonish captivity: These, though we never find them again going a whoring after idols, the sin that they had paid so dear for, and had now bought their wit, yet forgetful of former both beatings and benefits, as children are, they soon returned to their old flagitious practices of polygamy, blasphemy, sacrilege, defilement of divine worship, unlawful marriages; and so had lost in a manner the fruit of their sufferings, putting God to his old complaint, Why should ye be smitten any more, &c., and causing him to sigh out, as even sick of them, "Ah, sinful nation," "Reprobate silver shall men call them," ***Isaiah 1:4; Jeremiah 6:30***.

By Malachi. Heb. By the hand of Malachi, *i.e.* by his mouth and ministry. Hand is put for mouth by a catachresis; [2] because the hand is the instrument of instruments, as saith the philosopher, ὄργανον ὄργανον. See the like ***Exodus 9:35; Numbers 4:37, 45; Isaiah 8:11***. One expositor noteth here, that this expression, by the hand, is used to teach us that prophets and ministers must preach not with their tongues only, but with their hands too; lest they be found in number of those Pharisees that say, but do not, that bind heavy burdens, and hard to be borne, upon other men's shoulders, but they themselves touch them not with one of their fingers, ***Matthew 23:3-4***. Let our hands also preach as well as our tongues, *ne dico factis deficientibus erubescant,* as Tertullian speaketh, lest talking by the talent and working by the ounce, our hands give our tongues the lie.

By Malachi. *i.e.* Mine angel, or, an angelic man. Not a heavenly angel, as Origen held; nor as told and taught by an angel how to deliver and deport himself in his office; like as when the Bathcol, or voice from heaven, came to Christ, ***John 12:28***, the people that stood by and heard it said that it thundered, others said, an angel spake to him, ***John 12:29***. But either he was so called by his parents at his birth and circumcision (as Angelus Politianus and others), or else so surnamed by the good people of those times; as whose disposition, communication, conversation, countenance, and whole carriage were angelic. Chrysostom, for like cause, calleth Paul *Angelum terrestrem,* an earthly angel. And the author to the Hebrews, speaking of those faithful martyrs that lived and suffered soon after Malachi's time, he saith, "Of whom the world was not worthy," ***Hebrews 11:38***, meaning that they were fitter to be set as angels in heaven, to be fixed in the region of happiness, to shine full fair upon the celestial shelf (as that martyr said), than to abide here among sinners. Chrysostom, in his 55th Homily upon Matthew, calleth certain religious men of his time angels, for their sanctimony and celestial conversation. And Dr Taylor, martyr, blessed God that ever he came in company with that angel of God, John Bradford.{{field-off:Bible}}

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1 A rich tapestry fabric, in which figures and scenes are woven in colours. ŒD.

2 Improper use of words; application of a term to a thing which it does not properly denote; abuse or perversion of a trope or metaphor. ŒD.

[[@bible:Malachi 1:2]]**Verse 2.** {{field-on:Bible}}**I have loved you, saith the Lord**. Thou hast loved us (might they reply) while we were willing and obedient. Thou lovest them that love thee, ***Proverbs 8:17*** "and showeth mercy to thousands of them that love thee, and keep thy commandments," ***Exodus 20:6***; but now "thou hast utterly rejected us: thou art very wroth against us," ***Lamentations 5:22***. Nay, saith God, I do love you, so Tremellius renders this text: I am Jehovah, "I change not," ***Malachi 3:6***. I do rest in my love, and will seek no further, ***Zephaniah 3:17***. Surely "Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts: though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel," ***Jeremiah 51:5***. Thus it was before the captivity. But how after? See ***Zechariah 1:17***. The Lord had professed before that he had been sore displeased with their fathers, ***Zechariah 1:2***, and it appears, ***Zechariah 1:3-4***, they were no better than their fathers; all which notwithstanding, see a sweet promise, ***Zechariah 1:17*** "Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad, and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem." There are four "yets" in the text, and all very gracious ones; to show that the fulness of sin in us doth not abate the fulness of love in God towards his people. And the same in effect is thankfully acknowledged by those holy Levites at their solemn fast, held much about the time of our prophet Malachi, Nehemiah, where they make a catalogue of the many fruits and expressions of God's love to themselves and their fathers. Besides extraordinary favours not a few, he gave them good laws, ***Nehemiah 9:13***, good sabbaths, ***Nehemiah 9:14***, his good spirit to instruct them, ***Nehemiah 9:20***. He forsook them not when they dealt proudly against him, ***Nehemiah 9:16-17***, but crowned them with outward comforts, ***Nehemiah 9:21, 25***, afflicted them when they provoked him, ***Nehemiah 9:26-27***, sent them saviours when they cried to him, ***Nehemiah 9:27***, after often revolts was often entreated, ***Nehemiah 9:28***, withheld his worst and consuming judgments for a long time, ***Nehemiah 9:30-31***. And was there not love in all this? Might not God well say, I have loved you? Ribera thinks there is an aposiopesis [3] in the words, as if God would have said more; but very grief breaks off his speech, out of a deep sense of their detestable ingratitude. David hath such an abrupt expression, ***Psalms 116:1***, I love, because the Lord hath heard my voice. Such a pang, such a passion he felt, that he was not able to say, I love the Lord, but I love, and so breaks off abruptly. The like whereunto may here be conceived of God; who cannot endure to have his love lost, his grace undervalued, as it was by these obstreperous questionists, who put him to his proof, as those did ***Jeremiah 2:25***.

Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Their recent captivity and calamity so stuck still in their stomachs, that they could not see wherein he had showed them any love. But had they considered Daniel's weeks they might have known that (besides their free election, all blessings flowing therefrom, as ***Daniel 9:3-5***), for their seventy years' captivity, they had seven seventies of years granted them afterwards for the comfortable enjoyment of their own country. *Sed ingrato quod donatur, deperditur,* But for ingratitude which was forgiven, he is utterly destroyed, saith Seneca. And *Amare non redamantem est amoris impendia perdere,* saith Jerome. All is lost that is laid out upon an unthankful people, who devour God's best blessings as brute beasts their prey, haunch them up and swallow them, as swine do swill; bury them, as the barren earth doth the seed; use them as homely as Rachel did her father's gods, which she laid among the litter, and sat upon; yea, fighting against God with his own weapons (mercies, I mean), as Jehu did against Jehoram with his own messengers, as David did against Goliath with his own sword, as Benhadad against Ahab with that life that he had given him; as if God had hired them to be wicked, &c.

Was not Esau Jacob's brother? Did they not both tumble in a belly? were they not both dug out of the same pit, hewn out of the same rock? ***Isaiah 51:1***; and yet, as the Great Turk and his

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[3] A rhetorical artifice, in which the speaker comes to a sudden halt, as if unable or unwilling to proceed. ŒD.

brethren, born of the same parents, the eldest is destined to a diadem, the rest to a halter, so here Esau, though the elder and heir, was rejected, at least he was less loved (for so the word hated is to be taken, ***Genesis 29:31; Luke 14:20; Matthew 10:37***). Jacob, though the younger and weaker (for Esau was born a manly child, born with a beard, as some think, and was therefore called Esau, that is, *Factus et perfectus pilis,* a man already, rather than a babe), yet was God's beloved one. And so were his posterity too the people of God's choice, above the Edomites; who were now left in captivity at Babylon, when as the Jews were returned into their own country; yea, for the Jews' sakes and as a testimony of God's love to them, were these Edomites still held captives, and their land irreparably ruined because they showed themselves merciless and bloody in the day of Jerusalem's calamity, ***Obadiah 1:10-11; Psalm 137:7***. God had charged the Israelites, saying, "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother," ***Deuteronomy 23:7***; but as Esau began betime to persecute Jacob, bristling at him, and bruising him in their mother's womb, ***Genesis 25:22***, so his posterity were bitter enemies to the Church, joying in her misery, and joining with her enemies, wherefore thus saith the Lord God, "I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it," ***Ezekiel 25:13-14***.

Yet I loved Jacob. And preordained him to a crown that never fadeth, as Paul expoundeth this text, ***Romans 9:13***, of election to eternal life, which is the sweetest and surest seal of God's love. Let us secure our election, and so God's special love to our souls, by those infallible marks, ***2 Thessalonians 2:13***. *First,* belief of the truth, that articularity and propriety of assurance *Secondly,* sanctfficahon of the Spirit, unto the obedience of truth. And as God loved Jacob's person, so he loved his posterity, the Israelites, above all other people; not because they were more in number, or better in disposition, *ex meliore luto, &c.;* out of better clay, but "because the Lord loved you, therefore he set his love upon you, and chose you," saith Moses, ***Deuteronomy 7:7-8***: the ground of his love was wholly in himself; there being nothing in man, nothing out of God's self, that can primarily move and incline the eternal, immutable, and omnipotent will of God. The true original and first motive of his love to his creature is the good pleasure of his will. See ***Ephesians 1:5***, where all the four causes of election are showed to be without us.{{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:3]]**Verse 3.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And I hated Esau**. *i.e.* I loved him not as I did Jacob; I passed him by, and let him alone, to perish in his corruption and for his sin. And for his posterity, whereas they were carried captives by Nebuchadnezzar (as Israel also was), I have not turned again their captivity, but laid their land desolate; rased and harassed their cities and castles, made them a habitation of dragons and devils; and all this as an argument of my deep hatred and utter detestation of them. True it is, that Judea lay utterly waste during the seventy years of their captivity; the land kept her sabbaths, resting from tillage. Upon the slaughter of Gedaliah all the Jews that were left in the land fled to Egypt: and God kept the place empty, and free from the invasion of foreigners, until the return of the natives out of Babylon. Now it was far otherwise with Idumea, the desolation whereof is here described to be both total and perpetual, according to that foretold by ***Ezekiel 35:7, 15***, O mount Seir, I will make thee to be most desolate, or (as the Hebrew hath it, emphatically and eloquently) wasteness, and wasteness extreme and irrecoverable. A πανολεθρια, or utter, ruin, befell that country, being part of Arabia Petrea (hence mention of their mountains), and abounding naturally with serpents, or dragons; it being in the wilderness of this country of Edom where the Israelites were so stung with these fiery serpents, ***Numbers 21:6***: hence it became afterwards a very den of dragons lurking there. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:4]]**Verse 4.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished**. Or, thrust out of house and home, and reduced to extreme indigence; yet we will return, and build the desolate places. We will do it all, despite *di Deo* (as that profane pope said), if it be but to cross God's prediction, and to withstand his power and providence. Thus

these earthen pots will be dashing themselves against the rocks, against those mountains of brass (so God's immutable decrees are called, ***Zechariah 6:1***). Thus Lamech will have the odds of God seventy to seven (so Junius interprets it), ***Genesis 4:24***. Thus, when God had threatened to root out Ahab and his posterity, he would try that; and to prevent it, took more wives, and so followed the work of generation, that he left seventy sons behind him, ***2 Kings 10:1***. Thus Pharaoh (that sturdy rebel) holds out against God to the utmost, and sends away his servant Moses, threatening death to him, even then when he was compassed on all hands with that palpable darkness. Thus the Philistine princes (while sore plagued) gather themselves together again against the humbling Israelites at Mizpeh; and so run to meet their bane, ***1 Samuel 7:10***. Thus the proud Ephraimites, ***Isaiah 9:10***. The bricks indeed, say they, are fallen down, but we will build it again with hewn stones. The wild fig trees are cut down, but we will change them into cedars. Thus the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, ***Luke 7:30***, yea, would needs be found fighters against God, as Gamaliel truly told them, ***Acts 5:39***. Thus those primitive persecutors would needs attempt to root our Christian religion; the Jews, by the leave and help of Julian, to despite the Christians, would rebuild their city and temple, but were hindered from heaven. Otho, the Emperor, would make the city of Rome his imperial seat (which was long before pointed and painted out for the nest of antichrist), but could not effect it. The Jesuits would fain heal the beast's wounded head, and re-establish their kingdom of idolatry, but this they must never look for. Christ shall reign, and all his foes shall be his footstool: the Romish Edomites shall come to ruin.

Thus saith the Lord, They shall build, but I will throw down. *Ruit alto a culmine Roma,* "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen"; her downfall is sure, sore, and sudden; *Versa eris in cineres quasi nunquam Roma fuisses,* said Sibylla of old. And there was something surely in that which we have read, that when the wars began in Germany, A. D. 1610, a great brass image of the apostle Peter (that had *Tu es Petrus, &c.,* fairly imbossed upon it) standing in St Peter's church at Rome, there was a great and massive stone fell down upon it, and so shattered it to pieces, that not a letter of all that sentence (whereon Rome founds her claim) was left whole so as to be read; saving that one piece of that sentence, *Aedificabo Ecclesiam meam,* I will build my Church, which was left fair and entire. Surely when Popish mountains and monasteries shall be desolated and demolished, when the Pope (who was wont to say that he could never want money as long as he was able to hold a pen in his hand) shall be miserably impoverished, and his Euphrates of revenues dried up, ***Revelation 16:12***, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be set above all the mountains, and the Lord Christ alone shall reign in glory; he shall "overturn, overturn, overturn," all anti-christian power and policy, ***Ezekiel 21:27***, he will utterly destroy those crows' nests (as Henry VIII called the religious houses that he pulled down), *ne iterum ad cohabitandum convolent,* lest those unclean birds should build again (Sanderus).

They shall build, but I will destroy. It is the Lord, then, that both plants and pulls up kingdoms, nations, and peoples; that makes and destroys states, public or private, at his pleasure: they are all in his hand and done by him, and fall not out by any fortune, or fatal revolution and vicissitude, ***Daniel 2:21; Luke 1:52***.

And they shall call them, The border of wickedness. Chiefly for their insulting over the people of God in their affliction, ***Obadiah 1:10***. That wicked one, the Pope, is grossly guilty of this Edomitish inhumanity. What feasting and sending of gifts was there when the two witnesses were slain! What joy and jollity when the Waldenses (those ancient Protestants) were worsted in battle! What processions and bonfires at Rome upon the news of the Parisian massacre! Thuanus tells us, that the Pope caused it to be painted in his palace; and that the Cardinal of Lorrain gave him that brought the first tidings of it to Rome thirty thousand crowns for a reward. I do the rather parallel the Edomites and Romists, because the Rabbis

usually by Edom understand Rome, and the Thargum renders "O daughter of Edom," ***Lamentations 4:21***, thus: *Romi Reshignah,* O wicked Rome, which is answerable to this in the text, The border of wickedness, that is, the land of wickedness, haply called the border, or limit, as the *non ultra* of impiety, of unparalleled impiety: or else because men shall only come to the bounds and borders; and standing there aloof off, as abhorring to go farther, shall as it were point and say, Ah, wicked, Ah, wicked place, *Terra de diables,* as the Spaniards call one country in America, or the mouth of hell, as another place is named. Philip of Macedonia assembled all the infamous and wicked persons into a certain city of Thracia, and then called it Poneropolis. Italy is at this day little better: a second Sodom. M. Ascham, Queen Elizabeth's tutor, was but seven days in Venice, but he saw more wickedness there than he had seen in seven years in London. As for Rome (that *Radix omnium malorum*), that once faithful city is now become a harlot; yea, the great harlot, ***Revelation 17:5***, yea, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, ***Revelation 17:5***, *tota est iam Roma lupanar* (Petrarch), it is turned into a great brothel house, the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, ***Revelation 18:2***. Bethel is become Bethaven; the house of God, the border of wickedness; *Har-hamishcah* is become *Har-hamaschith,* the mount of unction, the mount of corruption, ***2 Kings 23:13*** "What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?" ***Micah 1:5***.

And, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation. The people of God's wrath, ***Isaiah 10:6***, and of his curse (so Idumea is called), ***Isaiah 34:5***. And such a people was Amalek, with whom God (laid his hand upon his throne, and) swore that he would have perpetual war for their ill usage of his Israel, ***Exodus 17:16***. He charged also his people never to forget them, ***Deuteronomy 25:19***. Neither did they: Saul was sent to make an utter end of them, ***1 Samuel 15:1-3***. And wherein he failed in doing it, God stirred up the Simeonites in Hezekiah's days to smite the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped, ***1 Chronicles 4:42-43***. The like judgment whereunto is befallen the Edomites long since: their very name is extinct, no memory of them being in posterity. The destiny of Doeg, their countryman, is come upon them, ***Psalms 52:5***, God hath beaten them down for ever: he hath taken them away, and plucked them out of their dwellingplace, and rooted them out of the land of the living. Selah. It is ill angering the Ancient of days. His wrath lasts longer than the coals of juniper, ***Psalms 120:4***; his judgments are severe and durable, as we use to say of winter; they never rot in the sky, but shall fall; if late, yet surely, yet seasonably. He that saith, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," repayeth often times when we have forgiven, when we have forgotten; and calls to reckoning after our discharges, as he did Nabal. It is dangerous offending any favourite of him who can have (as here) indignation for ever; whose wrath and revenge is (as that of the Athenians is said to be) ἀείμνηστος, everlasting, whose destructions are perpetual. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:5]]**Verse 5.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And your eyes shall see**. "The righteous shall see and fear, and shall laugh at him," and say, "Lo, this is the man," &c., said David of Doeg the Edomite, ***Psalms 52:7***. And the same is here promised by God to his people as a pledge of his love, and a special privilege: others should hiss at Edom, and say by way of byword, "This is the border of wickedness," &c., but the saints should make more of it (a bee can suck honey out of a flower, so cannot a fly), they should busy their eyes, and regard the work of the Lord; yea, they should so consider the operation of his hand, as to say sensibly, "Let the Lord be magnified. Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place," ***Isaiah 5:12; Psalm 35:27; Ezekiel 3:12***. God hath delivered me out of all trouble, saith David, and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies. The Edomites stood looking on and laughing at the Israelites' destruction, ***Obadiah 1:12-13***. God saw this, and it displeased him (as he is wondrously sensible of the least indignity done to his people); he therefore pays them home in their own coin, and promiseth his Israel that they shall rejoice when they see the vengeance, they shall wash their

feet in the blood of these wicked ones; become more cautious by their just destruction, ***Psalms 58:10***. Learn we hence, *First,* to have our eyes open upon the judgments of God, whether general or personal; that nothing of this nature pass our observation, lest we incur the curse denounced, ***Isaiah 5:12***, and be made examples to others, because we would not be warned by the example of others. *Lege historiam ne fiat historia.* Sodom and Gomorrah are thrown forth (as St Jude hath it) for an example; suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. And Herodotus saith, that the ruins and rubbish of Troy are set forth for an example of this rule, that national sins bring national plagues, and that God greatly punisheth great offences. *Ingentia, beneficia, flagitia, supplicia.* Let him that looketh upon me learn to fear God. ἐμέ τίς ὀρέων εὐσεβὴς ἔστω. These words were engraven upon the standing picture of Sennacherib (after that God had by an angel slain his army, and sent him back with shame to his own country), as the same Herodotus testifieth.

Secondly, learn we how far forth we may look upon the overthrow of the wicked with delight: viz. not as our own private, but as God's professed enemies; not simply as their ruin, but as it is a clearing of God's glory, and of our integrity, ***Psalms 9:16; 1 Samuel 25:39***; not out of private revenge, but pure zeal for God and his cause. I say pure zeal; for it is difficult to kindle and keep quick the fire of zeal without all smoke of sinister and self-respect.

And ye shall say, The Lord will be magnified, &c. Or, The Lord hath magnified himself, *i.e.* hath declared himself mightily to be a great King above all gods, by executing judgment upon these grandees of the earth, and making out, that "In the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them," ***Exodus 18:11***. Hence it is that "praise waiteth for God in Zion, his name is great in Israel." He is sent unto (as sometime Joab sent to David, ***2 Samuel 12:28***, to come and take the city of Rabbah), to take the glory of all their deliverances and victories. Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, say they, but to thy name be the praise. Hunniades would not own or accept the people's applauses and acclamations, but ascribed all to God. So did our Henry V at the battle of Agincourt, where he won the day. He would not admit his broken crown or bruised armour to be borne before him in show (which are the usual ensign of warlike triumphs). He also gave strait order that no ballad or song should be made or sung, more than of thanksgiving to the Lord for his happy victory and safe return, &c. So our Edward III after his victory at Poictiers, (where he took the French king prisoner, A. D. 1356), took speedy order by Simon, Archbishop of Canterbury, that eight days together should be spent in magnifying the Lord from the border of England.

From the borders of Israel. Or, from beyond the borders of Israel; viz., throughout the wide world. The saints have large hearts, and could give the Lord much more praise and service then they have for him. They would praise him infinitely, and according to his excellent greatness; filling up the distance, as it were, and calling in all the help they can get, of angels, men, unreasonable and insensible creatures, as David did, ***Psalms 145:2; 48:10; 103:20***. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:6]]**Verse 6.** {{field-on:Bible}}**A son honoureth his father**. Heb. Will honour his father. Nature teacheth him this lesson, to reverence his father. *Pater est, si pater non esset,* said the young man in Terence; It is my father, I must not cross him. Our parents are our household gods, said another heathen, θεοὶ ἐφέστιοι (Hierocl.), and to have all possible respect from us. To God and our parents, saith Aristotle, we can never make recompense. There is no nation so barbarous that acknowledgeth not this natural axiom, A son must honour his father, and a servant his master; as Eliezar did Abraham; the centurion's servants him, by being at his beck and call in all things. *Servus est nomen officii,* A servant is not one who moveth absolutely of himself; but he is the master's instrument, and wholly his, saith Aristotle, καὶ ὅλος αὐτοῦ, and therefore oweth him all love, reverence, and obedience, as if he

were many masters in one: the word here used for master is plural. Now from this principle in nature thus laid down, the Lord tacitly accuseth them:

First, Of ingratitude for his great love to them, evinced and evidenced in the former verses.

Secondly, Of contempt cast upon him and his service; as appeareth, first by the application of that natural law confirmed by the custom of all countries.

If then I be a father, &c. As you commonly call me, and claim me, ***Jeremiah 3:4; John 8:41*** "We have one Father, even God." And you have been long since taught so to do by Moses, and told by what right I come to be your Father, though with an exprobration of your detestable undutifulness, ***Deuteronomy 32:6*** "Do ye thus requite the Lord?" Is not he thy father (and is not he by the same right and reason thy master too?) that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established or preserved thee? Hath he not (more than all that) adopted and accepted thee so for his child; begetting thee again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ***1 Peter 1:3***, unless thou be still in thy sins, than the which thou canst not choose unto thyself a worse condition? All which considered, what more equal than that I should have both love from thee as a father and fear as a master? A mixture of both is required of all God's children and servants, that they yield unto him an amicable fear and a reverent love, that they look at once upon his bounty and severity, ***Romans 11:11***, and so call God Father, that they spend the whole time of their sojourning here in fear, ***1 Peter 1:17***; that they fear God and his goodness, and Jacob-like, when they see nothing but visions of love and mercy, as he did at Bethel, yet then to cry out, "How dreadful is this place! There is mercy with thee, that then mayest be feared," ***Psalms 130:4***.

Unto you, O priests. Whom I look upon as the chief of my children, given me in lieu of Israel's firstborn, the lot of mine own inheritance, that stand ever before me, and should by soundness of doctrine and holiness of life vindicate my name from contempt, and get me honour before the people. Singular holiness is required of ministers above others; a double spirit they had need to wish for, as Elisha. Things in the sanctuary were double to those that were common; as the shekel, cubit, &c. Ministers are called angels, and they must walk as angels, *ne sit nomen inane crimen immane,* lest God renew his old complaint, "The leaders of his people have caused them to err," ***Isaiah 9:16***. It was the complaint of Pope Pius II that there was no notorious wickedness committed in the Catholic Church, *cuius prima origo a sacerdotibus non dependent,* the first beginning whereof arose not from churchmen. John Huss cries out of the priests of his time, *Multa quae illi ordinem dicunt, &c.* Many of these things that they call by the name of order have brought all things in Christendom out of order. Cornelius a Lapide, upon this text, in his Popish way, bewaileth it, that the ignorance and profaneness of many of their priests had given occasion to Luther's heresy to spread the further. We also have no less cause to complain that the insufficiency and impiety of some of our ministry hath opened the black mouth of Campian and his Popish accomplices, to bark out, *Ministris eorum nihil villus,* their ministers are very base. For prevention, let the souls of ministers be purer than the sunbeams, as Chrysostom saith they should be; and let their lives be so unblameable that no man may speak the least evil of them without a manifest lie, &c.

That despise my name. This is the crime they are directly and expressly charged with. They had not honoured God as a father, feared him as a master; therefore they had despised and slighted him. Not to do God right is to do him wrong; not to reverence him is to rob him; not to bless him is to blaspheme him, ***Job 1:5***. That is an excellent saying of Fulgentius, *Deum si quis parum metuit, valde contemnit; huius, qui non memorat beneficentiam, auger iniuriam; i.e.* whoso feareth God but a little slights him overmuch; and he that maketh not honourable mention of his bounty doth him a great deal of injury. The very not serving of God, the not sacrificing to him, is a crime, ***Malachi 3:18; Ecclesiastes 9:2***. How much more, then, a

slubbered service, a corrupt sacrifice! There is a contempt in this latter which is worse than a bare neglect; and displeasing service is double dishonour. Hence the present contest with those greasy priests that despised God's name: the Septuagint hath it, Ye that esteem my name at a low rate, οἱ φαυλίζοντες τὸ ὄνομά μου, that misprise it (as the French translateth it), that have base and bald conceits of me and of my *nomen maiestativum,* majestic name (as Tertullian termeth it), that take me not into your hearts under the name and notion of an infinite highness, the great and mighty Maker and Monarch of the whole world. Our safest eloquence concerning God is our silence, saith Hooker. But if we take in hand to say anything of him, *Nullis vocibus tam plene Deum significamus* (saith learned Scaliger), *quam iis quae ignorantiam nostrum praetendunt,* we can set forth God so fully by no words as by those that set forth our ignorance of his excellence. The very heathens, when they would swear by their Jupiter, out of the mere dread and reverence of his name, forbare to mention him. The Jews would not pronounce the name Jehovah, here used in the text. The first among the Christians that pronounced Jehovah was Petrus Galatinus, following the pronunciation of the Syriacs and Greeks. If at any time we take God's holy and reverend name into our thoughts, ***Psalms 111:9*** (and truly we should think of him almost at every breath we draw, according to that "Let every breath praise the Lord," ***Psalms 150:6***), remember to think of God as of one at all to be thought of; as one whose wisdom is his justice, whose justice is his power, whose power is his mercy, and all himself, good without quality, great without quantity, everlasting without time, omnipresent without place, containing all things without extent, &c. This is to magnify God, to make room for him in our hearts, and the contrary is to despise his name.

And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Lo, the impudence of these frontless hypocrites. They traverse their accusation, stand upon their justification, and put God to his proofs. How ordinary is it with people still to palliate their sins and plead their innocence! ***Hosea 12:8*** "In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin," that were a foul businness. But men have learned to draw a fair gloss upon a foul hand, to cast a colour, as the calf fish doth, to deceive the fisherman; to hide their sins, as Adam, ***Job 31:33***, by downright denial, as did Cain, Gehazi, Ananias, and Sapphira, ***Genesis 4:9; 2 Kings 5:25; Acts 5:8***; or else by excusing and extenuating, as Saul, ***1 Samuel 15:20, 21***; or at least by a senseless silence, not acknowledging their sins, or being affected with them; but rather outfacing, as Judas, ***John 13:21*** *cf.* ***Matthew 26:23***. Sin and shifting came into the world together, and so they continue. Satan knows there is no way to purge the sick soul but upwards; therefore he holds the lips close, that the heart may not disburden itself, and have ease, ***Proverbs 28:13***. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:7]]**Verse 7.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar.** Bread, that is, sacrifices and oblations (so Rabbi David expounds it out of ***Leviticus 21:6; 3:3; Numbers 28:2***); for the Hebrews call all kind of meat by the name of bread, though it be flesh of ox, lamb, or goat, offered in sacrifice to God, whom they made account that they feasted in their sacrifices. Hence that of the Psalmist in the person of God, "Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" ***Psalms 50:13***. Now the bread was reckoned polluted when it was neither lawful nor acceptable, but prohibited, and therefore abhorred, as much, every whit, as Ezekiel's bread prepared with man's dung, ***Ezekiel 4:13***, of which he saith, ***Ezekiel 4:14*** "Ah Lord God! behold, my soul hath not been polluted; neither ever came there abominable flesh into my mouth." What sacrifices God had flatly forbidden, see ***Leviticus 22:20-22***, &c. Take we heed that we despite not the Lord with seeming honours: we pollute him with our sacrifices, while either for the matter for them we resent him with will worship; as those of old that sacrificed their children (in a foolish imitation of Abraham's offering his son Isaac), and the Papists at this day in their unbloody sacrifice for the living and the dead, and many other unwarranted fopperies. Or else, when for the manner devotion is placed more in the massy materiality of the outward works than purity of the heart, from which they proceed. This

made God complain, Isaiah that all his five senses, nay, his very soul, was offended and vexed at their hypocritical performances, ***Isaiah 1:11-15***, their very incense, that precious perfume, that was made up of so many sweet spices and pure frankincense, stank in his nostrils. God's sharp nose easily discerns, and is offended with the stinking breath of the hypocrite's rotten lungs, though his words be never so scented, and perfumed with shows of holiness. Never did the five cities of the plain send up such poisonous vapours to God as the prayers and other performances of a corrupt and carnal person. And God, not able to abide these ill scents, sends down upon such a counterpoison of fire and brimstone. Good actions from bad men displease: as a man may speak good words, but we cannot hear them, because of his stinking breath; sad as we abhor to taste of a dainty dish if brought to table by a foul nasty sloven, that hath been tumbling in a jakes or wallowing in a quagmire. The very heathens, as they were very curious in the choice of their sacrifices, that they were every way sound and of the best, so they carefully shut out all profane persons; *Procul hinc este profani,* the priest cried out τις τῇδε, who is here. those that were present at the sacrifice answered, πολλοὶ ἀγαθοί τε πάρεισι, here are many, and those all good men. And hence it was that Jehu sees and searches that no servant of Jehovah be crept into the throng of Baal's worshippers. Well might this search have bred suspicion, were it not that in all those idolatrous sacrifices the first care was to avoid the profane. Even Baal will admit no mixture: how should the true God abide it? Let all Cainists take heed how they draw nigh to him: so Luther calleth *offerentes non personam, sed opus personae,* all those that offer to God the work done, but do not offer themselves withal. We may fitly call those also Cainists that offer polluted bread, as if God's table were contemptible; that think anything good enough for God that comes next hand, as Cain did, when Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, and so offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, God testifying of his gifts, ***Genesis 4:4; Hebrews 11:4***; as likewise Christ did of Mary's spikenard of great price, defending her against Judas, the thief, that held it waste; whereas he secretly taxeth those rich wretches of baseness, who cast their brass money into the treasury χαλκόν, ***Mark 12:41***, as holding the worst piece they had good enough for God and his poor. Surely Papists, with their vowed presents for the very best they have to their he-saints and she-saints; and Turks, with their mosques or temples stately built, when their private houses are low and homely; shall rise up in judgment and condemn such sordid Christians, as cannot give God the best of the best. Solon, the Athenian lawgiver, appointed that their sacrifices should be chosen and selected ἔκκριτα ειρεια, that the sacrificers should purify themselves some days before, and that none should serve God *obiter,* in passing, slightly and slenderly, but in all best manner, and with the best preparation they could make beforehand, οἴκαθεν παρασκευασμένοι. Numa Pompilius, King of the Romans would not have them worship their gods, παρεργψ καὶ ἀμελῶς, for fashion and dissolutely; but freed from all other cares and cumbers, σχολὴν ἄγοντας ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλωὶ: in the time of Divine service the priests, to prevent distraction, cried out often to the people, *Hoc agite,* mind the business you are about. So in the primitive times of the Church, the deacons called often upon the people, *Sursum corda,* Lift up your hearts. And again, *Oremus, attendamus,* Let us pray, let us attend. For what reason? Prayer without attention and hearing without attention is as a body without a soul. This sentence is written in Hebrew upon the walls of the Jewish synagogues, *et si nullibi minus intentionis sit quam in ipsorum precibus, &c.,* saith mine author, though there is as little true devotion to be seen among them in their services as among any people, unless it be among the Papists, of whom perhaps they learned it, whose devotions are prized more by tale than by weight of zeal, whose holiness is the very outward mark itself, being a brainless head and soulless body. In the isle of Sardinia, as they give way, in the very time of their mass, to vain talking and toying and tumults, so after mass done, they fall to dancing in the midst of the Church, singing in the mean time songs too immodest for an ale house. Henry III, King of France, *processiones religiosas non intermittit, at tepidius celebrat,* saith the Chronicler, would not neglect their religious processions, but showed little devotion at them. For between him and his cardinal

there went at the same time a jester, whose work was to make sport then, when the business required greater seriousness. How much better the Great Turk, who, when he comes into his temple, lays aside all his state, and hath none to attend him but a professor of their law, whose office is to proclaim, before they begin, that nothing be done against religion!

And ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? They well understood that by offering polluted sacrifices they polluted God himself (as much as in them lay), and that the dishonour done to God's service reflected upon himself, and was a despising of his name, ***Malachi 1:6***, whereof his true worship is a part, ***Micah 4:5; 1 Kings 5:3, 5***. Hence they say not, wherein have we polluted thine altar? but "wherein have we polluted thee?" This is much more done under the New Testament by all unworthy communicants, and unhallowed worshippers, that present the great God with dough baked duties, slubbered services, careless and customary performances which they turn over as a task, holding a certain daily stint of them, as malt horses do their pace: or mill horses their round, merely out of form and for fashion' sake. These do enough to pollute the God of purity, and to cast contempt upon him from the sons of men; who will be apt to conclude that he is a contemptible God, since he will be content to take up with such contemptible sacrifices and services. But more especially those that come hand over head and without due preparation to the Lord's supper are guilty of polluting God's holy things, and of crucifying afresh the Lord of glory, putting him to an open shame. *Dum enim sacramenta violantur, ipse cuius sunt Sacramenta, violatur* said Jerome. When the sacraments are violated he also, whose the sacraments are, is no less violated. And as these in the text are said to pollute God, in that they offered polluted sacrifices, though they never touched God himself so unworthy receivers are guilty of the Lord's body and blood, ***1 Corinthians 11:27***, although they never touched either his body or blood with their impure mouths. They are as very kill Christs as Judas was in a proportion; and look whatsoever blasphemies, irrisions, scorns, contumelies, reproaches, the miscreant Jews belched forth and practised corporally against Christ the same are spiritually repeated and reiterated by the unworthy receiver; who polluteth the very outward elements that he toucheth, and so offereth indignity to Christ, whom they represent. Like as he that doth rend, deface, trample under foot and villanously abuse the image, seal, or letter patent of a prince or state, is guilty of high treason; so is it here. The Donatists that cast the holy elements to dogs, did it to the disgrace of Christ; and by a just judgment from him were themselves afterwards devoured of dogs Dr Morton reports a story of his own knowledge of one Booth, a Bachelor of Arts, in St John's College in Cambridge, who, being Popishly at fected, at the time of the communion took the consecrated bread, and forbearing to eat it, conveyed and kept it closely for a time, and afterwards threw it over the college wall. But a short time after, not enduring the torment of his guilty conscience, he threw himself headlong over the battlements of the chapel; and some few hours after ended his life. God seemeth to say of every one that cometh to the supper of his Son, as sometimes Solomon said of Adonijah, "If he will show himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of him fall to the earth; but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die," ***1 Kings 1:52***.

In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. God's infinite patience in vouchsafing not only to reply to these malapert priests, but thus to rejoin, and to approve the assumption of the last syllogism, which they so shamelessly denied, is much to be admired. How justly might he have answered them with blows instead of arguments; and have dealt with them as he did with Pharaoh, that sturdy rebel, that proudly asked, "Who is the Lord?" Hereunto God made a large reply by a great many plagues, one after another, till Pharaoh was forced to answer himself, "The Lord is righteous, but I and my people are wicked." And as God's patience appeareth in his proceeding with these priests in the text, so his wisdom too, in his thus instancing in particulars of their sins, that he might the sooner evict them, and bring them to a saving sense and sight thereof. Thus he dealt by our first parents in Paradise; and

afterwards by Cain. Whereas, without any more ado, the Lord God said unto the serpent, "Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou," &c., ***Genesis 3:14***. He was not so much as questioned, or convinced, because God meant him no mercy; but presently doomed, because of mere malice he had offended.

Ye have said. *i.e.* Ye have thought, as ***Psalms 32:5; 30:7***; and as good ye might have spoken out; for I hear the language of your hearts; I understand your thoughts long before, or at a great distance, ***Psalms 139:2***.

The table of the Lord. That is, the altar of burnt offerings, see ***Ezekiel 41:22***, which is therefore called a table, because by their sacrifices God did as it were feast the Lord, as is above noted. And as God prepared the Israelites a "table in the wilderness," so they also in a sense prepared him a table: hence Moses tells Pharaoh, that they must go to keep a feast to the Lord, ***Exodus 5:1***. And how God accepted of their kindness, see ***Hosea 9:10***. I found Israel, saith he, like grapes in the wilderness; which, to a wearied, parched traveller, how welcome are they! And how the good soul still entertaineth her Christ, as Esther once did Ahasuerus at the banquet of wine, is sweetly set forth in many passages of Solomon's Song . See ***Malachi 1:12***. (***See Trapp on "Malachi 1:12"***)

Is contemptible. Or, lightly set by. Some are poor, and cannot; others are profane, and care not to cover God's altar with their sacrifices. Hence the whole ministry is slighted, because impoverished. For *ad tenuitatem beneficiorum, necessario sequitur contemptus sacerdotum,* Lean benefices make contemptible incumbents; and *Nil habet infelix paupertas, &c.* (Horat.), Poverty rendereth men ridiculous. Or thus, The table of the Lord is contemptible, so they esteemed it, because the fat and blood poured upon the altar were things but base and despicable in themselves; and they considered not for what end God had appointed these sacrifices, and how they were to be led to Christ by them. For the ceremonial law was or ought to have been their gospel, it was Christ in figure. And this, if these buzzards had seen, they would never have counted the "table of the Lord contemptible"; as holding forth the Lord Christ unto them, that pearl of price, who is better than rubies; and the altar or table, that typified him, or presented him to his people, was not an oysterboard, as the Papists in King Edward VI's time scornfully termed our communion table; but far more precious than either that rich table sent by Ptolemy Philadelphus to Eleazar, the Jews' high priest, or that costly communion table, that had in it all the riches of land and sea, offered up by Justinian, in the temple of Sophia, in Constantinople. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:8]]**Verse 8.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, &c.** Their profaneness in polluting God's altar is here further evinced and evidenced: 1. By the illegality of their practice, while they offered the blind and lame as good enough for such a contemptible altar. 2. By the incivility and indecency thereof; while they presented that to the Emperor of the world, that they would have been ashamed or afraid to present to some petty prince, that had any power to punish such an affront. The law for sacrifices see ***Leviticus 22:20; Deuteronomy 15:21***. A blind sacrifice he offereth who worshippeth he knoweth not what, ***John 4:22***, that is, to seek, and grope in the dark, ***Acts 17:27***, when they yield not the obedience of faith, bring not to God an intelligible, reasonable service, such as whereof they can render a sound reason out of the word of God, ***Romans 12:1***; who binds us not to any blind obedience, as the Popish padres do their novices. And yet the most people are to this day woefully to seek for the warrant for their worships; resting on that old Popish rule, to follow the drove, and believe as the Church believes. As at Ephesus, so in our Church assemblies, "the more part knew not wherefore they were come together," ***Acts 19:32***. They will say in general, to serve God. But who he is, how to be served, wherein and in whom to be served, they know not. There is in a printed sermon a memorable story of an old man, over sixty, who lived and died in a parish where there had been preaching almost all his time. This man was a constant

hearer as any might be, and seemed forward in the love of the word. On his death bed, being questioned by a minister touching his faith and hope in God, he made these strange answers. Being demanded what he thought of God? he answered that he was a good old man. And what of Christ? that he was a towardly young youth. And of his soul, that it was a great bone in his body. And what should become of his soul after he was dead? That if he had done well, he should be put into a pleasant green meadow. These answers astonished those that were present to think how it were possible for a man of good understanding, and one that in his days had heard at the least two or three thousand sermons; yet upon his death bed in serious manner thus to deliver his opinion, in such main points of religion, which infants and sucklings should not be ignorant of. But we may be sure this man is not alone; there be many hundreds whose grey hairs show they have had time enough to learn more wit, who yet are in case to be set to their A B C again for their admirable simplicity in matters of religion. Blind they are, and blind sacrifices they offer; never once opening their eyes till death, if then, as Pliny reporteth of the mole; but always rooting and digging in the earth, as if through the bowels of it they would dig themselves a new way to hell.

Is it not evil? Or, as some read it, It is not evil, *q.d.* it is good enough, and may serve turn well enough. Or thus, It is not evil in your opinion, who, rather than you would lose any gain, say, *Melius est ill quam Nil* (it is Osiander's rhyme), better that which is ill and bad than nothing at all. But they which count all good fish that comes to not, will in the end catch the devil and all. The sense is much clearer in the interrogative, "Is it not evil?" It is, it is; and therefore studiously to be declined and avoided as poison in your food, or a serpent in your way. "Abstain from all appearance of evi!," saith that great apostle, ***1 Thessalonians 5:22***; how much more from all apparent evils, such as stare you in the face, and are so directly contrary to the plain word of God! Such are sins with an accent, wickedness with a witness, great transgressions, ***Psalms 19:13***.

