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Reward
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# THE REVVARD OF RELIGION.

Deliuered in sundrie Lectures vpon the Booke of Ruth, wherein the godly may see their dayly both inward and outward trials, with the presence of God to assist them, and his mercies to recompence them.

Verie profitable for this present time of dearth, wherein many are most pittifully tormented with want; and also worthy to bee considered in this Golden age of the preaching of the word, when some vomit vp the loath somnes ther-of, and others fall away to damnable security.

LVC. 12. 32.

*Feare not little flocke, for it is your fathers will to giue you a kingdome.*

Ciprian in the end of the 6. Epist. lib. 4.

Deerely beloued brethren, let this be rooted in your hearts, let this be the preparation of your weapons, let this be your Meditation day and night to set before your eyes, and consider with mind and sences, the punishments of the wicked, with the rewards and deserts of the righteous: what penaltie he threatneth to them that denie him, and what glory he promiseth to them which confesse him.

*Seene and allowed.*

Printed at London by *Iohn Windet.*

1601.

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# TO THE RIGHT Honourable, vertuous and Christian Ladie, the Ladie Margaret, *Baronnesse Dacres of the South*, grace, mercy, and peace, be multiplied in this life present, and eternall felicitie in the life to come.

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that the soules of men departed, do go into other men, and also into brutist beasts, that whatsoeuer was aboue the Moone, was immortall, with such like fantasies, and in the end this Pythagoras would be called a God. Next vnto him arose the Platonists, who affirmed that the world was created of the Angels and little goddesse, that of one God there came many other Gods, that all women ought to bee common, and that no man ought to haue a wife peculiar to himselfe in a well ordered common-wealth. After these succeeded the Stoickes, who affirmed this world to be God, that all flesh shall perish, and that the soules depart from one into another. Then also began the Epicures to grow like serpents, borne onely to destroy others, they would haue all things to end in pleasure, that there is no God or prouidence, that none are blessed but in this present life. And thus your Ho. may perceiue how miserable were those dayes, when men ranne headlong into so great extremities, that their profession of wisedome was the confessiō of folly, & for al their light of learning, they groped in a Cimmerian darknes, being shadowed with ignorance like the Country Odessa in Greece, which by reason of mightie hils thereto adioyning, neuer felt the beames of the Sunne. The fourth head or fountaine of vngodlines, is

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called Samaritanisme, of the Samarians which mingled themselues with the profession of the Iewes, and receiued some part of the Bible, yet like the Anabaptists in our dayes, without any difference or conscience kept company with Iewes and Gentiles. Of these came many accursed sects, from whom sprang many detestable opinions; and thus the world labored with damnable deuises, while the diuell laughed at their daily destruction, whereby this is euident, that Pholosophie or Paganisme is the corruption of our Religion. But some peraduenture will obiect vnto me, that they had very excellent and worthy man, who crowned their Countrey and kindred with endlesse memory. Mutius lest his right hand on the Altar. Empedocles willingly cast himselfe into the burning flames of the mountaine Ætna. One of the builders of Carthage, to auoyde a second marriage, cast her selfe into the burning graue. Regulus being freed from the Carthagenians, choosed rather to suffer death himselfe in most cruell torments, then to discharge their prisoners at Rome. Menocæus, seeing his Citie of the Thebes besieged by the Grecians, which they threatned to destroy, except one of them would giue himselfe for all, did ascend to the wall of the Citie, and there pearcing his body with a sword, fell



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down dead among his enemies, wherwith they contented departed. Alcestis the wife of Perilaus seeing (as shee supposed) the fiendes come for her husband, who lay sicke, slew herselfe, bidding them to take her shadowe and spare her husbandes life. To speake nothing of Lucretia, Dyrachya, Aria, Cyane and many others, only let this suffice. Eleates being asked of Dionisius the tirant, what was better then Philosophy, answered death: whereupon hee was commaunded to be scourged to death, which for the defence of his speach, and contempt of death hee most patiently endured. Yet Tertullian, a Christian father speaking of such like actions, hath these wordes, O lawfull commendation because humane, to whome neither wilfull presumption, nor desperate preswasion is imputed, to whome it is permitted to die in contempte of death, and all manner of crueltie: to whome is giuen more libertie to suffer for his countrie, kingdome or friendes then for God. Who is hee that cannot with one eye espie the meaning of this father? Improuing this kinde of death, as presumtion or desperation which may neuer haue any harbour in the heartes of the faithfull, what shall wee then say of all these worthy persons? Surely whatsoeuer is not of faith is sinne, and without faith it is impossible to please God.

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*Wee must not regard what man doth, but what God commaundeth, as the emperour* Constantine *once saide, it is not death but the cause of death that deserueth commendation, as* Agesilaus *the best Grecian Prince that euer was, was wont to say. The purest Adament is not worne with iron, nor wasted with fire, yet a little Goates bloud will consume it: euen so if one man could suffer all the trials in the world and abide many thousande deathes by fire and torture; yet it shall no whit profite him, except the bloud of Iesus Christ loose the fetters of sinne, and breake the chaines of the deuill: now the mercies of God in Christ are not communicated to any, but to such as knowe them, and who can knowe them without the worde of God? This is the fountaine of water of life, and all other are but poysoned puddles, stinking more filthily in the presence of God then the Lake of Camarina in the nostrils of men. They reporte that in Sicilia there are two springes, whereof one will make a fruitfull woman barren, the other a barren woman fruitfull: if this were so, I thinke all the world would haue recourse vnto it. Yet in this worde of God, there is a greater commodity declared vnto vs, for here wee learne the true cause of barrennesse: which beeing knowne the disease is the more easily remo-*

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ned, herein learne the meanes whereby it is cured, as in Rebecca, Annah, Elizabeth, and others; which might as easily bee practised, as true Religion vnfainedly professed. Moreouer they tell vs, that in Epirus at the foote of the hill Tomarus, there is a holy Well, which of it selfe will kindle a Torch, being put vnto it, & quench it being brought burning thereto; grant this to be true, & it will represent vnto vs the nature of this holy Well, the word of God which with the water of our Baptisme doth fire our hearts by the holy Ghost, but comming vnto it, burning in the heate of our owne lust, quencheth the flame of our own concupiscence. Also we find in Varro, that there are two streames in Beotia, whereof if sheepe drinke, the one burneth their colour in Russet, and the other maketh them white againe, if this be possible as all things are possible to the creator of the world, what maruaile though we are regenerated, not (new coloured) by the immortall seede of his heauenly word. Which are his sheepe, and the corruptions of our nature so washed in the same, that our garments of righteousnes are as white as snow in his presence. Solinus telleth that at the Citie Debris among the Garamantes there is a spring which at the rysing of the Sunne congealeth the Ice,



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but at the setting therof, resolueth to water a-gaine, which is contrary to all the world beside freezing with heate, and thawing with cold: yet we may make this vse thereof, that it is no wonder to see our heauenly Well to worke these contraries, to be the sauour of life vnto life, or else the sauour of death vnto death, that vnto some it is a two edged sword to giue them mortall wounds, vnto other a broad Target to defend them from danger, that it wrought so effectually in the dayes of persecution, when it was oppressed in darknes, but now freezeth and hardneth in the dayes of peace, when the sunne of prosperitie shineth to all. Surely as the Albeste stone once set on fire, can neuer be quenched, so if we could but once burn in loue vnfainedly with the Gospel, our profession should not be so luke warm, nor our deuoti ō so feaful in the cause of religiō. And thus I haue bin bold with your Ho. to proue my first assertion, wherein if I haue beene too long, let me craue pardon, and I will promise greater breuitie in my second proposition, which is this, that Popery is a confusion of Heathenisme, Heresie, and Christianitie. And that I may methodically proceede, I willbegin at their highest degree, and so in order lightly touch so many things as may certifie your Ho. of the truth of their Religion. Numa

appointed

appointed one to bee a high Priest, at whose iudgement all temporall and spirituall thinges were administred, the same is retained in the Church of Rome, for the Pope obtained of Phocas the Emperour and murderer of Mauritius, that the Bishoppe of Rome might bee the heade of all Churches, to whose iudgement all the world in spirituall matters must be subiect, by which in time it came to this, that hee corrupted the whole Church of Christ, that he got both swords into his hand, and made himselfe a triple Crowne, after the manner of the late Romane Emperours, who had three Crowns at their inauguration, and as the triple lightning was the auntiet of Iupiter, so the triple crown is the badge of the Pope, thorough the honour or terrour thereof, he threatneth what thunder-bolts he pleaseth in the world. The Cabalists imagined two Keyes, whereby paradise was opened and shut from hence the Pope hath in his banner the crosse Keyes, telling vs that hee hath power, to open and shut paradise, for, and against whome he pleaseth. Being thus exalted into the highest place, as it was reported the God Termines would not giue place to Iupiter standing both in the Capitoll, no more the Pope giueth place to Christ although hee stand in the middest of his Church, and sit at



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*the right hand of his Father in heauen. For this cause, as the Emperors had their senate, so he hath his Cardinals: as the Egyptians bound the Priests of Isis or Apis, to liue in perpetuall virginitie, so he forceth the sacred shauelings of his vnholy seate, with the vow of perpetuall chastitie, and that he might helpe their weaknesse in this behalfe, as* Caligula *suffered the whoores of Rome in his daies, so the Popes haue granted the tolleration of a Stewes, builded by a Pope,* Sextus *the fourth, which in short time so preuailed, that the Pope receiued for Rents thereof fortie thousand Duccats by the yeare. And* Paul *the third, had the names of fortie & fiue thousand Tennants belonging to that most filthie and damnable kind of life. Furthermore he furnished, or rather poysoned the Church of Christ, with Friers, Munkes, Nunnes. The Friers and Munkes are the successors of the* Essæan, Dosithæan, Nasichæan, *and* Cynicall *heretikes, which like these take vpon them the vowes of willfull pouertie, and perpetuall chastitie placing their Religion in abstinence from meates, in outward and hipocriticall fasting, affirming that they are the successors and followers of the Apostles, like the heretikes called by* Augustine *Apostoliques, defending that the Apostles lead a single life,*

*and*

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*and had no wiues, so these Romish heretikes account Marriage but filthinesse, like the Marcionites, Tacians, Adamites, Platonists, and Valesian heretiques, and are not ashamed to make the holy Apostles of Christ breakers of wedlocke, and wilfull departers from their own wiues, contrarie to the writings of the Euangelists and Saint Paul. The Nunnes or women-Munks are the naturall successors of the vestall Virgins instituted by* Numa, *& as these were Dedicated to* Vesta, Apollo, Iuno, Argiua, Diana *&* Minerua, *so are the Romish Nunnes to* Marie *the mother of Christ, and other holy women. Then also did he begin to dresse and adorne the Temples with Images which he learned of the Gentiles, as I haue alreadie declared, and herein bee ioyned with the Gnostikes and Basilidian heretiques, who defended Images to be lawfull for Christian people; and as the Gentiles had their sacrifices for the dead, called* Inferiæ, *so he instituted praiers for the dead, least hee should seeme to want any thing, which hee should not haue. Then also he tooke the Scriptures from the common people, least they should espie his lewdnesse, and as* Lysis *the Pithagorean blamed one of his fellowes for making knowne abroade their Masters precepts, so hee blameth all those that shall open the misteries*



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*of the Gospel to the common people: and as the Magicians of Persia were wont to sing to their Idols in a strange tongue, so the Pope commanded all things to be done in the Church in an vnknowne language, wherein they also ioyne with the Basilidian heretikes, who gaue this as a principle, that their misteries must be concealed and reuealed only to a few, being worse then the Pythagorians, who commanded but fiue yeares silence to their Disciples, but the Papistes, keepe men all their liues from reading, speaking and conferring on the Scripture. By this means he deceiued the world with iugling like the heretiques called* Mirabiliarii, *& affirmeth that faith commeth by nature, like the Basilidians and Gnosticks, they taught that euery one that would be saued, must be annoyled in their sicknesse, like the Heracleonite heretiques, that it is lawfull for women to Baptise, like the Marcionites, that children vnbaptised are not vnder the couenant, and that grace is giuen with the outward signe, like the Arrians and Heracleonites, that children must be annoynted with Oyle in Baptisme, like the heretiques* Marcus *and* Marcosus, *that Baptisme washeth away originall sinnes, and such actuall as are committed before, like the Nouatians, and Messalian heretiques, that the Sacrament*



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*crament of the Supper of the Lord, after the words of Consecration spoken, is the verie body and bloud of Christ, so the heretiques called* Marcites, *saide, they made by coniuration, & for this cause the Pepuzian heretiques baked the bloud of man with the bread ordained for this supper; that wine must bee mingled with water, as the* Artotyrites *saide, they must offer* Cheese *with the bread in the* Sacrament; *that good workes merite eternall life, like the Pelagians, Catharites, and Mahumetistes: that a man since the fall of* Adam *hath free will, and that God hath Predestinated none, like the Pelagians; that it is lawfull for vs to sweare by creatures, as the Virgine* Marie, *Saintes and Angels, so doe the Manitheans and Mahumetistes; that some sinnes be mortall and some veniall, so doth* Mahomet *affirme: with a thousand like, most vaine, wicked, wretched, blasphemous and damnable assertions, which were most easie to bee proued if there were any question of it. By this your Ho. may perceiue, that their Religion is but patched of many condemned heresies, defended by vnwritten traditions, and maintained by violent and forcible dealing: like the Chameleon they haue often changed and poysoned the world, but the scriptures are as a Bare leafe, to cure the contagion*



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*of such mortall confusion, and thus in some sort I haue performed my promise, in deliuering the vanity of the world which hath refused the wisedome of the eternall word of God. The end of this my speech is to shew the wonderfull and incomparable treasure of the holy Scriptures; for as the Golde hath the brightest beames, being laide to the Copper: as the Adamant is of greatest force, when the loade stone is beside it, and the purest colour hath the best hewe, when the counterfaite is compared with it, so the blessing of God in his word, doth most magnificently appeare, when wee behold before our eies the counterfaite colours of superstitious conceipts, the crooked deuises and cursed opinions of the condemned crue, which haue refused the waye of life declared herein, and chusid the path of damnation for the heire of their superstition. The Scriptures are not only a Castle to keepe vs from heresie, but also a salue or remedie, if wee haue beene poysoned by falshoode. The sting of the Scorpion is cured by applying the Achates stone, the grasse Alimos preserueth the famished person from death, the Baare hauing eaten Mandragora saueth his life by the little Emmet, and the poyson of the Chamaleon is expelled by a Raye leafe: euen so the word of God, cureth the heresies of Poperie, which are com-*

*pared*

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*pared to the stinging of the Scorpions in the Scriptures, it is the fruite of the tree of life, and whosoeuer eateth and disgesteth it shall neuer die, it is a preseruatiue against all poyson, and the leaues thereof shall cure the nations. By this alone the Lord hath wrought the calling of his children, the confusion of his enemies, the comfort of his Saintes, and the replenishing of his kingdome. All the Kinges of the earth haue beene in armes against it: yet the ministers thereof, who neuer bore armes against them, by their onely preaching haue wonne a glorious fielde. All Egipt could not resist* Moses *and* Aaron, *because they came on the Lordes message: no more shall all the world ouercome the preachers of peace, so long as they faithfully performe their heauenly Ambassage. Wordes haue wrought more then weapons; the spirite hath pearced more then the Speare; the wals of Paper and the ordinaunce of Fathers haue battered downe the stately kingdome of the whoore of Babilon, learning hath done better seruice then Launces, Gownes haue conquered moe then Gunnes; Bookes haue done more good then Bullets; and the prayers of the faithfull haue preuailed more then the Pikes of horsemen; the stone which the builders refused, is become the*

*heade*

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head of the corner, this is the Lordes doing, & it is meruailous in our eyes, the bloude of the dead Martyrs hath giuē greater wounds in this quarrell, then the swordes of the liuing souldiours. But thus I haue too long troubled your Hon. with that which you knewe before, and haue presumed on your fauour for the acceptation of these my slender labours vpon one part of Scripture, the booke of Ruth, which as the holy Ghost hath vouchsafed to call by the name of a woman, to the praise of the whole sexe, and euerlasting commendation of her Religion: so am I emboldned to Dedicate it to so Honourable a Lady as your selfe, whome I know to be a Ruth by Religion, though a Noble woman by birth. For many witnesses can testifie this also if I should be silent, and the ordinarie exercises at Seuenoke, will sound your name, because your presence and diligence at them, hath stirred vp many meaner personnes, comforted some godly people thereabout, and much euery way countenanced, and encouraged the preachers of the same. There are many causes which might compell me, (though vnwilling) to commit my labours to the presse, yet willingly to present them to the world vnder the name of your Honour. For I am assured of the accepta-

*tion of any small thing that shall be offered in the name of Religiõ, much more of this which comprehendeth the recompence and reward of our profession. Your honour knoweth that better it is to see the smoke of owes owne Country then the fire of another: so I trust my slender studies, which are but as smoke, being compared with the burning coales of others knowledge, such as dayly you heare, shall be the better accepted, because there I had my being, where your honour hath your dwelling. Also, I am hereu. to mooued, that I might haue any occasion; to testifie my bounden dutie, which I owe vnto that Noble and woorthy Gentleman, Sir* Henry Leonard *your Sonne, of whome I haue receiued especiall encouragements in the course of my studies, and to whom I must remaine a debtour to the end of my dayes, being no wayes able to recompence his woonted kindne., but onely by this, dayly to pray for his life and prosperitie, that hee may bee as the heyre of your Honour, so an ornament of the Noble house of the* Dacres. *And the God of all peace blesse your owne person, with such blessings as you dayly desire, that you may still liue to the comfort of the godly in this present life, to the enlarging of your*

*owne*

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*owne Honour, to the reioysing of your whole family; and to the endlesse saluation of your owne soule, with Iesus Christ the Sauiour of all them, which haue vnfainedly embraced true Religion. London this first of October.*

1596.

Your Honours to command in the Lord.

*Edward Topsell.*

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# To all them that vnfainedly embrace true Religion.

DEarely beloued in Christ, when I consider that comfortable Oracle of the Apostle, when he saith that godlinesse hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come, it commeth into my mind, that religion is none of the meanest professions that is laboured for in the world: for the greatest rewards are promised to the chiefest exployts, and the worthiest enterprises are Crowned with glorious benefites. *Ioseph* for his wisedome was made the gouernour of Egypt. *Othniel* for his seruice receiued *Aisah* the daughter of *Caleb* for his wife. *Iephtah* for his victory was made iudge of Israel, and *Dauid* for his Musicke was made one of the Courtiers of *Saul*.