And if ye offer the lame and languishing. He offers the lame that brings his sacrifice with a wicked mind, ***Proverbs 21:27***, as Balak and Balaam did, ***Numbers 23:1, 2***; that walks not evenly before the Lord, and with an upright foot, ***Genesis 17:1***; that halts between two opinions, as the people did, ***1 Kings 18:21***, *inter coelum terramque penduli,* hanging between heaven and earth, as meteors, uncertain whether to hang or fall. Such were Ecebolus, Baldwin, Spalatensis, Erasmus ἀμφίβιος. Cyprian calleth such *ancipites, palpatores temporum, in levitate tantum constantes,* doubtful minded men. St James, ***James 1:8***, calleth them "double minded men, unstable in all their ways," as he is that stands on one leg, or as a bowl upon a smooth table. But what said that martyr? If God be God, follow him; if the mass be God, let him that will see it hear it, and be present at it, and go to the devil with it, but let him do what he doth with all his heart. God cannot abide these neuter passives ("I would thou wert either hot or cold," ***Revelation 3:15***). He requires to be served truly, that there be no halting, and totally, that there be no halving. To halt between two opinions, to hang in suspense, to be in religion as idle beggars are in their way, ready to go which way soever the staff falleth, how hateful is it! When some took Christ for John Baptist, some for Elias, some for Jeremiah, "But whom say you that I am?" said our Saviour; to teach us that Christ hates to have men stand doubtful and adhere to nothing certainly; to have them as mills, fit to be driven about by the devil with every wind of doctrine; or, as hunting dogs between two hares, running as soon after this, as soon after that; and so losing both. This for point of judgment; and, for matter of practice, the soul is well carried when neither so becalmed that it moves not when it should, nor yet tossed with tempests to move disorderly. A wise man's course is of one colour, like itself; he is *homo quadratus,* a square stone set into the spiritual building, ***1 Peter 2:7***; he is *semper idem,* as Joseph was; no changeling, but one and the same at all places and estates of life: his feet stand in an even place (as David's did, ***Psalms 26:12***), that is, in an equal tenor. Uniformity and ubiquity of obedience are sure signs of his sincerity; when godliness runs through his whole

life, as the woof runs through the warp. But "the legs of the lame are not equal," saith Solomon, ***Proverbs 26:7***. The hypocrite's life is a crooked life, he turneth aside to his crooked ways, saith David, ***Psalms 125:5***, as the crab fish goes backwards; or, as the planets, though hurried from east to west, yet, by a retrograde motion of their own, steal their passage from west to east. It is a crooked life when all the parts of the line of a man's life be not straight before God; when he lifteth not "up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees; and maketh straight paths for his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; and not rather healed," and rectified: or set to rights, as the apostle's word signifieth ***Hebrews 12:12-13***, ἀνορθώσατε. That is a sick soul that is not right set for heaven; and that is a gasping devotion, a languishing sacrifice that leaneth not upon Christ, and that is not quickened by his spirit, fitly called by the apostle, a spirit "of power, and of love, and of sound mind," ***2 Timothy 1:7***. Surely as a rotten rag hath no strength, so an unsound mind hath no power to do aught that may please God *Frustra nititur qui Christo non innititur,* saith a father. He loseth his labour that leaneth not upon Christ (who is the power of God and the wisdom of God), that leaneth not wholly upon him, but will needs have one leg upon the earth and the other upon the water, as that angel in the Revelation; one foot upon the solid ground and the other upon a quagmire; that rest upon Christ but as a part Saviour, as Papists; or trust to him, as the apricot tree that leaneth against the wall, but it is fast rooted in the earth; so some seem to lean upon Christ in their performances, but are rooted, meanwhile, in the world, in pride, filthiness. Or, lastly, as the ivy, which though it clasp about the oak and draweth much from it, yet brings forth all its berries by virtue of its own root. Thus hypocrites also offer sacrifice, but it is a sick sacrifice, because it is from themselves and in themselves; they do all in their own strength, that is, in their own weakness. For our "strength is to sit still," ***Isaiah 30:7***, and to work ourselves into the Rock of ages. "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength," ***Isaiah 26:4***. The blind and the lame Jebusites, when they had secured themselves in the stronghold of Zion, insulted over David, as if he could not come in thither, though he did his utmost to get in to them; the very blind and lame there enclosed should be able to withstand him. But both their hold and their hope deceived them. "Nevertheless," saith the text, "David took the stronghold of Zion: the same is the city of David," ***2 Samuel 5:6-7***. But they that get into the rock Christ Jesus shall never be visited by evil, nor disappointed in their hopes (*Deo confisi nunquam confusi*); but of weak they shall be made strong, ***Hebrews 11:34***, able to present their bodies a lively, not a languishing, sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, ***Romans 12:16***; they shall do all things through Christ which strengtheneth them, ***Philippians 4:13***.

Offer it now unto thy governor. Be it but some petty provincial president, some duke of Venice, or despot of Servia. Jacob can tell that the lord of Egypt will look for a present; and therefore biddeth his sons take of the best in the land in their vessels, and carry the man a present, a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds, of every good thing somewhat, though it were the less, ***Genesis 43:11***; for to do much it was not in the power of their hands; but see that it be of the best, saith he. The poor Persian that met Artaxerxes with a handful of water out of the river Cyrus, went away well rewarded. So did the gardener that presented the Duke of Burgundy with a rape-root, because it was the best they were able to do. Likewise, the Almighty takes anything well aworth from those that are willing indeed, but, alas, not able to bring a better present. Vow and perform (saith he) unto the Lord your God: bring presents unto him, that ought to be feared, ***Psalms 76:11***. Say not, I fear to present, because I have nothing worthy of him. Send a lamb to the ruler of the earth, ***Isaiah 16:1***. Or, if thou hast not a lamb, offer a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons; but see they be young, and that thy lamb be the best in thy fold, and it shall be accepted. Every man cannot do as Solomon did, at the dedication of the temple; when he offered twenty-two thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep, ***1 Kings 8:63***; or as great Alexander, whom Pliny reporteth, that in his childhood, when he threw incense upon the altar in great plenty, his schoolmaster checked him for so doing; and bade him sacrifice on that sort when he had

conquered the incense bearing countries, and not till then. Alexander, when he had subdued Arabia, remembered his schoolmaster, and presented him with a ship laden with frankincense; largely exhorting him to spare for no cost when he sacrificed to the gods. But no man must come before the Lord empty handed; if it be but a handful or two of flour, or a grain or two of salt, ***Leviticus 5:6, 11-12; 14:30-31***. So the Athenians thought the gods would be well pleased with a poor man, if he offered but meal; especially if he could mingle it with oil and wine; for they held that every man was bound to bring his best, and not to be base in saving charges in this case. Hence it was that when the famous artificer Phidias advised them to make the statue of Minerva rather of marble than of ivory, 1. Because it was more durable: this passed with allowance. 2. Because less chargeable: at the mention hereof with infinite indignation they commanded him silence. Their meat offerings were to be sound and without blemish, whether it were an ox, sheep, goat, swine, calf. The more wealthy did cast frankincense on the altars; and, in their blind devotion, thought they could hardly over do in honour of their dunghill deities. What, then, shall become of those base wretches among us, that think everything too good for God, too much for his ministers? that study to beat down the price of heaven, and will not deal except they may have it underfoot?

Will he be pleased with thee. I think not. The Vulgate renders it, *Si placuerit, &c.* If it please him, or if he accept thy person: *q.d.* then let me never be believed. But the other reading is better, and more agreeable to the original.

Or accept thy person? Heb. Accept thy face, that whore's forehead of thine, hatched with so much impudence, that thou darest bring him a worse present, when thou hast a better at hand, but holdest it too good for him. Araunah, though a subject, yet, as a king, he gave unto the king oxen for sacrifice, and threshing instruments for wood, ***2 Samuel 24:23***. And although David accepted his courtesy, but not his cost, yet God hath crowned him and chronicled him for his munificence, ***Zechariah 9:7***. Ekron, that is, the barbarous people of Palestine, shall be as the Jebusite, that is, as this famous Jebusite Araunah, a proselyte, a true convert, as appeared by his ready parting with his freehold to God, and the best that he had to his prince. Let all those that look for acceptance in heaven honour the Lord with the prime of their age, with the choice of their days (as the Hebrew hath it, ***Ecclesiastes 12:1***), with the primrose of their childhood, with the best of their time, and of their talents; and not unworthily and woefully waste and cast away the fat and marrow, the flower of their age, the strength of their bodies, the vigour of their spirits, in sinful pleasures and sensual delights, in pursuing their fleshly lusts that hale hell at the heels of them. Will they give the devil the best, and then think to serve God with the dregs, the bottom, the snuff, the very last sands, their extreme dotage, that themselves and their friends are weary of? Surely, God takes no pleasure to pledge the devil, or drink the snuffs that he hath left. If men reserve the dregs of their days for him, he will likewise reserve the dregs of his wrath for them. He will put them over to the gods whom they had chosen, as ***Judges 10:14***, and make them to know the worth of his good acceptance by the want of it. He that should set before his prince a dish of meat that had been half eaten before by hogs or dogs, would he not be punished with all severity? What, then, shall become of those that serve God with the devil's leavings? that sacrifice to themselves, as Sejanus did (Dio in Tiberio); that serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, as those seducers, ***Romans 16:17-18***; that say to God, Depart from us, and to the devil, Reign thou over us, that are serious at his work, Mighty in God's? {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:9]]**Verse 9.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And now I pray you, beseech God**. Heb. Weary God with your prayers, press him till he be even sick of you; improve your uttermost interest in him, if, at least, you have any. Pray hard, if ye can, at least; for all men cannot pray; wicked men are gagged by the devil; and their character is, They call not upon God. They may cant or chatter out a charm when God's chastening is upon them, yea, be with child, as it were, of a prayer, and yet bring forth nothing better than wind, ***Isaiah 26:16-18***. In prosperity they

may have some few short winded wishes, as Balaam (Satan's boggie man) had; yea, they may by strength of wit or memory devise a handsome prayer, and seem to set it forth with much life, that they may pass for men of parts and gifts: but will the hypocrite pray always? ***Job 27:10***; will he persevere in prayer when God seems to cast out his prayers, and to multiply his crosses? will he not rather curse in that case, as Job's wife, and Micah's mother? will he not howl against heaven, as the wolf when hunger bitten? and as the parrot, when beaten, leave imitating man, and turn to his own natural harsh voice? But say that wicked men do (Joab-like) run to the horns of God's altar when in distress or danger; say they roar out a confession when they are upon the rack (as Pharaoh), and call for good prayers; say they seek him with their sacrifices, as Israel did, —when he slew them, then they sought unto him, ***Hosea 6:6; Psalm 78:34***, and made their voices to be heard on high, as the prisoner at the bar, as the hog under the knife, as a bull in a net; say they weary out God with their many words, as those sacrificing Sodomites, ***Isaiah 1:11***, and those hypocrites in the Gospel, that hoped to be heard for their much babbling, ***Matthew 6:7***; yet all this is but the prayer of the flesh for ease, and not of the spirit for grace; it is but the fruit of sinful self-love, to rid themselves of God's rod, or to still the noise of their consciences, or out of a vain hope to stop God's judgments. And hence it is that they miscarry, that they pray to so little purpose (as here is hinted), and that they are not a button the better for all their long prayers. For either God answers them not at all, he hath no respect to their sacrifices (which was Cain's and Saul's unhappiness. The Philistines were upon him, and God was departed from him), or else he answers them according to the idols of their hearts, bitter answers; or, if better, it is but as he answered the Israelites' importunity for a king, for a scourge to them and for quails to choke them: *Deus saepe dat iratus quod negat propitius,* God often gives that in anger which he denies in mercy. If it were otherwise, the devil should have received mercy from God, when, upon his suit, he was suffered to enter into the swine. Let our chief and constant petition, therefore, be in all our addresses to God, that

he would be gracious unto us. that he would cast a loving aspect upon us, that whatever else he deny us, grain, wine, yet that he would lift up the light of his countenance upon us. This David preferred before his crown and sceptre. He had a crown of gold, but he valued not that in comparison of that other crown, ***Psalms 103:4*** "he crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." Hence St Paul, having himself obtained mercy, beginneth and concludeth all his epistles with wishes of grace, mercy, and peace; as not knowing what better to wish those whom he wished best unto. This was Abraham's prayer for Ishmael, Oh that he might live in thy sight, that is, be joint-heir of the promise of grace with Isaac. God answers, several dukes shall come of Ishmael, but with Isaac (as a token of special grace) will I make my covenant. This was also Joseph's prayer for Benjamin, ***Genesis 43:29*** "God be gracious unto thee, my son." This the priests were appointed to pray for, as a blessing upon the people, ***Numbers 6:24-25*** "The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee." And hereunto the prophet seems to allude in this text, *q.d.* you are the Lord's priests, and your office is to preach and pray, ***Deuteronomy 33:10*** "They shall teach Jacob, they shall put incense before thee." Show now what ye can do in a time of necessity: Beseech the Lord that he would be gracious unto us. This is the main, the mother blessing, that comprehends all the rest. Every man seeks the face of the ruler, ***Proverbs 29:26*** "I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king"; *q.d.* that is better to me than all the land thou hast given me, said that crafty flatterer Ziba, ***2 Samuel 16:4***. How much more is the grace of God to be preferred before all outward blessings whatsoever! "The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion," saith the Psalmist, ***Psalms 134:3***, intimating that blessings out of Zion are above all the blessings beside that heaven and earth can yield us. What is the air without light? What was Haman the better for all his honours, when the king frowned upon him? How can a wicked man be happy, though wealthy, so long as God is his enemy? As that father speaks of Ahab; he describes him sitting in his ivory palace in the time of the three years' famine in

Samaria; he had gold, silver, and jewels in every place; but what good did all that when the heaven was brass above, and the earth iron beneath? Cry, therefore, as those in Zechariah, Grace, grace unto us; pray for ourselves and others, as David did for Ittai the Gittite, mercy and truth be with thee, ***2 Samuel 15:20***. Stir we up ourselves to take hold of God, and to get of him Gaius's prosperity, *dona throni,* soul blessings, and such as accompany salvation. Jesus Christ, when he came into the world, brought grace and truth with him, ***John 1:17***. And God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing our sins, but stretching out to us the golden sceptre of his grace. Get in to him, therefore: till this be done, though thou shouldest spend thy time in gathering up pearls and jewels, thou art an undone creature.

This hath been by your means. Heb. From your hand, *q.d.* You priests have effected it, and are in fault about it. It is long of you that I and my service are so slighted, as hath been before demonstrated, you have caused the people to abhor the offering, ***1 Samuel 2:17***; you should have better instructed the people in their duties, and not have suffered them so to pollute mine altar with their carrion sacrifices; and if God reject your prayers, as here, and even curse your blessings, as ***Malachi 2:2***, and curse your seed, ***Malachi 1:3***, you have to thank yourselves. All this is by your means. Accept, therefore, of the chastisement of your iniquity, leave quarrelling, and lay the blame of all where it should be; wash you, make you clean, &c. For till then will he regard your persons? will he receive you to favour, and hear your prayer? or will he think the better of you for your office and dignity of priesthood? No, sure, but the worse; for, *sedes prima et vita ima,* the highest place and the basest life agree not. *Dignitas in indigno est ornamentum in luto,* even royalty without righteousness is but eminent dishonour; and men of mark are therefore the worse, because they should have been better. Height of place ever adds two wings to sin, example and scandal, whereby it soars higher, and flies much further. If the sun be eclipsed and obscured, a thousand eyes gaze upon it; a lesser star may be darkened, and none take notice. A small flaw is noticed and noted in a jewel; a small spot in a swan; not so in a swine. One fly may corrupt a box of precious ointment; when a hundred flies in a tar barrel do no harm to it. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:10]]**Verse 10.** {{field-on:Bible}}***Who is there among you that would shut the doors***. To be a doorkeeper in God's house, to have any the lowest employment about him, David (though destined to a diadem) looked upon as a high preferment. Those Nethinims, mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah, were none other but the Gibeonites, who were made drawers of water to the temple, as a kind of punishment. God, who is a liberal paymaster, made this cross a mercy. Their employment, so near the house of God, gave them fit occasion to be partakers of the things of God. The Lord did wonderfully both reward and honour them. So he did all others, though but porters, that had any office about his house. "Know ye not," saith Paul, "that they which minister about holy things live with the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar" (though but to kindle a fire upon it) "are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live by the gospel," ***1 Corinthians 9:18-19***; should have, if not tithes, as they had, yet honorary stipends, double honour, ***1 Timothy 5:17***, *duplex, id est, multiplex* (Calvin), as ***Isaiah 40:1-2; Jeremiah 17:18***. Or, double, comparatively, to that of widows indeed, ***1 Timothy 5:3***, which yet was honourable maintenance, *Et ex publico alebantur.* The priests of the Old Testament were plentifully provided for by tithes and other revenues appointed them by God. True it is, that in the captivity little commodity was made of the priesthood; whereupon some priests, who had married themselves into the noble family of Barzillai, took scorn to be in the priest's register, but called themselves after the family of their wives. Now after the return to Babylon the priesthood grew into some gain and grace again; and then those degenerate priests would fain have thrust in among the priests of the Lord; but the Tirshatha would not suffer them, ***Ezra 2:62***. Howbeit, those priests that had stuck to their offices, and been faithful in them, did not serve God on freecost; neither was he behindhand or in arrears with any of them, as appears

by this text; but as they did their work, so they had their wages. God put into the heart of good Nehemiah to take order that these tithes were duly paid in to the treasurers for that purpose appointed, ***Nehemiah 13:10-11***. What reason had these priests, therefore, to be so gripple and greedy of filthy lucre, as to take such lame and lean sacrifices of the people, for if fat and good, to change them for the worse ones among their own, as holding anything good enough for God? which, because they did,

I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hands. I care not for your persons, I respect not your performances. The Lord had respect, first to Abel, and then to his offering, ***Genesis 4:4; Psalm 4:3*** "But know" (saith David, to those that abused him) "that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself"; and this he makes the ground why his prayer should be heard. The blood of a swine may look better and brighter than the blood of a sheep; yet might it not be offered unto the Lord, because it was of a swine. *Sordet in conspectu iudicis, quod fulget in conspectu operantis.* A piece of wood may shine in the night from its rottenness; and that be fair in the sight of men that is abomination before God, ***Luke 16:15***. The swan was rejected for sacrifice because of his black skin, notwithstanding his fair feather, ***Leviticus 11:18***. The wicked man's incense stinks of the hand that offereth it; and all his devotion is but a beautiful abomination. There is in Lombard this sentence quoted out of Augustine, *Omnis vita infidelium peccatum est: et nihil bonum sine summo bono* The whole life of unbelievers is sin, neither is there any good without the chiefest good. Ambrose Spiera, the expositor, saith, *Crudelis est illa sententia,* This is a cruel sentence. But saith not the holy Scripture the very same in effect? ***Proverbs 15:8; Hebrews 11:6; John 15:5***. What though Papists talk much of *Opus operatum?* and teach that good works, by whomsoever performed, are accepted of the Lord, as justice in an atheist is a good and acceptable work to him? St James assures us that it is "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man" only, and of one reconciled to God, that "availeth much," ***James 5:16***. And, "for this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee," saith David, ***Psalms 32:6***. The leper's lips should be covered, according to the law. And to the wicked God saith, "What hast thou to do?" &c., ***Psalms 50:16***. It is said of witches and their good prayers (as they call them), *Si magicae, Deus non vult tales: si piae, non per tales,* If those prayers be abused to witchcraft, God will have none of them; and if they be never so good, God will not have them from such kind of people. Before they pray men should see whether they are persons fit to pray; for God accepts not a good motion from an ill mouth, ***Jeremiah 11:10-11; John 9:31; 1 John 3:22; Psalm 66:16***. A wicked man lacks contrition, humility, faith, hope, feeling, fervency; he hath not a spirit of grace and supplication to indite his prayers; he hath not an intercessor in heaven to present and perfume his prayers. The breath wherein our prayers ascend should be like pillars of smoke perfumed with Christ's myrrh and incense. Otherwise our words will be like the Egyptian pots, reeking out the strong smelling onions and garlic of our own corruption, such as God can take no pleasure in, neither will he accept such an offering at our hands. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:11]]**Verse 11.** {{field-on:Bible}}**For from the rising of the sun, &c.** Whereas they might object, if you will not have service from us, you can have none at all; for other people walk every one in the name of his god, ***Micah 4:5***, and the Gentiles have their vanities, and doctrines of vanities, ***Jeremiah 14:22; 10:8***, wherewith they are wholly taken up. Take you no care for that, saith God here.

For from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles. I will provide for mine own great name, that is, for my glory (for so God's name is used in that sense, ***Exodus 9:16; Psalm 8:1***). I will be no loser by your rejection; for I have other people that will more reverence me, and do me better service; so that I need not be beholden to you. I have from east to west those that will make hard shift but I shall have service done me. I can "set a sign, and send to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud," &c., "that have not heard

my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles," ***Isaiah 66:19-20***. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, &c., that though sick, weakly, and unfit for travel, yet they shall come on end; and rather in litters than not at all; they shall be content to suffer any hardship for heaven, as the stone will fall down to come to its own centre, though it break itself in a hundred pieces. The Gentiles once converted shall fly as a cloud, ***Isaiah 60:8***, that is, with greatest pernicity and swiftness; yea, they shall in such flocks come to the Church, as if a whole flight of doves, driven by some hawk or tempest, should scour into the columbary, and rush into the windows. There are those who have observed, that the name of God in all the maternal languages consisteth of four letters (תוהי, θεὸς, *Deus,* Dieu, Gott), to intimate that he hath his people in all the four quarters of the earth, out of all countries, nations, and languages. ***Deuteronomy 6:4*** "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." In the original the last letter of the word hear is greater than the rest, as calling for all possible heed and attention. So likewise is the last letter in the word one, which being *Daleth,* and standing usually for four (as a numeral letter), signifieth, say the Hebrew doctors, that this one God shall be worshipped in all the four corners of the earth. (*Hebrew Text Note*) This Cyprian hath also gathered from the Greek letters of the name Adam; which do severally signify the four quarters of the world, east, west, north, and south: to teach that Christ, the second Adam, will fetch his people from all parts (ἀνατολῆ, δύσις, ἄρκτος, μεσημβρία), and hath therefore built his Church, his New Jerusalem, four square, ***Revelation 21:16***, and placed on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates, ***Revelation 21:13***, that all from all parts may have free and open access unto him. Babylon was in like manner built four square, as Herodotus testifieth; and Constantinople is so situated between Europe and Asia, as if it were fatally founded to command both. This is much more true of Uranople, the city of the great king, open to all comers, as the Aedilis, or chamberlain's house in Rome was. "O thou that hearest prayers, to thee shall all flesh come" (saith the Psalmist, ***Psalms 65:2***), come with a courage, since they are sure as of access, so of success in all their suits through Christ the Mediator, "who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles," ***Ephesians 2:14***. This the perverse Jews could never abide to hear of; nor can they to this day. And therehence is it that they have in their expositions basely depraved this text, and corrupted the true sense of it, as is to be seen in the Chaldee Paraphrast and David Kimchi; calling us still *Gel Mamzer,* bastard Gentiles, and cursing us in their daily prayers, which are not (sure) that pure offering mentioned in this verse, and interpreted by them of the prayers of the holy Jews everywhere dispersed. The rejection of the Jews and acceptation of the Gentiles into grace and favour is a hidden mystery; such as maketh the apostle of the Gentiles cry out, "O the depth!" ***Romans 11:33***; yea, it is a part of that great "mystery of godliness," ***1 Timothy 3:16***, that "God manifested in the flesh should be preached unto the Gentiles, and believed on in the world." Let us pity the poor hardened Jews; and pray the rending of the vail that is yet spread over them; that the rebuke of God's people may be taken away from off all the earth, ***Isaiah 25:7-8***. Let us also praise God, who hath made us Gentiles meet "to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," ***Colossians 1:12***. And take heed that we sin not away our light, and cause God to take his kingdom from us, giving it to a nation that will bring him better fruit, ***Matthew 21:43***. We have a fair warning given us by the example of the Jews, ***Romans 11:11***. Seest thou another shipwreck? look to thy tackling.

From the rising of the sun. From the east of Judaea the sun of Christ's gospel passed by the south of Greece, to the west of the Latin Church, and these islands of ours that lie in the sea, into which the sun is said to go down, or to lie down, as in its tabernacle of rest (which is an expression of the old Greek poets, and the original word here used agreeth to it). All the danger is, lest the gospel, in this its solar motion, be travelling for the west of that other world, the American parts; and quitting its present places of residence and unworthy possessors; and

then farewell England. Oh, let us pray that that dismal day may never arise wherein it shall be said, that the glory is departed from our English Israel.

My name shall be great. Name for fame, as ***Exodus 34:5-6; Philippians 2:9; Genesis. 11:4***. Renowned men are called men of name, ***Genesis 6:4***, and base men are called men of no name, ***Job 30:8***.

Shall be great. Not that God is great, or less. *Magnum et parvum sunt ex iis, quae sunt ad aliquid,* saith Aristotle. But God's name is said to be great when he is declared or acknowledged to be great, as the word sanctified is used, ***Matthew 6:9***, and the word justified, ***Matthew 11:19; James 2:21***. God's fame and glory is as himself, eternal and infinite; and so abides in itself, not capable of our addition or detraction. As the sun which would shine in its own brightness and glory, though all the world were blind, and did wilfully wink. Howbeit, to try how we prize his name, and how industrious we will be to magnify and exalt it, he hath declared that he esteems himself made glorious; and accounts that he hath received, as it were, a new being by those inward conceptions we have of his glory, and those outward honours we do to his name.

And in every place incense shall be offered. Not at Jerusalem only, as the Jews held; nor in mount Gerizim, as the Samaritans, ***John 4:20-21***; but any place without difference, be it but a chimney, might make a goodly oratory, ***1 Timothy 2:8***. All religious differences of places was taken away by Christ's death. Therefore as soon as he had said, ***John 19:30*** "It is finished," he gave up the ghost, and presently the vail of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, ***Matthew 27:51***. And from that hour there was no more holiness in the temple than in any other place. Though till then the temple was so holy a place, and such religious reverence did God's people bear to it, that after the Chaldeans had burnt it they honoured the very place where it had stood, and esteemed it holier than any other. This appears by those eighty persons whom Ishmael murdered, ***Jeremiah 41:5***, and by Daniel's opening his windows toward Jerusalem, when he prayed, ***Daniel 6:10***.

Incense shall be offered, and a pure offering. *Insigne testimonium pro sacrificio Missae,* saith Bellarmine. This text is a notable testimony for the sacrificing of the mass, which Papists will needlessly have to be the sacrifice here meant and mentioned. Much like that Sorbonist, that finding it written at the end of St Paul's Epistles, *Missa est, &c.,* bragged he had found the mass in his Bible: so another, reading ***John 1:4***, *Invenimus Messiam,* made the same conclusion (Beehive of Rome, fol. 93). We shall waive their arguments as sufficiently answered by others; and take the meaning of the Holy Ghost here to be of such spiritual sacrifices of the New Testament as all Christians, even the whole royal priesthood, are bound to offer up to God. These are called incense and offering by analogy, ***1 Peter 2:5***, the type for the thing thereby shadowed, as Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Augustine interpret the text, ***Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4***. This incense is prayer and praise, ***Psalms 141:2; Hebrews 13:15; Hosea 14:4; Psalm 51:19***. This pure offering is every faithful Christian, together with all the good things that he hath or can do. It is *simplex oratio de conscientia pura,* saith Tertullian. Thus those good Macedonians gave themselves to the Lord, saith St Paul, "and unto us by the will of God," ***2 Corinthians 8:5***. Thus the Romans had delivered themselves up to the form of doctrine that had been delivered unto them, ***Romans 6:17***, and are yet further exhorted to exhibit, present, make tender, yield up, and offer, as spiritual priests, their bodies (and much more their souls), to God, as a living sacrifice, ***Romans 12:1***, by a willingness to do what he requireth, ***Psalms 40:6; Romans 15:16***, and to die for his sake if called thereunto, ***Philippians 2:17; 2 Timothy 4:6***. Swenkfeldians took away all external service, saith Zanchy. Libertines say, it is sufficient that we sacrifice to God the hidden man of the heart. The Pope saith to his vassals, My son, give me thy heart; be a Papist in heart, and then go to church, dissemble, do what ye will; but God requires to be glorified with our spirits and bodies both, because both are his, ***1 Corinthians***

6:20. The very Manichees, that denied God to be the author of the body, fasted on Sundays, and in fasting exercised a humiliation of the body. But (2.) as the true Christian sacrificeth himself to God, so all that he hath or can; and is ready to say, as that Grecian did to the Emperor, If I had more, more I would bring thee (εἰ πλέον εἶχον, πλέον ἐδίδουν). It comforts him to consider, that "if there be a willing mind, God accepts according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not," ***2 Corinthians 8:12***. Noah's sacrifice could not be great, yet was it greatly accepted, because of clean beasts, and offered in faith. It is the godly man's care that his offering, though it be poor, yet may be a pure offering, proceeding from a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned, ***1 Timothy 1:5***; and then he is sure it is pure, by divine acceptation through Christ, ***1 Peter 2:5***. In confidence whereof he lifts, up holy hands, ***1 Timothy 2:8***. And although, sensible of his impurities and imperfections, his heart misgives him sometimes, as Jacob's did, lest his father should discern him; yet when he remembereth that he is clothed, as Jacob was, with the garment of his elder brother, the robe of Christ's righteousness (which is not a scant garment, as Bernard saith, but reaching to the heels, and covering all the parts of the soul), he goeth boldly to the throne of grace, and covers God's altar with his evangelical sacrifices; such as are contrition and self-denial, ***Psalms 51:17***; confidence in God, ***Psalms 4:6***; obedience to the preaching of the gospel, ***Romans 15:16***; beneficence to the poor, ***Philippians 4:8***; &c. In all which his aim and endeavour is to worship God in spirit, and to do all more out of thankfulness, and less out of constraint of conscience. For he knows that as the greatest growth of sinners is in spiritual wickedness (as in those that sin against the Holy Ghost), so the greatest growth of grace is in spiritual holiness, in worshipping God more in spirit and truth. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:12]]**Verse 12.** {{field-on:Bible}}**But ye have profaned it**. Ye Jews, in general, though my peculiar people, and called by my name. You that quarter arms with me, as it were, and should, therefore, lift up my name as an ensign; that you should use me thus coarsely, and cast dirt upon my name by your irreligion, this moves me not a little; so that I cannot but once and again complain of it. Had it been an enemy I should better have borne it. But it was thou, my familiar, &c. What, thou, my son Brutus? καὶ σὺ τέκνον Βροῦτε. Friend, betrayest thou the Son of man, and that with a kiss? Scipio had rather Hannibal should eat his heart with salt, than Laelius, his friend, do him the least discourtesy. God will take that from a profane person that he will not take from a professor. Philistines may cart the ark, and escape scotfree; but if David does it, God will punish him in the death of Uzzah. Augustus Caesar may send forth a decree that all the (Roman) world should be taxed or numbered, ***Luke 2:1***; but if David number his people God will make bloody welts upon his back; and if he make God's name to stink among the heathen, God will scour out that blemish cast upon his name with David's tears and blood. See ***Ezekiel 36:21; 39:7; Amos 2:7; Leviticus 10:3***; I will be sanctified in all them that draw near unto me. Sanctified he will be, either actively or passively; either in the sincerity of their conversation or else in the severity of their condemnation. If Solomon forsake the Lord, that appeared unto him twice, God will chastise him with the rods of men, at least. If Israel profess God's name, and yet profane it, God will cast them off, and turn to the Gentiles. And, indeed, what could he do less to a nation so incorrigibly flagitious, a nation so unthankful for mercies, so impatient of remedies, so incapable of repentance, so obliged, so warned, so shamelessly, so lawlessly wicked?

The table of the Lord. That is, the altar; see ***Malachi 1:7***.

And the fruit thereof. Or the revenue, the income of it: it is a base allowance that the priests have; prisoner's pittance; they live, that is all. Or thus, The table of the Lord is polluted, &c. That is, it is no better worth than to be polluted; neither do his priests deserve either countenance or maintenance. So many wretched people in these days think there is more ado made than needs in the worship and service of God, *Colo Deum, ut par est.* Whereas, indeed, we that have received so many mercies, and have lived in such an age of miracles, should not

only *servire Deo, sed et adulari,* as Tertullian phraseth it, serve God, but be unsatisfiable in serving him. And as God's service is slighted, so his ministers are well nigh starved in many places; the common people holding the ministry no better than an idle, useless trade, taken up to make a living. How shamefully are God's ablest servants defrauded, mocked, misused! A sad prognostic of a dying state, ***2 Chronicles 36:16***. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:13]]**Verse 13.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And ye have said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, &c.** At what? At the chiding you have had for your lame and lean sacrifices. A little offensive breath hath blown you up into rage. This is a kind of blasphemy, ***Ezekiel 20:27***, when graceless men fall into a fustian fume, as they say, by hearing of their faults; and bristle against a reproof, though never so just. Or thus, Ye have puffed and blown, as almost breathless, by carrying some carrion sheep for a sacrifice; as if it were so fat and full of flesh that you could hardly bring it without breaking your wind; whereas ye might have blown it away, it is so thin and light. Hateful hypocrisy! And it sped accordingly. For should I accept this at your hand? No, no: *Sapiens nummularius est Deus: nummum fictum non recipiet* (Bernard). God is a wise mint man; he will take no counterfeit coin. He not only detects the deceiver, and detests him, as here, but curseth him bitterly in the next verse. He rejects the hypocrite's sacrifice, and plagueth such Prometheuses; when as he wipes not out any of the good services of his sincere people, ***Nehemiah 13:4***, but abundantly blesseth them.

Labour, therefore, for that "truth in the inward parts," ***Psalms 51:6***, that we may be with "Apelles approved in Christ," ***Romans 16:10***, and with Nathanael, "an Israelite indeed," ***John 1:47***. Be we the same that we would seem to be; and if not, as the windows of the temple were, wider within than without, yet to be no more in show than we are in truth. It stands us in hand when to deal with God to have the greater part of our ware in the inner part of the shop, and not all on the foreside, on the board or stall; and to see, that though our work be but mean, yet it may be clean; though not fine, yet not foul, soiled and slubbered with the slur of a rotten heart. Sweet powders can make even leather an ornament, when the sanies of a plaguesore will render a rich robe loathsome and infectious. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 1:14]]**Verse 14.** {{field-on:Bible}}**But cursed be that deceiver**. Cursed with a curse both verbal and penal; temporal and spiritual, ***Malachi 3:9***. These last light heavy, such as are hardness of heart and horror of conscience, though less observed; because they come into the deceiver's bowels like water, and like oil into his bones; they soak and sink into his soul insensibly, ***Romans 1:28; Matthew 27:5; Psalm 109:18***. He hath his death about him (as we say of one that hath drunk poison, or eaten an Italian fig), though he fall not down dead immediately. He is accursed, and he shall be so, as, in a contrary sense, Isaac said of his son Jacob, He is blessed, and he shall be blessed. But usually the visible vengeance of God dogs the deceiver at the heels; his sin finds him out, and lays him open to others, as an accursed person. This was Cain's case and curse, ***Genesis 4:15***. God sets a mark upon him; probably it was the perpetual trembling of his hands and whole body, through the horror of his conscience. So, not long before, when Adam had played the deceiver, and hearkened to that old impostor, the subtle serpent, God spared him, but cursed the ground (as the Persians, when their noblemen's sons had made a fault, hanged up their coats and whipped them in their presence): "Cursed is the ground for thy sake: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth," ***Genesis 3:17***. And the truth is, it was never beautiful nor cheerful since that curse inflicted; but lies bedridden, waiting for the coming of the second Adam to free it from that heavy curse, ***Romans 8:20***. The barren fig tree felt the power of Christ's curse even to admiration, ***Matthew 21:20*** "For when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!" They might marvel well enough; for the fig tree is the most juiceful of any tree, and bears the brunt of winter-blasts without withering. But the blasts of Christ's mouth are more powerful. He can blow men to destruction, ***Job 4:9***., as so many dust-heaps; yea, frown, not some single fig tree only, but the whole vineyard to desolation. "It is burnt with fire, it is

consumed: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance," ***Psalms 80:16***. Men may curse, and no hurt follow; "the curse causeless shall not come," ***Proverbs 26:2***. Micah's mother cursed when she lost her money, ***Judges 17:2***; but who cared or fared the worse for that? And the like may be said of Julius Palmer the martyr's mother, when he craved her blessing upon his knees, she drove him out of doors for a heretic, and said, God's curse and mine go with thee.

What was David the worse for Shimei's cursing of him, or Jeremiah for the people's, ***Jeremiah 15:10***, or the reformed Churches for the Pope's? The silly people in Italy are made to believe that ever since the Pope excommunicated Queen Elizabeth the people of England are all as black as devils. The Pope is like a wasp, no sooner angered but out comes a sting; which, being out, is like a fool's dagger rattling and snapping without an edge. We may say of his curses (with bell, book, and candle), as Vogetius saith of chariots armed with scythes and hooks, that at first they were a terror, and after a scorn, lib. 1, cap. 24. But God's curses are terrible, and light heavy. Together with word there goes forth a power (as it is said in another case), and what be speaketh with his mouth he maketh good with his hand. And it is a fearful thing to fall into the punishing hands of the living God: those that have felt his finger will say so. This the deceiver is sure to do if timely course be not taken. *Currat ergo poenitentia, ne praecurrat sentontia.*

That deceiver. That fraudulent fellow, that crafty companion, that fraud, quadruplator, machinator, that dealeth subtilly with the Lord, as the Egyptians did with his people, and thinks to outwit him, as the Midianites did the Israelites, (*see* ***Numbers 25:18; Psalm 10:18****, in both which places the same word is used as here*) that casteth and fetcheth about (*versutulus et versatilis*), how to deceive both God and man with shows of devotion; not afraid to be damned, so he may seem to be saved, and seeking so long to deceive others, that in fine he deceiveth his own soul (which is the worst kind of deceit, as self-murder is the worst sort of murder), winding himself into the fool's paradise of a sublime dotage, and that in matters of greatest consequence and concern. *Imposturam faciunt et patiuntur,* as that emperor said of them that sold glass for pearl; they mock and are mocked, deceiving or being deceived, as Paul saith; like some drunken stage-player, they have acted a king's part so long, that now they begin to think themselves kings indeed; and, like sleeping Sisera, they dream of a kingdom, when as Jael's nail is nearer his temples than a crown. A curse he is sure of, set on by God (who then shall take it off?), and seconded by men, yea, by men that were without God in the world. Witness that law of the twelve tables in Rome, *Sacrum, sacrove commendatum qui clepserit rapseritve, parricide este.* Let him be punished for a parricide that shall commit sacrilege of any sort. Now, a hypocrite is by Basil rightly called ἱερόσυλος, a sacrilegious church-robber; because he steals from God τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀνάθημα, himself dedicated to God by profession of Christianity; and so becomes ἀνάθημα, accursed, yea, Anathema, Maran-atha, double accursed, and put over to God to punish; who hath prepared the hottest fire in hell for such, because their sin is increased by their knowledge; as the sin of Solomon in honouring idols, which he knew to be no gods, was far greater than that of his wives', which believed them to be gods, as Tostatus truly observeth.

Which hath in his flock a male. A flock he hath then, and is a sheep-master; able, perhaps, to say, as he in the poet— *mille meis errant in montibus agni.* Were he a poor man he might be the better excused; from a little God accepts a little. Again, he hath a male in his flock, a sound, tidy, fat lamb, or ram; and, reserving that for his own use, though he had voluntarily vowed it to God, he brings a corrupt carrion, or a lean starveling, for a sacrifice. This deceitful dealing is his sin, that subjects him to the curse. This was the sin (and became the calamity) of those in ***Jeremiah 4:22***, that served not God with the best of their understanding; of those in ***Haggai 1:4***, that dwelt in their ceiled houses, and let the Lord's house lie waste; of Solomon (some think), that bestowed twice as much time in building his own house as God's house; of all those that seek not God's kingdom in the first place, that give not God the best of the best, the

primrose of their age, the first thoughts in the morning, the fittest and freest times of the day for prayer, &c. Scipio went first to the Capitol every day, and then to the Senate House. David prevented the night watches to pray. Christ was at it a great while before day, ***Mark 1:35***. Of Charles the Great it is reported, that he spoke and conversed more with God than with men. Our King Alfred cast the natural day into three parts: eight hours he spent in prayer, study, and writing; eight in the service of his body; and eight in the affairs of his state. The Jews divided the business of the day into three parts: the first, *ad Tephilla,* that is, for prayer; the second, *ad Torah,* for the study of the law; the third, *ad Malchah,* for work; this they did on working days; besides their weekly sabbath and other holy days strictly observed, which made Seneca (that profane heathen) say of them, that they lost more than a seventh part of their time. How much better might he have bewailed his own loss of time, and neglect of the one thing necessary, in the words of Bernard, *Totum vitae meae tempus perdidi, quia perdire vixi,* I have lost my whole life, because I have lived without God in the world! What a happiness had it been to him if he had observed Aristotle's rule, and Thales' examples, viz. that a philosopher may get riches, but that is not their main business (ἀλλ᾽ οὐ τοῦτ᾽ ἔστι περὶ οὗ σπουδάζουσι, Arist. Polit. lib. 1, cap. ult.). Many are so busied in the world, that they think not of God's kingdom (which yet they vowed to do when they were baptized), as the Duke of Alva told the King of France, who asked him whether he had observed the late great eclipse? No, said he, I have so much to do upon earth, that I have no leisure to behold the heaven. How much better Anaxagoras, the philosopher, who, being asked why he came into the world? answered, *Ut coelum contempler,* that I may contemplate heaven! Men should certainly mind heaven most and first; and not suffer the lean kine to eat up the fat, the thin ears of corn the good; but honour God with the best of their substance and with the best of their abilities (if they stand bound by vow especially, if they have vowed a male to God). Let it not be according to the Italian proverb with us, *Sciapat il morbo fraudato il Santo,* when the danger is escaped the vow is neglected, lest else God curse them, as here, for a company of defrauders; and make them know and rue his breach of promise, ***Numbers 14:34***. Surely if Jacob was afraid when he went about to seek a blessing, lest his blind father should discern him, and his deceit in dealing with him, and so he might get a curse instead of a blessing, ***Genesis 26:12***, how ought men to take heed and fear to dissemble or deal deceitfully with the all-seeing God! especially since he is so great a God (see him set forth in his greatness, ***Deuteronomy 10:17***), and, therefore, less patient with affronts and indignities; he looks to be served like himself, and according to his excellent greatness.

For I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts. Yea, a great King, because Lord of hosts. (***See Trapp on "Malachi 3:17"***) παντοκράτωρ, παμβασιλεὺς, αὐτοκράτωρ. He is absolute monarch of the whole world; and by him it is that all other kings reign and princes rule, ***Proverbs 8:15***. All other sovereigns are but his substitutes, his viceroys; he makes them and unmakes them at his pleasure, as proud Nebuchadnezzar was forced to acknowledge, ***Daniel 4:37***. Hence he is rightly styled a great King (a title anciently given to the kings of Persia, and now to the Grand Signior), yea, he is King of kings and Lord of lords, in another sense than Maximilian, the Emperor of Germany, said that he was, because the princes and cities of the empire were free states, and yielded him little obedience. God hath all the kings of the earth at his beck and check: Constantine the Great, Valentinian, and Theodosius, three emperors, called themselves *Vasallos Christi,* the vassals of Christ, as Socrates reporteth. And well they might; inasmuch as all nations (taken together) are, in comparison to him, but as a drop of a bucket, and as the dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing, as one would take up a feather at his foot. And if a sacrifice fitting for him should be prepared, Lebanon would not be sufficient to burn, nor all the beasts thereof for a burnt offering. All nations to him are as nothing, ***Isaiah 40:15-16***. Simon Magus gave out that he was some great matter; and the world hath been troubled with Alexander the Great, and Pompey the Great. But what is now become of all these grandees, with their swelling titles and loud brags? Hath

not God long since cut off the spirits of these petty princes, and become terrible to the kings of the earth? ***Psalms 76:12***; where the word rendered cut off signifieth that he slips them off, as one would slip a flower between one's fingers, or a bunch of grapes off the vine. The kings of Persia were wont to give laws to their people sitting in a chair of state, under a vine tree of gold, that had, as it were, bunches of grapes made up of *smaragdites,* or emeralds, and other stones of greatest price. The King of heaven sits upon a throne far more costly and stately; as may be seen, ***Ezekiel 1:26; Isaiah 6:1-4; Daniel 7:13-14*** *Omnino igitur oportet nos, orationis tempore, curium intrare coelestem, in qua Rex Regum stellato sedet solio, &c.,* as Bernard excellently inferreth, it behoveth us, therefore, at prayer time, to enter into the court of heaven, where the King of kings sits in his starry and stately throne, environed with an innumerable number of glorious angels and crowned saints; with how great reverence, therefore, with how great fears, with how great humility, ought a poor base toad, creeping and crawling out of his ditch, to approach so dreadful a presence!

And my name is dreadful among the heathen. It was ever so from the very distinction of men into Hebrews and heathens. At the first, before the covenant made with Abraham, all nations were alike before the Lord. But as soon as it was said, I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee, the Church was evidently divided from the world, as light was from darkness at the first creation. The heathens God suffered to walk in their own ways. "Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness," ***Acts 14:16-17***; but his name was ever terrible and tremendous among them. The Hittites honoured Abraham as a prince of God; Pharaoh was raised up on purpose, that on him God might get him a name throughout all the earth, ***Exodus 9:16***. Jethro heard of his doings in Egypt, and became a proselyte. The hearts of the Canaanites melted, and they were made to say, "The Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath," ***Joshua 2:11***. The Philistines were woe begone when they beheld the ark of the God of Israel brought into the field; and were ready, as worms, to wriggle into their holes. The King of Babylon sent ambassadors and a present to Hezekiah, because he had heard that for his sake God had caused the sun to go back. Daniel records what a name God had gotten him in his days all the world over. And after the captivity, near Malachi's time, the famous victories gotten by the Maccabees were far and near discoursed of. Judas Maccabaeus had his name from the capital letters of this motto written in his ensign, *Mi camocha Elohim Iehovah,* who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? But, besides, and above all this, God's name is dreadful among the heathen in a special manner now; since the calling of the Gentiles, and the conversion of so many nations to the faith of Jesus Christ, defy the malice of earth and of hell. This made Calocerius, a heathen, say, *Vere magnus est Deus Christianorum,* the God of the Christians is a great God indeed. And another, ἀξιωματικώτατος ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν, your God is a most majestic God. What a mouth of blasphemy then opened that desperate Papist, John Hunt, in his humble appeal to King James! The God of the Protestants, saith he (whom he knows to be the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost), is the most uncivil and evil mannered God of all those who have borne the name of gods upon the earth; yea, worse than Pan, God of the clowns, which can endure no ceremonies nor good manners at all. True it is, that human inventions in his service, and Popish will worships, our God will not away with. Such strange fire if any presume to bring before him, they may look to speed as Nadab and Abihu, Core and his complices, did; but he expects and requires that all his worshippers should come before him with reverence and godly fear: "For even our God" (no less than the Jews' God) "is a consuming fire," ***Hebrews 12:28***. He is terrible out of his holy places, ***Psalms 68:35***. And albeit he loves to be acquainted with his people in the walks of their obedience; yet, as a great King, he takes state upon him in his ordinances, and will be trembled at in his word and sacraments. Hence Chrysostom calls the Lord's table that dreadful table (φρικώδης); and other ancients call sacraments τὰ φρικτὰ μυστήρια, terrible mysteries. He that comes to this table without his wedding garment may look to be taken from the table to the tormentor. That is a remarkable text, ***Exodus 34:10-11***, upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they

saw God, and did eat and drink. So dreadful is God, and so infinite is the distance between him and the greatest noble that comes to his table, that it is an honour they may be suffered to live in his sight; how much more, then, to partake of his ordinances! Kings and judges are instructed to serve the Lord with fear, and to rejoice before him with trembling, ***Psalms 2:10-11***. This is *horror sacer,* holy awe, saith a Lapide upon this text, descanting upon their Vulgate interpreter, who rendereth the word dreadful horrible, *Et nomen meum horribile.* But what an odd conceit was that of a certain sophister at Paris, who would needs be called the horrible sophister, *non minorem eam appellationem ratus quam Africani aut Asiatici,* saith Vives. Perhaps he had read this text in the Vulgate translation. Unless they had the same law at Paris that they had in Italy, that none should read the Bible lest they should thereby be made heretics; but rather study Aristotle (whom Peter Lombard had brought into more request than St Paul, as the Sorbon at Paris complained), or the Canon Law, whereof Carolostadius had been eight years a doctor before he began to read the Scripture; and yet at the taking of his degree had been pronounced, *Sufficientissimus.* {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 2

[[@bible:Malachi 2:1]]**Verse 1.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And now, O ye priests, &c.** Now, that is, Now again, I must have the other bout with you, besides what I had, ***Malachi 1:6-11***, for as once from the prophets, so now from the priests, in Jerusalem profaneness is gone forth into all the land, ***Jeremiah 23:15***. Their white ephods covered many foul sins; and their evil example proved a public mischief. Hence the prophet is so round with them; for he knew that a wicked priest is the worst creature upon earth. Unsavoury salt is fit for no place; no, not for the dunghill. It is an old proverb, that hell is paved with the shaven crowns of evil priests. The word priest is never used by the apostles for a minister of the gospel; no, not by the most ancient fathers, as Bellarmine himself confesseth. Indeed in Chrysostom I find this piercing passage; *Non arbitror inter sacerdotes multos esse qui salvi fiant,* I do not think, saith be, that among all our priests, there be many that shall be saved. Bernard comes after him, and complains that in the court of Rome good men failed, bad men grew plentiful; and that the bishops of his time were not doctors, but seducers; not pastors, but impostors; not prelates, but Pilates. Yea, Pope Pius II hath left it in writing, that no villanous act had been for a long time committed in the Catholic Church the first beginning whereof proceeded not from the priests. Cornelius a Lapide, upon this chapter, cries out of the ignorance and wickedness of the Popish clergy as the cause of the contempt cast by us upon them. And I would we had not cause to say, that many of our ministers neither feed liberally by charity, nor soundly by doctrine, nor religiously by life; which opened once the mouth of that dead dog Campian maliciously to bark out, *Ministris eorum nihil vilius,* Their ministers are most vile and vicious.

This commandment is for you. *i.e.* That curse, ***Malachi 1:14*** implying a commandment; that if you desire to escape that heavy curse you forthwith obey this commandment (*Aut faciendum enim aut patiendum*) to procure the purity and integrity of my worships, and to see that there be a present reformation of religion. Reformation is a work that hath ever gone heavily on, and hath met with much opposition. As that made by Elijah, by Josiah, by Nehemiah, and by Hezekiah, who found the priests and Levites very backward; which the good king perceiving, began first himself, and awaked those sluggards with these words. Oh, be not deceived, my sons: God hath chosen you for this service, ***2 Chronicles 29:11***. The like backwardness was found in the Popish clergy to a general Council, so much urged and called for by the Bohemians, Germans, and other nations, that groaned under the yoke of Papal tyranny. Luther truly and trimly compareth the cardinals and prelates that met at Rome about reformation of the Church, to foxes, that came to sweep a house full of dust with their tails; and instead of sweeping it out, swept it all about the house, and made a great smoke for the while; but when they were gone the dust fell all down again (Sleidan Comment.). When nothing could be obtained of the Pope, Luther began to reform in Germany, where he had a great door open, but many adversaries, and none more violent than the Pope, whose triple crown, and the monks, whose fat paunches, he so nearly touched, as Erasmus merrily told the Elector of Saxony. Bucer and Melancthon framed a form of reformation with approbation of the peers and states. But the clergy of Collen rejected it with scorn and slander, saying that they would rather submit to the government of the Great Turk than to a magistrate that followed or furthered such a reformation. Here in England something began to be done in the time of Henry VIII, but it was so envied and opposed by the Churchmen that little could be done to what was expected. There are many (said he, sitting in parliament) that are too busy with their new *Sumpsimus,* [4] and others that dote too much upon their old *Mumpsimus.* [5] The new religion, though true, he and his clergy envied; the old, though his own, he despised. Magistrates are to

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4 A correct expression taking the place of an incorrect but popular one *(mumpsimus).* ŒD.

5 One who obstinately adheres to old ways, in spite of the clearest evidence that they are wrong; an ignorant and bigoted opponent of reform ŒD.

have the main stroke in reformation of religion (though Papists would utterly exclude them from having to do in matters ecclesiastical), but ministers also must move in their own orb, and do their part too (why else are the priests here commanded and menaced?). 1. By teaching. 2. By exercising discipline. And here magistrates must hem ministers in with boards of cedar, ***Solomon's Song 8:9***, provide for their security while they do their duty, that they may be without fear among them, as Timothy, ***1 Corinthians 16:10***. Envied they must look to be, and hated for their zeal to God's house, which they seek to purge. But public respects must (like the rapid motion) carry our hearts contrary to the ways of our own private respects or concerns; and consider, that as it is not the tossing in a ship but the stomach, that causeth sickness; the choler within, and not the waves without; so the frowardness of men, that quarrel with reformation, and not the work itself, which is God's commandment, as here the prophet calls it.{{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:2]]**Verse 2.** {{field-on:Bible}}**If ye will not hear**. That your souls may live, ***Isaiah 55:3***, but forbear, and so show yourselves a rebellious house, ***Ezekiel 2:8***, so adding rebellion to your sin. If you will needs resemble the deaf adder, which, although by spitting out his poison he might renew his age, stoppeth his ears by applying one to the earth, and covering the other with his tail, lest he should hear the voice of the charmer. Or, if ye do hear with that gristle that grows upon your head only,

And will not lay it to heart. Heb. Upon your heart, as a weight to keep it down from rising in rebellion against the Lord. If you esteem my command a light matter, and, instead of pondering it in your hearts with Mary, cast it behind your backs, ***Psalms 51:17***, or suffer it to run through you as water runs through a riven vessel, ***Hebrews 2:4***. If, thirdly, you will not give glory unto my name, by confessing your sins, ***Joshua 8:19*** (so submitting to my justice, and imploring my mercy, which will make much to my glory), and redressing your ways, ***Psalms 50:23***, by breaking off your sins, and bearing much fruit, ***John 15:8***, studying mine ends more than your own, and drowning all self-respects in my glory. If you will not observe and fulfil these three afore mentioned conditions of exemption,

I will even send a curse upon you. That evil angel of mine, that shall bring with him fierceness of anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, ***Psalms 78:49***. The Vulgate translation renders it, I will even send poverty upon you; a curse well suiting with their covetousness, and agreeable to that threatened by another prophet: "As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right" (as these priests had done), "shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end be a fool," ***Jeremiah 17:11***. A poor fool God will soon make of the covetous wretch, and reduce him to extreme want; than the which he knows no greater hell, no curse comparable. But the original is more general, I will execrate you, or pronounce a curse against you. Howbeit, *non nisi coactus,* no otherwise than as compelled to it; as that emperor said, laying his hand upon his mouth for a good while before he would pronounce sentence of death upon one that had deserved it. Histories tell us of Augustus, that it went as much against the heart with him as it did against the hair with the malefactor, when he adjudged him to condign punishment. Vespasian wept over those he sentenced. Nero, in his first five years, being to sign a warrant for execution of certain malefactors, said, *O utinam literas nescirem,* O that I could not write! Our King Edward VI could not be persuaded by all his Council to put his hand to a warrant for the burning of one Joan Butcher, that had well deserved it. Our gracious God might well say, As I live, I delight not in the death of sinners, but rather would they should convert and live, ***Ezekiel 33:11***; why else doth he here, in threatening a curse, interpose a condition for repentance? why doth he warn before he wound, and pre-admonish before he punish? Well might the heathen historian say, God loves to forewarn, φιλεῖ ὁ θεὸς, προσημαίνειν (Herodot.). Well might that father say, *Minatur Deus ut non puniat:* God therefore menaceth misery that he may not inflict it. And another, *Ideo prolata est sententia, ut non fiat:* The sentence is therefore pronounced that it

may not be executed. Witness that we read ***Amos 4:12*** "Therefore thus will I do unto thee." Thus? how? He nameth not how, that they may fear the utmost, as Ribera noteth, and yet he addeth, "Because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" Surely, as a woman brings not forth without pain; and as a bee, usually, stings not till much provoked; so neither doth God curse his creature till there be no other remedy, ***2 Chronicles 36:16***. And then, *Patientia laesa fit furor;* abused mercy turns into fury. If men will not accept the conditions of peace, though never so fair and reasonable, as here, but pervert his mercies to wantonness, his patience to presumption, he will not always bear with their evil manners; but, repenting him of his kindness so cast away upon those that prized it not, as David repented of the good he had done unworthy Nabal, he will make them know the worth of his blessings by the want of them, ***1 Samuel 25:21***.

I will curse your blessings. Saith he here; I will recover mine own and be gone, as ***Hosea 2:9***. I will cut off the meat from their mouths, and blast all your hopes of abundance, and destroy you after that I had done you good, ***Joshua 24:20***. Thus God dealt by his unfruitful vineyard, ***Isaiah 5:5***, he pulled up the hedges and let in the wild boar. Thus also he dealt by the unprofitable servant; he took away his talent, and turned him over to the tormentor. And thus he deals by many today, in whom it is no hard matter to observe a wane and decay of their gifts and abilities, upon their disuse or misuse thereof. How many have we that are woefully fallen from the affections of prayer they were wont to find and express! how many idle and therefore evil ministers, rejected by God, and laid aside, as so many broken vessels; while he causeth the night to come upon their divination, puts out their right eyes and dries up their right arms, ***Zechariah 11:17***; till at length they may say, with Zedekiah. When did the spirit depart from me? "Woe to me, for I am spoiled," ***Jeremiah 4:13***. And in very deed what should a prince do but take a sword away from a rebel? what should a mother do, but snatch away the meat from the child that mars it? And what can God do less than take away his grain, wine, and wool, from those that not only own him to it, but go after other sweethearts with it? ***Hosea 2:5, 9***.

Yea, I have cursed them already. For a pledge of more malediction. For as in blessings, every former is a pledge of a future; so in curses. As one cloud follows another till the sun disperse them; so doth one curse succeed another till repentance remove them. No sooner doth that rainbow appear in our hearts, but God, remembering his covenant, clears up our coasts, and lifteth up the light of his countenance upon us. Take the bark from the tree, and the sap can never find its way to the branches. Take sin from the soul, and God will soon be reconciled. But if ye walk contrary unto me, I will punish you yet seven times more, and seven times, and seven to that, ***Leviticus 26:24***, till I have dashed you in pieces; as Dagon never left falling before the ark till his neck was broken. Sin doth as naturally draw and suck curses to it as the loadstone doth iron, or turpentine fire. The Chaldee and the Vulgate make these words but a repetition of the former; for they read the text thus: I will curse your blessings, and I will curse them; to intimate his peremptoriness in the thing, and that he was unchangeably resolved upon it. Now when God will do a thing, who shall hinder it? Nature may be resisted and hindered in its course; when the fire burnt not the three worthies, when the sun stood still in heaven, yea, went backwards. Men and devils, though never so potent, may want of their will, and be crossed in their designs and desires. But if God will have this or that to be done, there is no gainstanding him. If he have a mind to bless his people, they shall be blessed. If he will have pity for his own name's sake, which the house of Israel had profaned, ***Ezekiel 36:21***; if he will come in with his *Non obstante,* Nevertheless he saved them, &c., and dealt with his servants not according to his ordinary rule, but according to his prerogative, who shall contradict him? In like sort, if he will redouble his strokes upon his enemies, and not only curse them, but curse them bitterly, as the angel did Meroz, who can hinder or object against his proceeding in that behalf? ***Judges 5:23***. His judgments are sometimes secret, but always just; and if he once

say, I will curse, yea, that I will, there is as little hope of altering him as there was of Pilate, when he had once pronounced, what I have written I have written, it shall surely stand.

Because ye do not lay it to heart. As he had repeated their curse, so he doth here their sin; instancing in that branch of it that most offended him; and that was their stupidity and senselessness, either of their sin or danger. This is a God provoking evil, often complained about, but especially when it proceeds from presumption, as ***Deuteronomy 29:19; Isaiah 22:12-14; Ezekiel 24:13***. The Lord cannot satisfy himself in threatening such; as if the very naming of it had enraged his jealousy; neither is he more absolute in threatening than he will be resolute in punishing. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:3]]**Verse 3.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Behold, I will corrupt your seed**. And so mar your hopes of a harvest; I will bring famine upon you, that sore judgment, worse than that of the sword, ***Lamentations 4:9***, which yet is the slaughter house of mankind, and the very hell of this present world. By this scourge God will tame his prodigals, and starve their bodies; who, by the contempt of his ordinances, starve their own souls, ***Haggai 1:4***. Either by immoderate drought God can cause a famine, ***Joel 1:10***, or by immoderate moisture, ***Joel 1:17*** "The seed rotting under the clods," &c., to revenge the quarrel of his covenant. Israel was plagued with famine for breaking their faith with the Gibeonites, ***2 Samuel 21:1***. What may they expect that keep not in touch with God? David knew that the natural cause of that famine was drought; but he inquired (though it were long first) after the supernatural. As Jacob inquired who stood on the top of the ladder and sent the angels to and fro? ***Genesis 28:13***; so must we, in case of public calamities, ascend to the top of them, and see who sends them, and what is the cause of them, that we may cast the traitor's head over the wall, and he may return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him. For till then we may look that he should cut off our provision and victuals, as wise princes use to do from their rebels whom they have gotten up into a walled town.

And spread dung upon your faces. Cast contempt upon you, and cover you with confusion; make you to stink above ground, so that men shall shun and abhor your company. This is another fruit of sin, and piece of the curse; and many wicked men are more afraid of it than of the sin that causeth it; as Chaereas, in Terence, not ashamed to deflour a virgin, was yet ashamed to be seen in a eunuch's clothes, the sign of that sin. True it is, that the best may have dung cast into their faces, as St Paul and his precious companions had, ***1 Corinthians 4:13*** "We are," saith he, "the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things" (περίψημα). The latter word signifieth the dung cart, that goes through the city, into which every one brings and casts his filth; to note that every fool had some filth to cast upon those worthies of whom the world was not worthy. And truly, all public persons that are faithful to their trust had need carry a spare handkerchief to wipe off dirt and drivel; which yet many times will hardly stick, as dirt will not upon marble, though it will upon a mud wall. "The wise shall inherit glory: when shame shall be the promotion of fools," ***Proverbs 3:35***. A fair promotion; but good enough for them, unless they were better. If "the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, be at any time esteemed as earthen pitchers," as ***Lamentations 4:2***, or trodden in the dirt by the fat bulls of Bashan, God will in due time make all his, that have lain sullied and slurred among the pots, to become as "the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with pure gold," ***Psalms 68:13***. In the meanwhile, they have the commendation of a good conscience, which is better than the world's applause. But profane and profligate persons, with their spiritual nastiness and superfluity of naughtiness, stink worse than these cities of the plain in the nostrils of God and all good men, while they live (according to that, "The name of the wicked shall rot," and again, "He that perverteth his ways shall be known," ***Proverbs 10:7, 9***). And when they die they shall be carried through the dung gate of death, to the town ditch of utter destruction. At which time that in Job shall be verified of them, "Though his excellence mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds; yet be shall perish for

ever like his own dung; they which have seen him" (in his flourish) "shall say, Where is he?" ***Job 20:6-7***. Let those *dehonestamenta Cleri* disgraceful clergy look to this; all idle and evil ministers, who, as unsavoury salt, are fit for no place but the dunghill, even to be buried in a dunghill, as Bishop Bonner was, and meanwhile to be trodden underfoot, which is a thing not only calamitous, but extremely ignominious, ***Matthew 5:13***.

Even the dung of your solemn feasts. *i.e.* For the iniquity of your most solemn services, which you have slubbered over, and made to stink, I will make you also abject and abominable; as the dung of sacrifices, offered in great number on festival days, was carried into some bycorner, and set out of sight. And here it is remarkable that God calleth the solemn feasts their solemn feasts, as if they had been none of his; he would not own them. So ***Jeremiah 7:21***, in scorn he calls their sacrifices flesh, ordinary flesh, such as was bought and sold in the meat markets. And ***Hosea 9:4***, he calleth the same sacrifices "their bread for their soul," or for their natural sustenance, and saith, "it shall not come into his house." And yet he speaks there of that meat offering, ***Leviticus 2:5***, appointed by God himself for a spiritual use, which is nevertheless called the bread for their life, or livelihood; because God esteemed it none other than common meat. In a like sense it was, that after the people of Israel had set up the golden calf, God would own them no longer, but fathers them upon Moses: Behold thy people, saith he to Moses, whom thou broughtest out of Egypt, &c., ***Exodus 32:7***. David, also, when he had sinned in numbering the people, was counted and called but plain David "Go and say to David," &c., ***2 Samuel 24:12*** whereas before that, when he purposed to build the Lord a temple, &c., then it was, "Go tell my servant David," &c., ***2 Samuel 7:5***. The saints themselves, when they sin against God, are in a sort suspended from the covenant. Therefore it is usual with them, when they seek the Lord for any special mercy, to begin with humbling themselves, and taking pains with their own hearts, as David, Daniel, Ezra. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:4]]**Verse 4.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And ye shall know that I have sent, &c.** That is, ye shall know by woeful experience, your punishment shall advertise you; the curse appendant to the commandment shall teach you, as Gideon taught the men of Succoth, *sc.* with thorns and briers of the wilderness, ***Judges 8:16***; and as David taught the children of Ammon better behaviour by making them pass through the brickkiln, ***2 Samuel 12:31***; and as the Phrygians wax not wise unless they be beaten to it. When God's "judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness," ***Isaiah 26:9***. Smart makes wit, and vexation giveth understanding. Ehud's dagger was a message from God, ***Judges 3:20-21***; who, as he is said to hold his peace when he punisheth not, ***Psalms 50:21; Isaiah 42:14***, so to preach and teach when he doth, ***Isaiah 28:19***; his scourges are men's school masters, διδάσκαλοι ἀμισθοι, one calls them, God's free school masters, cursed and crabbed enough, but such as whereby he "openeth men's ears to discipline, and commandeth them to return from iniquity. Then he showed them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded," ***Job 36:8-10***; that they have slighted the commandment which he had sent them, and that now he would plead with them another way, *sc.* with patience and with blood, ***Ezekiel 38:22***, and so would cause them to pass under the rod, that thereby he might bring them into the bond of the covenant, purging out the rebels, and them that transgress, ***Ezekiel 20:37-38***. God should have no tribute from men, as those malignants suggested against the returned captives, ***Ezra 4:13***, if he did not make them know his breach of promise, ***Numbers 14:34***, if he did not break covenant with them that first play false with him, and keep no condition on their part required. See ***2 Chronicles 15:2***. And when thou art making a covenant with sin, say to thy soul, as Boaz said to his kinsman, ***Ruth 4:5*** "At what time thou buyest it, thou must have Ruth with it." If thou wilt have the pleasure of sin, the wages of wickedness, thou must also have the curse, &c.; and let thy soul answer, as he there doth, No, I may not do it, I shall mar and spoil a better inheritance. Polanus and others dislike the reading of this text in the future tense, "Ye shall know that I have sent this commandment," and tell us that the scope of the

prophecy requires that it be read in the present tense, thus, *Nam scitis,* For ye do know that I have sent, &c. You know your dignity and duty as priests, *Vos probe cognitum habetis* (Polan.); and yet ye wilfully cross your own knowledge and conscience. Knowledge is a divine gift; it is the great talent of all other; there is a (much) set upon it, ***Luke 12:48***, there is a special depositum in it, as the word παρεθεντο, there used, importeth. To know heavenly things is to ascend into heaven, saith Agur, ***Proverbs 30:4***. But as the devil, that knowing creature (ὁ δαίμων *quasi* δαίμων), that hath his name in Greek from the largeness of his objective knowledge, was once an angel of light till he fell from his dignity, ***Jude 1:6***, so those that corrupt themselves in that they know, ***Jude 1:10***; that imprison the light they have (as a prophet from God) in unrighteousness; that know the commandment sent from God, as here, and yet after that they have known the way of righteousness, do turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them; the latter end will be worse with those men than the beginning, ***2 Peter 2:20-21***; they have but aspired to a higher pitch, that their fall might be the more desperate. *Neronis illud, Quantus artifex pereo quadrabit in te peritum et periturum,* saith one. Thou dost but carry Uriah's letters about thee to thine own utter destruction. Thou mayest go to hell with much knowledge in thy head; as a bull with a coronet and garland goes to the slaughter. Thou mayest also, for this one fault, meet with a hell beforehand in thine own conscience, as Spira did; crying out to those about him, to learn from him to take heed of severing knowledge and practice. What else was it that brought such roaring and troubles both inward and outward on those, ***Isaiah 59:11-12***, and that when salvation was looked for? Our iniquities, say they, testify to our faces, and we know them. All sins offend conscience; but sins against knowledge waste and destroy it. A dangerous degree, drawing near that sin to which sacrifice is denied. For sins against the law, though against knowledge, there was an atonement, ***Leviticus 6:1-8***, and he instanceth in perjury. But to persecute the known truth with malice, for this there is no sacrifice, ***Hebrews 10:26***.

That my covenant might be with Levi. Levi did not thrust himself into the priesthood; but was taken by God into special covenant. See ***Numbers 8:13-14; 1 Samuel 2:28; Hebrews 5:4.*** "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Or if he do he shall smoke and smart for it, as Saul, Uzziah, and others. No man might come uncalled to the King of Persia, upon pain of death: much less to the King of heaven, as Korah and his complices, whom God hath hanged up in gibbets, as it were, for an example to all bold intruders upon that tremendous function of the ministry. Men out of office are not sent of God, therefore they may not preach, though gifted men, ***Romans 10:15*** *cf.* ***Isaiah 52:8***. All that are in office to preach are apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors, or teachers, ***Ephesians 4:11***. Elders only may preach, ***Titus 1:5***. And the contrary would prevent, the apostle willeth that in the Church all things be done "decently and in order," ***1 Corinthians 14:4***, which could not be if all were teachers; for then there would be no distinction of ministers and people. But "Are all teachers?" saith the apostle, ***1 Corinthians 12:29***, and he answers himself, No, but only those whom God did set, ***1 Corinthians 12:13***, like as he set apart the tribe of Levi to execute the priest's office; which, while Korah, Dathan, and Abiram sought to impugn and level, they went quick into the pit, ***Numbers 16:30***. Meddle not, therefore, without a calling; that in the day of God's displeasure you may appeal unto him, with Jeremiah, and say, "As for me, I have not hastened or thrust in myself for a pastor after thee: neither have I desired the woeful day, thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was right before thee," ***Jeremiah 17:16***. And being able safely to say this thou mayest bind upon it, that God, who is in covenant with all his Levis, his faithful ministers, will be their shield and their exceeding great reward, however the world deal with them. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:5]]**Verse 5.** {{field-on:Bible}}**My covenant was with him of life and peace**. Now God's covenant (saith an expositor here) is of four sorts: 1. General, made with all creatures, ***Genesis 9:2.*** 2. With the Church in general, ***Genesis 17:2.*** 3. With the Church of the

elect, ***Jeremiah 32:33.*** 4. With some particulars of some special graces, as here with Levi, of "life and peace." So then to ministers, above others, hath the Lord bound himself by special covenant to be their mighty protector and rewarder; to give them *life and peace* that is, long life and prosperous. See ***Numbers 25:12-13***. Life of itself, though pestered with many miseries, is a sweet mercy, and highly to be prized. "Better is a living dog than a dead lion," ***Ecclesiastes 9:4*** "And why is a living man sorrowful, a man for the punishment of his sins?" ***Lamentations 3:39***. As who should say, let a man suffer never so much, yet if he be suffered to live he hath cause to be contented. It is the Lord's mercy he is not consumed. When Baruk sought great things for himself, Jeremiah tells him he may be glad (in those dear years of life, when the arrows of death came so thick whisking by him) that he had his "life for a prey," ***Jeremiah 45:5***. Jacob took more comfort of his son Joseph's life than of his honour. "Joseph is yet alive," &c., ***Genesis 45:26***. *Quis vitam non vult?* saith Austin, Who is it that desires not life? When David moveth the question, "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?" Austin brings in every man answering I do, and I do. Long, life and happy days is every man's desire. If God give these blessings to those that are graceless, it is by virtue of a providence only, and not of a promise, and that is nothing so comfortable. Life in God's displeasure is worse than death, said that martyr. If wicked men live long, it is that they may make up the measure of their sins; and by heaping up sin, increase their torment. If godly men die soon, God taketh them away from the evil to come: as when there is a fire in a house or town men secure their jewels: and though they fall in wars, yet they die in peace, as good Josiah did, ***2 Chronicles 34:28***, who also *in brevi vitro spatio tempora virtutum multa replevit,* lived quickly, lived apace, lived long in a little time (Hieron.). For life consists in action, ***Isaiah 38:15-16***. The Hebrews call running water living water. Now God's faithful ministers, if they work hard, and so wear out themselves to do good to others (as a lamp wasteth itself to give light, or as that herb mentioned by Pliny, that cures the patient but rots the hand that administereth it), like clouds, they sweat themselves to death to bring souls to God, yet shall they be sure to find it a blessed way of dying: they shall, *mori vitaliter,* die to live for ever. God will not send any of his own to bed till they have done their work. The two witnesses could not be slain till their testimony was finished. No malice of man can antedate their ends a minute. "The days of mourning for my father will come," said Esau, "and then I will kill my brother Jacob," ***Genesis 27:41***. Here Esau, that rough reprobate, threateneth his father also, as Luther conceiveth. For it is as if he should have said, I will be avenged by being the death of my brother; though it be to the breaking of my father's heart. But what is the proverb? Threatened folk live long; for even Isaac, who died sooner, lived over forty years, beyond, this. "My times are in thy hand," saith David; and that is a safe hand. And blessed be God that Christ liveth and reigneth, *alioqui totus desperassem,* or else I had been in ill case, said Miconius in a letter of his to Calvin. Ministers are stars in Christ's right hand, and it will be hard pulling them thence. They must carry their lives in their hands, and be ready to lay them down when it may be for the glory of their Master, but they shall be sure not to die (whether by a natural or by a violent death) till the best time; not till that time when, if they were but rightly informed, they would desire to die. But whether their death be a burnt offering of martyrdom or a peace offering (whether they die in their beds, as Elisha, or be carried to heaven in a fiery chariot, as Elijah), let it be a freewill offering, and then it shall be a sweet sacrifice to him who hath covenanted with them for life and peace. They shall by death, as by a door of hope, enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds, ***Isaiah 57:2***, yea, in Abraham's bosom: and as "the sleep of the labouring man is sweet unto him, whether he eat little or much," ***Ecclesiastes 5:12***; so heaven shall be so much the more heaven to such as have here had their purgatory. Mark the upright man, saith holy David, and behold the just, for how troublesome soever his beginning and middle is, "the end of that man is peace," ***Psalms 37:37***.

And I gave them to him. Here is the performance of God's covenant to Levi and his posterity. God doth not pay his promises with fair words only, as Sertorius is said to do neither is he like

Antigonus Δώσων, (ignominiously so called, because) forward in promising, slack in performing. But as he hath hitherto kept promise with nights and days, ***Jeremiah 33:20, 25***, that one should succeed the other, so much more doth he keep promise with his people; for as his love moved him to promise, so his truth bindeth him to perform. See both, these together, ***2 Samuel 7:21*** "For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these things." "According to thine own heart," that is, of thine own mere motion; out of pure and unexcited love thou didst give thy word and promise; and "for thy word's sake hast thou performed it." There was nothing in Aaron or his seed that God should make his special covenant with him of life and peace. His rod was as dry and dead as any of the rest till God made it to blossom. But when God once passed his promise, and so made himself a voluntary debtor, he failed not to perform it to him and his. Aaron himself lived one hundred and three years, Phinehas three hundred, as it is thought, and as some chronologers do observe. Joshua, the son of Josedech, lived, according to Helvieus, one hundred and ten years in the office of the high priesthood.

To these and others was expressly fulfilled a covenant of life and peace; and God would have been ready to have performed it to these to whom Malachi prophesieth, had not themselves hindered. For "they like men," or like Adam, "transgressed the covenant," ***Hosea 6:7***; or (as Junius and Tremellius read it), not *tanquam homines,* but *tanquam hominis,* they made no more of breaking it than if they had had to do with dust and ashes like themselves, and not with the great God. "Remember them, O my God," saith good Nehemiah concerning these covenant breakers, "because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites," ***Nehemiah 13:29***.

For the fear wherewith he feared me, &c. That is, the good priests did so, the bad did otherwise; but God reckons of men by their righteousness, and this was the restipulation, or the condition on the priest's part performed; for in a covenant both parties undertake to do somewhat. As in the general covenant of grace, God promiseth to be the God of his people, that is, a universal good, all-sufficient, satisfactory, and every way proportionable and fitting to their souls. And they (interchangeably) promise to be his people; that is, to bestow themselves wholly upon him with highest estimation, most vigorous affections, and utmost endeavours, giving up their names and hearts to the profession of his truth. So that when he cries out, Who is on my side? Who? one says, I am the Lord's; another calls himself by the name of Jacob, another subscribes, &c., ***Isaiah 44:5***. Likewise in this particular covenant with the tribe of Levi, God promised them life and peace; and they assured him of fear and humility. Fear is an affection of the soul shrinking in itself from some imminent evil. Hereof there three sorts, natural, carnal, and spiritual.

The first is not to be disliked, if it do not degenerate into the second. The next is a bast fear of the creature more than of the Creator, who is God blessed for ever. The third is nothing else but an awful respect to the Divine majesty. Spiritual fear we called it in respect, 1. Of the author of it, God's Holy Spirit, called therefore, A Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord. 2. Of the object of it, The Father of Spirits, who is therefore, by an appellative proper, called fear, ***Psalms 76:11*** 3. Of the effect, which is to spiritualize both us and our services; and was therefore fitly vowed to God by those of the spirituality that stood before him continually, and were to be exact in their whole deportment, at their peril; God is of purer eyes than to behold evil. He cannot look on iniquity in any, ***Habakkuk 1:13***. Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name: They called upon the Lord, and he answered them; he forgave their iniquities; howbeit he took vengeance on their inventions, ***Psalms 99:8***. He met Moses in the inn, and had much ado to forbear killing him, ***Exodus 4:24***. And for Aaron, when (together with Miriam) he murmured against Moses, and Miriam was thereupon smitten with leprosy, Aaron was spared, not so much for the honour of the

priesthood, διὰ τὸ τῆς ἱεροσυνης ἀξίωμα, as Chrysostom gives the reason, but because of the fear wherewith he feared the Lord, and his humiliation that followed upon that fear.

For he was afraid before God's name. Or, as others better render this text, *Propter nomen meum humiliatus est,* He was amazed, frightened, *conterebatur, consternebatur,* humbled because of my name, he withdrew himself (so some render it), or, threw himself out of doors, as Peter did into a lone place, where he might souse himself in the salt tears of godly sorrow, ἐπιβαλὼν, ***Mark 14:72***. Or, he shrunk and shrivelled up, and so testifieth the trouble of his mind by the horror of his body. *Horripilatus est,* his heart fell down, his hair stood upright. See ***Psalms 119:53; 120:1-7***. His humiliation was deep and downright, soaking and sorrowing his heart, ***Psalms 73:21***. The word here used is passive, but Levi's humiliation was active; he was not humbled only, but humble; low, but lowly; he knew that no sacrifice could be accepted but that which was laid on the low altar of a contrite heart, which sanctifies the sacrifice. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:6]]**Verse 6.** {{field-on:Bible}}**The law of truth was in his mouth**. Hitherto hath been set forth what the priests of old were for their own particular, and as private persons; they were not high minded, but feared God. Now as pulpit men and public teachers, they have a four fold commendation. And first, that truth was their study and trade; they were expert in it, and had an excellent faculty in communicating their conceptions of it to others; so that if they did but open their mouths almost, it was a sermon; they bad a ready and easy way of discourse, a holy volubility and dexterity of delivering themselves to the benefit of others; as the law of God was in their hearts, so their mouths spake wisdom, and their tongues talked of judgment, ***Psalms 37:30-31***. Out of the good treasure of their hearts they could throw forth at pleasure good things, for the edification of others; yea, like full clouds, they willingly distilled, and like full paps, they were in pain till eased of their milk. Neither meddled they only with toothless truths, lest themselves should be left toothless (as one said, truth is a good mistress, but he that followeth her too close at heels shall have his teeth struck out), as Balak bade Balaam neither curse nor bless at all; and as the Papists were wont to say, *Missa non mordet,* The mass biteth no man: but they held that truth must be spoken, however it be taken; and abhorred, to be looked upon as the devil's dirt daubers and upholsterers, to daub with untempered mortar, or to sew pillars under their elbows, ***Ezekiel 13:10***. They affected rather to be styled (as Arrianus the historian was) φιλαλήθεις, lovers of truth, plain dealers; and, as it is reported of Suetonius, they took the same liberty to cry down sin that men did to commit it. *Ea libertate scripsit Imperatorum vitas qua ipsi vixerunt.* Aelian tells us that the high priest among the Egyptians wore about his neck a sapphire stone, which was called ἀληθεῖς, truth. This was but an apish imitation of Aaron's Urim and Thummim, *i.e.* light of truth and integrity of life, ***Exodus 28:30***. Mercury's priests were wont to feed upon figs, and then to say, γλυκεῖα ἡ ἀλήθειά, truth is sweet. It is so indeed to those that "have their senses exercised to discern good and evil," ***Hebrews 5:14***. But most men cannot brook downright truth: the hearing of it galls them, as they write of some creatures, that they have *fel in aure,* their gall in their ears. Hence truth breeds hatred, and plain dealing is generally disgusting; it is bitter in the stomachs of those that hear it, though sweet in the mouth of those that utter it. ***Revelation 10:9***. Micah would not budge, or be base in his errand to Ahab, though he were sure to kiss the stocks for his stoutness. Azariah, the high priest, withstood King Uzziah to his face, and put him out of the temple. Which while Uriah did not, but wickedly complied with idolatrous Ahaz, in making and setting up the altar of Damascus, ***2 Kings 16:11, 16***, he is branded with a black coal for a court parasite, and shall be infamous to all posterity. His contemporary, Isaiah, was of another spirit, and fulfilled after God (as it is said of Caleb, *Implevit post me,* ***Numbers 14:24***). He kept the law of truth in his mouth, and rolled it as sugar under his tongue, though he suffered for it. For (as Jerome tells us) he was sawn asunder by his wicked countrymen, for two causes. First, because he said he had seen the Lord. Secondly, because he called the great

ones of Judah, princes of Sodom and rulers of Gomorrah. Quintilian saith of Vespasian the emperor, that he was *patientissimus veri,* very patient of truth, though it never so much touched him. But not many such to be met with. Asa, though otherwise a good prince, yet fell out grievously with God's prophet, for his plain dealing, and laid him by the heels. Queen Elizabeth dealt little better with a bishop that had in a zealous sermon admonished her to think on her last end, by reason of her great age, which few princes had attained unto, and of the climacterical year of her life, which happened at that time. The bishop had the queen's disapproval, but God's approval. And so shall all truth's chaplains have, however the world entertain them. Wisdom shall be justified of her children, and God will see to their safety, *modo audeant quae sentiunt,* so they show men all the counsel of God, and keep back nothing that they have in charge to deliver, ***Acts 20:26-27***.

And iniquity was not found in his lips. Heb. Crossness, or crookedness; Chaldee, No falseness. He did not preach distorted doctrines, that produce convulsions of conscience, as those seducers did, ***Acts 20:30***. He did not handle the word of God deceitfully, or fraudulently, as those deceitful workers did, ***2 Corinthians 11:13***. Neither did he broach errors, and writhe from the right way for self-respects, setting his dial by that sun, ***1 Thessalonians 2:3***. But being of a most masculine, disengaged, and noble spirit, that bath received the truth in the love of it; he will not be drawn to falsity or faulter, to huckster the word, or handle it craftily and covetously; "but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God," ***2 Corinthians 2:17***; without mixture of errors or human inventions. Let Pharisees sour men's souls with their leaven of false doctrine. Let those inhabitants of the sea (as they are called, ***Revelation 12:12***), Popish Padres, set abroach gross, troubled, brackish tenets, which rather bring barrenness to their hearers and gnaw their bowels, than either quench thirst or yield good fruit. He that fears God can pity poor souls made prize of by sectaries and seducers, ***Colossians 2:8***; and knowing that he that breaketh the least of God's commandments and teacheth men so, shall be least in the kingdom of heaven, ***Matthew 5:19*** (that is, nothing at all there, ***Matthew 20:16***), he hateth every false way, with David; and takes care that no iniquity be found in his lips, ***Psalms 19:13***.

He walked with me in peace and equity. *i.e.* He kept constant correspondence and communion with me, so that we never disagreed or differed. For can two walk together, and they not agreed? He was like minded to me in all things, and observed my law in every point and part thereof. A high commendation and a necessary qualification in a minister, that he not only talk of God, but walk with him; and that not loosely and at all adventures, but strictly and exactly, as a pattern of the rule, as a transcript of his own sermon, *ne verba factis deficientibus erubescant,* lest his words blush for want of deeds accordingly (Tertull.); *ne virtutis stragulum pudefaeiat,* lest he put honesty to an open shame, as Antipater did, when, being vicious, he wore a white cloak, the ensign of innocence; lest his life gives his lips the lie, as it fared with those Pharisees that said and did not, ***Matthew 22:3***. The foolish virgins were found with their *Sic dicentes,* so saying, but the faithful servants shall be found with their *Sic facientes,* so doing. And when men come to give account, it shall be inquired, *non quid legerint, sed quid egerint, non quid dixerint, sed quomodo vixerint,* not what they have taught others, but what they have practised themselves. Origen's preaching and living were said to be both one; *Quod iussit et gessit.* because he ordered and he did. So did Mr. Bacer, whom his friends could never sufficiently praise, nor his foes in any point find fault with his singular life and sincere doctrine.