In

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In so much as it seemeth an ordinaris practise that euery knowledge is rewarded with some curtesie: whereby we are certified, that it is no maruaile to heare & hope for so excellent blessings as are promised to the religious. For they are the house of the Lord, and as hee dwelleth with all maiesty in heauen, so he raigneth with all authoritie in the righteous, they are a chosen generation borne of God, a royall and holy priesthoode, a holy nation, a peculiar people, the free men of Christ; the honourous of the earth, the iudges of the world, the coheyres of Christs Kingdome, and the Citizens of heauen. If wee looke for their Nobilitie, they are the Sonnes of God, if for their instruction, they are taught of God, if for their tuition, the heauenly Angels are their seruants, if for their degrees they are kings and priests for the eternal God, if for their calling they are Saints, if for their life it is heauenly, if for their wealth it is the whole world, and finally, their death is the birth-day of all felicitie. For this cause *Dauid* desired rather to bee a doore keeper in the house of God, then a dweller in the stately tents of the wicked,

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as if the meanest condition among the professors of religion, were more excellent then the chiefest estates among the worldlings, their Crosses excell the others Crownes, their barrennesse the others fruitfulnes, their humilitie the others honour, their ignorance the others knowledge, their simplicitie the others wisedome, their weakenesse the others strength, & a little thing that the righteous hath, is better then the great possessions of the vngodly. Whē there is famine they are satisfied, when there is war, they are deliuered, when there is plague, they are without danger, if fire fall from heauen it shall not burne them, if the waters arise aboue the mountaines, they are not drowned, if the earthquake and rend asunder, yet they are not swallowed vp, if the wild beasts fall vpon them, they are not deuoured and if the Diuell himselfe would oppresse them, yet he shall not ouercome them. Then how glorious is our calling? that liue vnder the wings of God that feede with the flocke of Christ, to whom are reuealed the secret Counsels of the Lord, speaking vnto vs by his Ministers, giuing vs the euidence of our saluati-

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saluatiõ by his testament, regenerating vs by the immortall seede of his holy word, sealing vs with the spirit of promise; lifting vs vp from the dust of worldly miserie, to the thrones of heauenly Maiesty. *Salomons* seruants were happie that stood in his presence and heard his wisedome. *Daniel* was happy when the Lions could not destroy him, his fellowes were happie when the fire could not consume them, the Israelites were happie whē the Egyptians were drowned, *Iob* was happy when his wealth was restored, and the Disciples were blessed when they heard Christ preach. How many blessings belong to the Religious? Sathā that roaring Lion cannot ouercome them, the fire shall haue no power on them, their enemies shall neuer hurt them, the riches of the grace of God shall bee powred vpon them, and the word of life is dayly preached vnto them. Consider therefore my beloued, what is the hope of our profession wherunto we are called, the dignitie of our condition wherein we stand, and the reward of our religion prepared for our soules. Call to mind the examples of the Fathers, the promises of the Gospell,

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pell the oath of the Lord himselfe, the price of our redemption, & the place of our saluation: you shall finde nothing wanting in religion, that might encrease your blessednes. Therefore how happy are the eares that hear the things which wee heare, the eies that see the things which we see, the hands that handle the things which we touch, nay the soules that are assured of the fauour of God. If all the world would goe about to set downe the felicity of the godly and the dignity of the chosen, they could neuer atchiue it: no, not that which they enioy in this life, for their thoughts are heauenly, their harts the throne of the holy Ghost, their hands feel the Lord of glory, their tongues talke of his praise, their feet stand in his temple, their words are acceptable before him, their praiers like sweet sauoures of incense, their worship like euening sacrifices, their eies behold his glory, their eares heare his wisdõe, and their names are written in the kingdom of heauẽ. Would not any man become religious, that he might be rewarded with this excellent honour, to eate his meate with the Kinge of heauen, to

 weare

weare the Crowne that neuer shal haue end, his Angels his attenders, the starres his flowes, the heauens his dwelling place, the starres vnder his feete, the euerlasting light to walke in, the presence of God to delighte him, & the pleasures of paradise for the recompence of his religion. For this cause I haue geuen this title vnto these my slender laboures vpon this booke of Ruth, wherein (beloued in Christ) you shall finde the matter agree with the title, and the hope of all the faithfull concerning this end of their profession, so profitable a decyphering hath comforted many troubled soules, confirmed many wauering mindes, confounded many obstinate wickes, encouraged many godly persons, and therefore I hope will offer the same fauor vnto you in reading, which vnto many other in pleasing. Herein the holy Ghost (I meane in the booke of Ruth) hath laide out whatsoeuer can bee expected of the man feare the Lord: here are afflictiõs to humble vs, death to preuent vs, & examples to admonish vs: here is the zeal of the godly, the vertue of an effectuall calling, the vizard of hipocrisie declared



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vnto vs; here is the loue of the faithfull, the obedience to parents, and the benevolence of godly persons commended vnto vs; here is the care of our parents, the giftes of the spirit, and the holines of the religious comitted to the Church; here is the office of Magistrates, the prayers of our brethren, and the calling of the gētiles expressed, in the marriage of *Ruth* with *Boaz*, who was made a mother of many kinges, but especially of the kinge of glory, the sonne of God, the Sauiour of the world, & the gatherer together of the heires of grace. My desire therefore is this, that you try it by perusing & reading this treatise: for it is but superfluous labour for me, any farder to trouble you with the Argument hereof, seeing the whole matter lieth before your considerations. I will pray for your successe, & commend the end of my trauailes, (which is the comfort and instructiō of the mēbers of Christ,) to the fountaine of mercie, by whome the heauens water the earth, and the earth multiplieth with increase, and the encrease thereof preserueth the world, that by the same power, your souls may bee edified, your faith may be strength-



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ned my labours may be blessed, that his name may be glorified, his word may euermore be taught among vs, that many generations may embrace his Gospel, & the course thereof finished, our Religion by the mercie of the father, in the sonne with the holy Ghost may bee rewarded with eternall saluation, to whome let vs euermore giue thankes because he hath vouchsafed vs the dignity thereof, and walke worthie of our calling, least our secure liues, our idle faith, our vaine hope, our colde profession, and our commō conuersation with the vngodly, bring vpon vs euerlasting damnation.

*Your Louing brother who desireth your prayers.*

Edward Topsel.

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LO here what guerdon godlinesse doth get,
And how the crosse doth come before the
Lo widowes twaine before our eies are set/crowne:
Not rais'd aloft, before they bee cast downe.
And thou *O Ruth* renouncing natiue towne,
And *Baal-peor* God of *Moab* land,
Art set at rest, and blest by Gods owne hand.

The loue of freindes and Countrie ouerpeized
With loue of soueraigne Lord behold in sight:
The antique age and life of patriarkes praised,
How liberall, frugall, chast, pure, and vpright.
But now this mould of earth is turned quite,
Alas that nought in perfect state should sit,
The wrold is chang'd, and we are chang'd in it.

Art thou a maid? Learne here of *Ruth* thy mate,
To chuse whom God inspires with grace diuine,
A widodwe thou? to paines and labour late,
In each degree thy selfe with *Ruth* resigne,
Or art a wife? to righteous *Ruth* incline-
If wife, or maid, or widdowe then thou bee:
Thy selfe in *Ruth*, thou as in Glasse shalt see.



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Go little booke, display thy golden title,
(And yet not little, though thou little bee:)
Little for price, and yet in price not little,
Thine was the paine, the gaine is ours I see:
(Although our gaine thou deemst no paine to thee)
If then *O Reader* little paine thou take,
Thou greatest gaine with smallest paine shalt make.

The hungrie stomacke feedes with full desire,
Whereby their vitall spirites soone renew:
So if thine heart shall burne with heauenly fire,
Hereby great fruit shall to thy faith accrew.
Trie ere thou trust, and then giue sentence trew,
If reading once be pleasant to thy taste,
Next pleaseth more, yet sweetest comes at last.

William Attersel.

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# THE REWARDE OF RELIGION.

Ruth. Cap. 1. verse 2.3.4.5.6.

*IN the time that the Iudges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certaine man of* Bethleem Iudah *went for to sojourne in the countrie of* Moab, *he and his wife, and his two sonnes.*

2. *And the name of the man was* Elimelech, *& the name of his wife* Naomi, *and the name of his two sonnes* Mahlon *and* Chilion, *Euphrates of the land of Iudah. and when they were come into the land of* Moab, *they continued there.*

3. *Then* Elimelech *the husband of* Naomi *died there, and she remaymed with her two sonnes.*

4. *Which tooke them wives of the Moabites, the name of the one was* Horpath, *and the name of the other* Ruth: *and they dwelled there about ten yeares.*

5. *And* Mahlon *and* Chilion *died also both twaine, so the woman was left destitute of her two sonnes, and of her husband.*

6. *Then she arose with her daughter in law, and returned from the countrie of* Moab: *for she had heard say in the countrie of* Moab, *that the* Lord *had visited his people, and giuen them bread.*

ALthough the author of this book of *Ruth* hath not expressed his name, yet there is no doubt, but it proceedeth from the spirit of God, as well as the bookes of the Iudges, Kings, & Chronicles, which haue not the names of their authors described: but if it may bee lawfull to iudge or giue any sentence thereof, it was either *Samuell*, or some other godly Prophet vnder the raigne of Saule, which is prooued by the genealogies in the last Chapter where Dauid is by name mentioned, testifying vnto vs, that it was then written,



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when he was chosen from his brethren and annoynted King ouer Israel, and yet before his raigne, or els there had beene added vnto it, the title of a King, for the aduauncing of the name of Ruth, who was his Grandmother, vpon whom this historie following dependeth, for the summe and scope hereof, is to shew the pedigree or ancestrie, the naturall progenitours of Christ from Iudah the fourth sonne of Iacob, vntill the time that he began to chalenge the princely seate, the royall scepter, and the right of gouernment ouer the people of Israell, which was at that time, when Dauid was chosen from his fathers house, & annoynted King by Samuel Again, in this history, there is deliuered vnto vs the hope which the fathers had, concerning the calling of the Gentiles, for this mariage of Ruth into the kindred of Christ, who was a Gentile, & by nature none of the people of God, did plainely foretell that the Gentiles should bee called in Christ: for as hee tooke part of his humane nature of them, so he shewed vs, that hee would giue the same for them, that there might be no difference in his body, between Iewes & Gentiles, but that the power of his death, the graces of the spirit, and the knowledge of redemption, might redound to all. Now the occasion of this history is deliuered vnto vs in this first Chapter, which is, the soiourning of a certaine Iew in the land of Moab, (by reason there was a famine in the land of Iudah,) with his family, and the returne of them that liued, which were onely Naomi his wife, and one other, Ruth the Moabitesse the widdow of his eldest sonne: This wandering or soiourning is described with all the circumstances thereof, in these first sixe verses lately read: and generally containe in them these two parts, the first, is their trauaile to the land of Moab: the second, those things that hapned vnto them, after they came thither. The first part is expressed in these two first verses, first, by the occasion, which is declared by the time, and by the thing that mooued them thereunto, in these words: *In the time that the Iudges ruled, there was a famine, &c.* Secondly, by the persons that trauailed, who are described by the place frō whence they were, namely of Bethlehem

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lehem Iudah, these were the parentes and the children which are named in the 2. verse. The second part of these wordes, is in the foure other verses following, and it conteerneth eyther the parents or the children: the parents, that one of them euen Elimelech, the father of the family dyed there shortly after their ariuall; the children, first that they maried, ver. 4. secondly that they likewise dyed, ver. 5. Then remayned one Naomi with her two daughters in lawe, and the time of her abode in Moab is set down to be ten yeares ver 4. secondly, the occasion of her departure, because she heard say, that God had visited his people, and giuen them bread, ver. 6 of these partes let vs speake in order, as the spirite shall giue vtterance, and the time permit. *In the dayes that the Iudges ruled.* In these words the holy Ghost after his accustomed manner, for the more certainetie of the history, beginneth at the time as *Moses* beginneth his book of Genesis from the first creation of the world, so the prophetes in the beginning of their bookes, set down vnder what king or kings they prophesied, so also in the new Testament wee may see how three of the Euangelists beginne their Gospels from the preaching of Iohn Baptist, and the raigne of king Herod. The which order they undoubtedly learned of the old writers, the same spirit guiding them to one and the same trueth, vseth but one and the same manner of speaking, for the almighty desiring to meet with the wrangling obiections of humane inuentions, so tempereth the texte of euery scripture, as if question were made who did such a thing? He nameth the persons where it was done. He quoteth the place, and when it was done. Hee mentioneth the time: The cause hereof is, that hee might staye the waues of our fickle mindes, vpon the pillar of truth, his euerlasting worde. But in this place he chiefly mentioneth the time of the Iudges, to shew vnto vs that whē religion was corrupted the worship of God decayed, & idolatrie aduanced: when the Lorde was forgotten of his own people, when his lawes were no more obserued, but euery man did that which seemed good in his owne eyes, yea, when there were almost as many Gods among

Gen. 1. 1.
Esay. 1. 1
Iere. 1. 2.
Eph. 1. 1. 2.
Math. 2. 1.
Math. 1. 3. 4
Luc. 1. 5.
Iud. 2. 18. & 21. 25.



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among them as they were men, then euen then did the Lord send this plague of famine among them, for Salo-
Pro. 20. 30 mon saith, the blewnes of the wounde seruetb to purge the euill, and the stripes within the bottome of the belly: as if he had said, as the ripenes of a wounde calleth for a corasiue, so the fulnesse of sinne crieth for vengeance: by this therefore we note, that the corruption of religion, and the neglect of the worship of God, is the cause of
1. Ki 14, 16. all his iudgements that are exercised in the world. For
& 16. 2. 13. the idolatrie of Ieroboam and his sinnes, whereby hee
4. induced Israell to sinne, did the Lord threaten by Achia the prophet, to scatter the people, so we may reade of Ba-
1. King. 18. hascha king of Israell, and so Salomon prayed at the de-
35, 37. dication of the temple, when heauen shall bee shut and thou giue no raine because they haue sinned against thee, &c. where he comprehendeth the chiefe and capital worldly punishments of sinne, as dearth and famine, sword and pestilence, blindnesse & ignorance, which are also the rewards of sin, & the vnseparable companions of all vnrighteousnes, & what saith the Lord by the prophet? Cast frō you all your sins wherewithal you haue transgressed & make you a new hart, for why shold you die, oh you house of Israell: as if hee had saide, eyther repent, or else be damned, for it is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God. And may not wee thinke that all these thunderings out of God his iudgements among vs, will stirre vp some rain of punishments vpon vs? Are we not already put into the winepresse, to be brused vnder the hand of fearefull destruction? How many plagues haue come vppon vs within these fewe yeares? Where is become the remembrance of the late enemies pretended inuasion? The rumor whereof amazed the harts of the couragious champions which spend all their dayes in pleasure: Oh then they cryed, if they might be deliuered, they would alot some time of their dayes to the seruice of the Lord. Where is the remembrance of the late plague, which was scattered almost in euery place of the land? Oh then wee cryed vnto the Lord in our distresse, and he deliuered vs out of all our miseries. Oh that men would therefore confesse the

Lord,

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Lord, and declare the wonders he doth for the children of men. But what are we now amended? is the vngodly person turned from his vngodlinesse, and not rather strengthned in his iniquity? They which were ignorant are ignorant still, and many like *Demas*, who seemed religious, haue embraced this present worlde. As for the prophane both of poore and rich, they haue made a league with death, & a couenant with the graue. though a swoord come thorough the land, yet (say they) it shall not come at them. And therefore who can without waterye eyes and bleeding hearte, tell this present plague of dearth and famine which we now most iustly endure. and yet who knoweth how long it shall continue. Now, (as the Prophet sayeth) we are gathered together and howle vpon our beds for corne and for newe wine, that is, for the bellie and for the throate, but there is a greater leannes in the soule. Now we bite the stone which the Lord hath cast at vs, but we looke not at the hand which did send it, and who thinketh it to bee a punishment of sinne that now raigneth among vs? The papists say it is for our heresies, the popish Atheists say, that the world was best when the old religion was, for then all thinges were cheape, like the idolatrous Iewes which said vnto Ieremie, that it was wel with them when they burnt incense & made cakes to the host of heauen. The ruffians say to the preachers, as Achab said to Eliah Are not you the troublers of Israel, whe it is themselus and their fathers houses, while they haue left the commandement of God and followed their pleasures, yea almost the whole countrie is so vainely addicted, that among these multitude of Preachers that are abroade, there is not one that faithfully followeth his vocation, but they are molested by the basest, and contemned by the best. So that we may saye as our Sauiour sayeth, wee haue piped vnto you, & you haue not dauced, we haue mourned, and you haue not sorrowed, yet wisedome is iustifyed of her children, who are not ashamed to pleade her cause in the gates of the cities, before the face of her enemies the Lord increase the number of them.

Hos 7. 14. 13.

Iere. 44. 19

1 King. 18. 17.

11. 17.

Psal. 127. 5.

We haue long retayned the name of Christians, that



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is, the annointed of the Lorde, and yet our Lampes are emptie, and we defer our dayes in slumber, thinking
Mat.25.3 our selues as good Christians as the best, till we be vtter-
Mat.21.30. ly excluded from the bridechamber: wee haue promised
Ioh.15.2. the Lord ofrentimes to worke in his vineyarde, but yet
Ioh.10.14. who hath entered? we are the vineyarde of the Lorde, &
Gen.31.34 he hath dressed vs: what fruit haue we borne vnto him? we are the sheepe of Christ, and yet wee know not his voice: and as Rahell couered her fathers idols with sitting on them and with a lie, so wee that are the greatest sinners couer our iniquities with hypocrysie and dissembling. Such pollution of Sabboathes as neuer was, yea e-
Pro.7.22. uen in this time of dearth and famine, drinking and drũkennesse dauncing and riot, feasting and surfeting, chãbering and wantonnes, sweariug and forswearing, accompting gaine to be godlines, and godlines to be the burthen of the world, with a thousand greater and more grieuous calamities, as if the bird could sing in the snare, or as the fatted oxe that runneth wilfullie to the slaugh-
Mat.3.10. ter. Then beloued let vs looke about vs: euen now is the axe of God his iudgements laid to the root of euery mãs heart, and he is accursed that feareth it not, euen now the Lord is knocking at the doore of our harts, and if euer let vs open vnto him, that the king of glorie may come in. Euen these are the daies wherin iniquity hath gotten the vpper hand, and the loue of many is waxen colde.
Reu. 18. 4. Therefore as the Angell warned the godly, so must wee still come out from among them: my people bee not partakers of their sinnes, least you beare a parte of their plagues. This is the harvest of the Lorde, oh let vs that be the Lords seruants gather out the wheat, least it be burned with the tares. There is a holy conuocation to the Lord, & the Lords ministers sound out the trũpet, if wee
Numb.16 appeare not, the earth will open her mouth, and reuenge
12.32. our rebellion, & swallow vs vp aliue: let vs at the length
Hos.6.1,2. say with the Iewes, Come let vs turne vnto the Lord, for he hath spoyled vs & he shall heale vs, hee hath smitten vs and he shall bind vs vp, after two dayes he shall giue vs life, and the third day he shall raise vs vp, and wee shall liue before him; if with knowledge we follow him, to

know

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know the Lord his rising is like the morning, and hee shall come vpon vs like raine in a drought, both the first and the latter raine vpon the earth. Let not our righteousnes, be as the dew before the sunne rising, but put on the Lord Iesus Christ, and let none call vpon him, but such as depart from iniquitie.

Secondly, by this we gather, that the Lord is as true in his iudgements, as in his mercies: for hee threatned by Moses, saying, If you forsake me, & fal to worship strãge Gods (as now they did) then your heauen shall bee as brasse, and your earth, as yron, and your raine like dust, till they were consumed from the face of the earth. Of all these miseryes you may see in the book of Iudges, Samuel, and Kings, to which I refer you at your leysure, as of Saul, Dauid, Ieroboam, Achab, Zidkia, and others, as in this present place: where they are oppressed ten yeares together, so that heauen and earth may passe, but the word of the Lord abideth for euer. Deut. 28. 23 24.

For this cause the Prophets adde to their preaching of iudgements: (*Thus sayth the Lord*) as if they had sayde, it shall neuer bee altered. And if the lawes of heathen men, such as the Medes and Persians, might not alter, much lesse the word of the Lord, which is like siluer purified seuen times, should haue any drosse or changeable substance in it. Wee see the law of nature stand inuiolable for euer, and shall not the law of him which made nature, be also immutable? when the fire ceaseth to bee hot, and the water cold, then shall bee exception taken against God his iudgements, and not before. The vse of this doctrine is to cast downe the presumption of notorious sinners, who, to auoyde the terrors of God his iudgements, deceiue their owne soules with this, that GOD is mercifull. So that in their most singular sinnes, they will flye to the mercyes of God, as if they were the very bond of iniquitie: yea, and these kind of people perswade themselues to bee as good Christians as any in the world, because they can say the Lord is mercifull. Dan. 6. 9. Psal. 12. 6.

But heare me a little in one word I pray you, I am per-



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swaded that I speake to many of these people this day, What hurt hath the Lord done vnto you that you rob him of his justice? Shall the prophet be found a lyer that sayth, The Lord is iust in all his wayes, and holy in al his
Psa.145.17 works: Or shall the Apostle speake vntruth, that sayeth,
2.Thes.1.6. It is a iust thing with God to render affliction to them that afflict you, and release to you that are afflicted? why shall we then spoile God of his iudgements, vnlesse wee will deprive our selues of our own saluation. But you will say, this serueth for the wicked, as Atheists, Turkes, Pagans, Infidels, and such like, which shall haue no parte with Christ, I answere, what greater wickednes can there be, than to deprive God of his iustice? Would a mortall man endure to be accounted without honesty, and shall the euerlasting king abide to be spoiled of his righteousnesse? Nay, the iustice of God pertaineth to such as you
Exo.18.26. would be holy persons, as well as to any. For what saieth the Prophet, When the iust man turneth from his righteousnes to doe iniquity, he shall die in it. And Peter sayeth, that iudgement must begin at the house of God, And a Father once sayde, God of his most deare iustice, hath decreede the summe of all discipline, both in exacting and in defending; as if he had said, there is no correction of the Lord, but it proceedeth from his iustice,
1 Pet.4.17. now the children of God are corrected, for he scourgeth euery child whom he receiueth And therefore the iudgements of God must be thundered out as well for the
Heb. 12.6. confirming of the faithfull, as the confusion of Infidels. But others there are that are so far past feeling of either mercies or iudgements, that as soon the deaf Adder will heare the voice of the charmer, as they any impression of terror for sinne. Hence commeth this custome of sinning, which euery sabboth commit their wonted iniquity, euery houre vomit out their poyson of blasphemies, and euerie day violate the lawes of charity, who through their dayly staring on the sonne of righteousnesse, are now become starke blinde, and with the continuall noyse of God his waters, are made so deafe, that they can heare no goodnesse. Vnto both these sorts

of people, hearken what the Lord saieth in his Gospell, Mat. 25. 48.
But if that euill seruant shall saye in his heart, the Lorde deferreth his comming, and shall begin to smite his fellow seruants, and to eate and drinke with the drunken, the Lorde of that seruant shall come in a daye that hee looketh not for, and in an houre that hee knoweth not, and shall separate him, and giue him his part with vnbeliuers, there shall bee weeping and gnassing of teeth. This shalbe the end of secure Christians, and contemptuous sinners, carnall Atheists, and despisers of wholsome doctrine; which haue no part but in this present life, with endless and fearefull damnation in the world to come, thus much of the first part, the circumstance of time. Now let vs goe to the thing which is the second part, of the occasion. *There was a famine in the land.* This was the chiefe cause which moued these persons to trauell, the auoiding of the pinching penurie of fearefull death, by lingering till the end of this pining famine.