And did turn away many from iniquity. The effect of his unspeakable labours and unblameable life was conversion of souls, and those not a few. God sometimes gives a pastor after his own heart to such places, where he takes but one of a city, or two of a family, ***Jeremiah 3:14-15***. *Quod si decimus quisque, si unus persuasus fuerit,* saith Chrysostom. If one in ten be gained, nay, if one of ten thousand be turned from iniquity, it is a great mercy. Nay,

saith he, say that none be converted, the faithful minister that endeavours their conversion, though he effect it not, *non minus praemii,* shall have no less reward than if he had prevailed for their conversion. Some good divines think he shall have more than those that do convert; because they have *praemium ante praemium,* a reward before the reward, that which may encourage them in God's work, but he does his utmost amidst all discouragement. Well may Ephraim love to tread out the grain, because, while he treads, he feeds on the grain, ***Hosea 10:11***; but to bear and draw, to plough and work, where no refreshing was to be had till the work was done, this that delicate heifer cared not to do. But he is a happy man that hath any hand in turning men from iniquity, though fruit, for present, appear not. The new birth of some is like the birth of the elephant, fourteen years after the seed injected into the womb. And that divine proverb is not seldom verified, "One soweth, and another reapeth," ***John 4:37***. The ministry is God's arm to gather people into his bosom; and the "weapons of our warfare are mighty through God," ***2 Corinthians 10:4***. Surely "as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven," &c., ***Isaiah 55:10-11***, and as the rain from heaven hath fatness with it, and a special influence more than standing water; so hath preaching more than reading. Howbeit there may be fruit and yet invisible, as in Elijah's time. And that which doth not yet appear, may hereafter, when the day of visitation comes; see ***Job 33:14***. God may have much people in the city, and Paul, for the present, not know so much, ***Acts 18:10***. A master doth not use to set up a light but there is some work to be done by it; and seldom doth he send his servants afield with their scythes to mow thistles only. Let God's faithful witnesses prophesy out their 1260 days, ***Revelation 11:3***; bending themselves to that office incessantly, being instant in season and out of season, and turning themselves, as it were, into all shapes and fashions, both of speech and of spirit, to turn people from iniquity; and then God will be with the good, as that prophet speaks in another case, ***2 Chronicles 19:11*** "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise," ***Proverbs 11:30***. Say he cannot win as he would, but labour all night and take nothing, yet he shall be paid for his pains; as the physician is, though the patient die. *Curare exigeris, non curationem,* saith Bern. It is the care, not the cure, of your charge that is charged upon you. You may speak persuasively, but it is God only that can persuade Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem. Paul may plant, &c., but God only giveth the increase. You shall be held wise, and shine as stars in heaven, whether you win souls or not. As there are diversity of gifts, so of operations, ***1 Corinthians 12:6***, and the Holy Ghost may and doth work when and how he pleaseth; but usually he delights to honour those of most sincerity with most success, as ***1 Corinthians 15:10***. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:7]]**Verse 7.** {{field-on:Bible}}**For the priest's lips should keep knowledge**. How else should he be instant in lip feeding? how should his lips present it unless they preserve it? How should he make others wise, unless he be wise himself? ***Daniel 12:3***. The Pope brags of an infallibility, and pleads this text for it; avouching that he knows all things knowable, and hath all wisdom and skill locked up *in scrinio pectoris,* in the cabinet of his breast. But what will they say of sundry of their popes that have been manifest heretics? John XXIII was accused, in the Council of Constance, for denying the resurrection of the body and everlasting life. And of all their popes we may safely say, as the Venetian ambassadors did; when the Pope laid his hand upon his breast and said, *Hic est arca Noae,* Lo, here is Noah's ark (meaning that he was the Church virtual, and was enriched in all knowledge and in all utterance), one of them presently replied, that in Noah's ark there were unclean beasts as well as clean; and so left him further to apply. The priest's lips indeed should keep knowledge. But those of Malachi's times had forsaken the way, and caused many to stumble, ***Malachi 2:8***. How this was we shall see when we come to it. Meanwhile, we may take notice, that *non libro sacerdotis, sed labro; non codice, sed corde, conservatur scientia;* knowledge should be kept, not in the priest's book, but in his bosom, as a storehouse; neither should it lie low or long there, but sit upon his lips, that all may have benefit by it. For the manifestation of the Spirit is given to profit also, ***1 Corinthians 12:7***. And it was death for the priest to enter into the sanctuary

without his golden bells about him, that he might be heard by all. A minister must be both able and apt to teach (διδακτικός, Greg. Pastor.). *Praedicationis officium suscipit quisquis ad sacerdotium accedit,* saith Gregory. He is no minister that is no preacher. Nor can he be a preacher that is not stored with knowledge of God's will and people's duty. See ***Matthew 13:32***. (***See Trapp on "Matthew 13:32"***) Walter, surnamed Malclerk, was surely no fit man to be Bishop of Carlisle; as he was by evil and corrupt means, A. D. 1223. "If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch," ***Matthew 15:14***; but the blind guides will lie lowermost, and have the worst of it. Varro complained of the Roman priests, that they were ignorant of many things about their own rites and religions. Mucius Scaevola (being their high priest) derived Pontifex of *Posse* and *facere* to be able to do. This derivation pleased not Varro; but it intimated that such should both be able and active to teach the people knowledge. It was a witty observation of a bishop, who was called in his time the gulf of learning, that *Doceo,* to teach, governs two accusative cases; according to that ***Isaiah 28:9*** "Whom shall I teach knowledge?" Ministers, saith he, must have whom to teach and what to teach, viz. knowledge; and must, therefore, give attendance to reading, that they may the better to exhortation and doctrine, ***1 Timothy 4:13***, that they may feed the people with knowledge and understanding, ***Jeremiah 3:15***.

And they should seek the law at his mouth. As at an oracle; they should depend upon the ministry, as the people hung upon our Saviour's lips, ***Luke 19:48***; as David went into the sanctuary to be resolved of his doubt, ***Psalms 73:17***, though himself were a prophet; and as Cornelius was appointed by the angel to send for Peter for further information. But what must men seek at the minister's mouth? The law, the sincere milk of God's word, the mind of Christ, the testimony of Jesus, ***1 Peter 2:2; 1 Corinthians 2:16*** *non nugas et fabulas,* saith Bernard, not trifles and fables, not strong lines and strains of wit, but the simple and plain words of God. *Non Oratorum filii sumus sed Piscatorum,* We are not speakers to men but fishermen, said Nazianzen. Ministers are not to study so much to please as to profit, to tickle men's ears as to work upon their hearts. They must not so paint the window, as to keep out the light; nor so put the sword of the Spirit into a velvet scabbard, that it cannot prick and pierce the heart. Let them handle and set out the law as skilfully and adornedly as they can; but still remember that it must be dispensed, *sancte magis quam scite, solide potius quam floride,* with fear and reverence, rather than with wit and dalliance. If in King Edward IV's days a citizen in Cheapside was executed as a traitor for saying he would make his son heir to the crown (though he only meant his own house, having a crown for the sign), more dangerous it must needs be to wit wanton it with the majesty of God. *Loquamur verba scripturae, utamur sermone Spiritus Sancti, &c.* Let us speak Scripture language, let us use the speech of the Holy Spirit, and not go about to correct the Divine wisdom and eloquence with our sophistry and vain babbling. To the ears of that which St Peter calls the hidden man of the heart, the plain song always makes the best music, ***1 Peter 3:4***. If heaven's door may be opened to it by a key of iron, it cares not for a key of gold. A sermon works not upon the heart as it is thus elegant or admirable, but as well fraught with testimonies of Holy Scripture (that most powerful rhetoric), it is an instrument of God appointed to such an end. Let the people hear often, This is the law, this is *ipsum Dei verbum,* the very word of God; show Scripture for what you deliver, and that will carry it. But *ut drachmam auri sine imagine principis, sic verba hortantis sine authoritate Dei contemnunt homines* (Lipsius). The law carrieth a majesty in it; and if Cicero dares to say that the law of the twelve tables did exceed all the libraries of philosophers, both in weight of authority and worth of matter, how much rather is this true of the law of God! Wherefore as Aeschines said of an orator's, so let a minister's discourse and the law be unisons; and let the people ask the priests concerning the law, as they did, ***Haggai 2:11***, and

not be like tidlings, [6] that will not eat their milk unless it be in a silver dish; but account it a singular happiness to live under those lips (however thick, a thin lip is a sign of eloquence, ***Job 12:20***), which both keep knowledge and utter it (χρὴ τὸ αὐτὸ φθέγγεσθαι τὸν ῥήτορα καὶ τὸν νόμον).

For he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. Heb. the angel, (***See Trapp on "Malachi 1:1"***) and so the Septuagint and Vulgate render it. His office is as to stand before God and praise him, so to carry messages from him to his people, and to be in his stead, ***2 Corinthians 5:20***. Knowest thou not, saith Chrysostom, who the minister is? He is God's angel; he speaketh not of himself; if thou despisest, thou despisest not him, but God that sent him. And to the same purpose Ambrose: The minister is God's angel, to set forth the kingdom of Christ and eternal life: *non specie tibi aestimandus sed munere;* he is not, therefore, to be judged of by his outside, but by his office. Those Sodomites that sought to abuse the angels are thrown forth for an example (πρόκεινται), suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, ***Jude 1:7***. Behold, Christ himself hath assured us that Sodomy itself is not a heavier sin, nor more severely punished in hell, than the despising or abusing of a minister in the faithful discharge of his duty. We should, therefore, welcome such with trembling, as the men of Bethlehem did Samuel, and as Cornelius did Peter. "Comest thou peaceably?" said the Bethlemites, as suspecting the purpose of some judgment. "Now therefore are we all here present before God" (not only before thee, said Cornelius), "to hear all things that are commanded thee of God," ***Acts 10:33***. If Ahab had been like well affected as these good souls, he would never have asked Elijah that absurd question, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? Alas, what had the righteous prophet done more than what by his office (as God's ambassador or messenger) he was bound to do? he taxed their sin, he foretold the judgment; he deserved it not, he inflicted it not; yet he smarts, and they are guilty. As if some fond people should accuse the herald or the trumpet as the cause of their war; or as some ignorant peasant, when he sees his fowls bathing in his pond, should cry out of them, as the causes of foul weather. Saith a divine, It is a good thing to stand in awe of God's angels, and with reverence to receive their message, howsoever distasteful unto us; considering they are but messengers.{{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:8]]**Verse 8.** {{field-on:Bible}}**But ye are departed out of the way**. Heb. From that way, viz. that good old way of your progenitors: you are nothing like Levi, but are woefully degenerated from the practice of your predecessors, and have swerved from your fathers' footsteps, though ye have the same place, and enjoy the same privileges. This is a foul fault, and condemned even by the heathen sages. Seneca tells us, with indignation, that Socrates' sons were more like their mother, a froward woman, than their father, the wisest of men; according to that saying, *Partus sequitur ventrem,* the birth follows the belly. Young Cicero was, for his intemperance and excess in drinking, surnamed *Tricongius.* Caligula, that monster, was the son of noble Germanicus (*Heroum filii noxae*). But we have Scriptural instances not a few. Not to speak of Eli's sons, and of Samuel's, Solomon degenerates from his father David, who had carefully taught him better, ***Proverbs 4:4***, and so had his mother, ***Proverbs 31:1*** (which one calls Bathsheba's catechism; another Lemuel's lesson). Jehoram is taxed for his not walking in the ways of his father Jehoshaphat and his grandfather Asa, as if there had been no intervention of a Hezekiah. "Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh," that idolatrous priest, mentioned ***Judges 18:30***, is thought to have been the grandson of Moses; so the Hebrews tell us; and that therefore the Nun in Manasseh is suspended above the rest of the letters. (*Hebrew Text Note*) Certain it is that Nabal, the fool, was of the line of faithful Caleb, ***1 Samuel 25:3***, to teach us that virtue is not, as lands, inheritable. All that is traduced with the seed is either evil, or not good. Grace is by gift, and

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[6] A pampered or spoiled child; a darling, pet; a young, delicate, or puny child or animal, needing special care; a weakling, 'dilling'. ŒD.

not by descent. Hence that prayer of David's courtiers, ***1 Kings 1:47***, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name. Agreeable whereunto is Hector's prayer in Homer, for his son—πατρὸς δ' ὄγε πολλὸν ἀμείνων, I wish he may be a better man than his father. And that of Juvenal,

> "*Male pater tibi sit Thersites, dummodo tu sis*
> *Aeacidae similis, Vulcaniaque arma capessas,*
> *Quam te Thersitae similem producat Achilles*."

Ye have caused many to stumble at the law. Which is a very dangerous thing; like as it is to stumble on a bridge. A bridge is made to give us a safe passage over a dangerous river; but he who stumbles on the bridge is in no small danger to fall into the river. The word is given as a means to carry us over hell unto heaven; but he who stumbles at this means (as by snuffing at it, ***Malachi 1:13***, chatting against it and contesting with it, as often in this prophecy, casting reproaches upon it, ***Jeremiah 20:8-9***, gathering odious consequences from it, ***Romans 3:8-18***) shall fall in thither, from whence otherwise he had been delivered by it. This mischief many fell into, in Malachi's days, by the means of those ungodly priests, who either taught them not better, or otherwise drew them into sinful courses by their corrupt losses or lewd practices. Evil examples of ministers have a strong influence upon their people; and the sins of teachers are the teachers of sins: The leaders of this people have made them to err, ***Isaiah 9:16***. Corruption commonly (as in a fish) begins at the head; neque solum obsunt principes, quod illi ipsi corrumpuntur, sed etiam quod corrumpunt: plusquam exemplo quam peccato nocent, saith Cicero: they that are in office do a great deal of mischief by encouraging others in evil, through their evil example. Jupiter's adulteries drew the people to like wantonness. Magis intuentur quid fecerit Iupiter quam quid docuit Plato, saith Austin; They look more what Jupiter did than what Plato taught. I have read of a woman who, living in professed doubt of the Godhead, after better illumination and repentance, did ofton protest that the vicious life of a great scholar in that town did conjure up those damnable doubts in her soul. In the time of Pope Clement V the Church was so ill-governed, and things so corruptly carried at the court of Rome, that Frederick, King of Sicily, doubted much of the truth of the Christian religion; but was confirmed, and his mind better settled, by Arnoldus de Villa Nova, who showed him that "Offences must come, but woe be to them by whom they come." A scandalous priest is a singular mischief; for he falls not alone, but (as when a main stone in a building or a tall cedar falls) he draws many with him into fellowship of errors and enormities; as did Hymenaeus and Philetus, ***2 Timothy 2:17-18***; and as the dragon, with his long and strong tail, drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth, ***Revelation 13:4***. When the pastors become brutish all the flocks are scattered, ***Jeremiah 10:21***.

Ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi. The covenant on God's part with Levi was a covenant of salt, and could not be corrupted, ***Numbers 18:19***, *non computrescit vetustate,* saith Flaccius, it putrefieth not with age or long standing; as that pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was turned, and of which Josephus saith, that something of it was to be seen till his time. But these degenerate priests had abandoned God's holy fear, they did not humble themselves and tremble before his name, as Levi their father had done, ***Malachi 2:5***; they had falsified with God, and so forfeited his favour. It was with them, as Cajetan complains and confesses of the Popish priests; that whereas by their places they should have been the salt of the earth, they had lost their savour, and were good for little else but looking after the rights and revenues of the Church; therefore God held himself disobliged, and resolved that they should bear the iniquity of their priesthood; ***Leviticus 19:8***. that is, the punishment of their iniquity notwithstanding the priesthood. That should be no protection to them, but an aggravation; because they fell, as if they had not been anointed: and were, therefore, the worse, because they should have been better, *Ideo deteriores sumus quia meliores esse debemus* (Salvian.). God holds himself not bound to perform covenant with those who break with him; for why should

he give the children's bread to dogs? why should he cast away his favours upon those that value them not? We have the covenant, the seals, the ministry (and this is a singular happiness: ***Isaiah 19:25***, Assyria is the work of God's hands, but Israel his inheritance). But, alas, are not these blessings among us as the ark was among the Philistines, rather as prisoners than as privileges? rather *in testimonium et ruinam quam in salutem* for a testimony against us, and for our further ruin, than for our safety here and salvation here after? Oh consider how God hath cast off the Israelites, notwithstanding his covenant with their fathers; and when in their necessity they would have forced acquaintance with him, he would not look upon them, ***Judges 10:14***. The sword hath broken in pieces those seven golden candlesticks in Asia, merely for their covenantbreaking. (***See Trapp on "Malachi 2:5"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:9]]**Verse 9.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Therefore have I also made you contemptible, and base**. And so have cried quittance with you and returned you your own with usury. God loves to retaliate, and to proportion jealousy to jealousy, provocation to provocation, ***Deuteronomy 32:21***, frowardness to frowardness, ***Psalms 18:26***, contrariety to contrariety, ***Leviticus 26:18, 21***, contempt to contempt, ***1 Samuel 2:30***, and here. How these unworthy priests had slighted God, and exposed his name and service to contempt and obloquy, hath been before set forth sufficiently. And now it is come home to them. It was threatened before, ***Malachi 2:3***, (***See Trapp on "Malachi 2:3"***) and now it is executed. Graceless men are apt to imagine that God threateneth *in terrorem* in fear only; and are ready, with those miscreants in the Gospel, to say, God forbid; we hope he will be better than his word, and not be so unmerciful as the preachers would make him. They believe the predictions of Scripture but as they believe the predictions of an almanack, which saith, such a day will be rain, and such a day wind; men think it may come to pass, and it may be not. But shall God say the word, and not see it fulfilled? Is not his *dicere* to say his *facere?* do do, his word his deed? Yea, doth be not sometimes, *dicto citius,* by saying more quickly, break out upon his enemies, as he did upon Nadab and Abihu, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, &c. God had poured contempt already upon these degenerate priests. And the like he had threatened to those, ***Jeremiah 23:40***: see ***Micah 3:7; Zechariah 13:4***. Ribera upon this text bewails the business in their Romish clergy, now become despicable by reason of their evil manners. Petrarch complained long before that the stench of that sink, the court of Rome, was come up to heaven. Erasmus laid them open in their colours, and did them more mischief *iocando,* by his jeering and jesting at them, than Luther did *stomachando,* by dry blows and invectives, as one well observeth. He made the world look up that had been long lulled asleep, and take notice of the truth of that which Chrysostom had long before discovered and lamented: *Multi sacerdotes, et pauci sacerdotes; multi in nomine, pauci in opera.* There are many priests, and yet but few many so in name, few so indeed. Fie on such rascal ribalds, [7] said the excommunicated barons in King John's time (in their declaration), concerning the Pope and his Cardinals, and yet they were no Protestants. No more are the Venetians; and yet how they slight their Pope (who is now, like the cuckoo in June, heard, but not regarded, by them) is sufficiently manifested by their manifestos to the Christian world. In Biscany (anciently Cantabria), a province of Spain, they admit no bishops to come among them; such a hatred they have taken against that order of men. And when King Ferdinand came in progress thither, accompanied, among others, by the Bishop of Pampeluna, the people arose in arms, drove back the bishop, and, gathering all the dust on the which they thought he had trodden, flung it into the sea. What our bishops did in Queen Mary's days we all know; that bloody Bonner especially, buried at length in a dunghill (too good a grave for him). Sure it was an unhappy proverb that was then learned, The bishop's foot hath trodden here. They are now utterly cashiered, and lie wrapped up in the sheet of shame for this sin (among others) here charged upon these priests, their dishonouring God's great name, his services and servants. For it was

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7 A person of abandoned character; a wicked, dissolute, or licentious person. ŒD.

come to that height of wickedness among us, a little before the late troubles, as to cast *odium in religionis professores tanquam in adversaries,* an evil report upon the professors of religion, as so many adversaries, as Redo saith the ancient Britons did immediately before their destruction by the Saxons. He that would not be an Arminian was therefore accounted a practical Puritan. He that was not for the *iure divino* by divine law of episcopacy, was little better than a public enemy. If the ministry of England be under any abuses at present, as they are through the iniquity of the times, and the overflow of errors and atheism, let it serve to humble them for their desire of vain glory, and not seeking the honour that cometh from God only, ***John 5:44***; let it also work in them a greater care to approve themselves to God, that they may be glorious in his eyes and to his people, who dare not but honour such as fear the Lord, ***Psalms 15:4***, and have his ministers in singular esteem for their work's sake, ***1 Thessalonians 5:13***.

According as ye have not kept my ways. *q.d.* Your dignity is decayed, like as your duty hath been neglected; you are fallen out of the hearts of good people, and are aviled by all. Neither is it any wonder; for a vicious life breeds vileness of estimation; but virtue is a thousand escutcheons. Hence that close connection, "If there be any virtue, if any praise," ***Philippians 4:8***; this treads upon the heels of that, as it were; follows it as close as the shadow doth the body. When Adam stood in innocence the savage beasts did him reverence. And the same God which did at first put an awe of man in the fiercest creatures, hath stamped in the cruelest hearts a reverent respect to his own image in his faithful ministers, as in Saul to Samuel, Herod to John Baptist, those gallants of Israel to that mad fellow, as they were pleased to call the prophet that came to anoint Jehu; upon whose words (as mad as they made of him) they will presently adventure their lives, and change the crown. God's image (as God's name, ***Psalms 111:9***) is holy and reverend; and they that would have good repute and report among men must carefully keep (or, as the word here used may be rendered) watch God's ways. He shall have enough that will watch for his halting, and take any little occasion to revile him with open mouth, as Shimei did David, when he had declined God's ways. It is therefore excellent counsel that Solomon gives, and worthy of all acceptation, ***Proverbs 4:25-27*** "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil." Lo, this is the ready road to honour and estimation. Do worthily in Ephrata, and so be famous in Bethlehem, ***Ruth 4:11***. *Sic famam extendere factis, Hoc virtutis opus.* But those Balaams that, persuaded by their Balaks, seek for honour by evil doing, these seek the living among the dead, figs of thistles, heaven in hell, &c.

But have been partial in the law. Heb. Ye have accepted, or acknowledged, faces in the law, *i.e.* you accept persons; you deal partially in expounding and applying the law, making it pinch the poor and favour the rich. The Church hath ever been pestered with such *Aretalogi,* story tellers, such parasitic preachers, whose practice hath been, like Ahab's prophets, to speak *magis ad voluntatem quam ad veritatem,* more to please than to profit. And there is a very great sympathy between great ones that have first flattered themselves, and these false flatterers, who prove a fit helve for such hatchet, and meet lettuce for such lips. Such a one was Uriah, the high priest, to Ahaz, ***2 Kings 16:15-16***. His motto seems to have been *Mihi placet quicquid regi placet.* It please me whatever pleases the king. Such were those dirt daubers for the devil in Ezekiel's days, ***Ezekiel 13:10-11***, &c., the Herodians, the Arians, the Arminians, Utenbogardus, &c., the Queen of Navarre's preachers, who persuaded her, out of political respects, to consent to that unhappy match that gave opportunity for the Parisian massacre. The apostle chargeth his son Timothy to do nothing of popularity or partiality, by tilting the balance on the one side, as the word signifieth; (***1 Timothy 5:21***, κατὰ πρόσκλισιν) but as a just law is a heart without affection, an eye without lust, a mind without passion, a treasurer which keepeth for every man that he hath, and distributeth to every man that he ought to

have; so should a minister be; remembering that of ***Job 13:10*** "He will surely reprove you, if you secretly accept persons," that is, he will chide you, smite you, curse you for it, and so set it on, as no creature shall be able to take it off. If you reprove meaner men, and wink at the faults of great ones, reproving he will reprove you, he will not do it to halves; no, he will rather do it double; you shall have it both surely and severely. Let your resolution, therefore, be that of Elihu, ***Job 32:21-22***, I will not now accept the person of any man, neither will I give flattering titles to man. For I may not give flattering titles, lest my Maker should suddenly take me away; lest my Master, whose steward I am, finding me unfaithful in the disposal of his mysteries, should confound me before you, ***Jeremiah 1:17***. *Nisi fideliter dixerim, vobis erit damnosum, mihi periculosum,* If I should not deal faithfully and freely with you, it would be to your loss, but to mine utter undoing, *Timeo itaque damnum vestrum, timeo damnationem meam* (Bern.).{{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:10]]**Verse 10.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Have we not all one father?** Here begins a second contestation, viz. with the people (as the former was with the priests), for their unrighteous dealing; where we have so many words, so many arguments. *In brevitate verborum est luxuries rerum.* If shortness of words is the heart of the matter. How many ones are here, and all to persuade to unity. See the like ***Ephesians 4:3-5***. Let those that take upon them to persuade others to equity and unanimity learn to marshal their matter handsomely, and to fill their mouths with arguments, such as may fall thick, and prevail, being seconded and set on with intimation of heartiest affection, ***Job 21:4***. Oh that I could somewhere meet with you both together, said Austin to Jerome and Ruffinus (hearing of their differences), I would fall down at your feet with much love and many tears, I would beseech you, for God's sake, for your own sakes, for weak Christians' sakes, &c., not to suffer these dissensions to spread further, *Hei mihi qui vos alicubi invenire non possum, &c.* So Mr Bradford, in a letter to a distressed gentlewoman that was in a despairing condition, I beseech you, saith he, I pray you, I desire you, I crave at your hands with all my very heart; I ask of you with hand, pen, tongue, and mind, in Christ, through Christ, for Christ, for his name, blood, mercy, power, and truth's sake, that you admit no doubting of God's final mercy toward you, howsoever you feel yourself. Oh that I could get words, said another holy man to his hearers, to gore your very hearts with smarting pain, that this doctrine might be written in your flesh! By this "one father" in the text is meant Adam, say the most interpreters, who was the common parent of us all, and the very stock and root from whence all mankind did spring. It is, therefore, a sin against nature itself and common humanity to deal treacherously against another, or to hide thyself from thine own flesh, ***Isaiah 58:7***. This is to be more unreasonable than beasts, birds, and fishes, which love their own kind; and those that feed on flesh will not eat the flesh of their own kind. But our age overly aboundeth with unnatural man eaters, that (not only like a pickerel in a pond, or shark in the sea, devour the lesser fishes of another alloy, but also) eat up God's people as they eat bread, ***Psalms 14:5***, make no more conscience, nay, take as much content in undoing a poor brother as in eating a meal's meat when they are hungry; they make but a breakfast of a whole representative nation; as those gunpowder papists designed to do. How often are wicked oppressors compared to hunters, for their cruelty, and fowlers, for their craft! to show that they spare none that fall into their nets; young, old, male, female, all go together into the bag, ***Psalms 10:9***. This raised a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren, those usurious Jews, that had both robbed and ravished them, ***Nehemiah 5:1***. And what could they say for themselves, but the same in effect with this in the text, "Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children?" &c.

Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? Here the prophet riseth higher, viz. from Adam to God, out of whose mint when man came first, he shone most glorious, for he was God's own workmanship, created unto love and good works, ***Ephesians 2:10***: yea, as iron put into fire seems to be nothing but fire; so Adam, come afresh out of God's hands, who is

perfect love and goodness itself, was none other than a very lump of love to God and kindness to his fellow creatures. But now, alas, we may sit and sing, *O quantum haec Niobe, &c.,* how strangely are we altered, and fallen from our first love! and what great cause have we, with those in Ezra, to think of this temple that was burnt, and lament! yea, write Lamentations, with Jeremiah, and say, as he; "They ravished the women in Zion, and the maids in the cities of Judah. Princes are hung up by the hand: the faces of the elders were not honoured," &c. ***Lamentations 5:11-12*** The wonder was the less, because these that did all this were of a different religion. But for those that serve the same true God, the Creator of all, to jar and war, as we, alas, do at this day, this is *lamentabile bellum,* doleful war, and speaks a great decay and defect of the power of godliness; true religion being of a uniting nature; and the strongest tie. *Sanatior sane est copula cordis quam corporis.* This Joseph's brethren knew, and, therefore, held it their best plea, ***Genesis 50:17*** "And now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of thy father's God." They had one common father; but, as a better string to their bow, they had one common God. The very Turks are found to be much braver soldiers upon the Christian than upon the Persian, because they begin alate to be infected with Persianism, whom they acknowledge better Mahometans than themselves.

Why do we deal treacherously. Or, fraudulently. The prophet puts himself into the number, though innocent, that his reproof might the better take with them. That which he taxeth them for is their wrong dealing in general, one with another; whether it were by force or by fraud (ἐπιβολή ἐπιβουλή), by violence or cunning contrivance, which what is it else, but *crimen stellionatus,* the very sin of deception, and hath God for an avenger? ***1 Thessalonians 4:6***. Now, it is dangerous offending him whose displeasure and revenge is everlasting, and who often calls to reckoning after our discharges. Take heed, therefore, of all sorts of injustice. Curse not the deaf, lay not a stumblingblock before the blind: but fear the Lord Jehovah, ***Leviticus 19:14***. And considering that to deal treacherously with another, a brother especially, is a sin (as hath been above-said), both against nature and religion; both against race and grace, which teacheth righteousness as well as holiness, ***Titus 2:12***, and turning the leopard into the lamb, causeth that none do harm to, or destroy, another in all God's holy mountain, ***Isaiah 11:6***; let us so carry ourselves, as that, with blessed Paul, we may glory, and say, "We have wronged no man, we have consumed no man, we have defrauded no man," &c., ***2 Corinthians 7:2***.

By profaning the covenant of our fathers. *i.e.* By degenerating from the promises and practices of our pious progenitors. Of this see ***Malachi 2:8***. A certain popish prince said, It is not amiss to make covenants; but woe be to him that is necessitated to keep them. He had learned (much like Machiavel), *fidem tamdiu servandam esse quamdiu expediat,* that covenants are to be kept so long as a man shall see cause. That which was anciently said of the Thracians is now verified of the Papists, that they keep no covenants (*eos foedera nescire*), with heretics especially. The Turks, taught by them, say, There is no faith to be kept with dogs, that is, with Christians. Their leagues, grounded upon the law of nations, and solemnly confirmed by oath, have with them no longer force than standeth with their own pleasure and profit. And if Turks and Papists only were truce breakers and perfidious, it were the better to be borne with. But what shall we say to those *Christiano categori* (as Bellarmine saith a certain sort of heretics were called of old), those blots and botches of Christian religion and holy society, that can say and unsay at pleasure, make vows to God in their distress, and break them as fast when delivered? Just like those Jews in ***Jeremiah 34:8-12***, that set free their servants when the enemy lay before the walls; but reduced them into bondage when the siege was raised, though they had cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof; a most solemn way of sealing up covenants. So dealt their fathers before them, ***Psalms 78:34-37***. And so dealt here their nephews after them. They profaned the covenant of obedience to God's commandments, that their fathers, for themselves and their successors, entered into. But should men thus play

with covenants as children do with nuts? should they slip them at pleasure, as monkeys do their collars? should they snap them in sunder, as Samson did his cords? Had Shimei peace, that brake his oath to Solomon? or Zedekiah, that kept not touch with Nebuchadnezzar? &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:11]]**Verse 11.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Judah hath dealt treacherously**. Judah, the confessor, as his name imports; Judah, that once ruled with God, and was faithful with the saints, ***Hosea 11:12***; Judah, in whom God was known, his name was great in Israel, ***Psalms 76:1***. Prosper's conceit was that *Iudaei* Judah were so called because they received *ius Dei,* the law from God's mouth; whence Josephus calls the commonwealth of Israel Θεο-κρατειαν, a God government. For to them pertained (among sundry other precious privileges recited, ***Romans 9:4-5***) the covenants, that is, 1. The moral law in two tables. 2. The giving of the law, that is, the judicial law. 3. The service, that is, the ceremonial law, which was their gospel; whence Judaea is called the glorious land, ***Daniel 11:41*** (or the land of delights, or ornaments, as the Hebrew hath it), a pleasant land, or a land of desire, ***Jeremiah 3:19***, because, as it is ***Ezekiel 20:6, 15***, it was the glory of all lands. Jerusalem, the metropolis, was not only the most famous of all the cities of the East, as Pliny confesseth it, but also of the whole world, *si insignia Dei spectemus beneficia,* as one saith, if we consider God's marvellous kindness showed to it in a strong city, as David hath it. But, as *ingentia beneficia, flagitia, supplicia,* the greater the privileges of any place or people are the more heinous are their offences, and the more hideous their punishments; so it happened with this nation, so advanced, so obliged, so shamelessly, so lawlessly wicked. They were but newly returned from captivity, scarce yet warm in their nests, when they fell afresh to their old trade of treachery, doing wickedly with both hands earnestly. Abomination was committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, even such as God's soul abhorred, and was ready to be loosened or disjointed from them, ***Jeremiah 6:8***, because "in the land of uprightness they dealt unjustly, and would not behold the majesty of the Lord," ***Isaiah 26:10***. Judah had profaned the holiness of the Lord, which he loved, that is, the very place that he had espied out for himself, and that was dedicated to his name and service, the holy and separate land, the isle, as it is called, ***Isaiah 20:6*** (though part of the continent), because compassed about with God's favour as with a shield, ***Psalms 5:12***. In such a consecrated country to act their villany was no small aggravation of their wickedness; this made it swell like a toad in the eyes of the Almighty, it was an abomination. Filthiness in a cook, in a strumpet, is nothing so odious as in a pretended virgin. A nettle on the waste is better borne with than in a garden. To see the devil in hell is no wonder; but what makes he in paradise? England was anciently called the kingdom of God; it may much better be so called now that the gospel of the kingdom is preached among us. It was also called *Albion, quasi Olbion* (happy or fortunate, the fortunate island, say some), or *ab albis rupibus,* from the whiteness of the rocks. True it is, we were black all over with superstition; first Pagan, and theu Papagan; but Christ hath made us white again as snow in Salmon. And do we again sully and soil ourselves with sin's filthiness, with that unclean kitchen stuff? do we profane the holiness of the Lord, which he loved, to drive him away from us by degrees, as those Jews did, ***Ezekiel 8:9-11***; sin is the leaven that defiles our passover, and urgeth God to pass away and depart from us; sin is the snuff that dims our candlestick, and threatens the removal of it. Let those that live in God's good land, but not in God's good laws (as Aristotle complained of his Athenians to like purpose, and as Seneca said to the Romans, that they were become more filthy since they had baths to wash in), look forward to the following verse, and tremble at that utter destruction there threatened to such, *Disperdet Dominus, &c.* And thereunto St Paul seemeth to allude, ***1 Corinthians 3:17*** "If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy."

And hath married the daughter of a strange god. This is that particular sin whereby they had dealt treacherously against their brethren profaned the covenant, polluted the Church,

and committed abomination in Israel; they had married with women of a strange worship, and joined in affinity with the people of those abominations, as holy Ezra phraseth it, ***Ezra 9:14***, and also setteth it forth for such a sin in those newly returned captives, as he thinks heaven and earth might well be ashamed of. A sin it is, flatly forbidden in both Testaments, ***Deuteronomy 7:8; 2 Corinthians 6:14***; and reasons added: as, 1. Danger of defection, at least, from former forwardness; but most commonly of infection, as in Solomon, ***1 Kings 11:4 Nehemiah 13:26***. What is the reason the Pope will not dispense in Spain and Italy if a Papist marry a Protestant, yet here he will, but in hope to draw more to them. See ***1 Kings 12:25; 2 Kings 8:27.*** 2. Great inconvenience: as, 1. Of grief to the godly parents, ***Genesis 26:35; 27:36.*** 2. Ill education of children, who commonly take after the mother (as did most of those idolatrous kings of Judah), and follow the worse of the two sides, though it be the weaker, as the conclusion in a syllogism follows the weaker proposition. The birth, we say, followeth the belly; and most men, we see, do *matrissare,* take after the mother in matters of religion. Hereunto might be added, that God's service must by these unequal matches necessarily be hindered, if not altogether omitted (to gratify a froward Zipporah, or a mocking Michal), and the better party forced to see and hear that that cannot but grieve the Spirit of God. Besides danger of disloyalty, and a cursed posterity, as Edomites of the daughters of Heth. Here, then, I could join with that reverend contemplator in that holy wish of his (Dr Hall), that Manoah could speak so loud that all our Israelites might hear him: "Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all God's people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?" If religion be any other than a cipher, how dare we not regard it in our most important choices? how dare we yoke ourselves with any untamed heifer that beareth not Christ's yoke? What mad work made that noble pair of naughty packs, Jezebel and Athaliah, in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, the latter beginning her reign in the same year that the former perished, as Bucholcer observeth! And who knoweth not what a deal of mischief was done to the poor people of God in France, by Katherine de Medicis, Queenmother, with the advice and assistance of the Cardinal of Lorrain? Concerning which two it was said,

> "*Non audet stygius Pluto tentare quod audet*
> *Effraenis Monachus plenaque fraudis anus*."{{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:12]]**Verse 12.** {{field-on:Bible}}**The Lord will cut off the man that doth this**. Though the magistrate be careless and corrupt; though he either cannot punish this evil, it being grown so universal, or will not (and so impunity in the magistrate maketh impenitence in the offenders), God will take the sword in hand, and cut off every mother's child that doth this, *nisi currat poeniteatia;* as a surgeon cutteth off a rotten member, so will God destroy such for ever, *Metaphora est a Medicis ducta* (Polan.): he will take them away, and pluck them out of their dwellingplaces, and root them out of the land of the living, ***Psalms 52:5***. Neither shall this be done to himself only, but to his wretched posterity (such a legacy, like Joab's leprosy, leaves every graceless man to his children), for so the Chaldee here rendereth and interpreteth that proverbial expression in the text, both the master and the scholar, *filium et filium filii,* his son, and his son's son, though he teach never so well by wholesome instruction, and political advisement, to prevent the mischief. Agreeably hereunto for sense Piscator rendereth this text thus, The Lord will cut off his children that doth thus, the children that he begets of the daughter of a strange god. A heavy curse, surely, and frequently inflicted, as upon Ahab; though he, to avoid it, so followed the work of generation, that he left seventy sons behind him; which yet would not do.

And him that offereth an offering, &c. That is, although he be a priest; or, although he seek to make peace with me by an offering; as hoping thereby to stop my mouth or stay my hand, to expiate his sin, or to purchase a dispensation, as those ***Micah 6:6-7; Isaiah 58:2-3***. Thus Saul sacrificeth; Ahab trembleth and humbleth; Jeroboam's wife goeth to the prophet; Joab taketh hold of the horns of the altar; the King of Persia, having lost some of his children by untimely

death, as Ctesias reporteth, sends earnestly to the Jews for prayers for him and his, ***Ezra 6:10***. So did Maximinus in like case to the Christians. Cicero (de Nat. Deor.) tells us that they which prayed whole days together and offered sacrifice, *ut sui liberi superstites sibi essent,* that their children might outlive them, these were first called superstitious persons; afterwards the word was taken in a larger sense. But devotion without holy conversation avails nothing to avert God's judgments, ***Isaiah 1:12, 15; 66:3***. He that killeth an ox, unless he also kills his corruptions, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, unless by faith he lay hold upon the Lamb of God, is as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, &c. This men are hardly drawn to, viz. to part with their sins, to cast the traitor's head over the wall, to hang up the heads of the people before the sun. Sin, harboured in the soul, is like Achan in the army, or Jonah in the ship; much pains the mariners endured, and much loss too, to have saved Jonah from the sea; they ventured their own casting away ere they would cast him overboard; but there could be no calm till they had done it effectually. So it is here. Full fain men would keep their sins, and yet save their souls; but that is impossible. God will not be bribed, ***Psalms 50:16-23***, nor brought to suffer sin unrepented to escape unpunished. Poor souls, when stung by the friars' sermons, they set them penances, pilgrimages, all sorts of good works, which stilled them a while; and for them they thought they should have pardon. So many run now among us to holy duties, but with the same opinion they did them as bribes for a pardon. These dig for pearls in their own dunghills, make the means their mediators, think to save themselves by riding on horses, &c., ***Hosea 14:3***. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:13]]**Verse 13.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And this have ye done again**. Or, in the second place: *q.d.* Not content to have married strange wives, ye have brought them in to your lawful wives, to their intolerable vexation; so adding this sin to the former, as a greater to the less. This is still the guise of graceless men, to add drunkenness to thirst, rebellion to sin, to amass and heap up one evil upon another, till wrath come upon them to the utmost. "For three transgressions, and for four, I will not turn away their punishment," ***Amos 1:3***; that is, so long as the wicked commit one or two iniquities, I forbear them; but when it comes once to threes and fours (how much more to so many scores, hundreds, thousands, as one cipher added to a figure makes it so many tens, two so many hundreds, three so many thousands, &c.), God will bear with them no longer. Of those old Israelites it is demanded, not without great indignation on God's part, "How often did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert? Yea, they turned back and tempted God," &c. ***Psalms 78:40-41***. Good men, if they fall once into foul practices, they fall not often. Of Judah it is expressly recorded that he knew Tamar no more. Lot indeed committed incest two nights together; but the orifice of his lust was not yet stopped by repentance. Think the same of Solomon, Samson, Jonah, &c., their acts were, as it were, continued acts; and, in the interim, little or no remorse or regret. Let us that have received mercy be admonished to sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto us, ***John 5:14***. There is a woe to such as draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope, ***Isaiah 5:18***. Babylon's sins in the Revelation reached up to heaven, or they were thwacked together thick and threefold one upon another, ***Revelation 18:5***, there was a concatenation or a continued series of them; therefore she fell surely and suddenly. When wickedness is once ripe in the field God will not let it shed to grow again; but cuts it up by a just and seasonable vengeance.