Of all the punishments of sinne which happen in this life, there is none more vehement then famine. Therefore the Lord by the Prophet threatneth to send his arrowes of famine to breake the staffe of bread. Where he Eze. 5. 16.
alludeth to a maine battell, signifying vnto vs, first as the arrow is the fittest instrument to breake the ranke, so a famine is the sharpest weapon to dismay the couragious stomackes of rebellious sinners. For as the arrow is alway in sight, so a famine euer in sense: the arrowe hurteth, but not with a speedy death, a famine spoileth, yet with tedious misery, the arrow entered, doth procure more paine and greater wound at the pulling foorth; than the falling in: euen so aboundance of meat sooner dispatcheth a famished person than lingering hunger. Therefore Dauid put to his choice of three plagues, famine, flying, and pestilence, chose the last as the most sodainest, and therefore accompanied with lesse griefe, for 1. Sam. 24. 14. 15.
that disease by the rule of phisicke is most daungerous, which is the longest in growing. Now we may reade of many famines in the Scripture, one and the first we read of, was in the dayes of Abraham, another in the daies of Gen. 12. 10.
Isaak his sonne. Seuen yeeres famine was in Egypt, Gen. 26. 1.
where

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Gen.41.30. where Ioseph by the hand of God, succored the church in his fathers family. And to omit that in Dauids time,
2.Sam.21.1 and that in Ahabs time, with those in the dayes of Iehoram and Zidkia, with many others. Wee reade in the
1.Kin.18.2 new Testament of an vniuersal famine, in the dayes of Claudius Cæsar, prophesied by Agabus, when the
2.Kin.6.25 Church did most notablie releeue one another. Vnto the which we may adde that at the destruction of Ierusalem, about fortie yeeres after Christ. All which are
Act.18.28. most worthy spectacles of humane miserie, and worthy examples of God his iudgements, to terrifie all them which say in their prosperitie, they shall neuer bee mooued. There we may reade of the pittifull death of many thousandes which starued in the streetes, in the face of their deerest friendes, and yet were not able to releeue them. There wee may see howe men were driuen to eate dogges, cats, rats, mice, and horse flesh: but that which is most miserable, the mothers to succour their stomacks and bodyes, with the slaughter and eating of their own children. What heart of adamant would not weepe, yea, rather bleede at the sight hereof? And yet behold a greater famine then all these. Is it possible? yea verily, a famine of the word of God, when men shall goe from one Sea to another, and from the
Amo.8.11. North to the East, running to seeke the word of God, and shall not finde it. In that day shall fall both the faire virgins and the yong men, which sweare by the idols of Schomron, & say, As thy God liueth, O Dan, and as the God of the way of Beersheba liueth, they shall fall, neither shal they euer rise vp againe Is not this greater than the famine of bread? There was neuer famine so great, but if liberty were giuen, the famine was eased: but in this they shall haue libertie to run too and fro, and shall not be releeued. There was neuer any famine wherewith men were so hunger-starued, but some recouered, but in this sayth the Lorde: They that fall, shall neuer rise againe. Oh that the open contemners of God his word, would drinke but one drop for a taste of these fearefull iudgements: I am perswaded that the heate of greedie sinne would bee so cooled in them,

that

that they shoulde recouer the health of their soules, which will neuer bee, till of open prophaners they become publike professors. But of all these famines there is but one cause, which is the abuse of the creatures of God, for so the equity of iustice requireth, that in the same thing wherein they sinned, they shoulde bee punished. Like as the thiefe was bounde for that which he stole, to restore foure folde. Fulnesse of bread was one of the sinnes of Sodome, and they vnderstoode not from whome they had it, because they were vnmercifull to the poore, and therefore abused it by vnthankfulnesse.

And this is a worthy doctrine bee vrged in our dayes, wherein our abuse is greater then our want, and yet our want is such as hath not beene heard of these many yeares. The couetous seller keepeth in his corne, and draweth vpon himselfe the curse of the poore, saying, it is scantie, it is scantie, when his garners are full. Is not this to tell that the Lorde his hande is shortened, when indeed it is lengthned? Is this to say, thou openest thy hande and fillest with thy blessing euery liuing thing? Nay, you plainely accuse the Lorde of illiberalitie.

O detestable crueltie, who for to fat vp their own posterities, will murther the bodies of many thousands of pouertie, yea this is more cruell then murther in the sight of God. Why deale you not plainely, and say, the Lorde hath ginen aboundance, yet your price must be raised, so you should speake truelie, and excuse the liberality of the Lorde in excusing your owne couetous desires. But oh wretchednesse, you will not laye the faulte vppon the guiltie, you iustifie the couetous, whome the Lorde abhorreth, and condemne the innocent liberality of him, who giueth to all freely, and casteth none in the teeth. Another sort there are more viler than those, who of this great want, which if the Lord suffer to endure, will turne to extreame famine, yet they wil spend more vpon one to wake him drunke, than vpon one dozen of poore folks. These are the tiplers, alesellers, & drunkardes, the very

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very caterpillers of our countrey, who like the horse-leach are euer sucking, and neuer satisfied, and these only consume much that other should not bee contented with it. Of these both Cities and Countries are replenished, and the Magistrates suffer them with little or no punishment at all; but if the poore preachers rebuke the folly, their safety is indangered by this rauenous broode who are not ashamed to giue rayling, yea & threatning speeches. And magistrates seruants are in greatest fault, who are not onely partakers of this vnseasonable drinking, but also deale priuately with their maisters, that those which are complayned, might escape vnpunished. Thus are the poore vnrelieued, the country vnprouided, the people vnanswered, the wicked vnpunished, the common weale vnreformed, the godly vncomforted, & the iudgements of God baled downe vpon vs, that wee might be euerlastingly confounded.

*There went a certain man* Now are we come to the persons that traueled, which is the second part of this verse, which we shewed you ended in the second verse: they are first generally described in this verse, and after specially by name in the next verses: they are of two sorts, first the parents, Elemelech & Naomi, secōdly the children, *Mahlon* and *Chilion*, who are all described by the place from whence they went, Bethlehem Iudah: it is so called because there was another Bethlehem in the tribe of Zebulon: and this is that Bethlehem which in Genesis is called Ephratha, & therefore these persons are in these two verses called Ephrathits, of the place where afterwarde Christ was borne. Then it is apparant by the booke of Iosuah, that the tribe of Iudah had the fruitfullest possession in all the land of Canaan, they were the greatest in number, the wisest in pollicy, the richest by inheritance: yet we see when the scourge of God came, the famine inuaded their countrie, and crope into the wals of Bethlehem, and made the wealthiest among them to flie: yet this Elimelech, which was as appeareth by his consanguinity of the princes of the whole tribe, such is the vehemency of the Lords arrows, when he shooteth them abroad, that if king Achab were in his chariot, in the mid-

Ios. 19. 15
Gen. 35. 19
Math. 2. 1.
Chap 15.
King. 22. 34

de

dest of his host, yet one of them shall giue him a mortall wound. The vse of this doctrine is, to teach vs that if the Lord suffer his plague to continue, he will strike downe the chosen men in Israell, the chosen men in England, yea the noblest among vs, who think themselues in greatest security, can he easily bring to greatest misery. Therfore you whose heads the Lord hath aduanced ouer your brethren, looke to your calling, for the voice of the Lord shaketh as wel the Cedars of Libanus, as the little shrubs in the wildernes of Cades, it is as easie with him to binde the nobles in chaines, and the princes in linkes of yron, as to raise vp the poore from the dunghill to the throne. Did not his darknes couer as well the courte of Pharao as the countrie of Egypt? Was not the first born of the king destroyed, as well as of the poore pesantes of the dwellinges of Ham? Yea, when the Israelits were carried captiue to Babilon, their king and his children slaine before his face, his owne eyes put out, and after lead in a chaine, neyther was he spared for his throne, nor you for your dignity and wealth.

Psal. 29. 6. 6. 8
Psal. 149. 8
Psal. 113. 7.
Exod. 10. 22
Exo 11. 29.
2. King. 25. 10.

Oh that you would therefore be warned of your slippery estate, that you might auoide the heauy wrath of God, when without respect of persons hee shall iudge both quicke and dead. Let not the lots of your inheritaunce deceiue you, though their soile be as fruitful as this of Iudah, and your possessions neuer so great: he that in one night destroyed all the fruits of Egypt, can also in one houre blast your corne with deawes, & consume your possession with drought, for a fruitfull land maketh he barren for the wickednes of them that dwell therein.

Secondly, we note out of these wordes, when he *tooke his wife and children with him*, an example of a religious father, and a louing husband: he might (if he had consulted with flesh and bloud) done like our husbands in these dayes, which had rather in their wandring, shift about for themselues, and leaue wife and children in a sea of troubles, to sinke or swimme to some doubtfull releefe. But the godly in old time knew that their wiues and childred were as themselues, and as they were carefull to cherish their owne bodies, so they were mindfull

to

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to nourish their own families. This the Lord at the first mariage that euer was, commanded that for a mans wife he should forsake father and mother, & they two shall be one flesh, as if he had said, parentes must not hinder
Gen.2.24 fellowship of wedlocke, much lesse pouerty or temporall wants: as the barke is ioyned to the tree, & the flesh to the bone, if one be without the other they both perish. so must husband and wife liue and loue together, vnles they wil be the slaughter-slaues of their own destruction. We read of this practise in the scripture, when Abraham by reason of a famine went down into Egypt, hee tooke Sara his wife with him: when Ishak by reason of a
Gen.12.18. famine wēt to Abimelech the king of Gerar, he took Re
Gen.26.1. becca his wife with him. How do we read of Iacob, how
Gen.cap. twise he sent into Egypt for all his family, and the thirde
42.43,44, time he went down with al his household, his son Ioseph
1.Tim.5.8. fed him fiue yeares of famine; yea the Apostle saith, that he is worse then an Infidel that prouideth not for his own familie, & Christ going from his disciples asked them if they had wanted any thing, and they answered, nothing. Against this point of doctrine there are manie that offend: some that are married by their couetous parents, who respect nothing but wealth, are so matched, as if a vine were planted in the flowing of the sea, which prospereth best whē the water is lowest, euen so these are in sweetest fellowship when one is a thousand miles frō the other. Others there are which in their marrieages, please nothing but their eyes, which as old persōs cannot see without spectacles, so they cannot find wiues with-
Gen.6. out the spectacles of bewty, & these loue as long as bewty endureth, which is till they be sicke, for sicknes is the cutthroate of bewty. Some take wiues & husbandes as fools find pearles, for as they cannot discerne them from pebles: so these are ignorant of all kind of duty towards one another. From hence proceedeth all the adulteryes, which are dayly committed, here ariseth the fountaine of strife, contention, debate, ielousie, & also the vnhappy blows which many giue to their wiues: hence it cōmeth, that so many Gentlemen and others are seldom at home but eyther beyond the sea in warres or in trauell, which in

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in their vnmaried estate, wanted nothing but wiues, but now being maried, want all things but wiues. Hence it commeth, that they termed them by the odious titles of crosses, plagues, troubles, and also as I haue heard some say, the causes of their vndoing, wheras they may as wel accuse the eie of his blindnes, as their wiues of their own wilfull miserie: and to conclude, there is not one breach of loue or kindnes between them, but it springeth from these corruptions, which then were sowed, whē they intended their mariage. But oh beloued, let not the godly be drawen away with the crooked conuersation of these contentious persons, but let thē be armed with the fore-named examples of godly vnity, that as their troubled daies were eased in the ioy of their owne loue, so let our miseries be releeued, which you suffer in wedlock, with your comfortable agreement in christian societie, for so sayth Salomon, Let thy fountaine be blessed, & reioyce with the wife of thy youth: and thus much of this second doctrine. Thirdly, by this wee may note that the godly are oppressed, when the wicked haue abundance: heere we see the Israelites which were the Church of God, had a famine, but the Moabits, to whom this man descended being a cursed generation, incestuous Gentiles, had plentie & abundance, for els Elimelech would not haue gone thither to be relieued. This may seem a strāge thing, that the godly shuld be oppressed with famine, when worldlings & heathens shall wallow in their wealth. Of these Dauid speaketh, I haue seen the wicked strong, & spreading himselfe like a baytree. And in another place, They are inclosed in their owne fat: And againe he saith, They haue their portion in this life, whose bellies thou fillest with thy hid treasure, their children haue inough, and leaue the rest of their substance to their children. And in another place, there are no bands in their death, but they are lusty & strong, they are not in trouble like other mē: & a little after, these are the wicked, yet prosper they alwaies & increase in riches. The very like you may hear in Iob, & in ȳ Prophet Ieremy. But of ȳ righteous he saith, & often crieth out of their afflictions, their sorrowes & nakednes, their hūger & misery, al the day long are they appointed

Pro. 5. 18.

Psal. 37. 35.
Psal. 17. 14.

Psal 73. 4.

Ver. 12.
Iob. 21. 7.
Iere. 12. 1.

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appoynted as sheepe to the slaughter, yea, our Sauiour Christ pronounceth himselfe in his members, poore,
Mat.25,42. hungry, naked, harborles, thirsty, & imprisoned, the foxes
43. haue holes, and the birds of the aire haue nests, but the
Mat.8.20. sonne of man hath not where to rest his head. And the
Heb.11.37. author of the epistle to the Hebrues, saith of the godly, Some are stoned, some cut asunder, some slaine with the sword, some wandering abroad in goats skins and sheepe skins, destitute, oppressed, euill entreated, of whom the world was not worthy, wandering in deserts, in the Mountaines, in dennes and caues of the earth. Iudge now I beseech you, betweene the outward estate of the godly & the wicked, are they not contrary? That which of the world is condemned, is of the Lord commended, yet I beseech you my brethren, be not terrified from godlines, but rather strengthened in your profession. Then will you say, tell vs the cause of all this inequalitie. Our Sauior answereth it very wel, You are not (saith he) of the world, if you were of the world, the world would loue his owne: and Dauid saith, that their portion is onely in this life, but Christ saith, our reward shall be great in heauen: and againe, you shall weepe and la-
Ioh.15.19. ment, but the world shall reioyce, but your sorrow shal bee turned to ioy, like a woman that reioyceth at the byrth of her sonne, so as a woman in trauaile hath no ease till a sonne is come into the world, neither must we looke for any rest, till our soules are deliuered out of the wombe of the body, into the kingdome of heauen. Our
Ioh.16.20. Sauiour compareth vs to the fruitfull vine, which doth not onely abide frost, snow, storme and heate, but also at the gathering time is broken of, that the grapes might be reached. The gold must be tried in the furnace, the sluer fined in the fire, the wheate pourged in the floore, and before it bee meate for man, is also ground in the
Ioh 15.12. mill, so must we be proued in affliction, fined in persecution, and crushed in peeces, vnder the burthen of our owne miseries, that wee may bee made prepared bread for the Lord his owne spending.

Why then doth the Lord make such large promises to his Church, of plenty, seeing it endureth continnall po-

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mostyfull answere, the Church of God must be considered after two sorts, the first as it is cleansed in the bloud of Christ, and washed pure from all outward and notorious offences, vnto which estate pertaine all those outward promises of liberality in the scripture. The second is the declined estate or corrupted condition of euery one in the church, euen vnto the worlds end: vnto this pertaine all the punishments, persecutions, & tribulations, which the godly endure: which the Lord sendeth vpon them, that he might by little and little scoure vs from our transgressions, and weary vs with the miseries of this life, that we might the more earnestly desire the life to come: for the Lord doth here scourge vs, that we should not be condemned with the world. Examples of these are most plentifull in the olde testament of the Church of the Iews, & for as much as the perfection of the church being once lost, is like broken glasse, which can neuer be soldered again, so the church shall neuer attaine those promises in this life, but they are all referred to the life to come, where shal be no hunger, thirst, nakednes, pouertie, trauaile, famine, or sorrow, but al teares being wiped from the eies of the faithfull; they shall then rest from their labors, & receiue many thousand times, for euery affliction which they here endured, eternall felicitie in the presence of Christ, when all worldlings shal be burned with vnquenchable fire.

Fourthly, in that they wēt down to the wicked Moabits, and there tarried, wee note that it is lawfull for the godly in the time of necessity, to craue help or relief of the very enemies of God, so they be not polluted with their superstitions. For proofe hereof, we haue the former examples of Abraham in Egypt, of Isaac in Gerar, of Moses in Midian, when he fled from Pharao, of the spies of Israel, which lodged in the house of Rahab. So did the Lord command Ioseph in a dreame, to take Mary and Christ, & to goe into Egypt, to saue Christ from Herod. So did Christ ask water of the woman of Samaria when he was weary, with infinite other testimonies, which the godly may find in the scripture. But the vse of this point is, that although the Lord hath permitted this liber-

Gen. 12.7. & 26.1.
Exo. 2.22.
Ios. 2.1.
Math. 2.13.
Ioh. 4.7.



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liberties, yet we must take heed of two things, first that we neuer receiue any thing with condition of religion, or doing the least thing against our owne knowledge; for Idolaters desire nothing more, then to winne mens soules to the diuell. Secondly, we may not go vnto such, where we may be cast off the godly; for it is free necessitie that constraineth, not necessary liberties permitteth. By this we learne what to iudge of them which are daily at talke and table with the wealthiest papists, Atheists, and carnall prophane persons, whose minds not for the loss of religion, so they may gaine by their friendship, or seeming vnto the feathers of a rich man, though vngodly, then the blood of a poore godly christian: they ye them to commonly for wealth and commoditie, not for need or necessitie: these are seasoned in the leauen of straight counsels, baked in the oueu of hipocrisie, & shal one day be burned in the fire of euerlasting destruction, for they which so gaine loue their company in this life, shall be partakers of their rewards in the life to come.

Psa. 37. 18. 19. Fifthly, by this we note, that the Lord doth euer prouide for his faithfull seruants in all their miseries. We see here, that Iewes satisfied with plenty in Moab, that were almost famished with penurie at home: therefore saith Dauid. The Lord knoweth the daies of vprightmen, and their inheritance shall be perpetuall, they shall not be confounded in the perilous time, & in the daies of famine they shall haue enough. Most notable is that speech of Ioseph to his brethren, telling them that God sent him before to prouide victuals for them, in that seuen yeares famine. So he stirred vp Obadiah, which hid fifty Prophets in one cave, and fifty in another, feeding them with bread and water, during the time of famine. Heb. 11. 37. Heb. 12. 5. Heb. 13. 5. Ge. 45. 45. 1. Kin. 18. 13. Here prouided for Eliah first by the rauens, and after by the widdow of *Sarephtha*, multiplying her oyle and meale for Eliah when tolde, and her sonne. 1. Kin. 17. 9. 2. 6. So beside an Elisee warne the Sunamite woman of the seuen yeares famine, that shee should fize for her selfe, and liue where shee could. 1. Kin. 8. 1. I might bee infinite in this point, and declare the bountifull liberalitie of the Lord, who euer prouidethmore then die or other,

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to fulfill the communall prayers of them that feare him: for we may say as paul sayth, We are afflicted, yet wee are not in distresse, in poverty, yet not ouercome of poverty, we are persecuted, and yet not forsaken, cast down but we perish not. This is the mercifull kindnes of him who giueth foode to the young rauens that call vpon him, & maketh his sun to rise & shine both vpon good & bad. Yet we our owne selues haue experience in our own Country, for we which were wont with our abundance to relieue other nations about vs, yet now in our want we are succoured by them. How should the poore in many places be relieued, if it were not for the corne which commeth ouer sea, therefore as the seauen plenifull yeares in Egypt, succoured the seauen deare yeares, euen so the Lord relieueth the misery of one time by the multitude of an other. Therefore my brethren, let vs not say, the Lord hath forgotten vs, for although our desires be not satisfied, yet our bodies are not famished: yea, the Lord testifieth that he is as vnwilling to punish our deserts, and vtterly to depriue vs of our maintenance, as we are to depart from our pleasant pastime or daintie chiere cheare, Poor *Lazarus* that was not relieued with the rich mans crummes, yet was hee comforted with the licking of the dogs, so much doth the Lorde affect liberalitie and kindnes, that he commandeth brutt beasts to execute his goodnes vpon his seruaunts.