Covering the altar of the Lord with tears. That is, You caused your poor wives, when they should have been cheerful in God's service, as ***1 Samuel 1:10***, and in many other places it was required of the Israelites to rejoice whensoever they appeared before the Lord. Earthly princes love not the company of mourners, ***Esther 4:4***, to cover the Lord's altar with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, to throw themselves, blubbered and swollen with tears, upon the altar, which was a profanation of it; so that God regarded not the offering any more. It were happy if we could be so affected with our unkindness to Christ, our Husband, that we

could cover his table, when we come to it, with our tears. How should the Lord regard our service so much the more! how should it be unto him as music upon the waters, far more harmonious! What a gracious respect had he to the weeping women that followed him to the cross! and what an honour was that to one of them (Mary Magdalene, I mean) that she had the first sight of the revived Phoenix, whom she held fast by those feet that she had once washed with her tears, and that had now lately trod upon the lion and adder ***Psalms 91:13***. It was appointed by Moses' law that the bondwoman should bewail her father and mother a full month before she might become an Israelite's wife, ***Deuteronomy 21:13***. We, that are strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, as we cannot be presented a chaste virgin to Christ, but as weeping over him that bled over us, so we never please him better than when we weep over our tears (*Ipsae lachrymae sunt lachrymabiles*), sigh over our sobs, mourn over our griefs, as not proportionable to our miscarriages. But to return to the text; the Jews, as they are noted for a nation overmuch effeminate, and given to women, as they say, so, when they have satisfied their lust, and served their own turns, they are as willing to be rid of them as Amnon was of Tamar. Hence those many cautions in the law to put bounds to their petulance; and that political permission of a divorce, for the relief of the poor despised woman, lest she should come to a mischief, by the hatred of the churl her husband, ***Deuteronomy 22:18-19; 24:3***. At this day they look upon women as not having so divine a soul as men, but are of a lower creation, made only for the propagation and pleasure of man. They use them as their drudges, lay upon them with their unmanly fists, are ready to cut out their tongues (as the Welshmen dealt by their French wives, lest they should corrupt the language of their children), put them away upon every slight occasion, covering that violence with the garment of the law, as ***Malachi 2:16***. Or if they kept them, they took other wives to them, to vex them, and to make them to fret, ***1 Samuel 1:6***, or (as the word there signifies) to thunder; not only tabering upon their breasts, with the voice of doves (as Nahum's expression is, ***Nahum 2:7***), but filling the air, yea, covering the altar (as it is here) with their laments and lowings, *flectu et mugitu* (so the Vulgate rendereth), for their husbands' harshness, and their concubines' insolencies and indignities: *Lamentis gemituque et foemineo ululatu Tecta fremunt* (Virg. Aeneid). Jerome tells us that these returned captives slighted their old wives brought with them from Babylon (as being by that tedious journey become infirm and deformed), and matched with strangers, who were fresh, fair, rich, &c.; this he gathers out of ***Ezra 9:1-10:44***, whereas they should rather have nourished and cherished them as their own flesh, ***Ephesians 5:29***, they should have handled them gently, because of their weakness, as so many crystal glasses. They should have given them all lawful content, as Abraham did Sarah, his faithful fellow traveller. They should have given all honour unto them, saith St Peter, ***1 Peter 3:7***; and why? Mark his many reasons. 1. They are the weaker vessels, and are, therefore, to be handled with all tenderness. Some translate it the weaker instrument; and (as Luther speaks of it) as a knife with a tender edge men will not cut stones, brass, or iron with, so here. 2. They are heirs together of the grace of life, that is, of the life of grace, and of glory too; for souls have no sexes, and as every one is in Christ, all are equal, so that the husband is bound, in this respect, to make his wife's yoke as easy as may be, since she draws even with him, though on the left side. 3. That your prayers be not hindered, as they will be, where there is not so much *coniugium* wedlock as *coniurgium.* quarrelling. How can they pray together comfortably that live so discontentedly? How can they bring their gift to that altar that is covered with the tears and moans of their justly aggrieved and abused wives? Or, if they do, will God regard their offering any more, or receive it with good will at their hands? Will not the tears and groans of their distressed wives (who yet hold out their devotion, and will not be hindered by their just grief from praying to God and pouring out their souls before him) move God more than their sacrifices can do? Especially if they bring them with a wicked mind, as Solomon hath it, ***Proverbs 21:27***; and as Lyra maketh it to be the sense of this text; Ye have covered the altar of the Lord with tears, &c., but he regardeth not the offering any more, &c., that is (saith Lyra, and he hath it from Chrysostom),

you are resolved to retain your idolatrous wives, though God have declared against it; and that ye may expiate this wickedness, and make amends by your good deeds for your bad, you run to the temple, and there, with many tears and groans, you beg pardon. But all in vain, because you have no purpose at all to break off your sins, but will needs persist in your unlawful marriages. (***See Trapp on "Malachi 3:16"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:14]]**Verse 14.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Yet ye say, Wherefore?** A senseless question; but there is nothing more stupid and stubborn than a hypocrite; he will not yield, though never so clearly convinced, but will have still somewhat to say though to small purpose, as had Saul to Samuel, ***1 Samuel 15:19-23***, and these questionists here to God, whom, as before often and again after, they put to his proofs. (***See Trapp on "Malachi 1:2"***) (***See Trapp on "Malachi 1:6"***) His answer is ready:

Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth. The heathen could say,

> "*Maxima debetur pueris reverentia siquid*
> *Turpe paras*:"

And again,

> "*Turpe quid acturus tu, sine teste, time*."

We should not do wickedly if but a child be by. And, when thou art about to do aught amiss, fear thine own conscience, which is a thousand witnesses. But if God be by as a witness, should not men fear to offend him? Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob. He that dares sin, though he know God be an eye witness, is more impudent in sinning than was Absalom, when he spread a tent upon the top of the house, and went in to his father's concubines, in the sight of all Israel, and of the sun. These treacherous husbands could not but know that they had entered into a covenant of God, ***Proverbs 2:17***, when they married; that the bond was made to God, and that upon the violation of it he would be ready enough to take the forfeiture; for "whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," ***Hebrews 13:4***. That God had been witness, or had protested (*Protestatus est*), so Montanus renders it, and withal had, by interposing of his own authority, confirmed the contract and compact, saying, *verbis conceptis,* as ***Hosea 3:3***, Thou shalt not be for another man, so will I also be for thee, and not for another woman, till God shall separate us by death. Indeed, if the husband or the wife is dead, the surviving party is at liberty to marry again, ***Romans 7:2***, whatsoever the Canonists say against bigamy. Jerome tells us of an old man in Rome that had buried twenty wives, which he had married one after the death of another; and that he had taken to wife the one-and-twentieth, who also had buried nineteen husbands. And that, burying that wife too, he followed the corpse to the church, so his neighbours would needs have it, with a garland of bays upon his head in manner of a triumpher. But against polygamy (which is, when a man or woman couples himself or herself in marriage to more than one) here are a heap of arguments in the text, which we shall take as they lie in order. Meanwhile it is worthy our observation, that the first author of polygamy was that Thrasonical Lamech, noted for a profane and wicked person; as was likewise Esau, another polygamist. Laban, though he had cheated Jacob into the having of his two daughters to wife, yet he could not but confess it to be a sin against the light of nature. Hence at parting he takes a solemn oath of Jacob, ***Genesis 31:50*** "If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness between me and thee." Some of the fathers were herein faulty, as Abraham, David, &c., and some say it was their privilege; but that is not likely. Rather it was their ignorance or incogitancy (they considered not that it was a breach of the first institution of marriage), or, as some conceive, it was their mere mistake of that text, ***Leviticus 18:18*** "Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her

nakedness, beside the other in her lifetime." Here they took the word (sister) for one so by blood, which was spoken of a sister by nation, ***Ezekiel 16:46***, as those clauses to vex her, and during her life, do evince. One thing was, the commonness of the sin, and the long custom of it. So long had it continued, and was grown so fashionable, that it seemed to be no sin. But debt is debt, whether a man know of it or not; and sin, as a debt, may sleep a long time, and not be called out for many years, as Saul's sin in killing the Gibeonites slept forty years, and Joab's killing of Abner slept all David's days. Another thing that might cause desire of many wives, was want of love and chaste affection to the wife of their youth. Isaac is noted for a most loving husband to his Rebecca; and he never desired more wives than her. "Rejoice in the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe." This will keep thee from being ravished with a strange woman, or embracing the bosom of a stranger, ***Proverbs 5:18-20***. The hind and the roe are most loving to their mates, and, therefore, most faithful to them. So, among birds, are the turtle dove and the stork. The former, they say, as he keeps close to his mate while she lives; so when she dies, he groans and moans continually, and never sits upon a green bough. The latter are chaste and severe in punishing those of the kind that are not. It is credibly reported by some that have seen it, that whole flocks of storks, meeting in a meadow, they have set in the midst of them two of their company that have been found disloyal, and, running upon them with main force, have killed them with their beaks. So that the company breaking up, and all the rest flying away, the two offending storks only have been found dead in the place.

Against whom thou hast dealt treacherously. viz. By superinducing another wife contrary to thy covenant. This is not a simple injury against thy lawful wife; but such as is joined with contumely, which the Greeks call ὕβρις; and the children that come of such copulation they call ὑβρίζεις, because they are subject to contumelies. The Hebrews call them brambles; Abimelech was such a one, ***Judges 9:14***, a right bramble indeed, who grew in the base hedge row of a concubine; and scratched and drew blood to purpose. Lo, this is the prophet's first argument against polygamy; it is treachery against both God, who is deeply interested in the marriage covenant, and against the true wife, who is hereby extremely defrauded and defeated, Follows now the second:

Yet she is thy companion. Thy companion, and co-partner, thy consort, and fellow friend, such another as thyself, so the woman is called, ***Genesis 2:18***, a second self, a mate suitable for thee, a piece so just cut out for thee, as answereth thee rightly in every point, in every joint. A wife is not a slave, saith one, but a companion; a yoke fellow, standing on even ground with thee, though drawing on the left side. From the left side, say some, she was taken, where the heart is, to teach that hearty love should be between married couples. Made she was of a rib, a bone of the side; not of the head (the wife must not usurp authority over her husband), nor yet of the foot, she may not be trampled upon or disregarded as an underling. A bone, not of any anterior part, she is not *praelata,* preferred before the man; neither yet of any hinder part; she is not *postposita,* set behind the man; but a bone of the side, of the middle of the indifferent part, to show that she is thy companion and the wife of thy covenant. A bone she is from under the arm; to put man in mind of protection and defence to the woman: a bone, not far from his heart; to put him in mind of dilection and love to the woman. Neither can the rib challenge any more of her than the earth can do of him. And as he was ignorant when himself was made, so he knew as little when his second self was made out of him; both that the comfort might be greater than was expected, as also that he might not upbraid his wife with any great dependance or obligation; he neither willing the work, nor suffering any pain to have it done. Shine she must with the beams of her husbaid; share she must with him in his masterly government of the family, as Sarah did with Abraham, by God's allowance, ***Genesis 16:1-6***, and as the Roman ladies were wont to say to their husbands, *Ubi tu Caius, ibi ego Caia,* where you are lord I am lady. That over lordly behavior of husbands towards their wives, and that usage

of them as drudges, is condemned by the heathen philosophers, in the very Barbarians themselves, as a great ἀταξία, and disorder in the family.

And the wife of thy covenant. And is it nothing to be a covenant breaker with a wife; especially where God also is engaged, as above said? *Foedus* παρά τὸ πεποιθέναι πίστις, *ab eadem radice,* perform your trust, make good the troth you have plighted. Otherwise, if the fruits of the flesh grow out of the trees of your hearts, surely, surely, saith master Bradford, martyr, the devil is at in with you; you are his birds, whom, when he hath well fed, he will broach you and eat you, chaw you and champ you, world without end, in eternal woe and misery. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:15]]**Verse 15.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And did not he make one**. Another forcible argument against polygamy and adultery. See our Saviour's explanation of it, ***Matthew 19:4-6***. (***See Trapp on "Matthew 19:4"***) (***See Trapp on "Matthew 19:5"***) (***See Trapp on "Matthew 19:6"***) The only wise God made but one woman for one man at the first creation; and ordained that those two should be one flesh, two in one flesh, not three or four, or as many wives as a man is able to maintain, as among the Turks, who, as a just hand of God upon them, are grievously vexed with jealousy, not suffering their women to go to church, nor so much as look out at their own windows; or, if they go abroad upon any occasion, they must go muffled, all but the eyes. Sardus tells us, that the old Britons would ten or twelve of them take one woman to wife. Likely, women were rare commodities, with them. As likewise men were in Judaea, when "seven women took hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach," ***Isaiah 4:1***: that is, we will maintain ourselves and thee; only be thou a husband to us, and let us have children by thee.

Yet had he the residue of the spirit. Or, breath; so that he could as easily have made more, and breathed into their faces the breath of life. And although it is not said of the woman, that God breathed into her the breath of life, as of Adam (whence Tertullian concludes, that she had both body and soul too from Adam), yet Austin rightly gathereth, that their souls were both alike imbreathed by God; otherwise, the Scripture would not have been silent in it, no more than it is in the new manner of the creation of her body. Thence also it is that Adam saith not, This is soul of my soul, but "bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh," ***Genesis 2:23***. Souls are not propagated by the parents, but created of God, and joined to the body, by a hidden or secret operation. Augustine, following Origen, held the contrary for a long time. At length he began to doubt, and after a while changed his opinion; Jerome stoutly defending the contrary against him. Aristotle also understood the truth hereof, and concluded, that the soul was divine, and came from above; and though of nothing, yet is it made a matter more excellent than the matter of the heavens, in nature not inferior to the angels. λείπεται δὲ τὸν νοῦν μόνον θύραθεν ἐπεισταναι καὶ θεῖον εἶναι μόνον. Lib. 2, c. 9. An abridgment it is of the invisible world, as the body is of the visible. And why may we not say, that the soul, as it came from God, being *divinae particula aurm,* so it is like him? One immaterial, immortal, understanding spirit, distinguished into three powers, which all make up one spirit. In this respect it is said, ***Genesis 9:6***, that in the image of God made he man. There is a double image of God in the soul. One, in the substance of it; this is never lost, and of this that text is to be understood. The other is the supernatural grace, which is an image of the knowledge, holiness, and righteousness of God, and this is utterly lost, and must be recovered. This the ancient heathens hammered at when they feigned that the soul once had wings; but, those being broken, it fell headlong into the body; where when it hath recovered its wings, it flies up to heaven again. That was very good counsel given by a godly man to his friend, not to busy his brains so much in inquiring how the soul entered into the body as how it may depart comfortably out of the body. And seeing the soul is more excellent than the body (saith

another grave divine), like as Jacob laid his right hand upon the younger, but his left upon the elder, so our best care, and the strength of our thoughts, should be for the soul, younger as much as it is than the body; they should be but left hand thoughts for the body.

And wherefore one? that he might seek a godly seed. Heb. a seed of God; not a bastardly brood, a spurious issue, *a mamzer,* as the Hebrews call such, that is, *labes aliens,* a strange blot, a "seed of the adulterer and the whore," ***Isaiah 57:3***; but such as God appointeth and approveth, such as may be holy, with a federal holiness at least, if not sanctified from the womb, as some have been, and are, ***1 Corinthians 7:14***; lastly, such as in and by whom the Church and religion may be propagated, and not idolatry spread and increased.

Therefore take heed to your spirit. That is, to your wife, which is the residue of your spirit; keep and cherish her; so Remigius and Lyra interpret it. But they do better that expound it by that of Solomon, "Keep thy heart with all diligence," ***Proverbs 4:23***, and by that of the apostle, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence," &c., ***Colossians 3:5***. These are those that defile the man, ***Matthew 15:19-20***. These make his heart a filthy dunghill of all abominable lusts, and his life a long chain of sinful actions, a very continued web of wickedness; "therefore take heed to your spirits," that is, to your affections, keep those pure and chaste; abstain from fleshly lusts that fight against the soul. Take heed where you set gunpowder, since fire is in your heart. Austin thanks God that the heart and temptation did not meet together. Look well to the affections; for by those maids Satan woos the mistress. Look to the *cinque ports,* the five senses, shut those windows, that death enter not in thereby. Take heed to thy fancy: we allow a horse to prance and skip in a pasture; which if he doth when backed by the rider, we count him an unruly and unbroken jade. So, howsoever in other creatures we deny them not liberty of fancy, yet we may not allow it in ourselves, to frisk and rove at pleasure, but by reason bridle them, and set them their bounds that they shall not pass. The Lord quieteth the sea, and turns the storm into a calm, ***Psalms 107:29***. If then the voluptuous humours in our body (which is but as a cup made of the husk of an acorn in respect of the sea) will not be pacified when the Lord saith unto them, Be still, every drop of water in the sea will witness our rebellion and disobedience.

And let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. He had convinced them of this sin before, ***Malachi 2:14***. Now he admonisheth them to abrenounce and abandon it. Lo, this is the true method and manner of proceeding in administering admonitions. The judgment must be convinced ere the affections can be wrought to anything; like as in the law, the lamps were first lighted before the incense was burned. First know thine iniquity, and then turn from it, ***Jeremiah 3:13-14***. Exhortation is the end of doctrine, science of conscience, reformation of information, conversion of conviction; and woe be to those that being convinced, or reproved, for their faults, get the bit between the teeth, as it were, and run away with their rider. When I would have healed Ephraim, then his iniquity brake out (as if it were to cross me) like the leprosy in his forehead, ***Hosea 7:1***. What can such sturdy rebels expect better than that God should resolve, as ***Ezekiel 24:13***, as if he should say, Thou shalt have thy will, but then I will have mine too; I shall take another course with thee, since thou refusest to be reformed, hatest to be healed; thou shalt pine away in thine iniquities, ***Leviticus 26:39***. Oh fearful! {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:16]]**Verse 16.** {{field-on:Bible}}**For the Lord the God of Israel saith, that he hateth putting away**. Heb. Put away: *q.d.* God hates that "Put her away, put her away," that is, so much in your mouths. For, because you are justly reproved for polygamy, for keeping two wives, you think to mend that fault by putting away your old ones, and plead you may do it by a law, licensing divorces. But the Lord would ye should know that he hates such practices; and the rather because you maliciously abuse his law, as a cloak of your wickedness. Divorce is a

thing that God's soul hateth, unless it be in case of adultery, which breaks the marriage knot, and malicious perpetual desertion, ***1 Corinthians 7:15***. This last was the ease of that noble Italian convert, Galeacius Caracciolus, Marquis of Vico (as is to be seen in his Life, written by my muchhonoured brother, Mr Samuel Clark, in the second part of his Marrow of Ecclesiastical History, p. 101), who by the consent of Mr Calvin, Peter Martyr, and other learned divines, who met and seriously debated the case, sued out a divorce against his former wife, who had first maliciously deserted him, and had it legally by the magistrate at Geneva granted unto him; after which he married another, A.D. 1560. The civil law of the empire permitted divorce for divers other causes. And these Jews, for every light cause (if but a blemish in the body, or crookedness of manners), pretending to hate their wives, would write them a bill of divorce, and turn them off. Our Saviour deals against this, Matt. v.; xix; see the notes there. This sin was also rife among both the Athenians (who were wont to put away their wives upon discontent, or hope of greater portions, &c.), and the Romans, whose *Abscessionale,* or writ of divorce, was this only, *Res tuns tibi habeto;* Take what is thine, and be gone. It is ordinary also among the Mahometans. But the Lord God of Israel saith here, that he hateth it; and it appeareth so by his practice to his spouse, the Church. See ***Jeremiah 3:1; John 13:1***, and then say, that God's mercy is matchless; and that he takes not advantages against his revolting people, but follows them with his favour; no otherwise than as when a man goes from the sun, yet the sunbeams follow him, shine upon him, warm him, &e. Zanchy (and some others) reads the text thus, If thou hatest her, put her away, in that discourse of divorces, which he wrote upon the occasion of Andreas Pixzardus's divorce, as indeed agreeing best with the matter he undertook to defend. But in another book of his he utterly disliketh the doings of Luther, and some other Dutch divines, who advised Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, to marry, *alteram, hoc est, adulteram,* his former lawful wife being yet alive. Archbishop Grindall, by cunning practices of his adversaries, Leicester and others, lost Queen Elizabeth's favour, as if he favoured prophesyings, &c., but in truth, because he had condemned an unlawful marriage of Julio, an Italian physician, with another man's wife, while Leicester in vain opposed against his proceedings therein. Archbishop Abbots also led in disgrace for opposing Somerset's abhorred match with the Countess of Essex.

For one covereth violence with his garment. This text had been easy had not commentators (the Hebrew doctors especially) made it knotty. Rabbi David, in opening it, *obscurior videtur, quam ipsa verba quae explicare conatur,* seems to be more obscure than the words themselves which he undertaketh to open, saith Figueir, who also reciteth the expositions of several rabbins. Concerning which, I may say, as one did once, when being asked by another whether he should read such a comment upon Aristotle? answered, Yes; when Aristotle is understood, then read the comment. The plain sense is this: These wicked Jews pretended the law of God, as a cloak and cover of their sin, that it might be no sin to them. And though the Lord had protested to hate their divorces, yet they pleaded I know not what liberty permitted them by Moses; but this was but a political coverture of iniquity, ***Matthew 18:8-9***. The like whereunto was the sin of Saul, ***1 Samuel 15:10-23***; of Jezebel, ***1 Kings 21:13***; of those Jews, ***John 19:7***; of those libertines, ***2 Peter 2:1-3; James 2:8-9***; of all heretics, that plead Scripture for their heresies; and some others impudently impious, who, lest they should seem to be mad without reason, abuse God's holy word to the defence of their unreasonable and irreligious practices. These men's judgments now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation sleepeth not, ***2 Peter 2:3***.

Therefore take heed to your spirit. A repetition of the dehortation; of which see ***Malachi 3:16***. Good things must be often inculcated, ***Philippians 3:1***, one exhortation must peg in another, till they stick in our souls, as forked arrows in the flesh. Men do not use to lay ointments only upon their lame limbs, but rub them, and chafe them in; so here. Austin persuades the preacher so long to insist upon a necessary point till, by the gesture and

countenance of the hearers, he perceiveth that they understand and relish it. Chrysostom, being asked by his people when he would stop preaching against swearing? answered, Never till you stop your swearing. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 2:17]]**Verse 17.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Ye have wearied the Lord with your words**. *Laborare fecistis Dominum,* so the Vulgate renders it. Ye have put the Lord to pain, as it were; ye have even tired out his patience, while ye have made him to serve with your sins, and have wearied him with your iniquities, ***Isaiah 43:24*** "I have long time held my peace; I have been still and refrained myself," saith the Lord: "now will I cry like a travailing woman," that hath long time bitten in her pain, I will destroy and devour at once, ***Isaiah 42:14***. God can hear and forbear as well as any other: Who is a God like unto thee for this? saith Micah, ***Micah 7:17***. Were the most patient man upon earth in God's stead, but for a very short time, to see and hear the provocations and indignities daily done unto him by the sinful sons of men, he would soon be weary of it, he would quickly make a short work upon the earth, ***Romans 9:28***. It would trouble his patience to spread out his hands all day long to a rebellious people, ***Isaiah 65:2***, to give forty days' respite to Nineveh, that bloody city, full of lies and robbery, ***Nahum 3:1***, to be grieved forty years long with a perverse people, and to suffer their evil manners in the wilderness, ***Acts 13:18***, to bear four hundred years with those wretched Amorites, who had filled the land from one end to the other with their abominable uncleannesses, ***Ezra 9:11***. In the fourth chapter of Ezekiel God is brought in as lying upon his left side for three hundred and ninety years, ***Ezekiel 4:5-6***; a long while to lie on one side, without turning on the other, and all to set forth his longsufferance. Our text tells us that he is patient, even *ad defatigationem usque,* up the point of being worn out toward the wicked; he bears till he can bear no longer. See the like ***Romans 9:22***, and the reason, ***Romans 2:4***, and the ill use that is made of it, ***Ecclesiastes 8:11-13***, till they tire out him that is indefatigable, ***Jeremiah 15:6***, and made him weary of repenting. But is this a safe course they take? Do they provoke the Lord to wrath? Are they stronger than he? ***1 Corinthians 10:22*** "Hear ye now, O house of David: Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but ye will weary my God also?" ***Isaiah 7:13***. Will he not put an end to his abused patience, that justice, justice (as Moses hath it), actual and active justice, may take place? ***Deuteronomy 16:20***. God in Ezekiel is said to sit upon a throne, to show his slowness; but this throne hath wings, to show his swiftness to come, if need require. His patience passeth along as a pleasant river. But if men stop the course of it by their blasphemies and contumelies, as here, and press in with their provocations, as a cart that is leaden with sheaves, ***Amos 2:13***, God will surely have his full blow at them, ***Nahum 1:2, 6; Romans 2:4; Hebrews 12:29***.

With your words. That is, with your continual contentions and quibblings; or with those ensuing words, blasphemous enough, and atheistic; together with your bold justification of them; "yet ye say, Wherein," &c.

When ye say, Every one that doth evil, &c. As if they should say, God punisheth not, but prospereth the wicked; therefore he loveth and favoureth them above better men. Job, Jeremiah, and David were once, for a fit, in the same error, but soon recanted it when once the waters of the sanctuary had cured their eyesight, ***Psalms 73:17***, for such are sand blind, and cannot see far off, ***2 Peter 1:9***.

Or, Where is the God of judgment. *q.d.* Nowhere; either there is no God, or, at least, not a God of that exact, precise, impartial judgment, such an emphasis there is in the Heb. Diagoras turned atheist, because his adversary that had robbed him was not presently thunderstruck (Corn. a Lapide). The like is recorded of Porphyry, Lucian, Averroes, and others. (***See Trapp on "Malachi 3:14"***) (***See Trapp on "Malachi 3:14"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 3

[[@bible:Malachi 3:1]]**Verse 1.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Behold, I will send my messenger**. It is well observed by the learned, that this whole prophecy of Malachi, though distinguished, as now, into several chapters, yet is but one entire sermon, at once delivered. Those atheists that asked in the precedent verse (and they did it with an accent too, that they might not be slighted), "where is the God of judgment?" are here fully answered; and that they might the better attend, they have it with a note of pregnancy, "Behold, I will send," &c. *q.d. differtur quidem iudicium sed non aufertur. Tandem veniet, profecto veniet.* Judgment comes not as soon as you call for it; but come it will, be sure it will. For, behold, I send, in the present tense, my messenger, the Baptist, and, at his heels, as it were, Messiah, the Prince, who shall reform and rectify all disorders. "For judgment," saith he, "come I into the world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind," ***John 9:39***. And then, you that call for judgment shall have enough of it; when ye see my messsenger, harbinger, or herald, know that I am hard at hand. "Behold": this is set here as the sound of a trumpet before some proclamation, to arouse men's attention.

I will send. Heb. I do send, or, am sending; though the thing was not done till four or five hundred years after; but in God's purpose and promise it was a done thing already. All things are present with him, for he is a pure act; his whole essence is wholly an eye, or a mind; he is all things eminently, exemplarily, and contains all things in himself. Hence he knows temporal things after an eternal manner, mutable things immutably, contingent things infallibly, future things presently. Hence he calleth things that yet are not, as if they were, ***Romans 4:17***; and this, as in the works of creation, renovation, resurrection, so in the accomplishment of his promises, which we must not antedate, as we are apt to do; but learn to live by faith, ***Habakkuk 2:2***. Possibly the calendar of heaven hath a post-date to ours. Strive to be strong in faith, and glorify God.

My messenger. Not Christ, as Eusebius doted (lib. 5, de Demon. Evang. cap. 28), nor Messiah, the son of Joseph, that is, of the tribe of Joseph, as Rabbi Abraham would have it (for the Jews foolishly expect two Messiahs, one the son of David, and the other the son of Joseph), nor an angel of heaven, as Rabbi David interprets it, according to ***Exodus 23:20***; but John Baptist, as our Savidur expounds himself ***Matthew 11:10***, who is here called Christ's messenger, or angel, by reason of his office: one by whom he would manifest his mind to his people. "He was a burning and a shining light," ***John 5:35***, or lamp, and shone for a season, till the Sun of righteousness came in place: as lights and candles are of good use till the sun riseth. See ***1 Samuel 3:8***.

And he shall prepare the way. *Expurgabit, everret, emundabit.* He shall clear the way, sweep it, accoutre or dress it. He shall remove all *rubs* and *remoras* out of the way, he shall pare and pave a path for Christ into the soul, open those everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in; he shall make "ready a people for the Lord," ***Luke 1:17***. Man's heart is full of mountains and valleys, ***Luke 3:5***. These must be levelled ere Christ can be admitted: and that is not done but by repentance unto life. As John Baptist was Christ's forerunner into the world; so must repentance be his forerunner into the heart: for he that repenteth not, the kingdom of heaven is far from him; so that he cannot see it (as the Hebrew word here used imports he must do), for his lusts that hang in his light, חנפ *viam aperture et oculis intuentium conspicuam faciet.*

And the Lord whom ye seek. Dominator, that Lord paramount, of whom David speaketh, ***Psalms 110:1***, and for whose sake Daniel desireth to be heard, ***Daniel 9:17***. Messiah the Prince, ***Daniel 3:25***, the Prince and Saviour, ***Acts 5:31***, Lord and Christ, ***Acts 2:36***, the God of judgment, whom they called for, ***Malachi 2:17***, and whom they are said to seek for. As God, he

is not very far from any of us, saith Paul, ***Acts 17:27***, not so far as the bark is from the tree; for in him we all live, and move, and subsist. And as Godman, he

shall suddenly come to his temple. Suddenly, that is, in the fulness of time (which is but a short time in respect to the long expectation of the patriarchs), and speedily after John Baptist's birth; suddenly also, because unexpectedly to the most, who stood amazed at his preaching, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter, &c.? To his temple he came, when presented there to be circumcised, ***Luke 2:21-39***, when he put forth a beam of his Divinity there, in his disputation with the doctors, ***Luke 2:46-49***. But especially when he purged the temple; 1. By his doctrine, ***Matthew 5:1-12; 15:1-20***; and 2. By his discipline, ***John 2:14-16; 12:12***; at which time, "Tell ye the daughter of Sion," saith God, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass," ***Matthew 21:5***; not upon a stately palfrey, [8] as an earthly potentate. And that was the very cause that these in the text, that are said to see him when they had him among them, could by no means think well of him, in respect of his mean and despicable condition. They had a certain notion of the Messiah, and were in expectation of him, and of temporal deliverance and felicity by him, of which, when disappointed, they were as blank as the time they saw the hoped issue of their late Jewish virgin turned to a daughter; or when they saw Mahomet eat of a camel; whom till then, when they saw him arising in such power, they were ready to cry up for their long looked for Messiah (Dr Hall's Peacemaker).

Even the messenger of the covenant. viz. Of the covenant of grace; for in Christ God reconciled the world to himself. And of this covenant Christ is the angel, or messenger, because, 1. He revealeth it, and we must take heed how we slight it, ***Hebrews 2:3***, shift it, ***Hebrews 12:25.*** 2. He mediateth it, ***1 Timothy 2:5***, and in and by him it hath accomplishment, ***2 Corinthians 1:20***. Hence, ***Isaiah 9:6***, he is called the Prince of peace, and, according to the Septuagint there, the Angel of the great counsel: Μεγάλης τῆς βουλῆς ἄγγελος. Let all that would receive mercy from God get into Christ, and so into covenant; for as the mercy seat was no larger than the ark, so neither is the grace of God than the covenant of grace; and as the ark and mercy seat were never separated, so neither are such from God as are found in Christ.

Whom ye delight in. They delighted in his day, the better sort of them, though afar off, ***John 8:56***; they anticipated him, and were recognised by him, ***Hebrews 11:13***. They promised themselves, through Christ, *malorum ademptionem, honorum adeptionem,* freedom from all evil, and fruition of all good. Hence he is called, "the desire of all nations," ***Haggai 2:8***. The Church in the Canticles saith he is *totus desiderabilis,* altogether desirable, ***Solomon's Song 5:16***. The Church in Isaiah desires him with her whole soul, ***Isaiah 26:9; 64:1***; as impatient of further delays, crieth out, "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence." "Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down, righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation," &c., ***Isaiah 45:8***. Lo, what earnest rantings and disquieting ways were in those ancient believers after Christ, what continual sallies, as it were, and egressions of affection.

Behold, he shall come. He shall, he shall; nay, he is even come already: for so the Hebrew hath it, *Hinneh ba,* behold, he is come; methinks I even see him. A like text there is ***Habakkuk 2:3***. The duty required is, wait; the promise is delivered doubled and tripled: It shall speak, it will come, it will surely come. Nay, doubled again: It shall not lie, it will not tarry. It is as if God had said, Do but wait, and you shall be delivered, you shall be delivered, you shall be delivered; you shall, you shall. Oh the rhetoric of God! oh the certainty of the promises! A Lapide's note is not here to be passed by. This word "Behold" signifieth that this coming of Christ in the flesh

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[8] A saddle-horse for ordinary riding as distinguished from a war-horse; *esp.* a small saddle-horse for ladies. ŒD.

should be, 1. New, admirable, and stupendous. 2. Sure and certain. 3. Desirable and joyful. 4. Famous and renowned.

Saith the Lord of hosts. And that is assurance good enough; for hath he said it, and shall he not do it? Here is firm footing for faith; and men are bound to rest in God's *Ipse dixit.* He spoke for himself. Abraham did, and required no other evidence, ***Romans 4:16-22***. He cared not for the deadness of his own body or of his wife's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief. No more must we, if we will be heirs of the world, with faithful Abraham. God's truth and power are the Jachin and Boaz, the two pillars whereupon faith must repose; believing God upon his bare word, and that against sense, in things invisible, and against reason, in things incredible.{{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:2]]**Verse 2.** {{field-on:Bible}}**But who may abide the day of his coming?** The prophet Isaiah asketh "Who shall declare his generation?" ***Isaiah 53:8***, that is, the mystery of his incarnation (that *habitatio Dei cum carne,* which the magicians held impossible, ***Daniel 2:11***); or the history of his birth, life, and death (as some sense it), whose tongue shall be able to speak it or pen to write it? Who can think of the day of his coming? so the Vulgate reads this text; viz. of all the glory, graces, benefits of that day? But the Hebrew word is the same as ***Proverbs 18:14*** "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity"; and is so rendered here by the Chaldee and Kimchi. Who can sustain or abide the day of his coming, *sc.* in the flesh? What wicked man will be able to endure it? for, "he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth" (that is, the consciences of carnal men glued to the earth), "and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked," ***Isaiah 11:4***. And this is spoken of the Branch that grew out of the root of Jesse, ***Isaiah 11:1***, when that goodly family was sunk so low, as from David the king to Joseph the carpenter. With what terror struck he the hearts of Herod and all Jerusalem by the news of his nativity! ***Matthew 2:3***. And *si praesepe vagientis Herodem tantum terruit, quid tribunal iudicantis?* If Christ in the cradle were so terrible, what will he be on the tribunal? The text that troubled those miscreants was ***Micah 5:2***, which some (taking *tsagnir* in the neuter gender) render thus: And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, it is a small thing to be among the princes of Judah; out of thee shall come a ruler, &c. This Herod and his complices could not hear of without horror; as neither could that other Herod, of the fame of Christ's mighty works, ***Matthew 14:1-2***, such a glimpse of divine glory shone in them. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness surpriseth the hypocrites"; and they run as far and as fast as they can from Christ, with these frightful words in their mouths: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who shall abide with the everlasting burnings?" The ruffian soldiers were flung flat on their backs when he said no more but, "I am he," ***John 18:6***. *Quid autem Iudicaturus faciet, qui iudicandus hoc fecit?* What will he do when he comes to judgment, who was thus terrible now that he was to be judged? (August.). Oh that the terror of the Lord might persuade people to forsake their sins, and to kiss the Son, lest he be angry. Though a lamb, he can be terrible to the kings of the earth; and though he break not the bruised reed, ***Matthew 12:20***, yet his enemies he will break with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings, &c., ***Psalms 2:9-10***. And as the sun, moon, and eleven stars in Joseph's vision did obeisance to him; so let our souls, bodies, all our temporal, natural, moral, and spiritual abilities, be subject and serviceable to Christ, as ever we hope to look him in the face with comfort.

And who shall stand when he appeareth? Heb. at the sight of him. True it is that Christ, coming to help us in distress, for the want of external pomp in his ordinances, and worldly glory in his ministers and members, and splendour of human eloquence in his doctrines, is despised by those that form and frame to themselves a Christ like to the mighty monarchs of the earth; like as Agesilaus, King of Spartans, coming to help the King of Egypt, was slighted in that country for his lowly clothes and contemptible outside. But if the centurion were worthy of respect, because he loved the Jewish nation, and built them a synagogue; shall not Christ

much more, even as prince of the kings of the earth, since he loved us, and washed us with his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, ***Revelation 1:5, 6***; by whom also he is made unto us righteousness (imputatively), wisdom, sanctification, and redemption, effectively, by way of inherency and gracious operation? "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?" as the men of Bethshemesh once said, ***1 Samuel 6:20***. Who would not fear this King of nations, saith Jeremiah, ***Jeremiah 10:7***, this King of saints? saith John, ***Revelation 15:3-4***, for to him doth it appertain; since there is none like unto him; neither can any stand before him when he appeareth, any more than a glass bottle can stand before a cannon shot. O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before this Lord our maker, ***Psalms 95:6***. If we harden our hearts he will harden his hand, and hasten our destruction. There is no standing before this lion, no bearing up sail in the tempest of his wrath: you must either be his subjects or his footstool; either vail to him or perish by him. "Thine arrows are in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee," ***Psalms 45:5***. What a world of miseries have the refractory Jews suffered, and do yet, for rejecting the Lord Jesus! They might have known, out of their own cabalists (besides Daniel's seventy weeks, and other Scripture evidences), that the Messiah was among them; for it is there expressly recorded that Messias should come in the time of Hillel's disciples; one of whom was Simeon the Just, who embraced the child Jesus in his arms; who also foretold that that child was "set for the ruin and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which should be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed," ***Luke 2:34-35***; and to the same purpose, ***1 Peter 2:7-8***. But before them both, our prophet here.

For he is like a refiner's fire. Intimating that the times of the Messiah would be discriminating, shedding times; and that he would separate the precious from the vile, the gold from the dross, the sheep from the goats: that Nabal should no more be called Nadib, the vile person liberal, the churl bountiful, ***Isaiah 32:5***; but that good people should be discerned and honoured; hypocrites detected and detested, as was Judas, Magus, Demas, &c., slit up and slain by Christ's two-edged sword, by his presence and preaching. Surely "his fan is in his hand," though the devil and his imps would fain wring it out, "and he will throughly purge his floor," *mali in area nobiscum esse possunt, in horreo non possunt* (Augustine), he will drive the chaff one way and the wheat another; for what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord, ***Matthew 3:12; Jeremiah 23:20***; he will purify the souls of his saints, "in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren," ***1 Peter 1:22***. So that they shall be united to such, and separated from sinners. Fire, we know, *congregat homogenea, segregat heterogenea;* for what fellowship hath light with darkness? The spirit of Christ, called a spirit of judgment and of burning, washeth away (lo, here refiner's fire and fuller's soap) the filth of the daughter of Zion, and purgeth the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, ***Isaiah 4:4***. By filth and blood understand their excessive bravery, mentioned ***Isaiah 3***, which now they had learned to call by another name, since their own names were written among the living in Jerusalem, ***Isaiah 4:3***. And here God made good to them that which he had promised, ***Isaiah 1:25***, that he would purely purge away their dross, and take away all their tin; and that though their sins were as scarlet, they should be white as snow; though red like crimson, they should be as wool, ***Isaiah 3:18***. Fuller's soap (or soap weed, Saponaria, as some render it) is of singular use to fetch out stains and spots, and to whiten wool: so much more is the blood and spirit of Christ to whiten sinful souls, and to make men his candidates, *ut fiant Candidati Dei.* Such were those Corinthians ***1 Corinthians 6:11*** "Such were some of you" (that is, as bad as bad might be, lepers all over), "but ye are washed," *sc.* by that fuller of souls, Christ Jesus. And if any ask, How washed? It follows, "but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name," that is, by the merit of the Lord Jesus, "and by the spirit of our God." The Jews in their Talmud hammer at this, when they question, what is the name of Messias? Their answer is, *Hhevara,* leprous *(sc.* by imputation, ***2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:6***, whence also he is said by one to be *Maximus peccatorum,* the greatest of sinners), and he sitteth among the poor in the gates of

Rome, carrying their sicknesses, according to that, "Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses." There are two things in guilt. 1. The merit and desert of it: this Christ took not. 2. The obligation to punishment: this he took, and so he became sin, that is, bound to the punishment of sin; which also he suffered, even to the effusion of his blood (that true *Pactolus,* agreement or rather Jordan), whereby he hath cleansed his people from sins, both guiltiness and filthiness. We have inveterate stains, which will hardly be got out till the cloth be almost rubbed to pieces: corruption cleaves so close to us, that fire and fuller's soap is but needful to fetch it off, ***Jeremiah 13:23***. Nature and custom have made our spots like that of the leopard, which no art can cure, no water wash off; because they are not in the skin only, but in the flesh and bones, in the sinews and in the most inner parts. Hence David prayeth again and again to be washed thoroughly, to be purged with hyssop, to be washed and wrung in this fuller's soap of Christ's blood, and with the clean water of his Holy Spirit. This is the only true purgatory, the king's bath, the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, ***Zechariah 13:1***. Here Christ washeth his, not only from outward defilements, but from their swinish nature; that when washed clean they may not (as else they would) wallow in the next guzzle. Here are those sovereign muddifying waters of the sanctuary, which so wash off the corruption of the ulcer, that they cool the heat, and stay the spread of the infection; and by degrees heal the same. Hither poor sinners need not come, as to the pool of Bethesda, one by one, but as Turks to their Mahomet, Papists to their Lady, by troops and caravans, true Christians to their All-sufficient Saviour, how much more! In that pool of Bethesda the priests used to wash their sacrifices; because no unclean thing might come within the temple. The water was of reddish colour, and ran into that place in great abundance; and therefore it was called, saith one, the house of effusion. This shadowed out that every one of Christ's sheep must be washed in the pool of his blood before they can be meet sacrifices, an offering unto the Lord in righteousness, as it is in the next verse. Other blood stains what is washed in it; this blood of the spotless Lamb whiteneth as fuller's soap, and purifieth from all pollution of flesh and spirit, ***Revelation 7:14*** "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood," ***1 John 5:6***. The priests of the old law were consecrated first with oil, and then with blood; so was Christ, first with the Spirit, ***Isaiah 61:1***, and then with his own blood, for our benefit. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:3]]**Verse 3.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And he shall sit as a refiner**. *i.e.* He shall stick to the work, and not start from it, "till he bring forth judgment to victory," ***Matthew 12:20***, that is, till he have perfected the work of grace begun in his people (for he is "author and finisher of their faith," ***Hebrews 12:2***), and by patience made them "perfect and entire, wanting nothing," ***James 1:4***. Christ, who is the God of all grace, and hath called them to his eternal glory, will, after they have suffered awhile in his furnace, or refining pot, (***Proverbs 17:3***) of afflictions, "make them perfect, establish, strengthen, settle them," ***1 Peter 5:10***, yea, make all grace to abound toward them; "that they always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work," ***2 Corinthians 9:8***. For which holy purpose Christ, our refiner, hath his fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem, ***Isaiah 31:9***, his conflatories and his crucibles, wherein his third part being brought through the fire, shall be refined as silver is refined, and tried as gold is tried, ***Zechariah 13:9*** "that the trial of their faith" (who have glorified him in the very fires, ***Isaiah 24:15***), "being much more precious than that of gold that perisheth, may be found to praise and honour and glory," ***1 Peter 1:7***. True gold will undergo the trial of the seventh fire, which alchemy gold will not. Christ Jesus, after that he hath been to his people as a refiner's fire and fuller's soap, that is, after that he hath justified and sanctified them also in some part, will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, that is, he will be serious, accurate, and assiduous in scouring them from corruption by correption, in purging out the remnants of sin by affliction sanctified. "For by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin," ***Isaiah 27:9***. Christ hath bought off all her corruptions, redeemed us from all iniquity, ***Titus 2:14***, and God will have the price of Christ's

blood out; what the word purgeth not the rod must: like as what evil humours summer purgeth not out by sweating, winter concocts by driving in the heat. And as winter is of use for mellowing the ground, and for killing worms and weeds, &c., so is the cross sanctified for quelling and killing fleshly lusts that fight against the soul. He that holds the winds in his fist, stays his rough wind, ***Isaiah 27:8***, and lets out of his treasury such a wind as shall make his young plants fruitful, and blow away their unkindly blossoms and leaves. Black soap makes white clothes, if God set in and set it on with his battle door, as that martyr phrased it. Foul and stained garments are whitened and purified by laying abroad in cold frosty nights. Scouring and beating of them with a stick beats out the moths and the dust; so do afflictions corruptions from the heart. Aloes kills worms; so do bitter crosses crawling lusts. Rhubarb is full of choler, yet doth mightily purge choler. Hemlock is a deadly plant, yet the juice applied heals *ignis sacer* accursed fire, and hot corroding ulcers, and much assuageth the inflammation of the eyes. The sting of a scorpion, though arrant poison, yet is an antidote against poison. Nothing is better to cure a leprosy than the drinking of that wine wherein a viper hath been drowned. The viper (the head and tail being cut off) beaten and applied cures her own biting. Affliction is in itself an evil, a fruit of God's wrath, and a piece of the curse. Christ alters the property to his, and makes one poison antidotary to another, and cures security by misery; as physicians often cure a lethargy by a fever. Every affliction sanctified rubs off some rust, melts off some dross, empties and evacuates some superfluity of naughtiness, strains out some corruption, ***Job 10:10***. Christ strains out our motes, while our hearts are poured out like milk, with grief and fear; he also keeps us from settling on the lees, by emptying us from vessel to vessel, ***Jeremiah 48:11***: when the wicked have no changes, and therefore they fear not God; they come not in trouble like other men, therefore they face the heavens, and their tongues walk through the earth, ***Psalms 73:5-9***. All that are Christ's people are sure of sore and sharp afflictions, fiery trials and tribulations, piercing and pressing crosses, ***Psalms 34:19; James 1:2***. He will be sure to plough his own ground, whatsoever becomes of the waste; and to weed his own garden, though the rest of the world should be let alone to grow wild. He will cast his purest gold into the fire of affliction; but they shall lose nothing by it. Gold cast into the fire wasteth not, cast into the water rusteth not. No saint was ever the worse for his sufferings, but the better; the least that can come of it is to do good duties with greater zeal and larger affection, ***Isaiah 26:9***. Now, who would not fetch such gold out of a fiery crucible?