2. Cor. 4. 8. 9.

Now let vs proceed to the second part of this scripture and seeing wee haue brought these straungers to their Inne at Moab, let vs heare their entertainement, & those things that happened vnto them after they came thether for the parts we haue in the beginning set down, which I trust you remember, and therfore we wil to the words, *And they continued there.* This is as much to say, as they found entertainement answerable to their expectation: they had liberty of residence graunted, and obtayned a place for their dwelling in safety. Where we first note the gentlenes or humanity of these heathen Moabites, who had learned by nature this pointe of curtesie, which is, friendlie to succour poore, harbourlesse straungers: and no doubte but hee that watcheth



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the descending of sparrowes on the ground, directed this iourney to Moab, for the accomplishing of his own counsell, and prepared the hearts of these people, with fauour to relieue them. For as before he guided the iourney of Abrahams seruant to the Citty of Machor, where Rebecca was, & framed hir answere according to his praier, euē so he cōducted these to Moab, where Ruth
Gen. 24. 13 was, and tempered the harts of the wicked to giue these pilgrims a dwelling place among them. By the which we are taught what friendship or loue we owe to strangers which are come among vs, yea, though we know not the purpose of their hearts, yet we must do good vnto them for the proportiō of their bodies: that is, because they are men. This is not a law written only in the book of God, but imprinted in the very nature of euery one. We see these Moabits do it by nature, & yet they had no religiō in them, we know how the king of Egypt gaue commādement for Abraham, that none should hurt him or any of his possessions. Read but the Acts of the Apostles, you shal see how barbarous nations receuied the church with curtesy, and some vpon their report believe the doctrine of Christ. What shall we then say to this beastlike behauiour of many among vs, who will hardly permit poor Christian straungers to harbour among vs: if it were not for that they are men, & the children of Adam like our selues, yet because they call vpon the name of Christ, being of the household of faith, let vs do good
Gen. 17. 13. vnto them. But some will say, what shall we doe vnto
14. them if they will noe ioyne with vs in our religion? I answere, none must be of Abrahams family but those which will be circumcised, that is, none must dwel with thee, but such as wil be of thy profession. Yet thou maist for humanity or curtesie receue a Turke or a Pagan, a Iew or an Infidel, Papist or Heretike, to talk or table for
Gen. 31. 54 a night or a small time, so thou keepe thy selfe from his pollutions. So did Iacob feast his idolatrous father in
2. Kin. 6. 23 law, and kinsmen when they pursued him to the mount of Gilead with purpose to hurt him, and our Sauiour Christ biddeth vs to feed our enemies and to giue them drink if they thirst. So did Elishah, to the host of the Siri



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ans, who being sent to take him, yet when hee had taken them & lead them to the city, he suffered the king to do them no hurt, but refreshed them with meat and drinke, and sent them away in safety. For our outward curteous receyuing of infidels is like coales of fire, to draw them in loue with our inward religion. We know how the Lord commanded the Iewes to be good vnto strangers because they were strangers in Egypt. We know how the Lord commended th estrange Samaritan beyond the priest and the Louite, because he succoured the poor wounded Iew, which had fallen among theeues. And truely we our selues may be strangers in other Countries, therefore let vs do good vnto them now that wee may receiue the like of them againe, for this is the lawe and the Prophets. *Then Elimelech*, when they had escaped one daunger, they fell into another sorrow, when by the mercifull kindnesse of the Lord they were ioyntly come together in Moab, and there quietly seated, scaped the arrowes of famine, by the hand of God, the father of the family, the nearest and the dearest vnto them, dieth in plenty. Luc. 10. 30. 34.

Where we note the very lot of all the godly, namely, that the end of one sorrow is the beginning of another, like the drops of raine distilling from the top of a house, when one is gone another followeth, like a ship vppon the sea, being on the top of one wave, presently is cast down to the foote of an other, like the seede which being spread by the sower is hanted by the foules, being greene and past their reach, is endangered by frosse and snow, being passed the winters hurt, by beastes in summer, being ripe is cut with the sickle, threshed with the flaile, purged in the floore, grounde in the mill, baked in the ouen, chewed in the teeth, and consumed in the stomacke. This made Dauid say, Great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord deliuereth them of all. But be not discomforted oh my Brethren for thorough many afflictions must we enter into the kingdome of heauen, and by affliction wee are made like to the sonne of God. But to the matter, We see here their sweet fellowship is preuented by death, which indeed is the end of all worldly Psa. 34. 19. Act. 14. 22. Heb. 2. 10.

worldly friendship. This is a good lesson for all worldlings to remember how the Lord disappointeth all their purposes, and ouerthroweth their counsels, more vainer then vanity. The merchant hauing obtained his banke, promiseth rest and security to himself, the husbandman hauing gathered his fruits, neuer doubteth but he shall spend them & prouideth for more, the Gentleman comming to his lands, thinketh his reuenewes and pleasant life will endure alway: like the Apostles when Christ
Mat. 17. 4. was transfigured in the mount, presently they woulde build tabernacles of residence; but as the cloude came betwixt them and heauen, and bereaued them of their purpose: euen so sodainely will death come & deprue you of your profits, call the marchant from his banke, the husbandman from his farme, the Gentleman from his lands, the noble man from his honour, the prince from his kingdome, the Lady from her pleasures, as this Elimelech was sodainely from wife and children.

Secondly, by these words we note the goodnes of God toward both the dead man, and also wife and children, for no doubt but they all desired to be setled in some place or other, and here the Lord suffereth the husband with wife and family, to be quietly seated before their separation. He might haue called him away in his iourney as he was comming, & then oh how would it haue grieued both him and them: him to leane a poore comfortles widdow and children behind, without dwelling or maintenance, for home again they could not returne, by reason of the fannine, and to go foorth on the iourney without a guide, was like as if a ship were sette on the sea without a mariner. Therfore in suffering them all to come safe to Moab, and there to liue till they got fauour and dwellinges, and also maintenance, was a singular fauour of the Lord towards both, that howsoeuer they were afflicted, yet they were not left destitute.
Rom. 8. 28. And this teacheth vs that in about afflictions we receiue especiall blessinges at the hand of God, for this end that we should not be swallowed vp of sorrow. There is no sickness but it is eyther short and sharpe, or else tedious and light, if it bee sodaine and very extreame,

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the continuance of it is but short, if it be long and tedious, it hath some time of ease, some time of more quietnes, so in al our miseries wee may say with the godly, If the Lord had not beene on our side we had bin swallowed quick: hee temperoth the sodainest showes with least continuance, and the longest Winter hath many faire daies, Be strong therefore my brethren & sisters, for surely the Lord will stablish your hearts, feare not all the daungers of the world, though as many troubles compasse vs, as there were Syrians about Elisea, yet lift vp your eyes, there are many thousandes more with vs then are against vs. He that suffereth none to beetempted aboue their power, will not lay more vpon vs then we are able to beare: but as he wrestled with Iacob with one hand, he held him vp with the other; so though he afflict with one arme, hee shall sustaine with the other. Pla. 124. 3. 2. Kin. 6. 29.

*Which tooke them wives.* Now we are come to the children, & the holy ghost expresseth ye friendship which they receiued of the Moabits after the death of the father. Which is, their mariage with their daughters. Wher first of all it may be demanded in this place seeing the Lord forbiddeth all strange mariages, whether these sons of Elimelech did not offend against this law: we know ye the vnmaried are at liberty to mary whom they will, onely in the Lord: now the Moabits were heathen people, and strangers from God his couenant, & therefore these persons maried not in the Lord. To which I answere briefly, that the Lord forbiddeth mariage with Infidels, for two causes, first, when wee may lawfully, and without daunger ioyne our selues to them that are godly, & wil presumptuously for worldly respects, run to the daughters of men: secondly, that we should refraine from all such mariages, where we are like to bee drawne away from our profession, as we see in Salomon. But these sonnes of Elimelech offended in none of these. For first they were now strangers and had no other choyce, and secondly it appeareth by that which followeth, that they were both well perswaded in religion. For as Moses mayred a Madianitish woman, and was blameless, and Salman the sonne of Nahasson, the Deut. 7. 3. 1. Kin. 11. 4. Exo. 2. 21. Ruth. 1. 4.



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prince of the Iewes, married with Rahab, (which both were the parents of Boaz, mentioned hereafter) and was faultles, nay it was done by the permission of Iosiuah, & therefore lawfull; euen so these strange Iewes mooued with the same reasons, choosed the like marriages. But some will say, the Iews which had maried strange wiues in the captiuity of Babilon, might haue alleadged this against Nehemiah, that they were in captiuitie, & had no women to take but strangers. To the which I answere, if they had so obiected, they had spoken vntruth, and so would Nehemiah haue replyed; for there were Iewish women captiues as well as men, and further I say, that this their marrying of strange women, was the cause of the destruction of many Iewish women, who being forsaken of their owne people, must of necessitie by maried to infidels, which could neuer returne to Ierusalem. Again, these sons of Elimelech by their mariage, gained greater fauour of the Moabits, but specially, the hande of God was in it, that when they both should bee dead, Ruth might be married to Boaz, and be made a mother of Christ.

Neh. 2. 1. 2.

First therefore we note out of this, that as these Moabits were kind to the father in giuing him residence, so they were louing to the sones, in giuing them wiues: a notable example of humane courtesie, giuē vnto us by these heathens, that we with the like fauour should entertaine strangers. But many couetous parents in these dayes, which would be accounted Christians, are so farre from doing this vnto strangers, that they will hardly dor the like to their owne naturall countrymen, rather imitating the vngodly Laban, who made marchandise of his daughters, then godly Caleb, in the bestowing them on Othniell, be he neuer so poore, if they had deserued wel of Church or cōmon wealth, rather desiring to aduance their posterity in the glory of the world, the to discharge their duties in the presence of God. They will say they ayme at this, the feare of the Lord, when as if they had matched their children with Turkes or Infidels, they would not, or could not be more profane then these, giuing onely these are outwardly obedient to a Christian

Gen. 32. 15.
Iudg. 1. 13.

prince

prince, that they might with more libertie, follow their licentious Atheisme, whereas peradventure the other would not so dissemble: so that goods, and not goodnesse, the world, and not the word, earthly vanitie, and not heauenly felicity, our parents ayme at. But what shall we say of them that force their children, not onely to match against their mindes, but to marrie with publike papists, and knowne recusants, onely for things of this life. Truely I aunswere, that it is against these that the Lord speaketh, when he sayth: You shall not take their daughters to your sonnes, nor giue your daughters to their sonnes, but as they haue married without the counsell of the Lord, in murdering the fruits of theyr owne bodyes, euen so they shall prosper without the blessing of God, in confounding the soules of their owne posteritie: and as the children of the Iews which were borne of strange women, were separated from the new founded Temple, euen so these shall be excluded from the euerlasting Ierusalem. Deut. 7. 3.

*And they tarried there.* This time of their abode in Moab, signifieth the great continuance of this misery. First for the Iewes at home, who endured famines: and secondly for these abroade, which liued among Infidels tenne yeares togither. It is a fearefull thing with vs, that we haue but one yeares famine, oh then we thinke that the Lord hath forgotten to be mercifull. But we haue heard already of famines of great continuance, that in *Iosephs* time was seuen yeares together, that in Dauids time was three yeares and a halfe, and this misery lasted tenne yeares together, Wherein many godly persons did patiently endure it. How is it then, that for this little dearth among vs, there are so great exclamations for corne and plenty, such horrible blasphemies against the Lord himselfe, saying: Shall this endure alwaies? Was there euer any poore people thus afflicted? Is this the fruit of the Gospell? Are these the fauours of God and his righteousnes, in keeping his promises? With such like, too horrible to be suffered,

suffered, as if the Lord were not able to releeue vs, or else were vniust in punishing our sinnes, howe can that be, seeing he calleth for repentance, and amendement, and then promiseth plentie and aboundance. These Saints endured some three, some foure, and others tenne yeares famine, and yet we say, was there euer such a people thus afflicted like to vs with one yeares dearth?

They were driuen to wander abroad in their enemies country for many yeares together, shall wee then thinke it such a misery to goe two or three miles for our corne? They aduentured the losse of their liues, and we are afraide of the lessening and diminishing of our goods. And shall we yet say, there was neuer any people tormented like vnto vs? Yea, I adde this, that euen at this day there are people in the world, which scant in all their liues doe eate any bread, but only the barke of trees, with some other vnseasonable fish, others liue of the rootes of the earth, some on the fruites of trees. And what shall I say more, our wickednesse is greater then our want, our sore is smaller then our sinne, our transgressions haue deserued to be punished with the scourge, and yet we are scarce corrected with the rodde, our complaints are greater then our hurt, and our murmuring exceedeth our miserie; therefore we haue greater cause to tremble at that which hangeth ouer our heades, then to feare or crie for this which we alreadie suffer, for it is hardly the beginning of sorrow.

*So Mahlon and Chilion.* Now when they were compassed about with the friendes of their wiues, which did promise securitie, then after a few yeares spent in safetie, the Lord called them away after their father. Where wee see our former doctrine iustified, that the end of one sorrow was the beginning of another. When they were most like to continue, then they gaue ouer, as in were in the armes of their wiues; and the sight of their aged mother, to whome no doubt, this was the greatest griefe of all other, that nowe

being

being left destitute both of husband and children, she should without comfort liue with the Moabites, and without ioye returne agayne vnto her owne Country, as a bird robbed of her young ones. Yet seeing this is our worldly lot still to endure misery, let vs set both our shoulders vnder the burthen, if it be too heauy let vs flee to the finisher of our faith with zealous and earnest prayers, desiring him either to ease or to remoue his hand. But seeing we haue spoken of this before, this shall suffice at this time to seruе for a remembrance.

*Then she arose.* When her friendes were departed, & herselfe left comfortles, yet the Lord remembred her, for euen then came the rumor vnto her, that the famine was ceased in Iewry, that the Lord had visited the sicknesse of his people, and restored the plentie of the earth againe, and therefore it is time for her to be hasting home againe, for here the holy Ghost setting down her returne, and the cause of the same, sheweth that it was euen then when her children were dead, for what should a godly woman liue there, where were none that could strengthen hir in the waies of the Lord, but rather prouoke her to embrace infidelity. And againe, euen at that time when shee was most comfortlesse for the losse of her children came this rumor vnto her of the restoring of her Countrie, so that now Naomi, thou art here in Moab a sorrowfull Pilgrime, goe home to thy Countrie and be a ioyfull inhabitant: indeed thy children are dead, but thou shalt haue greater comfort of thy auncient acquaintance. What knowest thou, but now the Lord hath called thee to consolation, whereas of late thou mightest thinke he had wrought thy confusion.

By this we note, that the Lord deferreth to helpe till greatest necessitie, euen as hee stayed the stroke of Abraham, when he was at the very instant to cut off little Isaaks necke. So we reade that when the king of Assiria had inuaded the kingdome of Ezechia, wonne his Cities, subdued his Countrie, conquered his people, and had not left him two thousand horsemen, & being destitute

Gen. 22. 10. 11

2. King. 18. 8

destitute of all helpe, then the Lord raised vp the king of Ethiop, who called the Assirians from the siege of Ierusalem. What shall I say of Lazarus raised from death? Of the deliuerance of Peter out of the hands of Herod, the day before he should haue beene Martyred? Of the shipwracke wherein Paul was, and yet not one of them were lost. And excellent is that of Christ, sleeping in the shippe on a pillow, suffered his disciples to bee so long tossed with the violence of the sea, till they cryed out Lord saue, we perish, and then he awaked, rebuked the rage of the windes, and stilled the storms of the sea, and a peaceable calme followed. This is that preseruatiue against desperation, which must stay our mindes on the leasure of the Lord: we must not at the first look for our desires, but as Abraham and Zacharia were old before they had any children, and yet in the end the Lord promised and also performed, euen so when wee haue least hope, for obtayning of our desires, we most often receiue them. For the Lord deferreth our requests for the triall of our faith and patience, that like as the wheate corne groweth not till it be dead, euen so his works do not aunswere our expectation, till they seeme to vs impossible: that as the most pretious pearles are farthest brought, and longest in comming, when we haue them we keep them more carefully, euen so his excellent mercies being with difficulty obtained, should be esteemed more thankfully. Therefore be of good comfort, you that now sorrow, for you shall be comforted, you that now hunger for you shall be satisfied, you that now weep for you shal laugh: the Lord wil shortly come, beare but a little and he will wipe away all teares from your eyes, and then oh how happy shall they be which haue trusted in him.

Ioh. 11. 43.
Act. 12. 7. 8.
Act. 27. 44.
Matth. 8. 25 26.
1 Cor. 15. 36.

*That the Lord had visited.* This is the last part of this scripture, being the reason that moued her to return into her Country. Oh it is as if the holy Ghost had said, The Lord looked vpon the afflicted estate of his people, & supplied their want of food. To visite, in the scriptures is taken two wayes, first to punish, as when God sayeth in the second commandement, that he will visite the

Exod. 20. 5.
Ps. 32. 34.

sinne,

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sinne of the fathers vpon the children, vnto the third and fourth generation: secondly it signifieth some times to pardon or to shew mercy, as that of Zachary. The Lord hath visited and redeemed his people, that is, hee hath shewed mercy in redeeming his people. In this later sense it must be taken in this place. Now the word properly signifieth to go to see, and is referred to them that are sicke, which by a metaphor is applyed to sinne, for sinne is the sicknesse of the soule, and is very fitly applyed to punishment sent of God, for when he scourgeth he cometh to see, as he said of Sodom, I will go down and see whether it be altogether so, if not, that I may know; for he commeth to see vs in our miseries, as a Phisition to his Patient, whom he hath first or before made sick with his potion or corasiue, & bristeth a wholesom or speedy remedy with him. Where we note the miserable estate of men in the sicknesse of sinne, or vnder any of God his iudgements, as dearth, & famine, war or pestelence; that euen all sicke personnes are not able to helpe or comfort themselues, or to take any pleasure in their wealth, though they possessed the whole world: so if we be oppressed in the punishments of our iniquities, we cā not or may not rest in our sleeps but in the Lorde our Phisitian and Watchman: for if the Lord shut who can open, if he wound who can healer, if hee curse who can blesse, he that hath the bond or writing must discharge the debt, & the Lord that stroke must bind vs vp againe. Oh my dearely beloued brethren, now are the children come to the birth, and there is no strength to be deliuered, for this is the day of tribulation. Now are we in the ballance of the Lord either to weigh our offences with his famin, or to scourge our sins with the rod of dearth if either of both continue what end can we look for but the pining of our bodies, and the consuming of our soules? Whether shall go to escape the iudgementes of the Lord, we are already clogged with his irons, and fast bolted, if we striue to shake them off, what do wee else but rebell against the power of the highest? If they continue

Luk. 1. 68.

Hos. 4. 9.

Math. 25.

Esa. 37. 3.

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tiuity, we are but miserable sinners, and can looke for nothing but the fearefull day of execution. Let vs turn to the Iudge before that day, and send vp our prayers as our deare friendes vnto his Sonne, that he may visite vs with the forgiueness of our sinnes, that he may sure our pardon, and bee conuerted from our transgressions; that we may obtaine the releasse of our present miserie, the remouing of his iudgements, the increase of the fruites of the earth, that he would visite vs in giuing vnto vs daily bread to satisfie the poore with his goodnesse, and giue vs all the bread of this life to banish our dearth, & the bread of life to escape damnation. And thus much for this time. Now let vs giue praise to God.

## The end of the first Lecture.

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# The second Lecture.

## Chapter 1. Verse 7. to the 15.

7 *Wherefore she departed out of the place where she was, & her two daughters in lawe with her, and they went on their way to returne vnto the land of Iudah.*

8 *Then Naomi said vnto her two daughters in law, Go, returne each of you vnto her owne mothers house: the Lord shew fauour vnto you as you have done vnto the dead, and vnto mee.*

9 *The Lord graunt that either of you may find rest in the house of her husband: and when she had kissed them, they lift vp their voyce and wept.*

10 *And they said vnto her, surely we will returne with thee vnto thy people.*

11 *But Naomi sayde: turne againe my daughters, for what cause will you go with mee? are there any more sonnes in my wombe, that they may be your husbands?*

12 *Turne againe my daughters: go your way, for I am too old to haue an husband: if I should say I had hope, and if I had an husband this night, yea, if I had borne sonnes.*

13 *Would ye tarry for them till they were of age? would you be deferred for them from taking any husbands? nay my daughters, for it griueth mee much for your sake, that the hand of the Lord is gone out against mee.*

14 *Then they lift vp their voyce, and wept againe, and Orpah kissed her mother in law, & departed, but Ruth abode with her still.*

IN these words is expressed how Naomi departeth out of Moab, to goe into the land of Iewry. The words diuide themselues into two parts: the first is the iourney, in this seuenth verse. The second part, is the communication, in the next seuen verses. The iourney is described by the persons, which were Naomi and her two daughters in law,

The

The communication which they had by the way, principally consisteth in the persuasion of Naomi to her daughters, that they should returne backe againe: and first shee speaketh in the eight and nine verses. Her speech containeth two parts, the first is the counsell shee giueth to them in these words, *Goe returne*. The second is her prayer for them, which is double, or consisting of two parts. The first is generall, in these wordes, *The Lord shew fauour*, to the end of that verse. The second is special in the ninth verse, in these words, *The Lord grant you that you may find rest, &c.* Which being spoken, they lift vp their voyce and wept, being sorrowfull for this newes, and therefore they answere in the tenth verse, that they will returne with her to her people. In the next verse to the fourteenth, Naomi confirmeth her former counsell by waighty arguments, which are expressed in her questions, and they are taken from their second marriages.

The first is in the eleuenth verse: that shee had no moe sonnes, to be their husbands, neither already born, or which hereafter might be borne, therefore their labour would be but lost if they went with her, seeing shee could prouide them no mo husbandes. This is amplified in the eleuenth and twelfth verse.