And he shall purify the sons of Levi. Whom he had before faulted, ***Malachi 1:6-2:10***. Or he may mean the ministers of the gospel, called priests and Levites, ***Isaiah 66:21***. Or, rather, all the royal priesthood of God's people, whose office is to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, ***1 Peter 2:5, 9; Romans 12:1-2***. Now for these, Christ, 1. Of bad makes them good, as he did Joses the Levite, ***Acts 4:36***, and many priests, ***Acts 6:7***. He makes them pass under the rod, and so brings them into the bond of the covenant, ***Ezekiel 20:37.*** 2. Of good he makes them better and brighter, he pours them forth as molten metal, so the Septuagint read this text. Gold that is melted in the furnace is not only purified, but also made malleable; yea, fit for the mould. Their hearts are brought down, they speak as out of the ground, ***Isaiah 29:4***, in a low language, and like broken men; they put their mouths in the dust, they lie low at Christ's feet, and say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Thus haughty Hagar, humbled by affliction, hearkeneth to the angel, and submits to her mistress; that young gallant, that in the pride of his prosperity, in the ruff of his jollity, would not be warned; when his flesh and his body was consumed, when his bones clattered in his skin, and the mourners expected him at the doors, he is of another mind, and he may be talked with, ***Proverbs 5:11-13***; then, like the beaten viper, he casteth up his poison both of high mindedness and of earthly mindedness, and if you have any good counsel to give him, he is ready to receive it. See the like, ***Job 33:19-21***, &c.

And purge them as gold and silver. *Colabit eos* , saith the Vulgate. He shall strain them, as some liquor or liquid matter; so that the purer part shall go through the strainer or colander, and the dregs may be left, *Sic Apuleius Neque illi, ait, norant colere arvum, vel colare aurum.* The same thing is again and again promised, as for more certainty sake, so to show that the purity should be very great in the days of the gospel. Howbeit for the comfort of his poor people, who are conscious of more dross than good ore, Christ hath promised that he will refine them, but not as silver, ***Isaiah 48:10***, he will not be overly exact with them, he will not mark all that is amiss, he will not contend very much, lest the choice spirits of his afflicted people should fail before him, ***Isaiah 57:16***: when the child swoons in the whipping Christ lets fall the rod, and falls a kissing it, to fetch life into it again. As it is a rule in medicine still to maintain nature; so God is careful still to keep up his people's spirits by cordials; though he purge them sometimes till he bring them almost to skin and bone, that there may be a spring of better blood and spirits.

That they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Or a right offering, a pure worship, holy duties from a right principle and to a right purpose. Two things make a good Christian, good actions and good aims. Though a good aim doth not make a bad action good (as we see in Uzza), yet a bad aim makes a good action bad, as we see in Jehu. If God's work be not duly done, we may meet with breaches instead of blessings, ***1 Chronicles 15:17***. David failed but in a ceremony; yet God was angry. Jehu's zeal was rewarded in an act of justice, *quoad substantiam operis,* in regard of the substance of the work; and yet punished as an act of policy, *quoad modum,* for the perverse end. Let no man measure himself by the matter of things done; for there may be *malum opus in bona materia,* an evil work in a good matter: works materially good may never prove so formally and eventually. Religion is a curious clock work; if but one wheel be distempered, all may go wrong. David in numbering the people omitted that duty, ***Exodus 30:12-15***, and thence the plague. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:4]]**Verse 4.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem**. That is, of the Latin Church, and of Rome, saith Ribera. A partial fancy of a Popish interpreter boldly propounded, barely proved; and therefore as he affirmeth without reason, so he may be dismissed without refutation. Understand it rather of the whole Church wheresoever, in cities or countries; and observe that neither Judah nor Jerusalem, however highly honoured or favoured otherwise, shall have their offerings accepted in heaven, unless their hearts be first purified by faith. Till then their sacrifices, ***Romans 12:1***, how specious soever, are neither living (but dead works, as the author to the Hebrews calls it) nor holy, that is, pure and unpolluted, ***1 Corinthians 7:34***, unless themselves be partakers of the grace of light, ***1 Peter 3:7***, and can boldly say, with David, "Preserve my soul; for I am holy," or one whom thou favourest, ***Psalms 86:2*** *cf.* ***Psalm 4:3***, he makes this the ground of his hope, that his prayer should be heard, that the Lord looked upon him as a godly person. God regards not the prayer if the man be not right. The blood of a sheep and of a swine are like; yea, it may be the blood of a swine is better and sweeter than of a sheep, yet was it not to be offered, because of a swine, see ***Hebrews 13:10; Philippians 4:18; John 15:16; Psalm 147:11; Isaiah 62:4; Hebrews 11:6***. Look how light, saith Chrysostom, maketh all things pleasing to men; so doth faith to God. True faith is like the salt that healed the waters, ***2 Kings 2:21***. O pray Christ to cast in a cruseful of it into our hearts, or else we lose all our services; nay, we do worse than lose our labour, for displeasing service is double dishonour; we do but take pains to go to hell. (***See Trapp on "Malachi 1:9"***) (***See Trapp on "Malachi 1:10"***)

As in the days of old, as in former years. *i.e.* As the sacrifices of Abel, Abraham, Aaron, &c., as the prayers and holy performances of David, Elijah, Samuel (who is thought to be the same with Pethuel, ***Joel 1:1***, which signifieth a persuader of God, and that he was so called because he could have what he would of God), Cornelius, Paul, &c., were very effectual and available, and did wonders even to the opening and shutting of heaven, as Elihu to the opening of the

doors of leviathan, ***Job 41:14***, as Jonah to the delivering even graves of their dead, as ***Hebrews 11:35***, &c., so they shall be still as effectual as those ancient saints: we "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water," ***Hebrews 10:22***. See ***James 5:16-18; Hosea 12:4***. The prophet, speaking of Jacob's wrestling with God by weeping, and his prevailing by praying (so that he was knighted for his good service, and dubbed Israel, or a Prince of God), subjoins, for our comfort, God found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us. So, then, what encouragement, access, and success Jacob had at Bethel, the same have we; provided that we so carry the matter that it may be said of us, as ***Psalms 24:6***, This is the generation of them that seek him; of them that seek thy face: this is Jacob; provided that, as Jacob wrestled in the night, and alone, and when God was leaving him, and upon one leg; so do we, amidst all difficulties and discouragements. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:5]]**Verse 5.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And I will come near to you to judgment**. *q.d.* You conceit me a great way off, and put far from you the thoughts of my coming, having been so bold as to ask, "Where is the God of judgment?" &c. "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me." Not, as you desired, to avenge you of your enemies, but, as justice requireth, to be avenged of you for your impieties which I have here billed up against yon. And that ye may not think to escape, know that as I am a Judge at hand, so a present witness, *testis festinantissimus,* a most swift witness, to evict and punish you, for your most secret sins. So, then, however the Lord spare long, yet he will be at length both a hasty witness and a severe Judge against those that abuse his patience; he will not always stand them for a sinning stock, but pay them home for the new and the old, ***Jeremiah 6:6; Micah 1:3***. God owned a revenge to the house of Eli; and yet, at length, by the dilation of Doeg, takes occasion to pay it. It is a vain hope that is raised from the delay of judgment; no time can be any prejudice to the Ancient of days. If his word sleep, it shall not die; but after long intermissions, breaks forth into those effects which men had forgotten to look for, and ceased to fear. The sleeping of vengeance causeth the overflow of sin, ***Ecclesiastes 8:11***, and the overflow of sin causeth the awakening of vengeance, ***Psalms 50:21***, so that sometimes he strikes before he gives any further warning; as Absalom, intending to kill Amnon, spake neither good nor evil to him. *Subito tollitur qui diu toleratur.* He was suddenly destroyed who was tolerated for a long time. Till the fiery serpents, God had ever consulted with Moses, and threatened before he punished. Now he strikes and says nothing. The anger is so much more by how much less notified. Still revenges are ever most dangerous and deadly, when God is not heard before he is felt (as in hewing of wood the blow is not heard till the axe be seen to have struck); or if he be heard to say, as ***Nehemiah 1:9***, what do ye imagine against the Lord? he will make an utter end affliction shall not arise up the second time; it is a sign he is implacably bent, and means to have but one blow. The wicked's happiness will take its end surely and swiftly. The end is come is come, is come, saith Ezekiel, ***Ezekiel 7:2***. The Lord is come near to you to judgment, and he will be a speedy witness. Judge and witness both; which in men's courts cannot be; but God, being infinitely both wise and holy, may be and will be both witness and judge against the workers of iniquity; and when they are (as Adonijah's guests were, ***1 Kings 1:41***) at the height of their joys and hopes, he confounds all their devices, and lays them open to the scorn of the world, to the anguish of their own guilty hearts and the dint of his own unsupportable displeasure which is such as none can avert or avoid.

> "*Ad poenam tardus Deus est, ad praemia velox,*
> *Sed pensare solet vi graviore moram.*
> *Poena venit gravior, quo mage sera venit.*"

Against the sorcerers. Or diviners, wizards, necromancers, &c. See the various sorts forbidden, and to be punished, ***Deuteronomy 18:10***. By God's law such might not be suffered to live ***Exodus 22:18***, yet did this evil prevail in Israel ***2 Chronicles 33:6; Jeremiah 27:9***; and

here, it was done by unlawful means, as Saul said to the witch, "Divine unto me by the familiar spirit," ***1 Samuel 28:8***; and it was a thing hateful to God even as high rebellion, ***1 Samuel 15:23***, since the ground of this familiarity is a diabolical contract overt or covert, explicit or implicit. It is fitly called the black art, for there is no true light in them that use it, ***Isaiah 8:19-20***, they depart from God and his testimony, ib., and so tempt the devil to tempt them. This was Saul's sin, for which the Lord killed him, ***1 Chronicles 10:13***, and hath threatened to cut off all from among his people that do inquire of such, ***Leviticus 20:6***. Thou hast been partaker with the adulterer, ***Psalms 50:18***; so are such with sorcerers. Surely the wounds of God are better than the salves of Satan; as Ahaziah found it. And they which in case of loss or sickness, &c., make hell their refuge, shall smoke and smart for it in the end. Satan seeks to them in his temptations, they in their consultations seek to him; and now that they have mutually found each other, if ever they part it is a miracle; he is an unspeakably proud spirit, and yet will stoop to the meanest man or woman to be at their command (the witch of Endor is twice in one verse, ***1 Samuel 28:7***, called the mistress of the spirit, because in covenant with him), whereby he may cheat them and their clients of salvation. Every one that consults with him worships him, though he bow not, as Saul did; neither doth that old manslayer desire any other reverence than to be sought unto.

And against the adulterers. *Sept. The adulteresses. Adultrinum, quasi ad alterum, aut alterius torum,* going up to another man's bed, as Reuben did, and was severely sentenced for it, ***Genesis 49:4***. It was to be punished with death, even by the law of nature; because the society and purity of posterity could not otherwise continue among men. Nebuchadnezzar roasted in the fire Zedekiah and Ahab, two false prophets of Judah, because they committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, ***Jeremiah 29:22-23***. The Egyptians used to cut off the nose of the adulteress; the prophet alludes to this ***Ezekiel 23:25***. The Athenians, Lacedaemonians, and Romans were very severe against this sin, as Plutarch recordeth in his Parallel Lives. The old French and Saxons also, as Tacitus tells us. By God's law they were to be stoned to death; and the high priest's daughter was to be burned for this fault, ***Leviticus 21:9***, a peculiar punishment, and not to be paralleled in the whole law. If men fail to fall upon such (it is a heinous crime, saith holy Job, and an iniquity to be punished by the judges, ***Job 31:11***), God himself will do it, ***Hebrews 13:4***, and did it effectually, ***1 Corinthians 10:8***, and on the filthy Sodomites, ***Genesis 19:24-28***, and on Charles II, King of Navarre, who was much addicted to this sin, which so wasted his spirits that in his old age he fell into a lethargy (*Venus ab antiquis,* λυσιμελής, *dicta.* See ***Proverbs 5:8***). To comfort his benumbed joints he was bound and sewn up in a sheet steeped in boiling *aqua vitae.* water of life (alcohol). The surgeon having made an end of sewing him, and wanting a knife to cut off his thread, took a wax candle that stood lighted by him; but the flame, running down by the thread, caught hold on the sheet, which, according to the nature of the *aqua vitae,* burned with that vehemence, that the miserable king ended his days in the fire. But say the adulterer be neither stoned nor burned, yet God usually stoneth such with a stony heart, ***Hosea 4:11***, which is a most fearful judgment; and when they die burneth them with the hottest fire in hell, ***Proverbs 2:18***; the whore's guests go down to the dead; Heb. *el Rephaim,* to the giants; to that part of hell where those damned monsters are. See ***2 Peter 2:4, 10***, and mark the word chiefly.

And against false swearers. A sin of a high nature, condemned by the height of nature, and punished by the heathens. *Periurii poena divina exitium; humana, dedecus;* this was one of the laws of the twelve tables in Rome. God punisheth perjury with destruction; men, with disgrace. Tissaphernes, the Persian general, being overcome by Agesilaus, King of Spartans, craved three months' truce, and had it; they both sware to be quiet on both sides. Tissaphernes soon broke his oath; but Agesilaus religiously kept it, saying, that gods and men would favour him for his fidelity, but curse and execrate the other for his perjury. God showed Zechariah a flying roll, long and large, ten yards long, and five broad, full of curses against the

false swearer, with commission to rest upon his house, which he holds his castle, and where he thinks himself most secure, ***Zechariah 5:3-4***. Michael Paleologus, Emperor of Constantinople, made the Greek Church acknowledge the Pope's supremacy, and did many other things contrary to his oath; and, therefore, lieth obscurely buried, shrouded in the sheet of defamation, saith the historian. So doth Rodulphus, Duke of Sueveland, who, by the Pope's instigation, broke his oath of allegiance to Henry the emperor, and by the cutting off of his faithless right hand lost his life. So doth Sigismund, the emperor, for his false dealing with John Huss: Ladislaus, King of Hungary, for his perjurious setting upon Amurath, the Great Turk, at the battle of Varna, where he was deservedly defeated. What a blur was that to the old Romans, if true, that Mirchanes, the Persian general, should say of them, *Romanis promittere promptum est, &c.:* The Romans will promise anything, and swear to it, but perform nothing that makes against their profit. There were at Rome such as could lend an oath at need; and would not stick to swear that their friend or foe was at Rome and at Interamna both at once. How slippery the Papists are, and how bloody, both in their positions and dispositions, is well known to all. But God is the avenger of all such; because they call him to witness a falsehood; and dare him to his face to execute his vengeance, see ***Zechariah 8:17***.

And against those that oppress, &c. Either by denying, diminishing, or delaying their wages. The Vulgate rendereth it, Who calumniate, or make cavils to detain wages, which is the poor hireling's livelihood, whereupon he setteth his heart, ***Deuteronomy 24:15***, and maintaineth his life; which is, therefore, called the life of his hands, because upheld by the labour of his hands, ***Isaiah 57:10***. He gets it, and eats it; and is in his house like a snail in his shell; crush that, and you kill him. This is a crying cruelty, ***James 5:4***, and hath a woe against it, ***Jeremiah 22:13; James 2:13***. Laban is taxed for it, ***Genesis 31:7***; and for those that are guilty, if they mend not, and make restitution, Master Latimer tells them they shall cough in hell.

The widow. A calamitous name: she is called in Hebrew, from her dumbness, *Almanan;* because death, having cut off her head, she hath lost her tongue, and hath none to speak for her. A vine whose root is uncovered thrives not; so a widow, the covering of whose eyes is taken away, joys not. God, therefore, pleads for such as his clients, and takes special care for them; the deacons were anciently ordained specially for their sakes, ***Acts 6:1; 1 Timothy 5:3***; and Pharisees doomed to a deeper damnation for devouring widows' houses, ***Matthew 23:14***; and magistrates charged to plead for the widow, ***Isaiah 1:17***, as judge Job did, ***Job 31:16***; and all sorts to make much of her, and communicate to her, ***Deuteronomy 24:19-21***.

And the fatherless. We are orphans and fatherless, saith the Church, ***Lamentations 5:3***. And we are all orphans, said Queen Elizabeth (in her speech to the children of Christ's Hospital); let me have your prayers, and you shall have my protection. That hospital was founded by her brother, King Edward VI, for the relief of fatherless children, after the example of the ancient Church, which had her *orphano trophi,* orphan breeders. With God the fatherless findeth mercy, ***Hosea 14:3***, and all his vice-gods are commanded the like, ***Psalms 82:1-4***, unless they will consult shame and misery to their own houses, and, Joab-like, leave the leprosy to their little ones for a legacy. Better leave them a wallet to beg from door to door than a cursed hoard of orphans' goods.

And that turn aside the stranger. The right of strangers is so holy (saith Master Fox) that there was never nation so barbarous that would violate the same. When Stephen Gardiner had in his power the renowned Peter Martyr, then teaching at Oxford, he would not keep him to punish him; but when he should go his way, gave him wherewith to bear his charges.

And fear not me. This is set last, as the source of all the former evils. See the like, ***Romans 3:18; Psalm 14:1***, where atheism and irreligion is made the root of all the sin in the world. God's holy fear is to the soul as the banks are to the sea or the bridle to the horse; it was so to

Isaac, who reigned in the reverent fear of God, when he saw that he had done unwilling justice, dared not reverse Jacob's blessing, though prompted to it by natural affection and Esau's howlings, ***Genesis 27:33***. It was so to Job, Joseph, Nehemiah, Daniel, &c., who could easily have borne out their oppressions by their greatness. And indeed whereas other men have other bits and restraints, great men, if they fear not God, have nothing else to fear; but dare obtrude and justify to the world the most malapert misdemeanours, because it is *facinus maioris abollae* (Juvenal), the fact of a great one, who do many times as easily break through the lattice of the laws as the bigger flies do through a spider web, as Anacharsis was wont to say of his Scythians. Hence Jethro would have his justice of peace to be a man fearing God, ***Exodus 18:21***; and this qualification he fitly placeth in the midst of the other graces requisite to him, as the heart in the body, for conveying life to all the parts, or as a dram of musk perfuming the whole box of ointment, ***Exodus 18:21***. Nothing makes a man so good a patriot as the true fear of God's blessed name, and a zealous forwardness for his glory, goodness, and good causes. This, this alone is it that can truly beautify and adorn all other personal sufficiencies, and indeed sanctify and bless all public employments and services of state. Whereas, on the contrary, *sublata pietate, fides tollitur,* take away piety, and fidelity is gone; as we see in the unjust judge, ***Luke 18:2***, in Abraham's judgment of the Philistines, ***Genesis 20:11***, and in Constantinus Chlorus's experiment of his counsellors and courtiers; whence that famous maxim of his, recorded by Eusebius, *He cannot be faithful to me that is unfaithful to God;* religion being the ground of all true fidelity and loyalty to king and country. Hence that close connection, "Fear God. Honour the king"; and that again of Solomon, "My son, fear thou the Lord and the king; and meddle not with them that are given to change," ***Proverbs 24:21***. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:6]]**Verse 6.** {{field-on:Bible}}**For I am the Lord, I change not**. I am Jehovah. This is God's proper and incommunicable name. It imports three things: 1. That God is of himself. This Plato acknowledged, calling God τὸ ὅν, and τὸ ὄντως. Julius Scaliger, by a wonderful word, calleth God αὐταυτόν, One that hath his being or existence of himself, before the world was, ***Isaiah 44:6 2***. That he giveth being to all things else, for in him they both are and consist. He sustains all, both in respect of being, excellences, and operations, ***Hebrews 1:8***. The greatest excellences in us do as much depend upon God as the effigies in the glass upon the presence of the face that causeth it. 3. That he giveth being to his word, effecting whatsoever he speaketh. Hence, when either some special mercy is promised, or some extraordinary judgment threatened, the name of Jehovah is affixed. See ***Exodus 6:3; Isaiah 45:2-3; Ezekiel 5:17***. The ancient Jewish doctors make this distinction between Elohim and Jehovah. By Elohim, say they, is signified *Middah din,* a quality or property of judgment. By Jehovah, *middath Rachamim,* a quality or property of mercy. And hereunto they apply that text, ***Psalms 56:10***, In God (Elohim) I will praise the word, in Jehovah I will praise the word; that is, *sive iure agat mecum, sive ex aequo et bono,* whether he deal strictly with me, or graciously, I will praise him howsoever. But this distinction, as it holds not always; so not here. For, to show the certainty of the judgment denounced ***Malachi 3:5***, is this subjoined, "I am Jehovah," &c. And if Jehovah come of *Hovah* (which signifies contrition or destruction), as Hieronymus from *Oleastro* will have it, what can be more suitable to the prophet's purpose? it is somewhat like that in ***Isaiah 13:6***, *Shod* shall come from *Shaddai,* destruction from the Almighty, or from the destroyer, as some interpret God's name, *Shaddai.*

I change not. I am neither false nor fickle, to say and unsay, to alter my mind, or to eat my word, ***Psalms 89:34***. The eternity of Israel cannot lie, nor repent, said Samuel to Saul (and it was heavy tidings to him, as Ahijah said to Jeroboam's wife, I come unto thee with heavy tidings); for he is not a man that he should repent, ***1 Samuel 15:29***. Men are mutable, and there is no hold to be taken of what they say. Of many it may be said, as Tertullian of the peacock, all in changeable colours; as often changed as moved. Italians all, as Aeneas Sylvius

said of Italy, *Novitate quadam nihil habet stabile,* there is no taking their words. Of a certain pope and his nephew the story is told, that the one never spake as he thought, the other never performed what he spake. But God is not a man that he should repent; or if he do, it is after another manner than man repents. Repentance with man is the changing of his will; repentance with God is the willing of a change. It is *mutatio rei non Dei, effectus non affectus, facti non consilii.* God's repentance is not a change of his will, but of his work. It noteth only (saith Mr Perkins) the alteration of things and actions done by him, and no change of his purpose and secret decree, which is immutable. What he hath written he hath written (as Pilate said peremptorily), there is no removing of him. If the sentence be passed, if the decree be come forth, none can avert or avoid it, ***Zephaniah 3:3***. *Currat ergo poenitentia ne praecurrat sententia* (Chrysolog.). Go quickly and make an atonement, as Moses said to Aaron, ***Numbers 16:46*** "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel," ***Amos 4:12***. *Mitte preces et lachrymas cordis legatos;* meet him with entreaties of peace, agree with him quickly; who knows if he will return, and repent? "for he is gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil," ***Joel 2:13-14***. It should seem so indeed by this text; for, even while he is threatening, and ratifying what he had threatened, his heart is turned within him, his repentings are kindled together, ***Hosea 11:8***. And hence the following words,

Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. A strange inference (considering the sense and occasion of the foregoing words, as hath been set forth), and not unlike that, ***Hosea 2:13-14*** "I will visit upon her the days of Baalim … she went after her lovers, and forgat me, saith the Lord. Therefore" (mark that "Therefore"), "behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her. And I will give her," &c. So ***Isaiah 57:17-18*** "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly," &c. "I have seen his ways, and will heal him." Ways? what ways? his covetousness, frowardness, &c.; and yet I will heal him. I will deal with him not according to mine ordinary rule, but according to my prerogative. If God will heal for his name's sake (and so come in with his *non obstante,* as he doth, ***Psalms 106:8***), what people is there whom he may not heal? Well may these sinful sons of Jacob be unconsumed; well may they have for their seventy years' captivity seven seventies of years, according to Daniel's weeks, for the re-enjoying of their own country; and God's mercies shall bear the same proportion to his punishments, which seven, a complete number, hath to a unity, ***Ezekiel 20:8, 14, 22, 44***. Provided that they return to the Lord that smote them (as in the next verse), for else he will surely punish them seven times more, and seven times, and seven to that, ***Leviticus 26:21-23, 27***, &c.; three different times God raiseth his note of threatening, and he raised it by sevens, and those are discords in music. Such sayings will be heavy songs; and their execution heavy pangs to the impenitent. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:7]]**Verse 7.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Even from the days of your fathers, ye are gone away from mine ordinances**. The more to magnify his own mercy (by a miracle, whereof they had hitherto subsisted, by an extraordinary prop of his love, and longsuffering), God sets forth here their utter unworthiness of any such free favour, by a double aggravation of their sins. First, their long continuance therein, so that their sins were grown inveterate and ingrained, and themselves aged and even crooked therein, so that they could hardly ever be set straight again.

From the days of your fathers, &c. *q.d. Non hoc nuper facitis: nec semel ut erroris mereamini veniam: sed haereditariam habetis impietatem, &c.,* as Jerome paraphraseth this text. You are no young sinners; it is not yesterday, or a few days since, you transgressed against me; you are a seed of serpents, a race of rebels; you are as good at resisting the Holy Ghost as ever your fathers were, ***Acts 7:51***. Secondly, their pervicacy and stiffness: they would not yield or be evicted. But ye say, wherein shall we return as if they were righteous, and needed no repentance. Still they put God to his proofs, as ***Jeremiah 2:35***, and show themselves an

unpersuadable and gainsaying people, ***Isaiah 65:2***; and this had "been their manner from their youth," ***Jeremiah 22:21***, when they were in Egypt, they served idols there, ***Ezekiel 16:26***. In the wilderness they tempted God ten times, and hearkened not to his voice, ***Numbers 14:22***. Under their judges, and then their kings, they vexed him, and he bore with them "till there was no remedy," ***2 Chronicles 36:16***. After the captivity they do *antiquum obtinere,* and are found guilty here of various omissions and commissions, calling for "a just recompence of reward," ***Hebrews 2:2***. All which notwithstanding, *Deus redire eos sibi non perire desiderat* (Chrysolog.). God soliciteth their return unto him here by a precept and a promise, two effectual arguments, if anything will work; and ratifieth all with his own authority, which is most authentic, in these words, "saith the Lord of hosts." A style often given to God, as elsewhere in Scripture, so especially in these three last prophecies to the people returned from Babylon, because they had many enemies, and therefore had need of all encouragement. For God is called the Lord of hosts, *quod ille numine suo et nomine terreat terras, temperet tempera, exercitusque tam superiores quam inferiores gubernet,* to show that he hath all power in his hand, and doth whatsoever he pleaseth in heaven and earth (Alsted). (***See Trapp on "Malachi 3:17"***), doctr. 1, and for the doctrine of returning to God (from whom we have deeply revolted) by repentance. (***See Trapp on "Zechariah 1:3"***)

But ye said, Wherein shall we return? This was their pride, proceeding from ignorance; they were rich and righteous, as those Laodiceans ***Revelation 3:17***, not in truth, but in conceit, vainly puffed up by their carnal minds, drunk with self-dotage, as ***Luke 16:15***. Hence they stand upon their slippers, and none must say, Black is their eye. Sin is in them as in its proper element, and therefore weighs not (*Elementum in suo loco non ponderat*); till, by long trading in wickedness, they grow to that dead and dedolent disposition, ***Ephesians 4:14***, their heart fat as grease, their conscience cauterized, ***1 Timothy 4:2***, that is, so benumbed, blotted, senseless, filthy, and gangrenous, that it must be seared with a hot iron; whereupon it grows so crusty and brawny, that though cut or pierced with the sword of the Spirit, it doth neither bleed nor feel; and though handfulls of hell fire be flung in the face of it, yet it starts not, stirs not; but is deprived of all even passive power, and so satanized, that there is no help for them. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:8]]**Verse 8.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Will a man rob God?** Adam pillage Elohim? frail weak man seek to supplant (so the Septuagint render it) the great and mighty God? Giant-like boldness! Cacus met with his match when he robbed Hercules. Mercury, say the poets, had a mind to steal Jupiter's thunderbolts, but dared not meddle, lest he should punish as Prometheus for stealing fire; or lest they should burn his fingers. The eagle in the fable, that stole a piece of flesh from the altar, and carried it together with a live coal, that stuck to it, to his nest, set his young and all on fire. Dionysius, that robbed his god, was cast out of his kingdom, though he was wont to boast, that he had it bound to him with chains of adamant. Belshazzar paid dearly for his bousing in the bowels of the sanctuary. Cardinal Wolsey, and five of his servants, employed by him in embezzling consecrated goods, though perhaps to better purposes, came all to fearful ends, as Scultetus noteth, and thereupon wisheth, *Utinam his et similibus exemplis edocti discant homines res semel Deo consecratas timide attrectare.* "It is a snare to the man that devoureth that which is holy," ***Proverbs 20:25***. They may be compared to those who, being of a cold and phlegmatic stomach, eat hard and choleric meats; well they may please their palates, but it cannot be for their health: no more can the murdering morsels of such sacrilegious persons, as, devouring holy things, have their meat sauced and their drink spiced with the bitter wrath of God. See ***Job 20:23***. Polanus reads the text thus, Will a man rob his gods? *q.d.* Will any heathen do so? did not they that worshipped idols abhor sacrilege? Was it not one of the laws of the twelve tables in Rome, *Sacrum sacrove commendatum qui clepserit rapseritque, parricida esto,* Let every sacrilegious person pass and be punished for a parricide? And doth not Cicero affirm those laws, that they did exceed all the libraries of the philosophers

in weight and worth? Did not those old idolaters freely bestow their most precious things upon their idols, ***Ezekiel 16:16-19; Exodus 32:3***, yea, their very children in sacrifice to Moloch, or Saturn? ***2 Kings 16:3; 17:17***; being as mad upon their idols as ever was any wicked wanton upon his harlot, lavishing out of the bag? &c. And are not our modern idolaters and Papists as bountiful to their he saints and she saints? so that their churches are not able to hold their vowed presents and memories, but that in many places, as at Loretto, Sichem, &c., they are fain to hang their cloisters and churchyards with them? Shall they in their petitions to our parliaments plead for favour and forbearance upon this ground, because their ancestors, they say, bestowed so great cost upon this land for church maintenance; and shall it be said (now that they are worthily cast out), *Possidebunt Papistae, possident Rapistte,* Wicked Papists had them, ungodly Rapists have them; Improprietaries, I mean, that hold by an improper title, and all others that appropriate that to them and theirs which the Almighty is invested in. This is here instanced as a capital crime, and called robbing God, as well it may; forasmuch as ministers' maintenance (being tithes) is called the Lord's, and holy to the Lord, ***Leviticus 27:30***, because separated from man and man's use, and therefore might not be altered, ***Leviticus 27:28***. Or if any had a mind to redeem them, they were bound to add to the price every fifth penny above the true value, ***Leviticus 27:31***. Let all those look to this, whether impropriators, false patrons (*latrones* robbers rather), or others, that, either by force or fraud, rob God of his right (*Nunquid homo fraudabit Deum? sic vertunt Aquila, Symmachus et Theodotion*); detaining part of the due at least, as Ananias and Sapphira did; God hath a *Quare Impedit* against them, which one day they must make answer to.

Yet ye have robbed me. Because ye have robbed my ministers, who are in my stead, ***2 Corinthians 5:20***, and in whom he receiveth tithes, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth, like as did Melchisedec, as a priest and tithe taker, and type of Christ ***Hebrews 7:7-9***. And as God is sensible of the least courtesy done to a prophet to reward it, even to a cup of cold water, ***Matthew 10:42*** (so that he is a niggard to himself that scants his beneficence to a minister), so for those that wrong and rob them, that deny them that double honour of countenance and maintenance that he hath appointed them, and hold them to hard allowance; muzzling the ox, or giving him but straw at the best, for treading out the grain; they will dearly answer it before God, who holds all done to them as done to himself. Surely, as David could not but feel his own cheeks shaven and his own coat cut in his ambassadors; they did but carry his person to Hanun; so here. And as there was never any king so poor and weak but thought himself strong enough to revenge any wrong done or abuse offered to his ambassadors (*Legati quod erant appellati superbius, Corinthum Patres vestri totius Graeciae lumen extinctum esse voluerunt.* Cic. pro lege Man.); so the king of heaven will not fail to curse with a curse whole nations that forget God and forsake his Levites, ***Deuteronomy 12:19***, it being all one to God to deal in this case against a nation or against a man only, ***Job 34:29***.

In tithes and offerings. He had told them before they had robbed him; or, as some read it, stabbed him as with a daggar. And here they should have confessed the action and craved pardon. But because they did nothing less, standing upon their justification (as before often), God descends to the particular wherein they robbed him, "In tithes and offerings." The original hath it, Tithes and offerings, without the particle *(in);* and it is as if the Lord should say, you may easily know my meaning without so many words, but that you love to contest. You cannot be ignorant that the Levites, for want of maintenance, are fled every man to his field, and so my work and worship is left undone. Good Nehemiah was sensible of it, ***Nehemiah 13:10***, and because he knew that by this means religion itself would be soon undermined and overturned, he contended with the rulers, and made all the people pay their tithes; and this he worthily reckons among his good deeds, praying God to remember him for it, and not wipe it out ***Nehemiah 13:14***. Hezekiah, that great reformer showed the like zeal in commanding the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and Levites, that they might

attend upon the law of the Lord (so the Vulgate), that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord, so we read, ***2 Chronicles 31:4***; that is, that they might not follow their callings heavily for want of maintenance, but cheerfully bend themselves wholly to the service of the Lord. And here (as Ferus once wished for the Romish synagogue) I would we had some Moses, said he, to take away the evils of the times; *non enim unum tantum vitulum sed multos habemus,* for we have not one golden calf, but many; so have we of these times cause to wish we had some zealous Nehemiahs and Hezekiahs to stickle and stand for Christ's ministers, not defrauded of their due maintenance only (a sign of gasping devotion), but trampled upon by the foul feet of the basest of the people, as the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things. Tithes, they say, are Jewish; but if Melchisedec tithed Abraham by the same right whereby he blessed him, ***Hebrews 7:6***, and if tithes by all laws of God, nature, nations, have been hallowed to God, as Junius and other modern divines allege and argue; and, lastly, if things consecrated to God's service may not be alienated, out of case of necessity, ***Proverbs 20:25; Galatians 3:15***; it will appear to be otherwise. Or if tithes be Jewish, and yet ministers must have a maintenance (Christ having so ordained, ***1 Corinthians 9:14***), and that both honourable, ***1 Timothy 5:17-18***, and liberal, ***Galations 6:6***, how else shall they be given to hospitality? ***1 Timothy 3:2*** (if they be not hospitable they will be despicable); how will men satisfy their consciences in the *quota pars,* the particular quantity they must bestow upon them? The Scripture speaketh only of the tenth part. *Sed manum de tabula.* Enough of this, if not more than enough. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:9]]**Verse 9.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Ye are cursed with a curse**. Vulgate: Ye are cursed with penury and scarcity of victuals, according to ***Deuteronomy 28:23***, &c., and so great was this people's poverty, that they were forced for food to sell not their fields only, but their sons and daughters, ***Nehemiah 5:1-5.*** They had pinched on God's side, and he had paid them home in the same kind; they thought in the famine to have kept the more to themselves, and they had the less for keeping from him that which was his. A just hand of God upon all church robbers; for the most part they are always in want and needy, their wealth melting away as snow before the sun, and their fields of blood, purchased with the spoils of Christ, proving as unfortunate and fatal to them as the gold of the temple of Tholose did to Scipio's soldiers, of which whoever carried any part away never prospered afterwards. What get men by such a detiny that shall prove their fatal destiny? Say they leave the gold behind them, yet they are likely to carry the guilt to hell with them, ***James 5:1-2***; yea, to cough in hell, as Latimer phrased it, unless they make restitution; to digest in hell, what they have devoured on earth, as Austin. Because Pharaoh saith, the river is mine own, therefore, saith God, I will dry up the river, ***Ezekiel 29:3, 9***. The merchant that denieth to pay his custom forfeits all his commodities: so here.

For ye have robbed me. And therefore I have cursed you. God never punisheth people but there is just cause for it, could they but see it; but that they are hardly drawn to, as here, and ***Isaiah 26:11***; the root of the matter is in themselves, as Job speaks in another case; the plague of their own hearts, ***1 Kings 8:38***, procureth them all the mischief, and may say to them, as the heart of Apollodorus, the tyrant, seemed to say to him; who dreamed one night that he was flayed by the Scythians, and boiled in a caldron, and that his heart spake to him out of the kettle, it is I that have drawn thee to all this (ἐγὼ σοι τούτων αἰτία). Let men, therefore, when under any misery, lay their hand upon their heart, thrust their hand into their bosom, with Moses, they shall be sure to bring it out leprous; let them turn short again upon themselves, and say every man, What have I done? what evil have I committed, or, at least, admitted? what good have I omitted, or intermitted? Profane Esau, beguiled of the blessing, cries out of his father's store, of his brother's subtlety; not a word of his own profaneness in slighting and selling his birthright; he had forgot since he did eat and drink, and went his way, ***Genesis 25:34***. The Jerusalem paraphrast adds, that he also despised his portion in the world to come,

and denied the resurrection. But this he never taketh notice of. So Pompey, beaten by Caesar out of the field, blamed the Divine providence for his ill success, when he should rather have assaulted his own reckless security (that he never considered into what place he were best to retire if worsted), and especially his sacrilege not long before the defeat, when he sacked Jerusalem, and ransacked the temple, ***Mark 9:54-56; Mark 3:24-25; 4:39-42; 5:15-16; 13:4, 8; 15:30, 34***. He might have considered what became (a little before his time) for the same offence of Alcimus, Heliodorus, Lysimachus, Antiochus, Menelaus, and Nicanor, all notorious church robbers, and all hanged up in gibbets, as it were, for an example and admonition to all that should come after. Sacrilege is a snare (saith Solomon, ***Proverbs 20:25***), that, 1. catcheth suddenly; 2. holdeth surely; 3. destroyeth certainly. *Cavete.*

Even this whole nation. The disease was grown into an epidemic, like that which physicians call *corruptio totius substantiae,* the entire nature is diseased, or that which the prophet Isaiah also complaineth of, ***Malachi 1:5-6*** "The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint," &c. This sin of sacrilege was grown national; there was a conjuncture of all sorts in this wickedness; a rabble of rebels they were, ripe for judgment; yea, though God's judgments were upon them, yet they persisted, ***Nehemiah 13:18***, and increased wrath, ***Ezra 10:14***. God had smitten them, but they sorrowed not, ***Jeremiah 5:3***; but to be revenged on him, as it were, for laying famine upon them, they took away his tithes. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:10]]**Verse 10.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse**. All, whether pecuniary or personal, all, and of every kind.

Into the storehouse. The standing place for tithes, as it is called, ***Nehemiah 13:11-13***, the tithe barn, as the Vulgate hath it.

That there may be meat in my house. *Tereph* from whence προφή, and the English, prey; that there may be maintenance for my ministers; enough not for themselves only, but for to be distributed to those that are about them (*Cibus qui discerpi, dividi, distribuique potest*); that they may not eat their morsels alone, that they may not be slaves to others, servants to themselves; that they may not "bite with their teeth, and cry, peace," teach for hire, and divine for money, ***Micah 3:5, 11***, that is, be fain to maintain themselves with sordid and unworthy flatteries. Balaam, the false prophet, rode with his two men, ***Numbers 22:22***. God's Levite had one man, ***Judges 19:11***. Augustine lived neither like a lord, for he ate his meat in wooden and marble dishes; neither lived he like a beggar, for he used to eat with silver spoons. What pity was it that Luther was forced to cry out in his comment on ***Genesis 47***, *Nisi superesset spolium Aegypti quod rapuimus Papae, omnibus ministris verbi fame pereundum esset. Quod si sustentandi essent die contributione populi misere profecto et duriter viverent.* If it were not for the spoil of Egypt which we have snatched from the Pope, all the ministers of the word must have been famished. For if they should be put to live upon the free contribution of the people, they would certainly have a miserable hard living of it. *Alimur ergo, &c.* We are maintained then, as I said, of the spoils of Egypt; and yet that little that we have is preyed upon by the magistrates; for the parishes and schools are so spoiled and peeled, as if they meant to starve us all. Thus Luther. Melancthon comes after him and complains in the year 1550, *Principes favebant Luthero: sed iam iterum videtis ingratitudinem mundi erga ministros, &c.:* The princes did at first favour Luther; but now ye see again the unkindness of the world to the ministers of the word. Calvin was so ill dealt with at Geneva (together with other faithful ministers there), that he was forced once to say, *Certe si hominibus servivissem, &c.,* Truly if I had served men in my ministry I had been very ill requited. But it is well that I have served him who never fails his own; but faithfully performeth with the better whatsoever he hath promised them. Our Doctor Stoughton observed, that the manner of very many in the city was to deal with their ministers as carriers do with their horses, viz., to lay heavy burdens upon them, and then to hang bells about their necks; they shall have hard work and great commendations, but easy

commons; be applauded for excellent preachers, have good words, but slight wages (Serm. on ***1 Samuel 2:30***). Thus in the city; but what measure meet men within the country! Hear it from a country minister's mouth. How many thousands in this land (saith he) stand obnoxious in a high degree to the judgments of God for this sin of sacrilege, which is the bane of our people and blemish of our Church! Some there are who rob God of his main tithes, yet are content to leave him still the lesser; they pluck our fleeces, and leave us the taglocks, [(9)] poor vicarage tithes, while themselves and children are kept warm in our wool, the parsonage. And others, yet more injurious, who think that too much; would the law but allow them a pair of shears, they would clip the very taglocks off. These (with the deceitful tailor) are not content to shrink the whole and fair broad cloth to a dozen of buttons, but they must likewise take part of them away, and hem the very shreds, which only we have left. After they have fully gorged themselves with the parsonage grains they can find means, either by unconscionable leases or compositions, to pick the vicarage bones, &c. Thus he, and much more to the like purpose. Our blessings (saith another eminent divine, Dr Sclatter) are more than those of old, our burden less. And yet how unwilling comes even a little to the most painfull minister! And those that, upon a kind of conscience, pay other duties, think all lost that goes to the maintenance of the ministry; and that with such repining, as if that were money of all other worst bestowed.

And prove me now herewith. *Dignatio stupenda,* A wonderful condescension, that God should call upon man to take experiment of him, to make but a trial, to put it to the proof whether he will not prosper the penitent. This is somewhat like that other passage, ***Psalms 34:8*** "O taste and see that the Lord is good," &c., or that, "Come, and let us reason together." Oh the never enough adored depth of God's goodness, that he should stoop so low to us clay and dirt, dung and worms' meat! He is so high, that he is said to humble himself to behold things done in heaven, ***Psalms 113:6***. If he look at all out of himself, to see but what the angels do, he doth therein abase himself. That he will deal so familiarly with us (who are no better than so many walking dunghills) as to bid us prove him what he will do for us, this deserves acknowledgment and admiration in the highest degree. Should he have used martial law with these malapert miscreants in the text that had robbed him of his rights, and not only have reproved them and cursed them with a curse of penury, but have (Draco-like) written his laws in blood upon them, he might have justified his proceedings. But thus to commune with them, and not only to prescribe them a remedy for removal of the curse, Bring ye all the tithes, &c., but thus to persuade with them, and to permit them to prove his bountifulness in giving, and his faithfulness in keeping promise with them, and that with an oath, as some conceive, *Subest iurandi species* (Figuier).

If I will not open the windows of heaven. Then never believe me more. What a wonderful goodness was this! Surely we may well say of it, as Chrysostom doth of the happiness of heaven, *Sermo non valet exprimere: experimento opus est;* we can never sufficiently praise it, but must take the counsel he gives us, and prove it, "Prove me," &c. There is an unlawful and damnable proving or rather provoking of God, when men separate the means from the end, holiness from happiness, will needs live as they list, and yet presume they shall be saved by the unknown mercies of God. Such were those that "tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies," ***Psalms 78:56***, like as before they had lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert, ***Psalms 106:14***; while, bearing themselves overly bold upon their external privileges, they refused to observe his statutes and keep his laws. This sin, in the New Testament, is called "tempting the Spirit of the Lord," ***Acts 5:9***. Ananias and Sapphire did so, when by a cunning contrivance they would needs prove and make trial whether God could discover and would punish their hypocrisy; so did Judas the traitor, when he boldly demanded, "Is it I, Lord?" So do all gross hypocrites that present unto God a carcase

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[9] A matted lock of sheep's wool, esp. one of those about the hinder parts; ŒD.

of holiness, like Ham, or that cursed deceiver, ***Malachi 1:14***. Such also as refuse Christ's offers of grace; and when he bids them, as here, prove him, if upon their obedience in the laws of his kingdom he will not open the windows of heaven and rain down righteousness upon them, even mercies without measure; and (for confirmation) wills them, as once he did wicked Ahaz, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God, ask it either in the depth or height above"; they churlishly answer him in effect as he did, "I will not ask, neither will I try the Lord." Whereupon the prophet that made the motion, in a holy indignation, "Hear ye now," saith he, "ye house of David, Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?" ***Isaiah 7:12-13***.

If I will not often you the windows of heaven. Vulgate: the cataracts, or floodgates, or spouts of heaven; meaning the clouds, those bottles of rain, which God here promiseth to shower down abundantly, *tanta copia, impetu, et fragore, ut ruere potius quam fluere videatur* (Corn. a Lapide). A phrase noting great plenty, ***2 Kings 7:2***, for in those hot countries drought ever made a dearth. Hence the proud Egyptians, whose land is watered and made fruitful by the overflow of the river Nile, were wont in mockery to tell the neighbouring nations, that if God should forget to rain they might chance to starve for it. They thought the rain was of God, but not the river. God therefore threateneth to dry it up, ***Ezekiel 29:9; Isaiah 19:5-6***, and so he did (Ovid.):

> "*Creditur Aegyptus caruisse iuvantibus arva*
> *Imbribus, atque annis sicca fuisse novem*."

To teach both them and us, that both plenty and scarcity, drought and rain, are his work; he carries the keys of the grave, of the heart, and of the windows of heaven, the clouds, under his own belt. Vessels they are as thin as the liquor which is contained in them. There they hang and move, though weighty with their burden. How they are upheld, and why they fall here and now, we know not, but wonder at it, as God's handiwork. In the island of St Thomas, on the backside of Africa, in the midst of it is a hill, and over that a continual cloud, wherewith the whole island is watered. In the middle region of the air, God hath made darkness his secret place: his pavilion round about him is dark waters and thick clouds of the sky, ***Psalms 18:11***. These he weighs by measure, so that not a drop falls in vain nor in a wrong place, ***Job 28:15*** "When he uttereth his voice there is a multitude (or noise) of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain," &c., ***Jeremiah 10:13***. A wonderful thing surely, that out of the midst of water God fetcheth fire, and hard stones out of the midst of thin vapours. This is the Lord's own doing, and it is (worthily) marvellous in our eyes. "Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can give rain? or can the heavens give showers?" (so the naturalists will needs have it; but what saith the prophet?) "Art not thou he, O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things," ***Jeremiah 14:22***. A pious resolution surely, and that which the Lord here would have this people to take up; viz. in the way of his judgments to wait upon him, ***Isaiah 26:8***, and walk before him, to honour him with their substance, and with the firstfruits of all their increase. So should their barns be filled with plenty, and their presses burst out with new wine, ***Proverbs 3:9-10*** "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself," ***Proverbs 11:25***.

God will pour him out a blessing. Because he is a soul of blessing, as the Hebrew hath it in that place of the Proverbs last cited, and he shall have rain enough, Ipse pluvia erit, as Kimchi rendereth the last words there. He shall be a sweet and seasonable shower to himself and others. "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock, and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow any more at all," ***Jeremiah 31:12***. O precious promise, every syllable whereof drops myrrh and mercy!

Abraham, that father of tithe paying (so we may call him, as the Hebrews call Jacob the father of vows, because he is the first we read of in Scripture that vowed a vow unto the Lord), had this promise of abundance plentifully performed unto him. So had Constantine, the first Christian emperor, the Church's great benefactor. Bonus Deus, saith Augustine, Constantinum Magnum tantis terrenis implevit muneribus quanta optare nullus auderet: The good Lord filled Constantine the Great with so many temporal blessings as never any man dared wish for (De Civ. Dei, l. v. c. 25.).

There shall not be room enough to receive it. *Ita ut dicatis satis est,* so that you shall say, It is enough: thus the Chaldee rendereth it. Rabbi Abraham, you shall have more than enough, as the Sareptan had, ***2 Kings 4:4***, the cruse never ceased running till there was no room. Borrow of thy neighbours, saith the prophet, but shut the doors upon thee. It was time to shut the doors, saith one, when many greater vessels must be supplied from one little one. She had a prophet's reward with a witness, *Non tantum quod sufficiat, sed etiam quod supersit.* Rab. David. *Ultra sufficiens* (Montan.). And so had the Shunamite. Her table and bed and stool was well bestowed: that candlestick repaid her the light of her future life and condition; that table the means of maintenance; that stool a seat of safe abode; that bed a quiet rest from the common calamities of her nation. So liberal a pay master is God: his rewards are more than bountiful; he will not be overcome by his creature in liberality, ***James 1:5***. They shall be sure to have their own again with usury, either in money or money's worth. What they want in temporals (a sufficiency whereof they shall be sure of, if not a superfluity) he will make up in spirituals, joy and peace through believing, as much or more than heart can hold. Some holy men have so over abounded exceedingly with joy, that they have been forced to cry out, Hold, Lord, stay thine hand, &c, their spirits were even ready to expire with an exuberance of spiritual ravishment; as the Church in the Canticles was sick of love, and therefore calls to the ministers, ***Solomon's Song 2:5***, to stay her from sinking and swooning, to bolster her up, being surprised with a love qualm; as the Queen of Sheba, rapt with admiration, had no more spirit in her; as Jacob's heart fainted when he heard the good news of Joseph alive. Bernard, for a certain time after his conversion, remained, as it were, deprived of his senses, by the excessive consolations he had from God. Cyprian and Austin testify the like of themselves.{{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:11]]**Verse 11.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes**. Caterpillars, cankerworms, and such hurtful creatures. God's terrible army, as they are notably set forth in their march and mischief, ***Joel 2:2-5*** *cf.* ***Joel 1:4***, to tame his rebels, to ease him of his adversaries, and to avenge him of his enemies, ***Isaiah 1:24***. These he will rebuke (for every creature is at his beck and check), as he "rebuked the Red Sea and it was dried up," ***Psalms 106:9***, and as he rebuked the winds, ***Matthew 8:26***, the fever, ***Luke 4:39***, the devil, ***Matthew 7:18***, he will say unto them, *Abite actutum hinc,* Get you hence, and that is enough, for they are all his servants, ***Psalms 119:91***. He is the great Centurion, or rather Lord of hosts, that saith to this creature, "Go, and he goeth," and to another, "Come, and he cometh," &c. If he do but say, Who is on my side, who? all creatures look out at their windows, as ready prest to do his pleasure; neither is there any so mean among them, or so despicable, that cannot, if set on by him, make the proudest on earth stoop, and say, "This is the finger of God." But of this see more in the 1st Doct. on ***Malachi 3:18***. Let all that look for God's blessing, either upon their persons or possessions, make their peace with God (the genealogy of grain and wine is resolved into him, ***Hosea 2:22***), and bring him all his tithes into the storehouse, &c., lest he blast their fair hopes, cut off the meat from their mouths, take his own and be gone, take away his grain in the time thereof, and his wine in the season thereof, &c., ***Hosea 2:9***. The Jews in our Saviour's time, *suis malis edocti,* were punctual in paying their tithes, even to a pot herb, ***Matthew 23:23***. And at this day, though not in their own country, nor have a Levitical priesthood, yet those of them that would be reputed religious do distribute, in lieu of tithes,

the tenth of their increase unto the poor: being persuaded that God doth bless their increase the more: for their usual proverb is, *Decima ut dives fiat,* tithe and be rich. Of the young Lord Harrington (the last of that name) it is reported by Mr Stock, who preached his funeral, that he constantly gave the tenth of his yearly revenue to pious and charitable uses. And of reverend Mr. Whately, minister of Banbury, it is likewise recorded in his life, that he set apart and expended for many years before he died for good uses the tenth part of his yearly comings in, both out of his temporal and ecclesiastical means of maintenance; and that he never thrived in his outward estate till he took that course. Besides the sweet comfort that the spirits of his wealth thus distilled, as it were, brought to his conscience, both in life and at death; and the blessing of a good name left behind him, according to that which follows next in the text, "And all nations," &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:12]]**Verse 12.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And all nations shall call you blessed**. viz. For the abundance of outward comforts and commodities, by the which the nations measured man's happiness, saying, "Blessed is the people that is in such a case," ***Psalms 144:15***. Cyprus was for this cause anciently called *Macaria,* that is, the blessed country, as having a sufficiency of all things within itself; and England was called *Regnum Dei,* the kingdom of God, or the Fortunate island, and Englishmen *Deires,* as that were set safe, *de ira Dei,* from the wrath of God. In the time of Pope Clement VI (as Robert of Avesbury testifieth), when Lewis of Spain was chosen prince of the Fortunate Islands, and for the conquest thereof was to raise an army in France and Italy; the English agent at Rome, together with his company, departed and got home, as conceiving that the prince was bound for England, than the which they thought there was not a more fortunate island in the world. Of the island of Lycia, Solinus saith that all the day long the sky is never cloudy but that the sun may be seen there, *Lyciam Horatius claram dicit. Semper in sole sita est Rhodes,* The Rhodes is ever in the sunshine, saith Aeneas Sylvius. And of Alexandria in Egypt, Ammianus Marcellinus observeth, that once in the day the sun hath been seen to shine over it. I confess the same cannot be said of England. I remember also what I have read of a certain Frenchman, who returning home out of England, and being asked by a countryman of his that was bound for England, what service he would command him into this country? Nothing but this, said the other; when you see the sun have me commended to him; for I have been there two months and could never see him in all that time: *Per duos enim menses quibus ibi fui, Solem mihi videre non licuit (Garincieres de tabe Anglica,* p. 84). Likely he was here in the deep of winter. For at summer solstice Tacitus, in the Life of Agricola, hath observed that the sun shineth continually in Brittany, and neither setteth nor riseth there; but passeth so lightly by us by night that you can scarce say we have any night at all, *Ut finem atque initium lucis exiguo discrimine internoscas.* But if we speak of the sunshine of God's grace and favour, either for spirituals or temporals, as Delos is said by Solinus to have been the first country that had the sun shining upon it after the general deluge, and there hence to have had its name, *Nomenque ex eo sortitam* (Polyb. c. 17), so was England one of the first islands that both received Christ and that shook off Antichrist. And for temporal blessings, all nations shall call us blessed, and count us a delightsome land indeed, a land of desires, such as all men would desire to dwell in, for the exceeding fruitfulness and pleasantness of it; it being the court of Queen Ceres, the granary of the Western world, as foreign writers have termed it, the paradise of pleasure and garden of God, as our own chronicler. The truth is, we may well say of England, as the Italians do of Venice, by way of proverb: He that hath not seen it cannot believe what a dainty place it is, and he that hath not lived there some good time cannot understand the worth of it. Our Mr Ascham, schoolmaster to Queen Elizabeth, had lived there some time, and had soon enough of it; for though he admired the place, he utterly disliked the people for their loose living. And the like, alas, may be too truly affirmed of us. We live in God's good land, but not by God's good laws; we eat the fat and drink the sweet, but we sanctify not the Lord God in our hearts, we live not as becometh Christians. Our hearts, like our climate, have much more light than heat, light of

knowledge than heat of zeal; our lukewarmness is like to be our bane, our sins our snuffs, that dim our candlestick, and threaten the removal of it. *O si fiat id in nobis* (saith one) *quod in sole videtur, qui quibus affulserit, iis etiam calorem et colorem impertire solet!* Oh that the Sun of righteousness would so shine upon us, as to warm us, and transform us into the same image from glory to glory, as by his Spirit! Oh that he would set up his own kingdom here more and more among us! Then should we be more happy than the Israelites were under the reign of King Solomon, or the Spaniards under their Ferdinand III, who reigned thirty-five years, in all which time there was neither famine nor pestilence in the land. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:13]]**Verse 13.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Your words have been stout against me**. Or, re-enforced, or strongly confirmed. *Superant me verba vestra,* so some have rendered it. By your hard and hateful words you have been too hard for me, as it were. And it is as if God should say, I have given you my best advice to break off your sins, and to bring me my tithes, that I might bless you both with store and honour. But I have lost my labour; I see well, my sweet words are worse than spilt upon you, who are so hardened in your error and blasphemy, that you are still clamouring and casting out odious words against me, ***Proverbs 23:8***. *Verba quid incassum non proficientia perdo?* Once before you had set your foul mouths against me, and, like so many wolves (that were wood), you held up your heads and howled out these ugly words, "Every one that doth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them," ***Malachi 2:17***; was it possible that the wit of malice could devise so high a slander? And now you are at it again, creaking like doors that move upon rusty hinges, nay, clattering and blustering out such hellish and hideous blasphemies, as at the hearing whereof it is great wonder if the heavens sweat not, earth gape not, sea roar not, all creatures conspire not to be avenged upon you; as the very stones in the wall of Aphek turned executioners of those blasphemous Syrians, when as, being but ignorant pagans, their tongues might seem no slander.

your words have been stout against me. Yea, stouter and stouter; your wickedness frets like a canker, and increaseth still to more ungodliness, ***2 Timothy 2:17***. Evil men and deceivers grow worse and worse, ***2 Timothy 3:13***, as being given up by God, ***Romans 1:28***, acted and agitated by the devil, ***Ephesians 2:2***, serving divers lusts and pleasures, ***Titus 3:3***, which to satisfy is an endless piece of business. Neither let any here say, they were but words that these are charged with, and words are but wind, &c., for words have their weight, and are marvellously provoking. *Leviter volant, sed non leviter violant.* The fly lightly but they do not outrage lightly. You shall find some, saith Erasmus, that if death be threatened, can despise it; but to be belied they cannot brook, nor from revenge contain themselves. "As a murdering weapon in my bones," saith David, "mine enemies reproach me," ***Psalms 42:10***. Desperate speeches and blasphemies that impose upon the Lord anything unbeseeming his majesty, a thing common among the Jews even to this day, he can by no means do away with. See how God stomacheth such proud contumelious language, ***Psalms 73:11; 94:4-11; Zephaniah 1:12; Ezekiel 9:9***. See how he punished it in him that bored through his great name, ***Leviticus 24:11***. Ludovike, commonly called St Lewis, caused the lips of blasphemers to be scared with a hot iron. Philip, the French king, punished this sin with death, yea, though it were committed in a tavern. The very Turks have the Christians' blaspheming of Christ in execration; and will punish their prisoners sorely when as, through impatience or desperateness, they wound the ears of heaven: yea, the Jews, in their speculations of the causes of the strange success of the affairs of the world, assign the reason of the Turks prevailing so against the Christians to be their blasphemies; and among other scandals and lets of their conversion are all those stout words darted with hellish mouths against God in their hearing, so ordinarily and openly, by the Italians especially, who blaspheme oftener than swear, and murder more often than revile or slander. Andrew Musculus, in his discourse entitled The devil of blasphemy, hath a memorable story of a desperate dice player in Helvetia, A. D. 1553, at a town three miles

distant from Lucerna; where, on a Lord's Day, three wretched fellows were playing at dice under the town wall. One of them, named Ulricus Schraeterus, having lost a great deal of money, swore that, if he lost the next cast, he would fling his dagger at the face of God. He lost it, and, in a rage, threw up his dagger with all his might toward heaven. The dagger vanished in the air, and was seen no more; five drops of blood fell down upon the table where they were playing, which could never be washed out (part of it is still kept in that town for a monument); the blasphemer, to say the best of him, was fetched away presently body and soul by the devil, with such a horrible noise, as frightened the whole town. The other two came to a miserable end shortly after. The truth of this relation is further attested by Job Fincelius and Philip Lonicerus, Theat. Histor. p. 142.

Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Chald. What have we multiplied to speak before thee? As if they should say, It is not so much that we have spoken that thou shouldest make such a business of it. Nothing more ordinary with graceless men than to elevate and extenuate; great sins with them are small sins, and small sins no sins; when as every sin should swell like a toad in their eyes, and the abundant hatred thereof in their hearts should make them say all that can be said for the aggravation and detestation of it; since there is as much treason in coining pence as bigger pieces; because the supreme authority is as much violated in the one as in the other. But this sin of theirs was no peccadillo, as appeareth by the following instance: {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:14]]**Verse 14.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Ye have said, It is vain to serve God**. Vulgate: He is vain that serves God. Ye are idle, ye are idle, said Pharaoh to the Israelites, when they would needs go sacrifice; and to Moses and Aaron, Ye let the people from their works. Anything seems due work to a carnal mind saving God's service; that is labour lost, time cast away, they think. But this is their want of spiritual judgment; they see not the beauty of holiness, they taste not how good the Lord is; they discern not things that are excellent; they measure all by present sight, sense, and taste, as do children, swine, and other brute creatures; and, therefore, they themselves are *vani et vanissimi,* as an expositor here speaketh, vain, and most vain, and that for two reasons, and in two respects. First, for that they take themselves to be servers of God. Secondly, they stick in the bark, serve him with the outside only, honour him with their lips, and not with their hearts; they bring him vain oblations, empty performances, serve him with shows and formalities which he delights not in, nay, he rejects them with infinite scorn, as he did the Pharisees' devotions, ***Luke 16:15***, because they were but skin deep, and not heart sprung; therefore they were not a button the better for them. God loves and looks for truth in the inward parts, ***Psalms 51:6***; he looks that men should do his will from the heart, ***Ephesians 6:6***, and serve him in their spirits, ***Romans 1:9***, in doing whereof there is great reward, ***Psalms 19:11*** *praemium ante praemium,* reward before the reward, that commendation of a good conscience; this the stranger meddleth not with, conceives not, the wealth of God's pilgrims standing more in jewels and gold, things light of carnage, and well portable, than in house and land. His servants have that here that doth abundantly pay them for their pains beforehand; righteousness being its own reward; and they knowing within themselves that they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance, ***Hebrews 10:34***. But hereafter oh the rich recompense that God shall make them! oh the heaped up happiness of such at the last! when these vain talkers in the text, and all that are of their mind, shall roar out *Nos insensati,* We fools counted their lives madness; but now, &c. (***See Trapp on "Malachi 3:16"***) doctr. 5.

What profit is it that we have kept his ordinance? The Chaldee hath it, *Quod mammon adepti sumus?* what mammon or wealth have we gained? Mammonists are all for gain, their very godliness is gain, still they have an eagle's eye to the prey when they seem to fly highest toward heaven; if they may not get by God they soon grow weary of his work. Whatever shows they make of better, sure it is their belly is their god, they mind earthly things. These will

follow the chase, as Jonathan, till they meet with the honeycomb; or as a cur follows his master till he meet with a carrion. These come to Christ (as that young Pharisee did) hastily, but they go away heavily; because they consider not that with the Lord are durable riches, ***Proverbs 8:18***; and that godliness, as it hath many crosses, so it hath many comforts against them (*Virtus lecythos habet in malis*); like as no country hath more venomous creatures than Egypt, none more antidotes. This these sensualists, having not the Spirit, understand not; and hence their complaint of a disappointment; casting a slur upon God's housekeeping, as those spies did upon the promised land, and ready to run back into Egypt to their flesh pots, garlic, and onions there, ***Numbers 11:5; 14:4***. Lo, this is the guise of graceless persons, with whom that is the best religion that brings greatest advantage in the things of this life. If the ark bring a blessing with it, as it did to Obed Edom, it shall be looked upon as worthy of entertainment; but if a plague of poverty come with it these Philistines will be glad to rid their hands of it. The garishness of honour, wealth, and pleasures do so dazzle their eyes, that they think it the only happiness to have and to hold. Such fools they are, and such great beasts, if David may judge, ***Psalms 73:22***, to fly a fool's pitch, and to go hawking after that which cannot be had, as Solomon saith, ***Proverbs 23:5***; or, if had, yet cannot be held, as being of swiftest wing, and as soon gone as a post that passeth by. Godliness hath the promise of both lives; and we read of some godly men in Scripture that were richer than any other. But God will have it sometimes to be otherwise, that godliness might be admired for itself; and to show that his people serve him not for commodity, ***Job 1:9***. But that none serve God for nought, no, not so much as shut a door or kindle a fire; see before, ***Malachi 1:10***.

That we have kept his ordinances. Which if they had done indeed, they would never have thus bragged, much less blasphemed; they would have accused themselves, and not the Divine providence; they would have said, with holy Ezra, And this is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass; and thou, our God, hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve. Mightest thou not be justly angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? ***Ezra 9:13-14***. Thus the good wheat falls low at the feet of the farmer, when the chaff whiffles and flies at his face. Thus the sheep, when shorn, bleats and looks downward; whereas the hunger-bitten wolf looks up and howls against heaven. Hypocrites use to wrangle with God and expostulate the unkindness of his nonacceptance of their services, as ***Isaiah 58:8*** "Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?" God was, in their opinion, far too short and much behind with them; and, therefore, much to blame, and they must give him the telling of it: they do so; and they have their answer. So they shall have here in the following verses, and the next chapter, which ought not to be divided from this, as some conceive. They upbraid the Lord, as with their observances, so with their humiliations.

And that we have walked mournfully. Or, in black, the habit of mourners; whence that of the heathen orator, *Athenienses non nisi atrati, &c.;* The Athenians are never so good as when they are all in black; that is, under some heavy affliction. And a great statesman of this kingdom had this verse written upon his study door,

> "*Anglica gens est optima flens et pessima ridens*."

Great Britain, all in black, is in its best condition. But what is it to wear sackcloth, and walk softly, with Ahab, when he had sold himself to do wickedly? ***1 Kings 21:27***; what is a humbling day without a humbled heart? not only an irreligious incongruity, but a high provocation; like Zimri's act, when all the congregation were weeping before the door of the tabernacle. Surely God may say to such pretenders, as Isaac did to his father, "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a sacrifice?" or as Jacob did to his sons that brought him the bloody coat, Lo, here is the coat, but where is my child? your garments are black, but your hearts and lives are much blacker. Go, "cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, you

doubleminded. Be afflicted," in good earnest, "and mourn" to some purpose, "and weep," soak and souse yourselves in tears of true repentance; let your sorrow for sin be deep and downright: "turn your laughter to mourning, and your joy to heaviness," ***James 4:8-9***. And then come, let us reason together, saith the Lord. All these unkind contestations shall cease, and all loving correspondencies shall pass between us. God had said so much as all this before to them, ***Malachi 3:7, 10-11***. *Sed surdo fabulam,* their adamant was too hard to be mollified. Their bulrushes, though bowed down for a day, while some storm of trouble was upon them, was now so perked up, as if it would threaten heaven: witness their continued contumacy, their robust language in the next verse also, stouting it out still with God. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:15]]**Verse 15.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And now we call the proud happy**. Such as, boiling and swelling with spite and spleen against God and his people, deal arrogantly and insolently, doing wickedly with hands earnestly, ***Exodus 18:11; 21:11***, and working their own ends confidently and daringly; these we call and count happy, because wealthy and well underlaid, as they say, because they live in the height of the world's blandishments. But the whole book of Ecclesiastes is a clear and full confutation of this fond conceit, had they but ever read or regarded it. How can the proud person be happy that hath God for his professed enemy? what was all Haman's honour to him when the king frowned upon him? what was Ahab the better for his ivory palace, his gold, and his jewels in every place, when the heaven was brass above, the earth iron beneath? Surely God abhorreth pride as an abomination of desolation; and though he preserveth the faithful, yet sooner or later he plentifully rewardeth the proud doer, ***Psalms 31:23***. Like metal in the fire, when they shine brightest they are nearest to melting; and, like a bulging wall, they will shortly fall. Swelling is a dangerous symptom in the body, so is pride in the soul. *Tolluntur in altum, ut lapsu graviore ruant.* Neither are they, therefore, to be reputed ever a whit the more happy because they come not in trouble like other men, but prosper in their wickedness. for God is never more angry with such than when he seems best pleased. Pharaoh had fair weather made him, till he was in the midst of the sea; fatting cattle are but fitting for the meat market. Never was Jerusalem's condition so desperate as when God said unto her, My fury shall depart from thee, I will be quiet and no more angry, ***Ezekiel 16:42***. Nor Ephraim's, as when he said, "I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom." And, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone," ***Hosea 4:14, 17***, *sc.* till I come and fetch my full blow at him. Clement of Alexandria cites Plato expressing himself thus: Although a righteous man be tormented, although his eyes be dug out, yet he remains a blessed man; and the contrary:

They that work wickedness are set up. Heb. They are built up, *sc.* in posterity, and prosperity of all sorts. The Psalmist expresseth it thus: "They are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes," ***Psalms 17:14***. Thus God built the midwives houses, that is, he gave them children, for their mercy to these newborn babes, ***Exodus 1:21***. Thus he builded David a house, ***2 Samuel 7:12-13***. And thus those that return to the Almighty have a gracious promise that they shall be built up, ***Job 22:23***. That these stout and stiff stigmatics were built up and prospered, though (after so sweet an invitation) they turned not to him that smote them, we need not wonder, since it is their portion, as David showeth, all they are like to have or must ever look for. Besides, is not God the true proprietary of all? Is not the earth the Lord's purse with the fulness thereof, and may he not do with his own as he pleaseth? ***Matthew 20:15***. Add hereunto that what wicked men have, they have it with a curse, and for mischief; their table is a snare to them; they are like to pay dearly for their sweet morsels, as Haman did for his wine at Esther's banquet. Bernard calls the wicked man's prosperity *misericordiam omni indignatione crudeliorem,* a misery more cruel than any adversity, ***Psalms 91:8***. Austin affirmeth, *Nullum mare tam profundum, quam est Dei cogitatio ut mali floreant, &c.:* No sea is so deep as the Divine dispensation that good men should suffer, bad men prosper. They are built up with blessings, as they say the Phoenix builds her nest with hot

spices, wherein she is afterwards burned. They build as those at Babel, and feather their nests, as if their lives were riveted upon eternity; but as their foundation is laid upon kiln, so brimstone is scattered upon their habitations, ***Job 18:15***. If the fire of God's wrath but touch it, all will be quickly consumed. Dioclesian, that bloody persecutor, despairing of ever rooting out the Christian religion, as he had endeavoured to do, gave over his empire in a discontent, and decreed to lead the rest of his life quietly. But he could not escape so; for, after that, his house was wholly consumed with lightning, and a flame of fire that fell from heaven, he, hiding himself for fear of the lightning, died within a little after (Euseb. de Vita Constant. lib. 5). "Their inward thought is" (saith the Psalmist of such wicked atheists) "that their houses" (honours, riches, nephews) "shall continue for ever; and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their houses after their own names"; as Cain called his newly built city of Enoch, after the name of his son, that he might leave him Lord Enoch of Enoch. "Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish," ***Psalms 49:11-12***. The use to be made hereof see ***Malachi 3:16*** "Be not thou afraid when" (a wicked) "one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased."

Yea, they that tempt God are even delivered. Still these miscreants are grunting out their grudges against God. What this sin here instanced, viz. of tempting God, is, hath been shown before. (***See Trapp on "Malachi 3:10"***) Here it is to be taken for an audacious daring of God to take vengeance, as ***Numbers 16:23-35***. These very worst sort of sinners are sometimes not only spared, but prospered, ***Jeremiah 12:1***. Their ephah is not yet full, their iniquity not found to be hateful enough yet. But the wicked is kept (by the patience of God) unto the day of destruction; and shall be brought forth to the day of wrath, as condemned malefactors are to execution, some by a back door and byways, others through the market place; so here. He that hath stolen a good horse rides gallantly mounted for present, till shortly after, followed close by hue and cry, he is soon apprehended, sentenced, and brought to condign punishment. And this is the very state of presumptuous sinners, and will be. I know well, that "because sentence is not presently executed, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are set in them to do wickedly," ***Ecclesiastes 8:11***. Felix *scelus virtus vocatur* calls evil virtue (Cicero), as we see here, The proud are called happy, because, for present, in prosperity. See the like ***Jeremiah 44:11; Genesis 30:18***. Dionysius, after the spoil of an idol temple, finding the winds favourable in his navigation, Lo, said he, how the gods approve of sacrilege. But the weakness of this argument see set forth by Solomon, ***Ecclesiastes 9:1-3***. (***See Trapp on "Ecclesiastes 9:1"***) (***See Trapp on "Ecclesiastes 9:2"***) (***See Trapp on "Ecclesiastes 9:3"***) God gives outward things to the wicked no otherwise than as if a man should cast a purseful of gold into an outhouse. He gives them riches to furnish their indictment out of them; as Joseph put his cup into their sack to pick a quarrel with them and lay theft to their charge. The sunshine of prosperity ripens their sin apace, and so fits them for destruction. Let God, therefore, be justified, and every mouth stopped. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:16]]**Verse 16.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Then they that feared the Lord, &c.** Then, when all flesh had corrupted their ways, ***Genesis 6:12***, and the whole world turned atheists. Then, when there was no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land, none to speak of, but that it was even darkened with profaneness, ***Hosea 4:1***; as Egypt was with those very grievous locusts that covered the eye thereof, ***Exodus 10:14-15***. Then, when the faithful city was become a harlot, ***Isaiah 1:21-22***; her silver turned into dross, her wine mixed with water; her people not dilute only, but dissolute; herself *ex aurea facta est argentea, ex argentea ferrea, ex ferrea terrea,* as one once said of Rome, of gold become silver, of silver iron, of iron earth, or rather muck.

Then they that feared the Lord. Those few names that had not defiled their garments in so foul a season, ***Revelation 3:4***; but had kept themselves unspotted of the world, undefiled in the way; so as that wicked one had not touched them, ***1 John 5:18***, had not thrust his deadly

sting into them, had not transformed them into sin's image. These stood up to stickle for God, to stop the mouth of blasphemy, and to stablish one another in persuasion of God's holy truth, and constant care of his dear children.

Spake often one to another. Montanus renders it, *Tunc vastati sunt timentes Dominum;* sc. *ab impiis et atheis impune eos invadentibus;* that is, Then were those that feared the Lord wasted and destroyed, viz. by those wicked atheists, who fell from fierce words to bloody blows; so the word is used, ***2 Chronicles 22:10; Psalm 2:5***. But this is far set, and nothing so agreeable to the mind of the Holy Ghost here, as our English, after other approved translations. It is the same word that is used ***Malachi 3:13***. Those spoke not so much against God as these did for him, and about him to each other, for mutual confirmation, that that which was halting haply might not be turned out of the way, but healed rather, ***Hebrews 12:13***. Great is the benefit of Christian conference for strengthening the weak knees, and comforting the feebleminded. "How forcible are right words!" ***Job 6:25***. One seasonable truth falling upon a prepared heart hath often a strong and sweet operation; as some speeches of Staupicius had upon Luther: of whom the story is told that he was much cheered up by conference with an old priest discoursing about justification by faith, and explaining the Articles of the Creed to him. Latimer, likewise, was much furthered by hearing Bilney's confession, and having frequent conference with him at Heretics' Hill, as the place where they most used to walk in the fields at Cambridge was called long after. Surely, as a little boat may land a man into a large continent; so may a few good words suggest matter sufficient for a whole life's meditation. This Satan well knows, and, therefore, as he did what he could to keep God and Daniel asunder, ***Daniel 6:7***, so he doth still to keep the saints one from another, that they may not build up themselves in their most holy faith, pray in the Holy Ghost, pull one another out of the fire, ***Jude 1:20, 23***. How were the apostles persecuted for their Christian meetings; the primitive Christians banished and confined to isles and mines, where they could not have access one to another, as Cyprian complains; the poor saints here in times of Popery, meeting as they could for mutual edification; and, therefore, accused of sedition; for prevention whereof it was ordained that, if men should flock secretly together above the number of six, they should be attached of treason; so the Protestants at Milcenburg, in Germany, were forbidden upon pain of death to speak together of Scripture matters (Luth. Epist.). And at Nola, the Jesuits straitly charged the people not to talk of God, either in good sort or in bad. See more of this in my treatise on these words, called The Righteous Man's Recompence, chap. iv. doctrine 3, annexed to this commentary.

And the Lord hearkened and heard. He not only heard, but hearkened, or listened; *Gestus hic est diligenter auscultantis,* ***Isaiah 32:3***. It imports, not only attention of body, but intention of mind (as when a man listeneth as for life, and makes hard shift to hear all), and retention of memory. For which purpose also a book of remembrance is here said to be written before him, or by his appointment. *Liber monumenti,* A book of acts and monuments, in allusion to the custom of kings: see ***Esther 2:23***. Tamerlane, that warlike Scythian, had always by him a catalogue of the names and good deeds of his servants, which he daily perused, and whom he duly rewarded; not needing by them, or any others in their behalf, to be put in remembrance. Much less doth the Lord, who bottles up the tears of his people, files up their prayers, puts all their holy speeches and practices on record, that he may make all honourable mention of them at the last day, in that great amphitheatre, that general assembly; not once remembering any of their misdeeds, ***Matthew 25:35; Hebrews 8:12***. See more of this in the Righteous Man's Recompence, chap. v., vi.

And that thought upon his name. That had God before their eyes, ***Psalms 10:8***, that minded his glory, ***1 Corinthians 10:31***, that thought upon his commandments to do them, ***Psalms 102:18***; that can truly say, with the Psalmist, "How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God!

how great is the sum of them!" ***Psalms 139:17***. See more of this verse in my Righteous Man's Recompence, chap. vii. doct. 16. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:17]]**Verse 17.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And they shall be mine**. By peculiar right: *Et suum cuique pulchrum:* we all affect and admire our own things most. God chooseth them for his love; and loves them for his choice. I will be a Father unto them; and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty, ***2 Corinthians 6:18***, which is all one with that here, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts." Concerning all which see my Righteous Man's Recompence, Part II chap. i. iii.

In the day when I make up my jewels. viz. From the world's malignities and misusages. They shall not plunder him of his jewels, rob him of his chief treasure. None shall take or pluck them out of Christ's hands, ***John 10:29***, they that attempt it shall find it a work not seizable. When one desired to see Great Alexander's treasure, he bade one of his servants show him not his gold and silver, but his friends. "Henceforth I call you not servants…but I have called you friends," ***John 15:15***. And a friend is as a man's own soul, ***Deuteronomy 13:6***. The Church is the dearly beloved of God's soul, ***Jeremiah 12:7***, yea, his dearly beloved soul, as the Septuagint and Vulgate render it, &c. See my Righteous Man's Recompence, Part II chap. ii.

And I will spare them. Or, indulge them, as David did Mephibosheth, ***2 Samuel 21:7***. See my Righteous Man's Recompence, Part II. chap. iv., v. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 3:18]]**Verse 18.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Then shall ye return and discern**. You wicked blasphemers, that have slandered God's housekeeping, and brought up an evil report of his providence and justice; as if in managing the matters of the world he were less equal or less careful: you, I say, shall return, not to your right minds by a thorough conversion, by an entire change of the whole man, from evil to good (alas for your misery, it is past time of day with you for any such good works); but you shall alter your opinions when your eyes are once unsealed by the extremity of your sufferings (as the mole's eyes are said to be, when pangs of death are upon her), to see and acknowledge a sensible difference between the righteous (ever more "excellent than his neighbour," let him dwell where he will, ***Proverbs 12:26***, because "sealed up to the day of redemption" ***Ephesians 4:30***), and the wicked, who is but a vile person, an οὗτος (let him be great as Antiochus Epiphanes the great King of Syria); between him that serveth God, accounting it the highest honour to be his vassal, as Constantine, Theodosius, and Valentinian (the emperors) called themselves ***Daniel 11:21***, *Vasallos Christi* repersentives of Christ (Socrat.), and him that serveth him not, but casteth off the yoke of his obedience, being a son of Belial; and counteth it the only liberty to live as he wishes, and not to be ruled by God.

Then shall ye return. Then, when it is too late, when the day of grace is past, the gales of grace gone over, the gate shut, the drawbridge taken up. Then shall ye, wretched lingerers and loiterers, Epimetheuses, experts in hindsight, wise after the fact, that come in at length with your fool's Had-I-know, return; not as the prodigal did, who seasonably and savingly came to himself, ***Luke 15:17***, having been before utterly bestraught, and quite beside himself, by the deceitfulness of sin, called foolishness of madness, ***Ecclesiastes 7:25***; nor as those true converts mentioned in Solomon's prayer, that bethink themselves and repent, and make supplication to their judge, ***1 Kings 8:47***; but as Judas, who, while he played alone, won all, but haunted with the furies of a guilty conscience, which would needs make one with him, he repented after a sort, with a *poenitentia sera Iscariotica,* as Pareus calleth it, had some after thoughts, but not to a transmentation; μεταμεληθεὶς, ***Matthew 27:3***; some inward wamblings, but they boiled not up to the full height of a godly sorrow, and therefore came to nothing. Or, is James Abbes, with his hideous All too late, all too late; so these wicked ones in the text, when they shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, and themselves thrust out;

Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, and themselves in the burning lake; Christ's poor despised fellow sufferers shining "forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," and themselves cast out into outer darkness, ***Matthew 13:43***; then shall they change both their mind and their note; then shall their odious blasphemies be driven back again down their throats, and then made to say, with Pharaoh, ***Exodus 9:27*** "The Lord is righteous," and so are all his people, ***Isaiah 60:21***, but I and mine associates are wicked, and therefore deservedly wretched. We once counted the proud happy, but now we see that of David verified which erst we believed not: "Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed," for that they "erred from thy commandments," ***Psalms 119:21***. We looked upon the righteous as calamitous, as worms and no men; as the *nullificamen populi* (Tertullian's expression), fit to be set with the dogs of the flock, and as the offscouring of all things; but now we can vote with that man of God and say, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and the sword of thine excellency? and thine enemies are now found liars unto thee, for thou treadest upon their high places," when they are trodden underfoot as unsavoury salt, ***Deuteronomy 33:29***. Woe unto us spoilers! for now we are spoiled. "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who can abide with everlasting burnings?" ***Isaiah 33:1, 14; Jeremiah 4:13***. Behold, the day is come that burneth as an oven, ***Malachi 4:1***, and we are now "as stubble fully dried," that it may burn the better, ***Nahum 1:10***. We are put away (even all the wicked of the earth) like dross, ***Psalms 119:119***, thrust away as thorns, ***2 Samuel 23:6***, placed as vile things under Christ's feet, ***Psalms 110:1***. When the righteous shine as bright as silver upon the celestial shelf (as that martyr, John Careless, said), and surpass us as far as the lily doth the thorns, ***Solomon's Song 2:2***, or as the gold doth the coals in the goldsmith's shop; yea, they are the throne of Christ, ***Exodus 17:16***, his jewels, ***Malachi 3:17***, his ornament, the beauty of his ornament, and that set in majesty, ***Ezekiel 7:20***, a royal diadem on the head of Jehovah, ***Isaiah 62:3***; and so they shall one day appear to be, though now they do not, ***1 John 3:2***; it shall be no hard matter to discern them.