The second reason is in the thirteenth verse, that although shee had now children borne, yet it would be to long to stay for them till they were of age: much more shee having none borne, and least her daughters should thinke shee cared not for them, shee addeth in the thirteenth verse, that it grieued her more for their sakes, that is the lone shee beareth to them, then for her owne, but it is the hand of God, and therefore shee is contented. Lastly, in the 14 verse is declared the effect of this communication, what it wrought, for Orpah departed as a woman ouercome by these worldly persuasions, but Ruth abideth still with her. Of these let vs briefely speak in order as they lie, by the permission and assistance of the almightie.

*And shee arose.* This iourney of Naomi to her own people, as in the former verse wee heard was vnderta-

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ken, when she heard, that the Iewes were deliuered from their famine, so it is more commendable if we consider the obiections, lets and hinderances, that may bee made against it. First the way was very long betweene Moab and Bethleem, which might terrifie an old woman; but if any say, that it was no longer to returne then it was to come down, I answere, when she came thether she had her husband and children to beare her company but now she was to returne alone, and therefore the iorney would be the more tedious. Secondly, the consideration of her age might haue hindered this ttauaile, for her withered body would be wearied in the iorney; and what knew she but that she might die in the iourney, and that among strangers, who peradauenture would haue no regard of her age, honour or honesty: againe, no doubt, but she had some wealth in moab, which of necessity she must be constrained to leaue behind her, and for euer to loose, with many other such grieuous thoughts which might accumber her troubled breast. But notwithstanding all these she proceedeth on her intended iourney, committing her selfe to the preseruation of God in all places, who she knew would giue her some comforts for the aduersity she had endured.

Where first of all me note the duty of all the godly, if with Naomi they are far from the company of the faithfull, or compelled to departe from them vppon the like occasion, as famine, pouerty, persecution, and such like, that when occasion shall bee giuen, they rerurne with Naomi to the temple, to the people, to the Arke, to the gospell of the Lord. For as God saide to Eliah, when hee was in mount Horeb. What dost thou here Eliah, euen so he speaketh to all persecuted pilgrims, and poor true Christians which are at the gates and Tables of carnall Atheists, the enemies of Christ, What do you here? there is corne and bread in Israell againe, the Church, your Brethren haue now receiued maintenance: returne to the place of sacrifice; they that worshippe must worship God at Ierusalem: the mountaines of Samaria are no place of God his worship, but at Shilo is his tabernacle and his dwelling in Sion. This we may reade practi-

1. Kin. 12. 9.

Ioh. 4. 22.



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sed of the auncient fathers long ago. When Moses had dwelt forty yeares in Madian, then the Lord bid him returne to his poore bretlren againe. Dauid being in great security with the King of Gath, yet the Lord wold not suffer him there to dwell. And as the Israelites might not dwel with the Egyptians, but must go into the land of Canaan, so the Lords people must abide but where he appointeth them. And as the Shunimite woman, after the seuen years famin returneth to her wonted dwelling, euen so must not we linger with recusant papists, atheists swearers, blasphemers and open despisers of God his ministers and ministery.

Exo.2.11.
1.Sam.27 9.
1.King.8.

Secondly, we may note in this verse a godly example of holy obedience, & commendable friendship, for here the daughters in law are going with their mother to the land of Iewry, Where, eyther for religion or loue, which they beare to their mother in law, they forsake both Country and friends to goe with her. Was it not sufficient for them to take strangers for their husbands, who being dead, and they at liberty, but they must goe from their own kindred, with a mother in law: was it not well for them to abide with her so long as shee would abide with them, and was able to maintaine them, but now when she had forsaken her dwelling and wealth, must they accompany her in her pouerty. Surely it seemeth that as Paul saieth to the Corinthians, he sought not theirs but them, so these women desire rather the presence then the wealth of Naomi, O excellent obedience and godly friendship worthy to be regestred with eternall memory. They had not past ten years space to learn this point of religion, that it is true friendship to loue at all times, whether it be in wealth or prosperity, in want, or aduersity. We haue many old professors in Christianity, which haue not profited thus much in twentie, thirty or forty years profession. They say to their neighbors as Iorams messenger said to Iehu, is it peace? so they aske, is it wealth? is it riches? is it honour? or is it fauour of prince or Gentleman that dwelleth neare them. As if they should say, if thou be wealthy, thou shalt haue my friendship, but if thou be poore, then as Nabal answered

Pro.17.17.
2.King.10 17

Dauid

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Dauids messenger, what is Dauid? and what is the sonne of Ishai? so, what art thou? I care not for thy company, get thee frō my presence, I can abide no such beggers. Is this the fruit of religion, condemned of the heathens, abhorred of the brute beasts, hated of the wicked, and yet practised of or among christians, surely I had rather be a friendly Moabite, then a thousand such carnal Israelits: yea, the very ciuil honest men among vs, wil rise in iudgement against vs in this point, they wil liue without hypocrisie, we dissemble in al vain glorie, our friendship is like the company of the Dolphin, if it be faire weather, she will neuer be from the ship, but if a storme come, she withdraweth her fellowship. Away with this most beastlike, yea, rather vnnaturall smiling vpon prosperitie, but grim and strange countenances vppon the afflicted, either loue at all time, which is Salomons friendship, or loue at no time, which is Sathans amitie. Pro. 17. 17.

*Then said Naomi.* The counsell that this godly Naomi giueth vnto her daughters, is simply that they shuld returne to their owne parents, as if thy should say vnto them. Be aduised my daughters, some will thinke you very vnnaturall, that you forsake your owne mothers, to go with me your mother in law, and forsake your own country to go vnto a strange place: the iourny is long & tedious, you are tender & weak, better return before we be far gone, to be wise too late, is to repēt too soon, care not for me, the Lord wil inable me as wel to go alone, as with your cōpany. Where we first of all note a most godly example of mother-like loue & godly charity, for if Naomi had gone alone, it could not chose but be farre more dangerous then with companie: and none could receiue any disaduantage by her counsell beside her selfe, yet we see she careth not for her owne commodity, so she might procure the welfare of her daughters. She might haue friendly accepted their owne proffers, and if any dangers had come, shee might haue sayd, she did not intreate them; it was their owne vpseeking, yet shee dealeth more plainely with them in telling them the danger, and as before they desire more her company then her wealth, euen so now shee loueth



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their cõpany wel, but coũselleth their safety better. This is the duty of all that feare God, as the apostle saith. Let euery man seeke anothers, and not their own good, this was so deare vnto the Lord himselfe, that he commanded by Moses, that if their neighbors cattel went astray,
1. Cor. 10. they shuld bring them home again. Doth the Lord take
24. care of oxen, and not much more of men? But oh where is the carful keeping of this commaundement? now euery man say th, euery man for himself & God for vs all, but rather, how shal the Lord be for vs, when we are not for one another? Now the wicked world is ful of deceit-
Deut. 22 7. full bargaines, now mens houses and lands are bought ouer the heads of their yong and vnthriftie sons: now mens farms and leases are forestalled by other, that they themselues cannot enioy them: such buying & selling, cosoning and deceiuing, borrowing and lending vppon vsury, taking of fines, raysing of rents, vndoing of the poore, and thrusting the weakest to the wal, as if charity were forgotten, and the precept of the Lord had neuer beene written, and finally as though all were our owne which we can get in out handling. Many giue counsell like lawyers for their fees, but few like Naomi, for their conscience. They licke their own fingers, as the prouerb goeth, but few wil cast any salt on their neighbors meat. if they can get aduantages of their neighbors vpon statutes, they sue ỳ extremitie, as if they were infidels. They
Gen. 13. 9. will not say as Abraham to Lot. If thou take the right hand, I will take the left: that is my brother, my neighbor take thou the choise, I wish not thy wrong, ask coũsell, & let there be no occasion of strife between vs: men will hardly giue either coate or cloake in these daies, by suffering iniurie they will rather take both, & although they think it better to giue almes then to take, yet they had rather take bribes and rewards then to giue. Oh my
Phil. 2. 3. beloued, let vs at the length be ruled by the counsell of
Ps. 19. 14. the Lord, & esteeme better of others then of our selues, help as many as we can, but hinder none, cursed are they that lay stumbling blockes before the blind, and giue euill counsell for their owne aduantage.

Secondly, by these words we gather to whom widowes,

dowes belong, their husbands being dead, namely, to *their owne mothers house*: that is, to their parents; if the parents of their husbandes will not prouide for them. Therfore it is that the Lord commanded, if the daughter of a priest were a widdow, and returned to her Fathers house, hauing no children, she might eate of the peace-offrings of the childrē of Israel. And Paul giueth charge to the godly in his time, that if any of their kindred were a widdow, of their own costs they should prouide for her, and not charge the church. This is a profitable doctrine both for parents add children. for parents that they be carefull to bestow their children in godly marriages, where they may be well prouided for, neither must they then cast them off, but if neede be, receiue them to their owne families again: for children, seeing the Lord doth thus commend their welfare, & careth for their widdow head as wel as their virginity, that they cast not thēselues away vpon euery one they can loue, without the consent of their parents, wherby they impouerish their friendes, vndoe themselues, & bring a wofull curse vpon their innocent posterity. Thirdly & lastly, by this counsel of Naomi we gather, that if the father bee dead, we owe the same duetie to our mother, which is aliue, for she sayth, to her owne mothers house. And Salomon sayth, it is foolishnes or wickednes to despise ones mother. The Lord curseth him in the law, that despiseth or curseth his mother, as well as his father. In the fift commaundement, he commandeth to honor the mother equally, or as well as the father. Many thinke they may be more bold with their mothers, because they are more tender ouer them, than with their fathers: but the godly must know, that vpon paine of Gods heauie curse, they must follow the counsell of their mothers with Iacob, as well as the aduise of their fathers with Esau. And the Lord doth often cloath the weaker vessell with more honour, that thereby wee might learne to continue our obedience to our parents.

Le. 22. 13.

1. Tim. 5. 16.

Pro. 15. 20.

Deut. 2. 16.

Gen. 17. 23.

*The Lord shew.* In these words the general blessing or prayer is contained, which Naomi maketh for her two daughters, when she praieth to God for his fauor vpō the



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as they shewed fauor to her, & to their dead husbands, as if she should say, I wish no more acceptable blessing vpon you, then you haue done to others.

Where we breefly note, that our duties which we discharge to parents or husbands, are as pledges before the Lord to do good vnto vs. This maketh him delight to poure his blessings vpon vs, when he seeth we dutifully walke in his presence, and it prouoketh those to whom we offer this obedience, to poure out their prayers for vs, into the eares of the almighty. Euen so the neglect of our duties, the contempt of our parents, & the disobedience of our superiors, procureth both the curse of God & them, not only in this life, but also in the life to come.

*The Lord.* These words are her speciall prayer for her daughters marriage, and are thus in effect, I can pray for no greater worldly blessing vpon you than this, that either of you being yong women, may find quiet and louing husbands, and be made ioyfull mothers of many children.

Where we first of all note, that as parents are bound by the law of nature to prouide mariages for their children, so they are willed by the law of God, to pray for their prosperous estate, both before, and also after they be maried. And truely this neuer sinketh into the head of carnall parents, who are able to doe more with their purses then with their prayers, who wish extremities to their children, minding onely a wealthy, and not a quiet life. Oh how are we beholding to such ignorant parents, who onely take care for vs that we might bee lifted higher, whe they prouide not for vs against the stormie tempests of vnquiet liues, and the dangerous downfals of worldly confusion? Let them neuer thinke that their wishes are prayers, when they say, I would God my sonne were married to such a mans daughter, or my daughter to such a mans sonne. This is all they aime at, simple and bare wealthy marriages, neuer minding or praying for God his blessing vpon them.

Secondly, by this prayer of Naomi, we note the duty of husbands towards their wiues, which is, that they should prepare rest for them: their minds being troubled

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led, they should pacifie them with counsell: their bodies diseased, they should comfort them with their loue: their estate endangered, they should deliuer them with carefulnes, and finally, they should loue their wiues as their own soules.

The Prophet Dauid compareth a wife to a vine, which if it be not propped vp with a stay by the hand of the gardener, what shall it doe but wallow on the ground & remaine fruitlesse? Euen so the best wiues if they be not carefully maintained by the kindnes of their husbands, their sorrowfull hues will increase their curse, yea & destroy the fruit of their own bodies. Psa. 128. 3.

The Apostle wisheth husbands to loue their wiues, as Christ loued his church, which is not onely mindfull to deliuer it out of present dangers, but also hath redeemed it from the curse of eternall damnation: so the husbands duties are to prouide for the temporall welfare of their wiues bodies, and specially for the euerlasting saluation of their soules: that they twaine which in this life haue had corporall society, in the life to come might enioy eternall felicity, Now this condemneth the carnall behauiour of wretched husbands, who vse their wiues as their seruants and not as themselues, who deale with them as men do with nuts, first, they reach and trauaile for them, and hauing gotten them, they take out the kernell but they tread the shell vnder their feet: so they hauing gotten the wealth, the bewtie, the health and young yeares of their wiues, despise their gray hayres, which are their greatest credite, as the shels wherein the kernel was, giuing thē ouer in their weakest dayes, wherein they wāt greatest comfort. Is this the rest you prouide for your wiues, to cause them to weare their bodies with weary trauailes, to consume their minds with daily grief to procure their paines by bearing of children, and to lay the greatest burthens vpon the smallest beasts, for so some most wretchedly tearme them. Oh look vnto it, this measure will the Lord measure to you againe, yee vnnaturall husbands which follow your pleasures, and pastimes abroad, and neglect your profites and sorrowfull wiues at home: to flie ouer the seas with vnnecessary Eph. 5. 25.



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iourneyes, to frequent the company of suspected women to follow the counsel of vaine persons, spending their patrimonies, & bringing thēselues, their wiues, & posterity to woful misery. Is this to dwel with your wiues like mē of knowledge? Is this to giue honor vnto thē as the weaker vessels? Is this to accoūt them the heires of the same grace? & finally, is this to see their prayers be not interrupted? nay rather, there are many thousand husbands which neuer either could or would pray with their wiues, that think neither vpō heauen nor hel, & haue no knowlege of their duties towards God or their neighbours (much lesse to their wiues) thē brute beasts, carnal infidels, prophane atheists, the murderers of themselues, & of their own posterity. Oh feareful dāger that hāgeth ouer your heads, whō neither the lawes of God can cōpel to learne their duties, or men instruct them to amende their liues. But you my beloued, who are guiltles in this point are ỳ blessed of the Lord, & forsake not your carefulnes alredy begun, that you loose not your reward. Thirdly, by this praier we obserue the duties of wiues or women in families, namely, that they shuld be peaceable thēselues, for if they seek peace they must ensue peace, & if their ioy consist in the quietnes of the family, they must bee careful they break not the vanity. If like Ismael their hāds be against al, the hāds of all will be against them, if they wil be the louing turtles, they must not be the chattering pies, if they be the vines, their fruit must be grapes, & out of grapes cōmeth wine, & wine reioyçeth the hart of mā so women must reioice their husbands & families. Some women will neuer be at rest til they beare rule, & wil say their husbāds loue them not, except for their sakes they wil displace their seruants, fal out with their neighbours, enuy their friends, and in all things follow their mindes: such men giue not peace, to their wiues, but swords to slay themselues withall. The harkening ouer much to womens counsell, olde Adam and we his posterity may for euer lament, yet godly men may heare their godly wiues, remembring alway themselues to be the head & the choice to rest them, eyther to like or dislike their counsell. *And they answered.* This is the answere of these wo-

I. Pet. 3. 7.

women to the counsel,& blessing of their mother in law wherein they refuse to return,& promise to go with hir to her owne people,as if they should say, we are rather boūd vnto thee,then to our own mothers,& for thy sake whose godly conuersation we know,are we drawn in loue with the whole people:so that in these words they testifie their louing affection to their mother,their desire to be with her among her people,& the cause vndoubtedly to be her godly & wise conuersatiō with them in the lād of Moab. Wher we note the duty of al the faithful,which is,so to walke that other by their good example may be drawn to loue the truth. For surely, these women liked well of the religion of Naomi, but much better of her conuersation,as a thing they better vnderstoode,then the other.For this point,the Apostle warneth that we walke in wisedome because of them that are without. And Peter saith to the dispersed Iewes of his time,that they must haue a good conuersation among the Gentils,insomuch as their enemies might haue no occasion to speake against them.And our sauior saith: Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works,& glorifie your father which is in heauen.For as the vnbeleeuing husband may be won by the godly behauiour of the beleeuing wife,so many infidels and carnall persons are sooner drawn to the Lord by the works which they see,then by the words which they heare. Seeing, this is plaine by the word of God,where shall I begin to complaine of this our vnhappy age,wherein are but few talkers of God his word,but much fewer walkers,when the Gospell of Christ is made the cloake of wickedness? Oh how grieuously is the Church of God rent in sunder by dayly disquietnes,insomuch as there is no peace among vs? Cā the infidels & papists say of vs,as old Emor said of Iacob & his family? These men are mē of peace,therfore let vs be circumcised with them: What peace is there left in the church of God? Trulie we are like vnto a troe,we agree all in the body of religion,but as the brāches spred themselues an hundred waies, so in our indifferentest points of religion there is little or no vnity. There is no care had of giuing offences vnto the weake, there

Col.4.5.
1.Pet.2.12.
Luc.8.16.
Gen.34.21.



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is no conscience to stay the slaunder of the Gospell. Oh how grieuous is it, that many now a dayes will defende their dissimulation, by saying. Take heed to our words, and not to our deedes: liue as we say, and not as we do, making Christianity like the profession of Pharisies, which say and doo not. Esteeming of religion like the occupation of a Smith, wherein one is discharged by blowing, and an other by beating: so these thinke, if they can blow out any good words, and be able to cry, the Gospell, the Gospell, the preachers, the preachers, and to say vnto Christ, Thou hast prophesied in our streetes, & we haue eaten in thy presence, they are right good christians. But the Lord shall say vnto them: Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I know you not. Yet let vs be warned by the examples of the godly, the exhortations of the scripture, & the motions of God his spirit in our harts, that seeing Christ is our wisedom, let vs walke in wisedom, or else we dwell not in Christ, seeing Christ is our light, let vs shine forth in holy conuersation, and seeing the world is our enemie, which dayly lyeth in wait to discredite our profession, let vs adorn the Gospel we professe, eyther make the tree good, and fruit good, or the tree euill, and the fruit euill, cast away this counterfeyt holines, which is double iniquity, let vs confesse with the mouth vnto saluation, believe in the heart to iustification, and practise in life vnto sanctification, and let euery one that calleth on the name of the Lord, depart from iniquity. Thus much for the Daughters answere. Now to the mothers replye in the nexte verse.

Mat.23.

Luke.13 26,27.

1.Cor.1.39

Ioh.13.30.

*But Naomi* In this verse and in the two next following, Naomi confirmeth her counsell by forcible reasons taken from their second mariages, and studying more for their good than her owne. The first reason is, that she hath no moe sonnes eyther borne or vnborne, to be their husbands: for by the law one brother being dead without issue, the next was to mary his wife, & to raise vp seed to his brother. They knew shee had no moe children already borne, and shee prooueth that shee is out of hope to haue any moe, by her owne

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age, she is too old to marry, & therfore to beare children; so that the force of this reason is to perswade them to go back again, that they might mary at home, for she knew not how to bestow them in her owne countrey. In the which words, thus taking a reason frõ their mariage, she noteth the duty of yonger widdows and women, which is to marry and to beare moe children, and in her selfe perswading them vnto it, shee noteth the duetye of godly parents, which is to deale priuatly with them for the publike commoditie. For the Apostle Paul willeth the selfe same thing, that thy yonger widdowes marry and bring forth moe children, as the most acceptable condition for their fruitfull daies, and a necessary dutie for replenishing the church. But these persons must not so marry for wantonnes, as if they minded nothing but procreation of children, but they must ioyne with it all Christian obedience, to the aduise of their husbands: secondly, they must be carefull to bring vp their children in the feare & nurture of the Lord. Thirdly, this must be the end of their marriage & child-birth, that they may the more deuoutly giue themselues to the worship of God, & by their children to increase the number of the faithful. For it is better to be barren then to bring forth children of the diuell, which they do that mind nothing lesse then their carefull education, & christian instruction, yea, it is more excellent to be a religious widdow, then a profane married wife. But some will say that second mariages are not lawful at al, because Paul willeth that such widowes should not be chosen into the number of church seruants: and the holy ghost giueth such commendation of Anna, because shee neuer married, though she were left a widdow very yong: moreouer, the counsell of Paule is, that if they be losed from husbands or wiues, they should not seek to be ioyned vnto them. Vnto all which I answere with the same Paule, that a woman, so soone as she is loosed from her husband, or so soone as her husband is dead, shee is at liberte to marrie with whome shee will, onely in the Lord. Anna is commended more for her religion, then her chastitie,

1. Tim. 1. 14.

1. Tim. 5. 9

Luc. 2. 36.

1. Cor. 7. 2

Rom. 7. 2.