Between the righteous and the wicked. Here they are together in the Church militant, and ever have been. "Sinners in Zion," ***Isaiah 33:14*** sacrificing Sodomites, ***Isaiah 1:10***, a devil in Christ's family, ***John 13:10***. All men have not faith, ***2 Thessalonians 3:2***, all the Lord's people are not holy, ***Numbers 16:3***, that any are it is a just wonder. "What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" ***Job 15:14***. None are so but such as are arrayed with that fine white linen and shining, the righteousnesses of the saints, ***Revelation 19:8***, that twofold righteousness, imputed and imparted, of justification and of sanctification. See both, ***1 Corinthians 6:11***, and seek after both by Christ's merit and Spirit, by his value and virtue. He is Jehovah our righteousness, ***Jeremiah 23:5***, and of his fulness ye all receive, ***John 1:16***. He it is that makes us to differ from the wicked of the world, that have hearts full of hell, and are ever either hatching cockatrice's eggs, or, at best, weaving spider's webs; vanity or villany is their whole practice. The best among them would serve God, and yet retain their lusts too; as Solomon thought he could follow sinful pleasures, and yet keep his wisdom. And with such we must converse while in this world. Tares will be with the wheat, goats among the sheep, righteous and wicked together. God permits it so to be for the glory of his free grace, and for the trial and exercise of his people. Our care must be the greater; for evil men endanger good men, as weeds do the corn, as bad humours the blood, or an infected house the neighbourhood. We must resolve, as Joshua, to serve the Lord, howsoever; because a difference shall be one day set between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. Where we see, that not serving of God, not sacrificing, is a sin, ***Ecclesiastes 9:2***. Not robbing only, but the not relieving of the poor was the rich man's ruin. Not gluttony only, but overmuch abstinence may overthrow the body. Omission of diet breeds diseases; so doth omission of duties; and makes work for hell, or for the Physician of our souls. "Let us therefore have grace, whereby we may serve God with reverence and godly fear," ***Hebrews 12:28***. Serve him as old Zechariah in his canticle saith we should do, ***Luke 1:74-75***. First, out of sense of his dear love

in our deliverance by Christ; whereinto the deeper we dive the sweeter. This will make us love to be his servants, ***Isaiah 56:7*** "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," ***Romans 12:12***, *Servati sumus ut serviamus.* Secondly, serve him without fear, slavish fear; serve him with a holy security, in full assurance of his gracious assistance and acceptance; yea, though through infirmity we miss or mar his work, yet he will spare us, ***Malachi 3:17***. Thirdly, serve him in holiness and righteousness, in all parts and points of duty; show your integrity both for subject and object; not picking or choosing your work, nor sticking at anything, but willing in all things to please God. He doth not God's, but his own will, that doth no more than himself will. Fourthly, serve him sincerely, in holiness and righteousness (before him, or, as in his presence). Set the Lord ever at your right hand; look him full in the face, approve your hearts and lives unto him, do him but eye service, and it sufficeth. Fifthly, serve him constantly, all the days of your lives, hire yourselves to him for term of life; why should you desire to shift or fleet? where can you mend yourselves, either for fairness of work or fulness of wages? "Can the son of Jesse give you vineyards," &c., said Saul to his servants; so may God say, Can the world do for you as I both can and will if you cleave to me with full purpose of heart? Sure it cannot, &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 4

[[@bible:Malachi 4:1]]**Verse 1.** {{field-on:Bible}}**For, behold, the day cometh**. This chapter should not be divided from the former; for here God's different dealing with the righteous and the wicked, proposed in the former verse, is further amplified by various effects of Christ's coming in the flesh. And if any ask, saith an interpreter, how this was verified of that his first coming? we answer, It was an initial or incipient stage, and by way of preparation, then; and shall be consummate in the day of the last judgment. This day comprehendeth all that time that is called by the apostle, "the ends of the world," ***1 Corinthians 10:11***, and "the world to come," ***Hebrews 2:5***; all the administrations of Christ's kingdom, from his incarnation to the end of all things, which also is at hand, and, as it were, under view already. "Behold, the day," that notable day, so long looked for by the Jews, who boasted of a Redeemer, and promised themselves all possible comforts then: *Tunc enim Deus nos dignabitur clarissima visione,* saith Jachiades on ***Daniel 12:4***, *tunc intelligemus res ipsas prout sunt:* Then shall we have a most clear vision of things as they are, &c. Lo, that day cometh; not such a day as you imagined, but like that in Amos, "A day of darkness, and not light: even very dark, and no brightness in it," ***Amos 5:20***. A day that shall burn like an oven; Nebuchadnezzar's oven, seven times more heated than it was wont, ***Daniel 3:19***. This day is come, the end is come, it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come, ***Ezekiel 7:6***. It was fulfilled in part upon this people at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and their miserable exile ever since for their unbelief. Howbeit, all these are but the beginning of sorrows; their present sorrows but a typical hell, "the pile whereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of fire, doth kindle it," ***Isaiah 30:33***. It is said to be "prepared for the devil and his angels," ***Matthew 25:41***, as if the all-powerful wisdom did deliberate, and, as it were, sit down and devise most tormenting temper, for that most formidable fire. The fire of the last day shall surely be very terrible, when all the world shall be on ablaze with fire, and wicked men shall give account with flames about their ears, with the elements melting and falling like scalding lead or burning bell metal on their heads. But all this will be but a shadow or spark of that fire of hell, the smoke whereof ascendeth for ever and ever, ***Revelation 19:3***. Some have held the fire of hell to be no true material; and corporeal fire but metaphorical, of a type known to God. *qualem novit Deus.* The most conspire in the contrary tenet; because bodies are to be punished by it. How spirits are also thus tormented, as the rich glutton's, ***Luke 16:24***, Austin sits down and admires the mystery; he tells us that for vehemence of heat it exceeds our fire, as far as ours doth fire that is painted on a wall (De Civ. Dei, lib. 21, c. 10). I would we had not cause to complain that preaching of hell is but as the painting of fire; which men can look on and handle without harm or fear. Surely he that observes the impiety of this age may say to us, as Cato did to Caesar, *Credo, quae de inferis dicuntur, falsa existimas,* I believe you think hell to be a very fable, *Esse aliquos manes nec pueri credunt, nisi qui nondum aere lavantur* (Juven.).

And all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, &c. Those proud whom you pronounced happy, ***Malachi 3:15***, because jolly, and full of worldly prosperity, rich and renowned; those workers of wickedness, whom you looked upon as set up, built upon a firm basis: God shall abase every one that is lifted up, he shall repay the wicked doer to his face, ***Deuteronomy 7:10***, and into his bosom, ***Isaiah 65:6***. Whatever arrows are in the bow string will one day fly and hit, and strike deep. They shall be as stubble, saith the text, as stubble that is fully dried, ***Nahum 1:10***, even when they be folden together as thorns. "Who would set these briers and thorns against me in battle?" saith the Lord: "I would go through them, I would burn them together," ***Isaiah 27:4***. Did he not deal so by Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Herod, the primitive persecutors? &c. Those mighty *Magnificos* that here seemed *fortes, ferrei, et aenei,* strong, and made up, as it were, of brass and iron, shall appear to be but as stubble, that cannot stand before God's fire.

The day that cometh shall burn them up. Heb. Shall so burn them *ut flamma ex ipsis excitetur,* as to set them aflame. Here Christ burns up his enemies with invisible judgments, inward terrors and torments, pangs and plunges, a very hell in their consciences, a foretaste of eternal torment (as was to be seen in Belshazzar, and our Richard III). But what will they do at the last day, when the law they shall be judged by is a fiery law, ***Deuteronomy 33:2***, the tribunal of fire, ***Ezekiel 1:27***, the judge a consuming fire, ***Hebrews 12:29***, his attendants flaming seraphims, his pleading with sinners in flames of fire, ***2 Thessalonians 1:7***, the place of punishment a lake of fire fed with a river of brimstone? ***Isaiah 30:33***; what can be the fruit of such a fiery proceeding but utter excision? Surely this fire will leave them neither root nor branch. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 4:2]]**Verse 2.** {{field-on:Bible}}**But unto you that fear my name**. What shall be the condition of graceless persons hath been said already. Now, for the righteous, that they have not served God in vain, it shall well appear by the many benefits they shall reap and receive by Christ; five whereof are here recited. 1. Imputation of Christ's righteousness, which is compared to the enlightening of this lower world by the beams of the sun 2. Remission of sins, which is compared to the healing of diseases. 3. Regeneration, which is likened to a sick man's walking forth when he is somewhat recovered. 4. Spiritual growth as calves of the stall. 5. Victory over all enemies, corporal and spiritual, which shall be trodden under-foot, as ashes of the furnace, ***Malachi 4:3***.

Shall the Sun of righteousness arise. So Christ is called (as by other prophets, ***Isaiah 60:1-2, 19; Luke 1:78; John 8:12***), to signify the joy of God's elect at the sight of him, ***Psalms 84:11***; as those that have long lain in darkness count it a pleasant thing to see the light. A "Sun of righteousness" he is said to be, 1. As asserting and vindicating the righteousness of God, called in question by those blasphemers. 2. As bestowing upon his people a double righteousness (imputed and imparted), as the sun doth his light, ***John 1:16***. It is further said here, that he shall arise, that is, he shall appear and show himself on earth, who now lieth hidden, as it were, in heaven; as the material sun doth under the horizon. God was manifested in the flesh, ***1 Timothy 3:16***. Manifested out of the bosom of his Father, out of the womb of his mother, out of the types of the law. In his nativity he came forth as the sun doth, as a bridegroom out of his chamber. In the whole course of his life he rejoiced as a giant to run his race. He enlightened and warmed the dark and dry hearts of men, he filled them with the fruits of righteousness, ***John 15:5***. He could not be stayed or stopped in his course; he made his gospel to run and be glorified. He was and is still in continual motion for the good of his Church; as the sun in heaven is for the good of the world. He went under a cloud in his passion, and brake forth again in his resurrection. From heaven he daily darts forth his beams of righteousness, and showers down all spiritual blessings in heavenly privileges, ***Ephesians 1:3***. The sun sucks up foul water from the earth, draws it up into the air, not to hold it there; but first purifies it, and then distils it down again with a fattening and fructifying property. Hereupon the thankful earth brings forth most fair and fragrant fruits and flowers, &c. Semblably, this "Sun of righteousness" took on him our sins and miseries, *sordes nostras induit,* assumed our human nature, not to retain it, and glorify it in himself alone, but that we might be con-glorified, and, in the mean time, filled with those fruits of holiness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God, ***Philippians 1:10***. And as the sun, the nearer he runs to the earth the weaker he is in operation, as in winter time, but the higher in heaven the more effectual; so, while Christ was not yet ascended, the Holy Ghost and his graces were not in that full measure imparted, nor Churches gathered, as afterwards, ***John 7:39***. Lastly, at that last and great day he will show himself in special manner a "Sun of rlghteousness"; clearing all obscurities, bringing to light the hidden things of darkness, causing his people's most holy faith, that now lies hidden in great part, to be found to praise, honour, and glory, cheering up their spirits after manifold tribulations, healing all their spiritual maladies; for he comes *with healing under his*

wings and making them as so many Samsons, whose name signifies a little sun, in the noon of their full strength, *Ipse est ergo noster Apollo sanitatis praeses.* For the righteous shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, Matt, xiii. I shall shut up this discourse with that observation of an ancient: When the Sun of righteousness was yet in his mother's womb, he might be said to be in Virgo; when on the cross, in Taurus; when he rose from death, in Leo; when he shall come again to judgment, in Libra. And as when the sun is in Libra the day is of an equal length; so, when Christ cometh, all shall be perfected.

With healing in his wings. That is, in his beams. This implies sickness in all to whom Christ comes; the world being, as it were, a great hospital or *Nosecomium* (though few feel it), and that true of every person that is spoken of the whole people, ***Isaiah 1:5.*** "The whole head is sick," &c. O my head, my head, said the Shunammite's son: my belly, my belly, saith the prophet, my leanness, my leanness, &c. And surely it were happy if men would be more sensible of their malady, and make out to this Jehovah Rophe, this Almighty Physician, that lacks neither will nor skill to cure all that come unto him, ***Exodus 15:26***. See him hanging out his tables, as it were, and setting to sell his eye-salve, ***Revelation 3:18***, for there he begins the cure, ***Acts 26:18***. Hear him, 1. Complaining of our dulness, backwardness, frowardness, ***Jeremiah 8:22; Ezekiel 24:13; Hosea 7:1.*** 2. Wishing we had more care of our poor souls. "Oh that this people were wise," &c. "Why will ye die?" 3. Threatening, ***Ezekiel 24:13*** 4. Promising, ***Hosea 14:4; Matthew 11:28.*** 5. Performing, ***Psalms 103:3; 2 Chronicles 30:20***. *Lastly,* providing all sorts of physic for us; preventing, purging, restoring, corrosives of the law, lenitives of the gospel, plaisters of his own blood, for here *Sanguis medici est curatio phrenetici;* and requiring us no more but to come unto him, as they of old did to the brazen serpent, with sorrow for sin, and faith in his name, having a good opinion of our physician, and casting ourselves wholly upon him for cure; calling upon him, as blind Bartimaeus did, and crying out as that martyr did at the stake, Son of God, shine upon me; and immediately the sun shone out of a dark cloud so full in his face, that he was constrained to look another way. What shall I say more? this blessed "Sun of righteousness" must be sought in the west, if we will get the kingdom (as Statio's servant in Justin did by the advice of his master, whom he had preserved); upon the cross, I mean, and in the state of his abasement; so shall we be sure to find healing in his wings, that is, the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit conveying the virtue of Christ's blood to the conscience, as the beams of the sun do the heat and influence thereof to the earth; thereby calling out the herbs and flowers, and healing those deformities that winter had brought upon it.

And ye shall go forth. To show that yo are thoroughly healed, ye shall rise up and walk. Where the Spirit is, there is liberty, ***2 Corinthians 3:17***. Live things love to be stirring; and those that are restored to health after sickness are not satisfied till they can go about their business in their accustomed strength, *Quod sanitas in corpor, id sanctitas in corde.* Holiness is to the soul what health is to the body. Let men make it out that Christ Jesus hath wrought a cure upon their souls, by being active and abundant in his work. Life consists in action. ***Isaiah 38:16.*** "O Lord, by these things, and in all these things, is the life of my spirit," saith Hezekiah; and, if ye do my commandments ye shall live in them, saith the Lord; as the fish lives in his element, as the lamp lives in the oil, and as the creature by his food. Up, therefore, and be doing; live betime, live quickly, and apace. Some men live more in a day than others in a month; as wise men speak more in two words than a fool in two hundred; or as one piece of gold is more worth than twenty of brass. Devise what to do for God, as David did, ***Psalms 116:2***; serve out your time as he, ***Acts 13:36***, do not idle it out wear out, do not waste out; flame out, do not smother out; burn out, be not blown out. Be not buried alive, as ***Job 27:15***, hissed out of the world, ***Job 27:23***, as Vacia in Seneca (*Hic situs est Vacia*). Fall not from the tree of life as leaves in autumn, as that sapless fellow Nabal did; and as those withered trees in St. Jude, "Without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." God expects that, acted first by

him, we should act as the inferiors do (*Ut acti agamus*), when moved by the superiors; that, when he hath infused sap, we should fructify; that, when he hath tuned us and doth touch us, we should make music; when he hath once made us willing, he requires that we both will and work that which is good in his sight. When we set victuals before a hungry man we expect he should eat it. Nature teacheth the sucking child to draw the breast when it is once put to the mouth; and to labour for its living, as we use to say (Aug.). He that made us without us doth not save us without us; but expects that our wills, which at first conversion were merely passive, should be afterwards active in adding to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, ***2 Peter 1:5***, in working out our salvation with fear and trembling, ***Philippians 2:12***. Herein we work the work of him that sent us, as our Saviour did; we finish the work which he gave us to do, ***John 17:4***. This work is to magnify him with our bodies, whether it be by life or death, ***Philippians 1:19***; yea, to glorify him in our bodies, and in our spirits, which are his, ***1 Corinthians 6:20***. God sells us increase of grace for sweat, saith one. He gives it as Boaz gave Ruth grain, ***Malachi 2:14-17***. He could have given her at first an ephah of barley, and it had been no more charge to him; but he will have her gather it, glean it, beat it out, use her endeavour, and that should be the price she should pay for it. So here God's people healed must go forth or leap about, use legs and have legs, &c. "This I had, because I kept thy precepts," ***Psalms 119:56***. What had he? but an ability to keep God's law, ***Psalms 119:55***; he kept it because he kept it; for every new act of obedience fits the soul for a following act, ***Romans 6:19***. And to you that hear shall be more given, ***Mark 4:24***.

And grow up as calves of the stall. Ye shall battle and thrive both in flesh and fat, as R. David expounds it; your souls shall be flourishing and fair liking; as waters of the sanctuary, they shall rise higher; as trees planted in God's paradise, they shall bring forth new fruit every month, ***Ezekiel 47:12; John 15:2***; as the morning sun, they shall shine more and more unto the perfect day, ***Proverbs 4:18***, when the wicked, by growing worse and worse, ***2 Timothy 3:13***, stumble in darkness, ***2 Timothy 3:1-9***, so that they lie down in sorrow, ***Isaiah 50:11***. The blessing on man in the first creation was Increase and multiply; in the second, Grow in grace, ***Isaiah 61:8, 11***. A Christian hath his degrees of growth, and his several ages, of childhood, youth, or well grown age, full grown, and old age, ***1 John 2:14***. These things write I unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God, that ye may believe in the name of the Son of God, saith the same apostle, ***1 John 5:13***, that is, that ye may grow in that belief, as ye grow in days and years, proceeding from faith to faith, ***Philippians 3:14***; as the Church in the Canticles hath her first light like the day dawning, her second beauty like the moon, her third degree like the sun, ***Solomon's Song 6:10***. A Christian, though in some sense perfect, yet hath he still his *Plus ultra,* and may take for motto Charles V's *Ulterius,* Further yet; he must be still adding grace to grace, that he may have an entrance further and further into Christ's kingdom, ***2 Peter 1:5, 11***, as by steps and stairs they went up to Solomon's temple. And the apostle there gives us to understand that those that thus add not to their stock of grace shall have little comfort either from the time past, for they shall forget that they were purged from their sins; or from thoughts of the time to come, for they shall not be able to see things far off, ***2 Peter 1:9***, because they delight not in high flying, as eagles; their wings, as the ostrich's, do little more than bear them above ground. Many care for no more grace than will keep life and soul together, that is, soul and hell asunder. This is a low and unworthy strain, and comes not near that of St Paul, who set up for his mark the resurrection of the dead, ***Philippians 3:10***, that is, that perfection of holiness that accompanieth the resurrection. To the attaining hereunto he followed hard on, reaching forth, and stretching out head, hands, and whole body, to lay hold on the high prize proposed unto him, ***Philippians 3:12-14***, and would have all men to be thus minded. Runners in a race look not how much they have run, but how much remaineth; and although moderate in the beginning (for hot at hand seldom holds out), yet the nearer they grow to the goal the Faster they speed their course; that their last days may be their best days; accounting that day lost wherein they have not some sensible comings in from Christ; like as

good husbands, in dead times when stirrings fail, are discontented when they have had no takings. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 4:3]]**Verse 3.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And ye shall tread down the wicked**. Christ, the champion of his Church, hath already won the field, and will shortly set his people's feet upon the necks of all their enemies. The broken horns of Satan himself shall be the trumpets of their triumph and the cornets of their joy, ***Romans 16:20***. See what honour all the saints have in this respect, ***Psalms 149:7-9***; see what comfort, ***John 16:33***; see what conquests, ***Romans 8:37***. How much more at the last day, when the thrones shall be set, &c., ***Matthew 19:28***. Rabbi David Kimchi understands this text to be temporal victories only. And no wonder, as being a Jew, and minding earthly things, he ascends no higher. Such grasshoppers, if at any time they leap above the earth, they soon fall down to it again; and as they are of the earth, so they speak of the earth, and the earth hears them. Petrus a Figniero writing upon those words in the former chapter, ***Malachi 3:12*****.** "For ye shall be a delightsome land," *Nota modum loquendi,* saith he: mark that expression, He saith not your land shall be a delightsome land, but "ye shall be," &c. *Forte enim tacite Iudaeos percellit terrain eos vocando.* It may be the Lord hereby, closely meets with them for their earthly mindedness; as those that by promise of earthly blessings were soonest prevailed with to serve God, when as these should have been but as steps or stirrups to mount their hearts up to a desire of the things above. Victory in their sense is doubtless a special mercy; and is so promised to the obedient, ***Deuteronomy 28:13*****.** "The Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and not beneath," &c. Hence the Israelites, delivered from the Egyptians at the Red Sea, sang, "The Lord is a man of war," ***Exodus 15:3***; the Chaldee there hath it, The Lord and victor of wars. The Grecians delivered from the Persians (vanquished and driven out by Themistocles), called their Jupiter thereupon, ἐλευθέριος, the deliverer. It was the thankful acknowledgment of generals, captains, and soldiers at Edge Hill fight, that the Lord was seen in the mount, never less of man in such a business, never more of God. But what shall it profit a man to conquer countries, and yet be vanquished of vices? to tread upon his enemies, and yet be taken captive by the devil at his pleasure? ***2 Timothy 2:26***, to command the whole world, as those Persian kings, and yet were commanded by their concubines, so by their base lusts, by yielding whereunto they give place unto the very devil, and receive them into their very bosoms, ***Ephesians 4:27***, who there hence leads them away naked and barefoot, as the Assyrians did the Egyptians, ***Isaiah 20:2***. How much better Valentinian the emperor, who said upon his death-bed that among all his victories over his enemies this one only comforted him, viz. that by the grace and power of Christ Jesus he that got the better of his corruptions, and was now more than a conqueror, even a triumpher.

For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet. Even the ashes of that stubble burnt in Christ's oven, ***Malachi 4:1***. This shows their utter and ignominious destruction. And the like is foretold of mystical Babylon, ***Revelation 18:17-19***. *Tota eris in cineres quasi nunquam Roma fuisses,* sang Sibylla of old. *Fiat, Fiat.* Our corruptions also shall one day be incinerated (they are already buried, ***Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12***), the fiery spirit of Christ will do with the body of sin, as the King of Moab did with the King of Edom, ***Amos 2:1***, burn its bones into lime.

In the day that I shall do this. *sc.* Partly here, but perfectly at the last day. Meanwhile sin may rebel in God's people, but it cannot reign. Satan may nibble at their heel, but he cannot come at their head; the world may kill them, but cannot hurt them. "Be of good cheer," saith Christ, "I have overcome the world," ***John 16:33***. All evils and enemies shall co-operate for their good, ***Romans 8:28***.

Saith the Lord of hosts. Who hath also said, "Heaven and earth shall pass, but not one jot or tittle of my word," &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 4:4]]**Verse 4.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Remember ye the law of Moses**. viz. Now henceforth, in the end of prophecy, for Malachi knew that after him until the days of John Baptist no prophet should arise. Hence this exhortation, to read and remember the law, as leading them to Christ; the law, I say, in all the parts of it; not excluding the prophets, those interpreters of the law, and most excellent commentaries thereupon, with like reverence to be read and received. The Jews at this day read in their synagogues two lessons; one out of the law, by some chief person, another out of the prophets, correspondent to the former in argument, but is read by some boy, or lowly companion; for they will in no sort do that honour, neither attribute they that authority, to any part of the Bible, that they do to their law. But "this their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings," as the Psalmist speaketh in another case, ***Psalms 49:13***. Two things offer themselves to our observation from these first words. First, the little coherence that this verse hath with the former; the prophet choosing rather to fall abruptly upon his most needful, but too much neglected, duty of remembering the law, than not at all to mention it. See the like ***Romans 16:17***, where the apostle breaks off his salutations, to warn them of their danger by seducers; and that done, returns thereto again. Secondly, in the Hebrew word rendered remember, there is, in many Bibles, a great Zain; to show, as some think, the necessity and excellency of this duty of remembering the law of Moses (Buxtorf. in Comment. Maser. c. 14). (*Hebrew Text Note*) It is well enough known, that since the fall man's soul is like a filthy pond, wherein fish die soon and frogs live long; profane matters are remembered, pious passages forgotten. Our memories are like sieves, or nets, that retain chaff and palterment, let go the good grain, or clear water; God's word runs through us, as water runs through a riven vessel. And as hour glasses, which no sooner turned up and filled, but are presently running out again to the last sand, so is it here. And yet the promise of salvation is limited to the condition of keeping in memory what we have read or heard, ***1 Corinthians 15:2***. And David's character of a blessed man is, that he meditateth in the law day and night, ***Psalms 1:2***.

"*Hoc primum repetens opus, hoc postremus omittens*" (Hor. Ep. 6).

Bishop Babington had a little book, containing three leaves only, which he turned over night and morning. The first leaf was black, to remind him of hell and God's judgments due to him for sin; the second red, to mind him of Christ and his passion; the third white, to set forth God's mercy to him through the merits of his Son, in his justification and sanctification. The law of the Lord, as it is perfect in itself, so it is right for all holy purposes, ***Psalms 19:7-8***. It serves to reveal sin, ***Romans 3:20; 7:9***, shows the punishment due to sin, ***Galations 3:10***, scourgeth men to Christ, ***Galations 3:24***; and is a perfect rule of obedience; it being so penned that every man may think it speaks *de se, in re sua,* as Athanasius saith of the book of Psalms; and must therefore be of all acknowledged to be θεοῦ εὕρημα, God's own invention (Demost.). Moses was but the penman only, though it be here called his law; because God gave him the moral law written with his own hand, ***Deuteronomy 10:2***, adding it to the promise made to Abraham, that thereby guilt being discovered, &c., men might acknowledge the riches of free grace and mercy; and that they might walk, as Luther hath it, ***Galations 3:19***, in the heaven of the promise, but in the earth of the law (that, in respect of believing, this of obeying); that they might live as though there were no gospel, die as though there were no law; pass the time of this life in the wilderness of this world under the conduct of Moses, but let none but Joshua (Jesus) bring them over to Canaan the promised land. This the generality of the Jews could not skill of (though the moral law drove them to the ceremonial, which was then Christ in figure, as it doth now drive us to Christ in truth), they would needs have Moses for a saviour; and being ignorant of God's righteousness (wilfully ignorant), they go about to establish their own, ***Romans 10:3***, and so lose all. They jeer at an imputed righteousness; and say, That every fox must pay his own skin to the flayer. They blaspheme Jesus Christ, and curse him in a close abbreviature of his name; and call those among them that convert to Christianity,

Meshumadim, that is, lost, or undone (Buxtorf. syn. Jud. cap. 5). Moses' law they extol without measure; it must not be written on any parchment but what is made of the skin of a clean beast; nor read but in a clean place. No man must touch it but with the right hand, and not without a kiss of reverence. They usually carry it in procession about their synagogue, with many ornaments of crowns and sceptres, the children kissing it as it passeth by them. No man must sit in the presence of it, nor so much as spit before it (Schicard. *de iure leg. Hebr.*). Whereas the gospel of grace they utterly reject and abominate, as a volume of vanity *(Evangelium Avan-gelaion);* that Italian translation that they had of the New Testament is called in, and taken from them, for their horrible abuse of it; this being still the twelfth article of their creed, I believe, with a perfect faith, that the Messiah is yet to come. No marvel if the apostle would not have us ignorant, "that blindness in part is happened to Israel," ***Romans 11:25***. That lesser part, or rather particle, of them that are proselyted to our religion, they pretend that they are none other than poor Christians hired to impersonate their part. And yet they give complete dispensation to counterfeit Christianity, even to the degree of priesthood. In the day of their expiation, their Rabbi doth absolve them from all their perjuries and deceits used against Christians. He also assures them they are not bound to keep any oath but what is sworn upon their own Torah, or law of Moses, brought out of their synagogue; to the reading whereof they depute one third part of their day; and wherein they are generally so expert, that they have it as ready as their own names (*Facilius quam nomen suum recitati.* Joseph. Cont. Appio. lib. 2). The mischief of it is, that they are too much affixed to it, and will needs be saved by it; which the law cannot do for them, as being weak through the flesh, ***Romans 8:3***. The law is a yoke of bondage, as Jerome calleth it; and they who look for righteousness from hence are like oxen who toil and draw and when they have done their labour are fitted for slaughter. Luther fitly calleth such drudges the devil's martyrs; they suffer much and take much pains to go to hell. And in another place he saith, *Qui scit inter Legem et Evangelium distinguere, gratias agat Deo, et sciat se esse Theologum.* He that can rightly distinguish between law and gospel hath cause to praise God; and may well pass for a divine.

Moses my servant. A far higher title than son of Pharaoh's daughter; for this was to be Pharaoh's God, ***Exodus 7:1***, and higher than the kings of the earth, ***Psalms 89:27***. No marvel though Moses so esteemed it; when Numa, king of Romans, a heathen did; and Augustus the emperor, *cui gratius fuit nomen pietatis quam potestatis,* saith Tertullian, he preferred piety before monarchy (τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπηρέσιον βασιλεύειν ἐνόμιζεν. Flat.); so did those succeeding emperors, Constantine, Valentinian, and Theodosius, who called themselves *Vassallos Christi,* the vassals of Christ, as Socrates reporteth. It was noted, as a great both presage and desert of Darius's ruin, when in his proud embassy to Alexander he called himself the king of kings, and cousin of the gods; but for Alexander, he called him his servant. That was worse in John Oneal, father to the Earl of Tirone, that rebel, A.D. 1598, who blasphemously inscribed himself in all places; I, great John Oncal, cousin to Christ, friend to the Queen of England, and foe to all the world, &c. What big bubbles of words were these, as Peter calls them. His pretended successor styleth himself the servant of God's servants; and one day in the year, in an apish imitation of our Saviour, washeth certain men's feet. But he acteth as *Dominus regnorum mundi,* Lord of the kings of the world, which is one of the devil's titles; and can endure to be called by his parasites *Dominus Deus noster Papa;* Our Lord God the Pope. Moses held it honour enough to be the servant of the Lord, and yet he was *Vir Deo longe acceptissimus quo nihil habuit antiqua aetas, mitius, sapientius, sanctius;* highly accepted in heaven, and the most meek, wise, and holy man that antiquity ever had or mentioned, as Bellarmine himself acknowledgeth.

Which I commanded him in Horeb. Moses then was not the law maker, as Solon, Lycurgus, Zaleucus, &c., but only God's minister to utter what he would have him deliver; or, at utmost, a mediator, ***Galations 3:19***, not of expiation, for so Christ only, but of communication of the law to all Israel, ***Exodus 20:19***, wherein he was faithful in all God's house as a servant, ***Hebrews***

3:5 *famulus ingenuus,* a servant of the better sort, a man of worship, as the word there seemeth to import (Θεριπων *ex verbo* θεραπεύειν). The place where Moses received the law is mentioned, Horeb (the same with Sinai, ***Acts 7:30; Exodus 19:1, 18***), to remind them of the terror of the Lord on that mountain, when God came down upon it with ten thousand of his saints; "from his right hand went a fiery law for them," Heb. a fire of law, ***Deuteronomy 33:2***. And surely that fire wherein the law was given, and shall one day be required, is in it still, and will never out. Hence are those terrors, which it flasheth in every conscience that hath felt remorse of sin. Every man's heart is a Horeb; and resembleth to him both heaven and hell. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law," ***1 Corinthians 15:56***.

To all Israel. And it is reckoned as a singular privilege to that people, ***Nehemiah 9:14; Romans 9:4***. Prosper's conceit was, that *Iudaei* Jews were so called because they received *Ius Dei,* the law of God. Josephus calleth their commonwealth a theocracy, or God government. That of Philo is not so solid, that their law was given in a wilderness, because it is to be learned in a wilderness, seeing there we cannot be hindered by the multitude. But what a wretched conceit is that of the Jews at this day, that the law of nature shall bring to heaven those that observe it; but the Hebrews (unto whom the law of Moses was peculiarly given) by keeping it, shall have a prerogative of glory! How shall the lion of the tribe of Judah roar upon them at that day, and say, "Do not think that I will accuse you: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust," ***John 5:45***. Get you to him whom ye have chosen; but cold comfort ye are like to have from him; a very froward generation he ever found you, children in whom is no faith, ***Deuteronomy 33:20***.

With the statutes and judgments. That is, with the ceremonial and judicial law. But what meant that false Rabbin to add to this text these following words, *Quamdin non venit dies iudicii,* Till the day of judgment comes (R. David); as if men were bound till then to the observation of the ceremonial and judicial law? But it is ordinary with those Jewish doctors to corrupt the text for their own purpose; adding and altering at their pleasure. The judicial law was fitted to the Jews, and was the best that they could suffer, as Solon said of the Athenian laws. The ceremonial law was their gospel, pointing them to Christ; and therefore abolished by him, as having no use in the Church after his death, but by accident. As for the moral law (called here by an excellency the law of Moses), it is established for ever in heaven, ***Psalms 119:89***; and albeit some duties of certain commandments shall cease when we come to heaven, yet the substance of every one remaineth. This perpetuity of the moral law was noted by engraving it in stone, ***Exodus 34:27; 2 Corinthians 3:7***. The Jews have a saying, That God hath more respect to the letters of the law than to the stars of heaven, and Christ either alludes to or confirms it in that saying of his, Heaven and earth shall pass before one jot or tittle of the law pass. Think not that I am come to destroy the law (viz. the moral law) or the prophets, who press moral duties, as explainers of the law; they do as it were unfold and draw out that arras which was folded together before, ***Matthew 5:17***. These therefore, together with the law of Moses, must be daily and duly read and remembered. Jerome calls the books of Kings his own; because by the frequent use and reading of them, he had got them by heart, and as it were made them his own (*Lege Melachim meum; meum, inquam meum: quicquid enim didicimus et tenemus nostrum est.* Prolog. in lib. Reg.). Of Paula he testifieth, that she had most of the Scriptures by heart (*Scripturas sanctas memoiter tenebat*). Of Nepotian likewise, that with daily reading and continual meditation he had made his heart *Bibliothecam Christi,* the library of Christ. See my True Treasure, p. 315. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 4:5]]**Verse 5.** {{field-on:Bible}}**Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet**. Not Elijah the Tishbite, as the Septuagint corruptly read; and the Popish expositors make no small use of it, to prove that the Pope is not antichrist, because Enoch and Elijah are not yet come, and yet are to come in his time, before the day of judgment (as they fondly fable), to preserve the elect in the faith of Christ, and to convert the Jews. But we have better

interpreters of this text. 1. An angel, who applies it to John Baptist, ***Luke 1:17.*** 2. Christ, that angel of the covenant, ***Matthew 17:10-11; 11:14***. Hear ye him, against all antichrist's agitators. St Mark begins his Gospel with these very words of Malachi, to let us know that this Elias is the Baptist, who is called Elijah the prophet, because of the like gifts, calling, and ministry, office of reforming habit, people with whom they dealt, &c. The like almost may be said of Luther, a third Elias for boldness, courage, zeal, knowledge, success, &c. But yet we see no footing in this text for Lucas Osiander's conceit, viz. that the prophet here pointed at Luther as well as at John Baptist; and that men must receive his doctrine, or else look to be smitten with a curse. Howbeit this is more passable and possible than that of the Jesuits, who presume to control Christ's own exposition; and infer, that as the devil stirred up Luther to call the Pope antichrist, so God raised up them to resist Luther. But what a mad fellow was that Spaniard (of whom Severus Sulpitius writeth) that professed himself, first, to be the prophet Elias, and afterward, when he had gained authority, to be the Christ; carrying himself so cunningly in his collusion, that Bishop Ruffus was led away with the error, believing in him, and adoring him as God; for which he was justly deprived of his dignity! Had we not need receive the truth in the love of it, lest God give us up to the efficacy of error, **2 Thessalonians 2:10**? lest being first infatuated, we be seduced, and then being seduced, we be damned, as Austin glosseth on that text?

Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Great, in respect of the good, and dreadful, or horrible, in respect of the wicked, as Montanus interprets it, paralleling it with ***Matthew 3:12***. Or great, because it shall be a beginning of great changes, both to the godly and the ungodly; and dreadful to the bad, yea, and to the best also at first, till they have recollected and better bethought themselves, as another senseth it; as taking it of the last day, which is the general mistake of Popish expositors, and that upon this ground, because Christ's first coming was an acceptable time, and a day of salvation. But though it be so to God's people, yet to others it was terrible, as hath been shown: (***See Trapp on "Malachi 3:2"***) and is so described, ***Luke 2:34; 3:9, 17; 19:44; Matthew 21:44; Isaiah 11:4***. He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with his two-edged sword he shall slay the wicked. See the like, ***Revelation 2:16***. And by his ministers he doth it still, ***2 Thessalonians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 2:15-16; 10:6***. Vengeance is as ready in Christ's hand as in the minister's mouth, for the disobedient. Some read the words thus, Before the day of the great and dreadful Lord come: like as others read that, ***James 2:1***, Have not the glorious faith of our Lord Jesus Christ in respect of persons. Both readings are good, and the text will bear both. {{field-off:Bible}}

[[@bible:Malachi 4:6]]**Verse 6.** {{field-on:Bible}}**And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, &c.** John Baptist's office and efficacy is here described; he shall, as a powerful instrument (by preaching repentance, ***Matthew 3:2***, and prevailing, as he did, with all sorts, even to admiration; so that all men mused in their hearts, whether he were the Christ or not, ***Luke 3:10, 12, 14-15***), convert sinners from the errors of their way, reduce them to the faith of the old patriarchs, make them unanimous in the love of God and of one another, and tie them up together, as it were, by his baptism. For the multitude of believers "were of one heart and one soul," ***Acts 4:32*** (*animo animaque inter se miscebantur,* as Tertullian phraseth it), neither was there any controversy at all among them, as one ancient Greek copy subjoineth there. Controversies there were great store among the Jews, when the Baptist came. As Joseph found his brethren in Dothan, which signifieth defection, so did he. They were all gone out of the way; and, being led aside by the error of the wicked, they were fallen from their own steadfastness. Many strange opinions and dotages they had taken up, and were woefully divided; specially by those three different sects, Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes; which the prophet Zechariah calleth three shepherds: that were to be destroyed in one month, at John's coming, ***Zechariah 11:8***. The Pharisees were held the best of those three, *si ad legem respexeris,* saith Tremellius, if you look to the law; and St Paul, who was once a Pharisee of

Pharisees, calleth them the most strict sect of the Jewish religion, ***Acts 26:5*** (like those *districtissimi Monachi* among the Papists); and yet there were seven sorts of Pharisees, as we find in their Talmud. Hence much alienation of affection among them, and great animosities; father hating son, and son father, for truth's sake, as ***Matthew 10:35***. So powerful should John be in his ministry, that although the leprosy were gotten into their heads, and were therefore held incurable, ***Leviticus 13:44***, yet he should "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord," ***Luke 1:17***. All headstrong and brutish affections should be calmed and corrected, as ***Isaiah 11:6-8***, and the peaceable wisdom from above instilled, ***James 3:17***, so that they shall "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," ***Ephesians 4:8***. And albeit some jars may fall out (as between Paul and Barnabas), yet God's people can soon piece again, and reunite. *Ut aer percussus non laeditur, imo ne dividitur quidem, sed refundit sese, et spissior redit, &c.* As the air, divided by a stone or stroke, soon closeth and thickeneth the more. Certainly there is no such oneness and entireness anywhere as among the saints; their love is spiritual, ***Solomon's Song 6:9***. The very heathens acknowledged that no people in the world did hold together and love one another so as Christians did. Tacitus observeth of the Jews, that there was *misericordia in promptu spud suos,* but *contra omnes alios hostile odium,* mercy enough for their own countrymen among them, but hostile hatred against all others: they used to say, that there is no Gentile but deserves to have his head bruised, &c. But John Baptist by his preaching made Jewish Pharisees and Roman soldiers (according to the phrase that Josephus useth of him), to convent, and knit together in baptism (ἐν βαπτισμῷ συνιέναι. Antiq. lib. 18, cap. 7).

Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. That is, lest coming, I smite, &c. For there is no doubt to be made of his coming; and as little of his smiting, if men amend not. These words menace as many as resisted John's ministry with utter destruction; "whether it be done against the whole nation, or against a man only," ***Job 34:29***. The Romans came and took away both their place and their nation; not for letting Christ alone, as they feared, ***John 11:48***, but for laying wicked hands upon him, and putting to "death the Lord of life," ***Acts 2:28***. John also preached damnation to them, ***Matthew 3:7-12***, and so did our Saviour, ***Matthew 23:13-33***, whereby eight dreadful woes, as by so many links of an adamantine chain, he draws those irreformable hypocrites down to hell, their place; and then leaves them to be reserved unto judgment. St Jerome was called *Fulmen Ecclesiasticum,* the Church thunderbolt. Mr Perkins was a most earnest preacher, and would pronounce the word damn with such an emphasis, as left a doleful echo in his auditors' ears a good while after. And when catechist of Christ's College, in expounding the commandments, he applied them so home, that he made his hearers hearts fall down, and their hairs to stand up straight almost. And surely this is the way to work upon hard hearted sinners; whence the apostle bids Titus rebuke with all authority; and then turning him to the people (as Calvin senseth it), chargeth them not to despise him for so doing, ***Titus 1:15***. The apostle knew well that men are, for the most part, of delicate ears; and can ill abide plain dealing. Ahab hates Micaiah, and hath him in prison, ever since that dreadful denunciation of displeasure and death, for dismissing Benhadad (for he was, probably, that disguised prophet), for which he was ever since fast in prison, deep in disgrace. But truth must be spoken, however it be taken; and those that will not be pricked at heart (κατενύγησαν), as ***Acts 2:37***, but take up bucklers to ward off the blow, must have the sword of the Spirit sheathed in their bowels, and bathed in their blood; for in all this we are a sweet savour unto God, ***2 Corinthians 2:15***, yea, though a "savour of death unto death." The barren earth must be smitten with cursing, and they that min d earthly things (*Terra autem sunt, qui terrena sapiunt,* saith Austin) have damnation for their end, so that St Paul cannot speak of them without tears of compassion, ***Philippians 3:18-19***. Oh that it might express from them tears of compunction! Oh that they would be forewarned to flee from the wrath to come! Oh that they would think upon eternity, and by breaking off their sins, disarm God's indignation

justly conceived against them! He therefore threateneth that he may not smite; he proceeds not to punish till there be no remedy, ***2 Chronicles 36:16***. *Crudelem medicum intemperans aeger facit;* an unruly patient makes a cruel physician. Oh that we could all resolve to deal by our sins as Lewis, King of France, did by the Pope's bulls, whereby he required the fruits of vacancies of all cathedral churches of France, about the year 1152; he cast them into the fire, saying, he had rather the Pope's bulls should roast in the fire than his own soul should fry in hell.

For a conclusion to all, take an observation of Amamas, and before him of Buxtorf; that in many Hebrew Bibles the last verse save one of this prophecy (as also of Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, and Lamentations) is repeated again in the end thereof, though without pricks, lest anything should be thought added to God's word. (*Hebrew Text Note*) *Factum hoc ex Scribarum decreto, &c.* This the scribes thought fit to do, either for the dignity of those repeated verses, that the reader might again ruminate and remind them; or else, as some will have it, because all those books end in threatenings and sad speeches. And therefore, lest the Sun of righteousness should seem to set in a cloud, or not to shine upon the departing passenger, they thought fit to leave the verse before to be last; as being sweet and full of comfort, that the reader might, Samson-like, go his way, feeding on that honeycomb.

Laus Deo in aeternum.