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chastitie. And Paul his counsel is to them that could forbeare in those daies of persecutiõ. But to come to Naomi, she saith she is too old to marry, therfore it seemeth, though second marriages be good for young women, yet they are not lawfull for the old. To this I answere, her meaning is not that it is simply vnlawfull for her to marry, but that it should not profit her in regard of child bearing: men desire yong and fruitfull women, not old and barren, & her purpose is to perswade her daughters, that she neither had, nor could haue any more children for them, therfore in the next verse she addeth: *If I hoped, or if I were this night with an husband.* But in my iudgement, I see no reasonoble cause why old women (especially) should marry, howsoeuer others may be contrary minded: my reasons are these: First, I reade it not practised by any body in the scripture, I meane such old women as in their owne consciences are perswaded they are past child bearing. Secondly, they break the greatest consideration in marriage: they vndertake it for lust, and not for children, for mariage was not ordained for the lust of the mind, but the necessitie of the body, to withdraw it from sinne. Now their withered bodies cannot accomplish the desire of theyr carnall mindes. Thirdly, it bringeth great inconuenience with it: if they marie with a yong man, there is no equality, as anone shal be prooued, if with old men like themselues, what comfort can they minister vnto them. Lastly, such mariages are more for wealth then women or necessity. Yet this is but my poore iudgement, if any doubt of it. let them examine my reasons, if they bee waighty, let them receiue them, if light, amend them. If any say they marry for comfort, as they can say nothing else, I demaund why poore women haue not this comfort as well as the rich. I see seldome any poore widows maried, but the wealthie, as soone as eyther honesty or modesty will suffer them: Again, comfort is no sufficient cause for mariage, because it may be had without mariage, but children cannot. It is the duty of maryed folks, with their mutuall loue to comfort one another,

*Nota certũ.*

but

but not a cause that ought to constrain to mariage. The Eunuch wanteth comfort, yet who thinketh such a person fit for mariage: a continent person, which as Christ sayth, hath made himself chast for the kingdom of God, wanteth comfort, yet he should sinne grieuously if hee maried for comfort: let lawfull things be ioyned with expedient, and I thinke old women will neuer marrie.

*Yea if I had.* This is the second reason wherewith she perswadeth her daughters to turne backe againe, namely, grant she had sonnes new born, yet it were too long for them to tarie till they were growne vp, and fit for mariage, yea, then they would be past children, also, they should lose the season of their youth, and so should reap no harueſt of their daies: there would be no agreement in yeares betweene them, when they should be as a withered stubbe, and the yong men as greene oliues. Where we note, ỳ by the iudgement of this godly Naomi, there must be an agreement of yeares between the parties that shal be maried, for she saith, would ye be deferred for them, from taking any husbands? nay, my daughters: by the which words shee signifieth, that it would be no fit mariage, that one should be so old, and the other so yong. The Lord created Adam and Heuah in one day, not onely that mariage should not be deferred too long, but also because their age should be alike, but if any be the elder, let it be the man. In the planting of gardens, they get the yongest impes, for the continuance and equalitie of the fruit: they will not digge vp an old tree, and plant him in an orchard of tender impes, euen so must it be in mariage, for the matrimony of old men and yong women, is like Iosephs particoloured coate, which caused iealousie in his brethren, for, as that was a signe of loue in his father, so this is a token of fondnes in a husband. But most vnseemely is the mariage of yong men and old women, which a godly preacher in our daies cōpared to the grafting of a yong head vpon an old paire of shoulders: and I may compare it to the mixture of oyle and water, the which are quite against the nature of all medecines. And euen the brute beastes and the birdes, as wee reade

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of the turtles, the harts, & the Elephants, condemn herein the folly of mankind, which from their youth choose their mate, and being dead, refuse another, fearing inequalitie of age and nature. But these kind of matches, are neither begun in the Lord, continued in nature, or satisfie the desire of both parties, but breake out into impatient ielousie of filthie adulterie, thinking euery day a yeare till the eldest partie be dead. Oh vnseemely and vnfriendly behauiour towards those to whom they haue bound themselues, to loue and liue together, being the onely cause of the breach of fidelity, cursed discord, mutuall enuie, and euerlasting miserie.

Secondly by this we note, that it is the duetie of parents in time to prouide for their childrē, if they be willing to it, some godly and fit mariage. So did Abraham for Isaac his sonne, so did Isaac and Rebecca for Iacob their sonne, so did Iethro for his daughter Zipporah. The neglect of this duty in parents, is the cause that so many children match contrary to their mindes, euen to their owne vndoing. And then they cry out town and country, My sonne or my daughter hath married against my mind, when as themselues are in the onely fault, then they punish them by keeping away their portion: so, as before by their negligence they sought their dishonesty, now by their wilfulnes, they bring them to perpetuall beggerie. I defend not the rash and headlong marriages against parents consents, especially where godly parents are: & surely I feare there are but few in England that euer maried so, but they procured the curse on themselues, and haue often (although too late) repented their wilful & vngodly mariage. But yet beloued, be warned, if you desire the discharge of your own cōsciences, or the safegard of your children, deale like parents with them, and they will performe like children to you: the Lord punisheth your negligence with their disobedience: you sinn e first, & they follow your steps, forgiue them their offence, and receiue them to fauour again, and the Lord will likewise pardon your transgression, & blesse your posteritie with more dutifull obedience to you.

Gen. 24. 1.

Exod. 2. 21.

*But this.* Now when she had perswaded her daughters

to

for returne, least they should thinke she careth not for them; & was willing to be rid of their company, as those that were troublesome & burdenous vnto her, shee addeth this clause in the end of this verse: Wherin she testifieth her care for them, and her patience in the Lord her care for them when she saith: It grieueth me much more for your sake than for mine own: the death of my husband & losse of my children grieue me, but not so much as this, that now either I must depart from you, or esse with your company endanger of your safty. I could not but sorow for the dead, yet I am more grieued for you poore destitute widowes: I haue lost their company for a while, till I meet them again in God his kingdom, but now we depart, I to the Lords people, & you to Infidels and we shall be separated for euer. Would God that I could so promise you prosperity with me, that so you might receiue the peace of your soules. Thus & such like she vttereth in these words for her owne excuse and their comfort.

Where we are first giuen to vnderstand, how hardly true friendship is separated, yea though some parties are indangered thereby. Naomi would haue her daughters depart, they weepe at it, and she is sorowfull: insomuch as either parte striueth who shall receiue the worst. The mother counselleth her good, and the daughters promise hers. she would haue them returne and liue at rest in the armes of some loving husband, but they had rather trauell than she should go alone. And this telleth vs that true friendship is not to receiue good of other, but to doe good vnto other. Choose thy friend, that when he is in heauines thou maiest comfort him, when he is hungrie thou maiest feed him, when he is cast downe, thou mayest raise him vp: and finally when hee wanteth, make thou a supply? This is a godly friendship, like Ionathans and Dauids. If any choose friendes for other respects, their friendship is carnall, and not spirituall, momentanie and not euerlasting, like the standing pooles which drie vp in summer, not like the running streames which ill lure continuallie.

Second-

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Secondly, by this we note that one misery commeth not alone, for wars cause death, dearth, enuie, and robberies, sicknes bringeth paine to the parties, and sorrow to their friends, euen so death doth not only bring sorrow for the dead, but griefe for the liuing, as Naomi sayth, it grieueth me much more for your sakes. There is none that die but some shall want them, many friendes comfortles, many children harbourles, many seruants masterles, and many creditours monylesse by the death of men. I will say nothing, that the godly may and ought to mourne for their friends that are dead, as Abraham for Sara, Iacob for Rahel, the Iebusites for Saul, Mary and Martha for Lazarus: & the Apostle willeth vs to mourn, but with this clause, not as men without hope. Therfore the vse of this doctrine is, with patient and brotherly loue to beare with the weakenes of them which seem in our conceipts to weepe more for their husbands and wiues, children and friends, then we thinke needfull. It is their weaknes, and what know we, if the like burthen were on our backs that we should not be pressed downe vnder it like them? Let vs therefore consider with our selues least we also be tempted, and help them with brotherly kindries, not increase it with dayly murmuringes: that which is to day their sinne, to morrow may be our wickednes.

*But the hand*, In those words she gathereth patience for the remedy of her own griefe, & sheweth howsoeuer she is afflicted, yet she is not ignorant, that as the showers come from the cloudes, so her afflictions from the Lord: his hand that wrought her felicity, hath also broght her to misery, her ease is her patience, her weaknes is hir sorrow, her comfort, that God with whom is mercy hath wounded her heart.

The hand of the Lord is taken in the scripturs many waies, but generally it signifieth the meanes whereby he accomplisheth his counsell, and is referred either to his mercy and fauour, as when it is saide, the hand of the Lord was with Iohn Baptist, or else to his iudgments, punishment, or chastisement, so the hand of the Lord was

against

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against the Israelites, when they had forsaken him and serued Baalim. So when the Arke of God was in the house of Dagon, the God or idoll of the Philistines, the Lord ouerthrew their God, cut off his hands and head, & smote the Priests with Emerods, when they confessed the hand of God to be sore against them: so in this place it is taken for the chastisemēt or correctiō vpon Naomi. Our of the which we note many profitable doctrines.

Judg. 2.15.

1.Sam. 5.7.

First, that all our afflictions come from the Lord, that he might chastise his owne, and confound the vngodly. Read but the 34 & 36 Chapter of Iob, most excellently intreating of this matter, wherein is shewed that neither the godly escape, nor the wicked goe scotfree. This is the confession of Moses, to terrifie the Israelites, or Iosuah, to keepe them in obedience, and of Dauid, a man more exercised in trouble, thē all the world beside. This must we account with our selues in all our miseries, wee are robbed by theeues, spoyled by murtherers, struck by bruit beasts, reproched by slaunderers, euill intreated by the world, hurt by our enemies, sustaine the losse of our goods, the danger of our health, and are oppressed with sicknes, surely in all these things say, The Lord gaue, and the Lord hath taken away, euen as it hath pleased the Lord, so commeth things to passe. But men will say, we know it well inough alreadie, and we confesse it. And doe you know and confesse, and will you not practise? A man being sicke, at the beginning neuer thinketh on the Lord, but posteth to the Phisition for counsell, without crauing the forgiuenesse of his sinnes, the cause of his sicknesse: yet you say, God hath sent it, and layd it vpon vs, as if the Lord sendeth sicknesse to helpe the Phisition to money, for with him you agree for his paines and cunning, but with the Lord you agree not for your owne paines which you endure. But you wil say, we find ease by medecines, & our sicknes is abated, I answere, so the Lord suffreth witches & coniurers, to tell them that come vnto them, the things they desire, yet you wil not say they are guiltlesse, I speake nothing against the excellent and commendable profession of Phisicke, but rather for the cō-

Deu.31.18.
Ios. 24.20.
Psa.119.71



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mendation of it, seeing God so accepteth it, as that thereby he seemeth to salue vp the sins of many, doing away their pains, and also to giue them longer time of repentance. But this I wish both in this & in all other miseries of mankind: that first we purge our consciences from notorious crimes, and then the Lord will stay our hands from striking, our hearts from wauering, our goods from wasting, our bodies from pining, and our soules from euerlasting dying.

Secondly by this we note, whence it commeth, that the godly are so patient in all their tribulations: euen fro this consideration, that the Lords hand afflicteth them. This is worthy to be noted, in the example of Dauid, when Shemei cursed him, Abishai standing by, wisheth Dauid to punish him: but Dauid answereth him, what haue I to doe with you yee sonne of Zeruiah? hee curseth, because the Lord hath bidden him to curse me: as if he had said, I may punish the Lord as well as Shemei. The very like did Iob answer his wife, when she would haue him curse God and die. Thou speakest like a foolish woman, what? shal we receiue good at the hands of God and not euill: as if he had sayd, wee are bounde to receiue euill at the hand of God, as well as good, & if we receiue the one with blessing, let vs not curse him for the other. This was it that made the Apostles to reioyce, that they were accounted worthie to suffer for the name of Christ: & this must sinke into our ignorant and rebellious hearts, that we mdy learne at the first to humble our selues, least as wee now suffer for sinne, so anone we be punished for impatience. The patient abiding of the righteous, auaileth much in the sight of the Lord: men think they be forgotten, if they be a little afflicted, and cry out like desperate persons, Lord, Lord, but they neuer pray for patience, but al for deliuerance. Oh how excellent is this example of Naomi, which being in many miseries in a strange countrey, hauing buried husbands and sonnes, being now to depart from her acquaintance, to take a tedious iourney into her owne countrey, poore, wearie, and desolate, yet all her words are these: The hand of the Lord is gone out

2.Sam.16. 10.11.12.

Iob.2.10.

Act 4.3.

against

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against me, as if she had said, he that gaue them tooke them, and he that tooke them left me patience. Thus must me stay our mindes on the worke of the Lord, as the Arke was stayed by the Priests in the middest of the riuer Iordan, which made the waters to flie back, till al the children of Israel were passed thorow: euen so the floudes of great troubles shall not ouerthrow vs, if we stay our mindes on the hand of the Lord, and safely escape the dangerous destruction of worldly affliction. Io.3.16.17

*Then they lift.* Now cometh the effect of the communication, wherin is shewed how sorrowfully these daughters took it, & yet diuersly minded: for Horpha notwithstanding her gentle proffers to her mother in law, her bitter tears, & pitiful lamenting, yet shee taketh her leaue with a sweet kisse, & returneth backe to her idolatrous friendes. Naomi vsed no perswasions but worldly resons taken from mariage to perswade them both, she seeth her sister remain constant, & she that euen now, for the loue of people & mother in law wold go as far as the farthest now for the cogitation of a heathen husband, forsaketh both God, people, mother and sister. Who would haue thought that Horpha which bid her friends farewell, her countrey adew, her kindred forsake, and idolatrie abhor, would thus cowardly (as I may tearme it) flie backe againe in hope of a husband? But yet we see she doth, and out of her example we may note many things.

First, that the world & carnall reasons are feareful hinderances vnto vs in religion. We see this woman, how doth she fall away from God, his people, all the Church that she knew, her mother and sister? Wee knowe, how many being sent for to the great mans supper, which is the Lord they excused their absence, one for his farme, another for his oxen, another for his wife, as Horpah doeth for her husband: What shall I say? The loue of the world is the hatred of God: and Iohn saith, Loue not the world, nor the thinges of the world, for he that loueth the world, the loue of the Father is not in him. Iam.4.4. Ioh.2.15.
And Christ saieth, Whosoeuer commeth to me, & hateth not Father and mother, and wife and children, is not worthie of mee. Luk.14.26 Where are now our naturals, that would be professors, but their friends wil not let them,

they would bee Christians, but their wiues will not agree to them, this yeare they wil be worldlings and the next yeare when they haue ouercome their businesse, if they haue any leasur they wil heare the word preached. Oh dangerous delayes of subtill Sathan, studying by the worlde, to draw men from God: they lye like sluggardes: in winter it is too colde, in sommer it is too hote to worke: so they in their youth, will be religious when they are old, beeing in age, when they be rich, being rich they waxe harder and harder, and so continue til the day of their damnation,

Secondly, by this we may gather how farre an hypocrite or an infidell may go in religion, Horpha forsaketh her own people, for the loue of God his people; shee weepeth and cryeth, when it is but mentioned vnto her that shee woulde depart, shee trauelleth on the way towardes the countrey of God his people; and in this her iourney, for a few worldly reasons, shee turneth backe againe, though as it may seeme with a bitter heart. Euen so hypocrites may forsake the world, and their friendes, ioyne themselues to God and his people, trauaile and profite in religion towardes the heauenly Ierusalem, be ready to weepe with them that weepe, and lament with them that lament: and in any good action, set his foore as far foorth as the best: yet some occasion giuen, eyther for profite or pleasure, feare or daunger, sodainely turneth sayle, and commeth to the worlde againe. Euen so saith our sauiour of the seede, that is sowne in the 2. and 3. grounde, it taketh roote, it springeth, and groweth vp, but sodainely the heate of persecution ariseth, or offence taken at the doctrine, which is taught them, or the cares of this life & deceitefulnes of riches choake them. By this wee learne what to thinke of our soft hearted Christians, many among vs that will diligently heare, and wring out teares from their moistned braine at the hearing of God his iudgements thundered and threatned by the preacher: yet being gone, will make no conscience of othes, carding, dicing, tabling, gaming for their neighbors mony, going abroad on the sabboth day to feasts, and being sharpe:

Mat. 4. 17 18.
Ioh. 6. 66

reproued

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reprooued for it, then farewell Religion and profession also.

Thirdly, by this we gather what exceeding kindnes an heathen, an Atheist or an Infidell may shew to them that feare God: Horpha for the loue of godly Naomi, goeth with her on the way, weepeth and kisseth at their departure, so great loue did she beare to her mother in lawe, that had it not beene for one thing, she had gone thorough with her to her own people. So we may see many among vs speake well of Religion, yet they will not go so farre as Bethlehem for it, that is, they will with they had a Preacher, yet they will hardly, either on the Sabboth day or weeke day, stirre one foot from their own places, to heare a Sermon, so colde is their deuotion: but if they giue a poore man a meale of meat, or lend him a little money at his need, or receiue a Preacher for a night, then he is the onely man in the Countrey. But oh Lord open their eyes, that they may see their curtesie is but light, in regard of their duty: if for their brethren they would die, it were but their duty, how little is it then, that they giue them meate? But they would know of vs what is the way to be saued? I answere, so wouldde the young man in the Gospel, yet when Christ told him he would not doe it, but went away sorrowing: euen so Mat. 19. 22
these men may outwardly and inwardly in some measure professe kindnes and humility to bee instructed, but alas their profession is farre from true feeling of Christian religion.

Lastly, by this verse we note that as Horpha and her companions are carnally minded, so Ruth and her fellowes are spirituallly minded, though one be ouerthrowen with worldly reasons, yet the other remaineth inuincible in her first pretended purpose. So that here is an image of a congregation, where all heare, and yet there is a difference of hearing in one and the same Company: one parte with profite, another with disprofite, one to their health, another to their sicknesse, to some the sauour of life vnto life, to other, the sauour of death vnto death. Yet blessed be God, that hath no earth so barren, but it bringeth forth some fruite, no people so rude, but

there are some sanctified persons among them, which will not be drawne away till death: no battell so cruel, but some escape with life. If the Phariseis will not beleiue in Christ, yet the poore people that know not the law will receiue him for the Messiah. Among the mockers at Athens, Paul receiued some fruit of his labours, and the Gospell was neuer preached in any country but it gained some. This teacheth vs to follow the example of Ruth, and we shall haue the reward of Ruth: sticke to the Lord, and to the faithfull, with purpose of hearte, let not the vaine glittering pleasure, of pleasant pastime or profite, drawe vs from the hope of our euerlasting blessednesse. The time is but short we haue to spende, the labour easie if we willingly endure it, the profite euerlasting, if we continue to the end. This is the victory that ouercommeth the world, euen our faith: for to him that beleeueth are all thinges possible: Let vs therefore heare the word with diligence, that our faith may be strengthned, beleeue with assurance, that our soules may be iustified, and stand fast in the triall of this worlde, that bodie and soule may be crowned: for blessed are they that endure to the end. And thus much of this conference or communication, and the effect thereof. Now let vs giue thanks to God for that which hath beene spoken.

Act. 17. 34

1. Ioh. 5. 4.

# The third Lecture.

Ruth. Cap. 1. Vers. 15. 16. 17.

15 *And Naomi said, behold thy sister in law is gone backe to her people, and to her gods, returne thou after thy sister in law.*

16 *And Ruth answered, intreate me not to leaue thee, nor to depart from thee, for whether thou goest I will go, & where thou dwellest I will dwell, thy people shall bee my people, and thy God my God.*

17 *Where thou dyest, will I die, and there will I be buried, the Lord do so vnto me and more also, if ought but death de-*

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*depart thee and me.*

N these words the holy ghost declareth vnto vs, the conference had betweene Neomi and Ruth, after the departure of Horpha, wherein Naomi ceaseth not throughly to trie and examine the minde of Ruth, for what cause she would go with her, the words containe in them two parts. The first is the perswasion of Naomi in the 15. verse, to make Ruth to returne by the exampie of her sister. The second is the answere of Ruth, in the two next verses, consisting of two parts, the first is of the petition shee maketh to her mother, in these words, *Intreat me not to leaue thee, &c.* which she amplifieth by the resolution of her mind, in the next words. First, that for her life she would dwell with her, and goe with her. Secondly for her profession, *her people and God should be Naomies.* Thirdly, for her death, that she would die and be buried with her. The last part of this answere of Ruth, is the confirmation of it by an oath, in these words, *the Lord do so vnto mee, and more also, if ought but death depart thee and mee.*

*Behold thy sister is returned*: Now Naomi goeth forward to deale with Ruth onely, for the castle may seem almost won, where one halfe of the souldiers are ouercome, the vnitie between these two sisters being broke, and Horpah being departed, what was poore Ruth able to doe alone? surely this was a greater discouragement vnto her, then any she had yet, namely, that her sister being departed, shee should lay before her her sisters example to draw her likewise to fall. And truely thus Mat.10.34.
the Spirit of God dealeth most times, with those that labour to come vnto him, setting some in the way like Mat.3.45.
the disciples wihch forbad yong children to come vnto Christ, and as the prease the people kept the poore man diseased of the palsy from comming vnto our Sauiour: euen so many scandals, stumbling blocks, lettes, interruptions & hinderances come betweene the godly and Christ, as did betweene Naomi and Ruth.

But here we note that the examples of our kindred, and specially of those that seemed any thing in Religi-



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on, are dangerous arguments to draw vs from Christ. We see in this place Naomi taketh not example of one vngodly sister to draw away the other: which when our Sauiour foresaw, he gaue this commandement, that for his sake wee must forsake father and mother, brother and sister, wife and children, or else we are not worthie of him. And in another place one desiring of him but a little space to burie his father, hee sayd vnto him, let the dead burie the dead. This is a very profitable doctrine for these dayes, wherein men are thus discouraged from religion for feare of their friendes, for now Sathan stirreth vp one brother against another, to hinder them from hearing the sauing word of God, now they crie out against vs, Are you wiser then your forefathers? hath not all thy friends before thee beleeued on this wise? and wilt thou bee singular? And surely beloued we know it is the greatest argument, that popish atheists haue, their auncestors, fathers and mothers, their masters and mistresses, haue misliked this preaching, and these new doctrines, wherin many repose their greatest felicitie, and God send vs, say they, to liue no worse then they did, and to die no more blessed then they. But would you so rather bee Followers of your popish and ignorant predecessors, then of the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, reuealed in his word? this is to builde your selues vpon another foundation, which when the fire commeth, will vtterly consume it. But they say, are all our predecessors damned, which did as we doe? to whom I may well answere. How doe you know that all your forefathers were of your mindes? but wee are not in God his place, to iudge & arraigne them: but say with the Apostle, the time of this ignorance did not God regard, but now hee admonisheth all men euerie where to repent, because he hath appoynted a day to iudge the world in rigliteousnes. So that if God seeme not to regard it, why should wee stand vppon it? And seeing now the trumpet of the Gospel is sounded by the Lords Ministers, let vs not with Mary, lament ouer the graues of the dead, but leauing them at their rest, trudge and trauel to the mount of the Lord, that of him

Mat. 10. 34 35.

Luk. 9. 60.

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we may freely receiue that, which many kings & prophets could neuer obtain. Thogh Moses went not into the land of Canaan, yet he saw it, so it may be the Lord let our predecessors see light of the Gospel, though they could not inioy it. But as Peter & Iohn were with Christ when he was transfigured, & saw his kingdom, yet could not enioy the continuall presence of his glory, but being warned of Christ, told it to no man: so many godly in time of darknes, not only saw, but imbraced ye truth, which it may be is forgotten of their graceleſſe posterity. Let the parents eate the sowre grapes, shal the children's teeth be set an edge? if they made cakes to the host of heaue, shal we worship the sun & the moon? what discredite is it to a blind father, to haue a son well sighted? no more is it to idolatours, whose children are the appointed heirs of the land of Canaan. Let vs abide with him that hath the words of eternal life, & the wealth of our parents is deare vnto vs, yea many thousand times more deare is the health of our soules. Secondly, by this we note, that to stick by our friends, & to go with them from the Lord, is to cõmit idolatry: for Naomi saith, *Thy sister is gone to her people & to her Gods*; as if she had said, indeed for kindred sake she is gone back, but it is vnto idols and false gods. Yea, & more also, vnto diuels: this is a worthy lesso for our naturals to learn, who wil forsake Gospel, church, praier, & preaching, some for the loue of their wiues, to keep them company at home, when God calleth them in one congregation or other, some their idolatrous friends, which are notable recusants, yet because they should think wel of them, they wil falsifie their faith to the Lord, & be vniust in his work, that they may please thẽ with their present cõpany: some are hindred by their profit, some by vnlawfull gaming, & many by bare idlenes. Thus mẽ make gods, some of their people, some of their wiues, some of their popish friendes, some of their profit, some of their pleasures, & some of their idlenes, & few or none are to be foũd, that are both able & willing to follow Christ, when he calleth them, as little Zacheus did, but euery one hath some excuse to keep thã frõ the Lords supper, who shal neuer tast of his heuenly pleasures, seeing they mind earthly things, making their

Mat. 17. 6.

Ioh. 6. 68.

Luc. 19. 5. 6



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glory their ſhame, their bely their God, let their end be damnation. But oh my beloued, let vs be warned by the dãgers of others, when Peter rebuked Chriſt, & bid him fauor himſelf, Chriſt rebuked him, & called him ſathan: euen ſo when our dearest friends would haue vs be ſlack in preaching, and fauour our bodies, come to the church ſeldom, & make no toile of it, agree with the moſt in religion, or rather in worldlings, & ſo ſhal we haue fauour, aſpire to the greateſt promotions, for there is greateſt profite, & finally take pleaſure in vnlawfull things, let vs ſay, come behind vs ſathan. For it is not our friend, but our enemie ſathan, that thus allureth vs with the baite of pleaſure, eaſe, & profit, that we might hang on the hooke of perpetuall perdition. Then ſeeing we haue eſpied his pollicie, diſcouered his deceit, & tried the diſcõmodities that enſue his obedience, let vs as innocent childrẽ once burned, dread the fire, & as Iacob ſaid by his own ſons Simeon & Leui, my ſoul come not into their habitation, ſo let vs ſay to our dearest friends when their counſell & a good conſcience cannot ſtand together, better breake the league of friendſhip betweene vs, then ſuffer ȳ ſhipwrack of a precious & peaceable conſcience. The wiſest Salomon by hearkning to his wiues, diſobeied the lord, and it coſt him ten tribes of his Kingdome: if ſuch greene peeces be deſtroyed, what ſhal become of the rotton & ſeare: therfore if angels from heauen muſt not be heard, much les diuels from hel, drawing vs away frõ following the truth by the mouth of our deereſt & neereſt friends, though it were by our wiues that lie in our boſomes. Therfore let vs take vnto vs the whole armor of god that we may ſtãd faſt in the day of battel: better neuer rũ: except we obtaine the price, better never to haue knowne God or his Goſpel, then now to fall away frõ him again.

Mat. 8. 23.

1. Kin. 11. 2.

*But Ruth ſaid, intreat me not.* This is the firſt part of the anſwer of Ruth, to the argumẽt of her mother, & it is her petition, with the reaſõ of it: wherin ſhe proteſteth that it is better vnto her, not to be intreted to depart, or once to haue it motioned, or mentioned to go frõ her, for her resolution is, that neither the troubles or trauailes of life could ſeperat her, neither ȳ ſorrows of death or deſolatiõ of the graue, ſhuld deprive her of Naomies company, for

she saith, *Where thou diest will I die, & there will I be buried.* Out of which I obserue these things. First, how the godly behaue themselues in all tryalls and temptations, namely, that the very thoughts of departing from God & yeelding to sin, are very gal & bitternes vnto them, insomuch as they say with Ruth, intreat me not to leaue thee that is, neuer speak word to moue me from hearing God his word, to ouerthrow my faith, to turn me to disobedience, to perish my conscience, to hinder my course, or to subuert my profession: a notable example hereof is in *Elisha*, who was intreted by Eliah, as here *Ruth* is by *Naomi* First, he bad him tarry at Gilgal, til he went to Bethel; but *Elisha* said, as the Lord liueth, & as thy soule liueth, I wil not leaue thee nor depart from thee, then they went to Bethel together, & bid him tary there, for ỳ Lord sendeth him to *Ierico*, but Elisha answered, as ỳ Lord liueth & as thy soule liueth, I will not leaue thee nor depart frō thee: then they went to Ierico: Eliah bid him tary there till hee went to Ierecho, and Eliah bid him tarry there till he went to meet the Lord at Iordan. Elisha answered as he did before for Eliah forsaw, ỳ if he went not with Eliah, he should haue no benefit by his seruice, so if we abide not the c b iectiōs of our frends, the reproches of our enemies, the intisemēts of the world, & the perswasions of our own fathers & mothers, that are against vs in religion, we shal loose al ỳ we haue done before, yea though they should say as Rabsaketh said to the men of Ezechia The Lord hath sent vs to speak vnto you. But many will say, if prophane worldlings shuld discorage vs in religiō, & those ỳ are open conteners shuld perswade vs from it, then we culd abide it, but it goeth nie vs when our owne wiues or husbands, fathers or mothers, brethren & sisters companions & acquaintance, shal try vs so narowly. But mark dearly beloued, ỳ art not alone, *Ruth* was thus hādled by Naomi her dear mother in law, for whose sake she had departed from kindred & coūtry, yet she trieth, molesteth, & vexeth her, yet by the sauing grace of Gods assisting spirit in the end she acquiteth her selfe like a womā of strength in the lords quarel: for the Lord for our farther trial doth not only proue vs in the lest, but in the greatest afflictions.

2 King. 2. 2
3. 4. 5. 6

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The Israelits cared but little for the Philistins, had they not had giants among thē, so the Lord wil bring crosses like armed men to dismay vs, that our valour & courage may be known. Iob had first one herd taken away, & thē an other, in the end his children crushed to death, & thē he was strangly visited in his own body, but hauing only one cōfort in al the world left, his wife, she bid him curse God & die. But some say, we wold willingly be professors but the preachers thēselues tel vs how we must be mortified, & they call vs in their sermons wretches & cursed creatures, these hard words hinder vs, if they spoke faire vnto vs, & cried mercy, mercy, we wold with more diligence frequent their exercise. I answere, if they speak in Gods name whose embassadors they are, cannot you beare it for his sake? they are not cōmon persons in that place, but supply Christs room: now Christ called his disciples a faithles generation, he called Peter Sathan, & a poor woman he called dogge when she came vnto him. How did he deale with king Herod, & with the Pharises, euery man knoweth, & are you better then these? Paul called the Galathians foolish, was it not to make thē wise therby he might draw them to the truth, they had forsaken? euen so the ministers of Christ must handle this rough world, setting it out by the titles, that by the name they may gesse of the nature. If the rich man promise peace to his soule in the multitude of his possession, shal not the Lord cal him foole for his labour? If all the world follow the prince that raigneth in the aire, shal not we say that they be without God, & so without saluatiē? doth not the Lord chasten vs in this world, that we shold not be condemned in the world to come? Are not seruants cōtented to beare hard words at the hands of their masters, because they receiue wages of them? euen so suffer God his ministers to speak the worst they can of you, yet I assure you ther is no faithful preacher that wil speak so basely of the notablest wicked person that is, but hee speaketh & thinketh a thousand times more basely of himself. Beare with them therfore, you are children, & infants in religion, not able to speak, they speake from the Lord in as humble manner as may be: knowing that the Lord resisteth the proud, & giueth grace to the humble

2.Cor.5.20

Mar.8.23.

Mat.15.23.

24.

Luk.12.20.

1.Pet.5.5.

ble & meeke: the prodigal son by speaking most vilely o himselfe, purchased his fathers fauor: Euen so these hard speaches of our selues, & other penitent sinners, are as faithful messengers to recōcile vs vnto God; Secōdly by this we note, how we must be enabled to encoūter or resist the exāples of others, ẏ are laid against vs to draw vs frō God, euē as Ruth doth in this place. Naomi telleth her, Horpha is turned away, & therfore shee must also. Ruth answereth, *Where thou dwellest I will dwell*: as if she had said: if ẏ turn backe, *I* wil turn backe also, but I know thy constācy is such, as ẏ wilt neuer yeeld, therfore al the exāples of my slippery sister, & fearfull fal-awaies in the world shal neuer moue me: it is thy constancy that I look vpon & nothing els, which is as a safe ship for me to saile in through the waues of my vnstedfast minde: so that by this you perceiue, how she opposeth the stedfastnes of her mother, against the backsliding of her sister, depending vpon the sureſt hold, not vpon a broken staffe. Euen so must we against the examples of vngodly ruffians set the exāples of sober minded. Match the world & Christ together, what shall the world get: If it say, be ignorant, the other saith, if the Gospell be hid it is to them that be lost: if it say, folow the ways of thy own hart, ẏ other saith for this thou shalt come to iudgment: if the world say be couetous & inrich thyself by gaming, cosning, carding, dicing, buying & selling, ẏ other saith, such shal not inherit Gods kingdom: if the world say, seek honor, the Church saith, it is vanity: if it say, esteem best of thy selfe, the other saith, think beter of an other: if it wish thee prosperity the church saith, rather suffer aduersity with Gods children, then to enioy the pleasures of sin for a season. So the flesh lusteth against the spirit, & the spirit against the flesh: if thou be tempted to infidelity remember Abrahā that beleeue in hope, vnder hope, & beyond hope, if to incontinency, remember Ioseph the mirror of chastity, if to impaciency, think vpon Iob, if to vniust dealing, remember Iacob: if to idlenes think on the pismire, if to drūkennes remember what Dauid did with the water of the wel of Bethleem, This is vsual in the scriptur to exhort by exāples, Peter wisheth godly women to look vpon Sara her obedience, Iames wileth the poor in his daies to take the

Luc. 16. 18. 19.

1. Pet. 3. 6.

Iam. 5. 10.

pro-

prophets for an example of patience. Paul exhorteth the Corinthians to liberality, by the example of the Macedonians: euen so on the contrary, threatnings are denounced by the exãple of others, as we may often read in the
2.Cor.8.23 Gospell. The Lord saith, the Queen of Sheba shal rise in
4. iudgment against the nation of the Iews, which came to heare the wisdom of Salomon, likewise he prouoketh them by the exãple of the publicans & harlots, telling thẽ they shalbe preferred in the kingdome of God, & thinke there is none so simple, but they know they ought rather to follow the wise then the foolish virgins. But some will
Mat.25.1 say, now the world is altogether corrupted, & the most
22. part is the worst part, therefore they must needes follow their maners & be defiled. To whom I answer, if ỳ were in a little bark vpon the greatest sea, & sawest a thousand mighty waues about thee like huge moũtains, wouldst ỳ forsake thy little bark which is alone, & leap into ỳ midest among ỳ waues, because they are many, so thou sholdest work thy own destructiõ: euen so, wilt thou forsake the maners, life & company of a few godly persons, with whom is safety, to wallow in the millions of worldly men with whom is no peace, but is like the raging sea ỳ cãnot rest? shalt not thou be tossed with them, I wil not say troubled, but euerlastingly confounded? I grant we shuld liue by precept & not by exãple, but seeing we must needes see the Gospell, before we belieue it, let vs looke on the liues of the purest & fewest among vs, & ioyn our selues to them, as Noah to his ark that the water flouds of euerlasting destruction ouerwhelm vs not in eternal damnation. *Thy God.* By these words it may seem that Ruth is not so wel grounded in the knowledge of God as shee ought to be in ỳ she dependeth vpon her mother, in saying, thy God is my God, as if she had said, if thou worship the true God so wil I, if ỳ be an Idolater so wil I, if thou turn backward so wil I, if thou go forward, so wil I. But I take it far otherwise, ỳ these words proceed frõ a hartfully groũded vpon the truth; as if she had said, I know Naomi, ỳ wilt neuer worshippe any Gods but the true God, thou art constãt in that which thy selfhast taught mee, I remain stedfast in that which I lerned of thee, & therfore I can neuer forsake thee. The which interpretation is con

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firmed by the words ỳ follow, *Thy people, my people*: who were Naomies people but the Iewes which alwaies worshipped the true God? so that if Naomi could change her birth, parentage, people, & country, then also in the minde of Ruth she could change her God, & as she was perswaded, she knew her people, so she knew her God, and as she thonght, she could not chãge her people, so she conceiued she would neuer alter her worship: so that these words proceed of a stedfast perswasion in the knowledge of God, & an assured hope of her mothers continuance. Euen as when the King of Babel calleth the almightie by the name of the God of Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego, was perswaded he was the true God, by the myraculous deliuery of those his seruants from the fiery furnace. And as the King of Media caled him by the name of *D*aniels God, because he had deliuered him from the hungry Lions: euẽ so Ruth called the true God by the name of Naomies God, because she was instructed by her. But some will say, is it not lawfull for vs to depend vpon our fathers or elder friends in religion, or to beleeue as the Church or as catholike men beleeue? I answer, if the question be made of the necessary points of saluation, as the knowledge of the trinitie, the work of our redemption, with such like, it is by no means lawful for vs to depend vpon men, though they be the chiefest in knowledge, & the greatest in authoritie in all the world, if they teach it neuer so truly, yet we must haue recourse to the Gord of God. For Paul wished the Corinthians, that they should be followers of him, as he was of God, as if hee had sayd, where I agree with God & his word, consent with me where I disagree, dissent from me. We know what commẽdation the lord giueth the Iews of Berea, which sought the scriptures daily, whether these things were so or not, which were taught by Paul and Silas: we know how Paul withstood Peter to his face, who was a pillar of the church and a more ancient Apostle then himself, yet he was faulty: & to conclude, wee must receiue the Gospell as from God the onely author of it, not from man, least we make the preaching of the crosse of none effect, it is far surer to send vs to the fountains of the written word of God, then to the braines of the best learned in the world. Therfore the conclusion is, that we must not in the foundation of religion,

Dan. 3. 29.
Dan. 6. 26
1. Cor. 4. 18
Act. 17. 11.
Gal. 2. 18.

depend

depend vpon men or angels, though we were neuer so truly taught by them, but must referre our faith, and the credite therof, to the only written word of God. But some will say, had Ruth this word of God, or did Naomi cary it with her into the land of Moab? I answere that it is very likely they had, for the Iewes at this day haue the old testament with them in all nations: secondly if they had not, yet the Lord by his spirit did perswade the heart of Ruth of the truth of these things which Naomi had taught her, so did he perswade his Church when there was no word written, for the space of aboue two thousand years: so doth he this day keepe his Church among infidels, where is neyther preaching, word, nor sacrament, yet not one of them is lost But if any say, let vs then forsake the written word of God, and attend to these reuelations and priuate instructions of the holy ghost, I answere, so the Iews when they came into the land of Canaan, might haue eate no meate, till the Lord raigned downe more Manna vpon them: surely then they had all starued many thousand yeares ago: euen so if we looke for such extraordinarie illuminations, & forsake the present food of our souls, God his writtē word preched among vs, the other being ceased, we shal iustly be condemned, as the murderers and slaughter-slaues of our owne destruction. Let vs therefore take heede to God, not to men, ground our faith on his word, not vpon humane gifts, attend to the voyce of Christ speaking by his ministers to the ears of ỳ body, not waiting for extraordinary iluminations, if we want this means, labor for it, as a pearle worth all our marchants substance, yea, a treasure greater then all the world. But of lighter points of religion, if wee receiue any thing of men, who in one point haue diuers iudgements, let vs learn to examine the reasons of all, & being proued by prayer and peace of conscience lean to the best: neither doubting to depend vpon men, or the credite of the truth, but to the word. Where we note many things, what great care ought parēts, magistrats, ministers, & prechers, to haue ouer their children, people, & subiects, for their instructiō, seeing as Ruth had truely lerned of her mother in law that did she constantly defend, namely the worship of the onely one God. If Naomi had peruerted hir from one heathenisme to another, it is very likely she would haue abode by

but being instructed in the trueth, & sealed by the holy spirit of promise, shee doth carefully maintaine it, giuing vs thereby to vnderstand how inestimable is the benefite of good education, and first training vp in religion. And ought not this to bee deare vnto vs, that watch ouer the soules of our people and children, who by vs being rightly grounded in the foundation of christian religion, may happily growe vp, like to glorious Olues for the Church and common wealth. We reade when Laban swore by his false gods, then Iacob swore by the feare of his father Izaac; so excellent was the instruction giuen him of his father, that in the presence of idolatrous Laban, for feare nor fauour would hee alter his religion: yea it seemed to be fastened in his flesh, that having beene twentie yeares among the idolatrous Sirians, yet hee had not changed the manner of his oth, the which hee learned of his father. Oh where are those Izaaks in our dayes, which teach their children any religion? indeed men are too carefull for their childrens temporall wealth, they put them to schooles and vniuersities, to bee students at the law, and men of occupations, (which are good) but aske them why they do so; they will aunsweare, that they might haue some thing to liue by hereafter: neuer a word I warrant you of the saluation of their soules. but for that, they will hope in God they say: and thus they compasse sea and lande for trifles, but the neuer fading health they least thinke vpon. In times past seruantes praied to the God of their maisters, but in these dayes if they should doe so, they must pray either to pride, couetousnes, or ignorance: maisters and seruantes can sweare by the name of God liberally, but pray sparingly, in so much as if the life of God consisted in their prayers, they would surely murder him, they so seldome call vpon him. Oh that this hellish behauiour of maisters and seruantes, could bee reduced to the line of God his worde; but now they deale with their seruantes as the Egiptians did with the Israelites, they looke for their tasks and worldy busines, but they neuer exhorte them to sacrifice to the Lorde: nay, they hinder them, and call them idle persons, if

Eph. 1. 13.

Gen. 31. 53.

Gen. 24. 42.



there

there bee any forwardnes of seruantes and children that wayes, truely now is like seruant, like maister, like maide like mistresse, like father like sonne, like mother like daughter, such is the seede such is the harvest, they goe from cradles to graues, and from graues to damnation, theire whole care is for pleasure and wealth, and therefore they haue no part or portion but in this present life. Yet let the children of Abraham do like Abrahā, teach their sons, daughters and seruants, the couenant of the Lord, that all the seede and posterity may be blessed, both with the temporall & euerlasting promise, for godlines hath the promise of this life and of the life to come. Secondly by this wee note, the fall of vngodly flatterers which will outwardly for shew or fauour bee godly with the good, & wicked with the profane, they wil in good company temper their speech like good men, they wil trudge & trauel to sermons & godly excercises, because it pleaseth some gentleman or other, & wil say to the, thy God my God, your preacher, my preacher, your professiō shalbe my profession, whome you loue I loue, whō you hate I abhor: Of this sort are many ignorant persons, one misliketh our religion because some popish freind of his mislike it, some speake against our gouernment, because one or other which gape for the church liuing, speaketh against it: and to say the truth, it is verie lamentable to see, how all religion of many is turned into man pleasing, but these tame beastes will one day come to the slaughter as well as wilde, when it shall bee manifested, that the surest and safest way in religion, is to depend on God and not men.

Gen. 18. 19.

1. Tim. 4. 8.

*Where thou dyest*, Hauing promised her life to bee spent in her mothers company, shee proceedeth to her death, shewing vnto her such perfect friendship as neyther the trauiles of life or sorrowes of death, could euer abrogate, and she addeth, that euen in that place where Naomi should be buried, would Ruth bee enterred: for wee knowe the ancient custome was to bee buried with the fathers or predecessours, where of vndoubtedly the cause was, the hope of the resurrection, that as they were buried so they should rise together, to be made partakers

of

of eternal woes, or euerlasting ioyes. And by this we obserue, the loue which we owe vnto our fathers & frieds, must be of such continuance, ỳ it reach vnto the graue: not only to be here the inheritors of their lands, but also being dead, to giue our bodies to their sepulchres, and the measure of it must be so perfect, that we must be the companions of life and death. And truly, such as is the loue of children to their naturall parents, such must be the peoples to their spiritual fathers in Christ. The Galathians to pleasure Paul, wold haue pulled out their owne eies, but men in these daies are so far frō this liberalitie, towards the small number of preaching ministers, that they will hardly giue any pennie towards their maintenance: they had rather haue their Gold, then the Gospel of Christ, their paltry pigs, then preaching: They cry out chargeable, chargable is the ministry, when they themselues which should pay the tenths, yeeld not the twentieth of their increase, such suing for their right, such triing of customes, such ouer-bearing the weak, & finally, they wold be religious, but the ministers must be as beggers amōg them. Who seeth not in many places where they cry out for preachers, and promise largely in their behalf, yet when the Lord hath sent them, they almost stinke in their presence. I speak plainly I confesse, & yet but the truth: and moreouer, they are not only poorely prouided for, but euery base person, pesant, & pot-companion, are suffred to crow ouer thē, & cry out against thē. Thus Christ was before, & yet like vs, cōtemned of the braueſt, & reuiled of the basest: the world I see is no changling, although many hundred ages haue passed since, yet the maners therof remaine, it agreeth in nothing, saue onely to persecute Christ: and seeing we are sent forth as silly lambes among ten thousand wolues, and as men born out of due time, although our calling be despised, our labour vnprofitable, & we made laughing stocks, yet our pains wil be rewarded, our offences pardoned, we crowned, & they euerlastingly confounded. *So let God*: Last of all, that shee might be no more molested by her mother in law, she cōfirmeth the resolutiō of her mind by an oath, in these words, So let God

1. Cor. 3. 19
Gal. 4. 24. 25



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do vnto me, and more also, if ought but death do separate thee and mee: which is an vsuall manner of swearing in the scripture, as we read of Dauid how he swore he would be reuenged of the churlish Nabal, for the
1. Sam. 24. vncourteous message he returned him by his seruants,
22. and is vsed by all the godly in the old Testament: and indeede it doth most notably describe the nature of an oath, for it is thus much in effect, I pray God confound me, if I speake not this with purpose of heart: out of the which we note many things most profitable. First, that in euery oath we curse our owne soules, if we publish not the truth, or performe not that which we promise: as if euery time we sweare, wee should say, The Lord confound we body and soule, with Sathan and his Angels, if this be not so. Oh that our oath-mongers & common swearers in our daies, would remember or vnderstand this, that whereas in their daies they haue sworne many milions of times, so many curses & damnations they haue wished to themselues; the very consideration whereof would make them as guilty in their own consciences, as euer Cain was for killing a man, or Iudas for betraying the Lord of glory: they haue with their arrowes of blasphemie, shot through and boared the Lord to the very neerest place of his life, for euery iniuste. And truely as the common Inne is known by his signe, and the blacke Moore by his skin, euen so is an atheist and carnall man by his oath. We shall talk with
Leui. 24. 23 honest worldly men, who at euery word or sentence, will breake forth into most horrible swearing vppon no occasiõ, if they be rebuked, they waxe much worse. We read of an Egiptian Israelite that blasphemed, and was by God his owne commandement, stoned to death. How if this law were put in practise among vs? where would the gallant companions, which will
Num. 1. 46. sweare by al the colours of the moone, become? would not they crie out to the hils to couer them, and to the rocks to fal vpon them? was it not strange, that among sixe hundred thousand men, which were able to beare armes, with old men women and children almost innumerable, there should be found but one man that had

blaspheme-

blasphemed, or taken God his dreadfull name in vaine & he must be stoned? But among vs, if so many choiseemen were taken, my life for in there shall not be found among euery hundred, ten persons, which are not common blasphemers. Oh Lord, how doth thy mercy stay the heauens from powring downe stones vpon vs, as they did vpon the Canaanites. There is not now a child in the streetes, if he be able to speak, but he murmurgth an oath, only excepted some few which haue godly parents; there is not a woman either maide or wife, some few excepted, which doth not dayly increase their curse by their continuall blasphemies: may we not now say, Lord what is man that thou visitest him, or the sonne of man that thou so regardest him. Truly the most follow the counsell of Iobs wife, they curse God & die, a godly martyr required to curse Christ and he should liue, answered, seuentie yeares haue I serued him, & yet hee neuer did me any hurt, why then should I curse him? And I pray you what hurt hath the Lord done vnto you, that you thus blaspheme his honour, curse your owne soules, rebell against his lawes, and sweare many hundred times oftner then you eate or drinke: surelie the disease of leprosie was contagious, and whosoeuer had it, as excluded from the congregation, how much more ought this poyson of swearing and swearers, to be cut off from the society of God & men? And surely now helpe, O ye Gods of the earth, I meane you magistrates and men of authority, this knot wil neuer be vnloosed, except you draw out your swords & strike it asunder, though you would giue them all your possessions, & steale away their swearing, as Rahel stole her fathers Idols, yet they will sweare by false Gods still as Laban did, that is, they must either die, or the wrath of God must be powred downe vpon vs for euer, for his curse shall neuer depart from the house of the swearer. And if you helpe not to cure this euill, the Lord shall curse both you and them with euerlasting plagues. He crieth and saith, whom shall I send? the ministers haue said they will goe, yea, they haue told Iacob his sin, and Israel his transgression, and England his swearing also,

Iud. 10. 11.

Esay. 9. 3.



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but they come againe with Ieremie, vnto you O princes, publish you the decree, that whosoeuer sweareth by the name of God rashly, he should be cut off from the people, and his house lowed with salt, neuer to be buildded againe. Secondly, by this we obserue, that it is not lawful to swear but only by the name of God, for Ruth saith so, *And so let God do vnto me, & more also.* She calleth not heauen and earth to record, or any other thing saue only he which is able to punish, or els to pardon, & knoweth the secrets of euery mas hart. Wherby we are taught, that it is sacriledge in God his sight to swear by our faith or troth out honour or honestie, bread or drinke, or any thing else. Many think they auoid swearing very cleanly, if they sweare by any of these, not knowing that he that sweareth by the gold, sweareth by the temple, & he that sweareth by the temple, sweareth by him that sitteth theron: euen so he that sweareth by his faith, swareth by Christ (for faith is no faith without Christ) & he that sweareth by the son, sweareth by the father & the holy Ghost. Therfore dearely beloued, let vs frame our tongs to honor, not to dishonour God, to glorifie, not to defame his name. For if he that toucheth his Saints, toucheth the apple of his eie, what doth hee which thrusteth at his name. which is dearer vnto him then heauen and earth? Surely the Lord will not hold him guiltlesse, but as he hath not pitied the Lord in tearing him with oathes, no more shall the Lord shew any mercy to his soule from punishing it in hell.

Lastly, by these words of Ruth we obserue, that an oath must be the last thing we produce in the testimonie of any truth. She denieth her mother once, and the second time when her sister went away, but now the third time, after solemne protestation made, she addeth an oath, as the last refuge & end of all controuersie. Against this do al the former offend, which will not tary till the last, but euen at the first wrap out their oathes, as fast as a brawling dog his barking, swearing through custome to truth & falshood, making no difference betweene waightie matters & idle toyes, especially in gaming, playing, hunting, chiding, and such like, they spit



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but their poison against God himself, neither sparing the wounds, bloud, hart, death, and nailes of the Lord, rending him worse being in heauen, then the Iewes did vpon the crosse. But let Ruth and her companions teach ten thousand of them, with what reuerence they muste use the holy name of God: shee had not bin past tenne years with a godly woman, but shee had learned her religion, both of faith and manners, for in this shee vseth both: but wee haue a great many both men & women, which haue had twenty and thirtie a peece, not with dat. But with a whole church of godly persons, and yet they haue gotten neither faith nor manners from them, they can easily giue them leaue to practise religion, but themselues wallowe in pleasure. But be ye not deceiued, God is not mocked, when hee beginneth hee will make an end, and consume yourviperous tongues and beastly hearts, as the fourtaine of this mischiefe in the fire of hell. wee are as importunate on you as the blind men of Iericho, the more we are rebuked, the more we crie vnto you, let not your countrie be cursed, our prince remoued, our God blasphemed, his Gospel banished from vs, & our soules & bodies euerlastingly plagued. *To God be the glorie, praise*

# The fourth Lecture.

Ruth. 1. Verse, 18. 19. 20. 21. 22.

*18 When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, shee left speaking vnto her.*

*19 So they went forth both vntil they came to Bethelem, & when they came to Bethelem, it was noised of them throughout all the citie, and they said, is not this Naomi?*

*20 and she answered, call mee not Naomi, but call me, Mara, for the almighty hath giuen me much bitternes.*

*21 I went out full, and the Lord hath caused me to returne emptie, why call you me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath humbled me, and the almightie hath brought mee vnto aduersitie.*

*22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitesse, &c.*

HAuing heard ye conference betwen Naomi & Ruth now the holy ghost describeth the issue of this iourney, to the end of this chapter: wherin Naomi ceaseth to

vexe her daughter, or dissuade her to proceed in her purpose, but willingly taketh her with her and both of them trauaile to Bethelem, whither they come in a most fit and acceptable time, neither hindred in their iourney, nor forgotten of their friends, but kindly receiued to their great comfort.

Those wordes containe in them two partes, the first their consent to trauaile and iourney vnto Bethelem, the second is their intertainment there. The first part is expressed in the eighteene & nineteene verses: and hath two members, first Naomi rested satisfied with the answeare of Ruth and vexed hen no more, verse eighteene, secondly their prosperous iourney to the city Bethelem verse nineteene: In the end of this verse is set down the intertainment they found there, which is this, the citizens came flocking to see her, calling and welcomming her by name in these words: *Is not this Naomi?* vnto the which salutation she hirselfe aunsweareth in the two next verses, first acknowledging her name but confessing herselfe vnworthy of it, in these wordes; *Call me not Naomi, but call me Mara*, secondly shee addeth the cause of her speech, in these words, for the Lord hath giuen me much bitterness: this is amplified in the next verse by an allegory taken from a vessel, In these words, I *went out full:* finally shee setteth downe the vse shee maketh of her affliction, shewing vnto them, that shee could not glorie in all the vaine titles of the world, first because the Lord had humbled her, secondly because he had brought her into aduersitie: in the last verse is set downe the time when these pilgrims came from Moab to Bethlehem, which was the beginning of barley harueſt.

*When she saw.* As Naomi in the beginning dealt verie wisely, in the triall of her daughters before they were too farre gonne, so in the end shee dealeth very godly with Ruth, in that she yeeldeth to her aunsweare and petitions, giuing ouer to molest her with any more obiections. This friendly and worthy meeknes is very commendable in all the godly, for without this they can neuer in charity and compassion try and examine their brethren

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brethren. When our saiuiour Christ, had dealt with the Cananitishe woman about the like cause, seeing that silence would not aunsweare her, nor deniall satisfie her; nor the opprobrious word of dogge dismay her then he yelded to her desire, cured her daughter, and proclaimed her faith to bee wonderfull: By which wee gather that it is an vngodly thing, to trie any religion or in any good motion beyond their strength, for it is no doubt but Naomi if shee would, could haue multiplied more obiections against this enterprise of Ruth, but her mind was to trie her, not to trouble her, to confirme her, not to confound her, and to shewe vnto her what must bee her resolution, if shee go vnto the Lords people shee can hope for no earthly felicitie, she must neuer repent & turne backe again, she must bury both contrey and kindred in the graue of forgetfulnes, that the thoughtes or desire of their fruition must neuer hinder the course of her religion. Whereby all the godly are by Naomi admonished, to be carefull whōe they receiue into their company, and how gently they must intreate them when they finde their fidelity: the rauens will not feede their owne birdes or young ones so long as they bee naked till their feathers come out, and they knowe them to bee their owne, which iealosie of soules must teach vs, that if wee see not the student tokens of godly belief, wee must not receiue, yea our own kinsemen into the secret of our hearte, to communicate vnto them the weet fellowship we haue with Christ, for many daily creepe into the church to espie our liberty, but as Iohn saith, if any come vnto you and bring not this doctrine receiue them not to house, nor bid them good speede. But in this as it strange to see how farre manie godly personnes are deceiued, which beleeue euery light word of hipocrite all personnes, esteeming them good christians, giuing them the right hand of fellowship, and opening the treasures of the Lord to these mockers of fruitly all things, casting the childrens crummes to dogs, and their precious pearles before the filthy swine, which treade both Christ and his Gospell vnder the feet of their hearte, and rent, reuile, persecute and seeke the

Mat. 15. 22.

2. Iohn. 13.

destruction

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destruction of the truely religious, would God we were all Naomies in this point, to trie their spirites whether they be of God, seeing so many false spirits are gon out into the world: for wee must not committ our selues to euery one that will outwardly say as wee beleeue, but first see the fruits and afterwards iudge of the tree. We knowe how many in the Gospel our saiour Christ refused, which offered themselues vnto him, for none can
1. John. 41 come to him but those whome his father draweth. And
John. 2. 24. against this especially doe all the flattring Michaes and please-man preachers of England offend, which as the prophet saith, sowe pillowes vnder the elbowes of the people, that is, they giue them rest in their singular sins, if they can say Lord, Lord, they tell them they are good christians, if they come once a weeke to the church, their deuotion is sufficient, if they spend all their dayes in ignorance & vanity, yet a fewe words at the later end will recouer them, Oh how fearfull and lamentable is the condition of such pastours and people, where they are thus flattered in their sins & stroked in their iniquities, they heare the Gospel, feede on the sacraments dwell safely in the house of God, and eate of the fatte of the lands; that their iudgement might be without excuse, their damnation the greater, & themselues the prepared oxen for ỳ Lords slaughter house, they cry peace peace, mercy, mercy, speake of plenty not penury, of feasting not famines, of pleasures not sufferings, of mirth not mourning, of new wine not God his word: nay they bid the most couetous cormorants, incroching vsurers, prodigall ruffians, beastly drunkards, filthy adulterers, cursed blasphemers, common swearers, dumbe ministers, and prophane and carnall atheists, to hope for saluation, whereas the Apostle saith, not one of these shall inherite the kingdome of God. Is not this to cast childrens bread to dogges, and to make the most holy Gospell a cloake, nay rather a patent or charter to worke all manner of licenciousnes? surele if Naomi would not promise any thing to her deere daughter Ruth, but rather discourage her from following the Lorde, in the triall of her faith, you are as farre wide from any hope

of

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of sauing health, as heaue from the earth, or light from darknes: therfore to conclude, as the gold is not knowen but by the touchstone, so is not any Christian, till he be throughly tried in religion, & as the gold-smith will not accept it (though it seem neuer so faire) til he haue tried it, so must not we loose the bands of sins, till they be repented, or bind the breaches of iniquity, til they be satisfied, nor account any a christian, till we haue throughly tried him. Other there are which will neuer bee satisfied in their brethren, euery day troubling thē with vaine & vnprofitable questions, neuer giuing thē ouet, til they haue wearied thē with their wrāglings, seeking to deface thē in that little knowledge which they haue, & discourage them frō the profession of christian religiō. But most abhominable is the dealing of many with their neighbours, both Christian men and women, who forsaking the cursed pastime of carnal cōpanions, espying the insufficiencie of dumbe & vnpreaching ministers, burning in loue for the pure preaching of God his word, and seeking that where it is to be found, absent themselues from their assemblies now & then, they present thē to the courts as wicked recusants, where I warrant you, they find as much fauor as Paul did before Felix: thus we are many times vniustly vexed for good cōsciēces, turmoiled about for hearing of sermons, almost as much as any papist, for abhorring our religion: & this it is that feareth many, causeth other to fall back before troubles come, & dismayeth many weake soules when they see their poore brethren in this peaceable time, vnder the gouernment of so godly & gracious a prince, so tormented as is incredible, the experience of this is too too cōmon in euery corner of our country, where there is any diligēt preacher or profitable hearer. Let vs therfore my brethren, with Naomi, cease to vexe the godly minded Ruths, both mē & women: our dāmatiō shalbe the greater, if we draw & driue men from God, the lawes require it not, the magistrates like it not, our profession forbiddeth it, & accursed are those godles iudges which pronounce any sentence against these innocēt persons. Therefore say with the Prophet, Come let vs ascend to

Act. 24. 26.

the

the mountaine of the Lord; euen to the hill of the God of Iacob, for he shall teach vs his waies, and wee will walke in his paths.

*So they went forth.* Now are these two good women both going, and also come to Bethlehem, and vndoubtedly their tedious iourney was eased by their mutuall conference: but what things hapned to them by the way, the scripture mentioneth not, onely their intertainment is here set downe, how their comming being noysed about the Citie, they came vnto them and saluted their old acquaintance, Naomi by name. For this question, *is not this Naomi?* after the maner of the Hebrewes, is a vsual maner of affirmation, as wee may see in these places of scripture. Where first of al we see the wonderfull mercie of God toward Naomi, which in so many yeares absent, suffred not her memory vtterly to perish, but at the first arriuing, did publish her name, and comfort her sorrowes. Thus God hath many blessings in store for the relieuing of his poore afflicted saints, and surely hee is carefull that the candle of the righteous be not put out for euer. But as in one day (after many yeeres sorrow for Ioseph & famine for bread, Iacob receiued tidings of the welfare of his sonne, and prouision for his familie, euen so the Lord compasseth about the faithfull with songs of deliuerance, that though heauines indure for a night, yet ioy commeth in the morning. Let vs therefore with the losse, and laying downe of our owne liues, confesse the goodnes of the Lord, for as he draue the king of Babilon for seuen yeares from the throne of maiestie, to the wilderses of wild beasts, so he called him againe, and restored to him his scepter and seate, established his kingdome all the dayes of his life. Therefore feare not, feare not my beloued, haue we now famine? we shal haue plety again: Do we carry forth our seed weeping? We shall come again with plentifull sheaues. Haue we sowed in teares? wee shall reape in ioy. Haue we bin strangers in other lands? we are come home with Naomi to the City of God his people: and finally, those that feare the Lord shall bee as mount Sion, which can neuer be moued: for as there

Gen. 18. 14.
17.
Numb. 32. 1.
Iud. 6. 31.
2. Sam. 3. 8.
Gen. 45. 28.
Psal. 30. 6.
Dan. 4. 33.
37.

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is a time to mourne, so there is a time to reioyce, and as the wicked shall haue measure for measure, so the godly shall receiue reward, for reward: Secondly, by these words we obseruе the fruit of charitie, or duties of neighbours and acquaintance: for as these Citizens of Bethlehem came to see and to comfort Naomi, so must euery one beare some part of his brothers or sisters, for now, in relieuing their troubled minds by their presence and speech. Wee read that Mary went to her cosin Elizabeth being with child, that they might commune & comfort theselues in the promises of the Lord. We read how the Iewes accompanied Mary and Martha, weeping for Lazarus, and the same also we read was done at the death of Dorcas. What shal I say of the foure mē which brought the sicke of the palsey vnto Christ: and most excellent is the fellowship of the Saints in the primitiue Church, which are said to continue and abide together with one accord, in praier & breaking of bread, so that their spiritual comfort of praying, and temporall refreshing of corporall foode, were priuate to any, but also for their comfort, as a young child is wrapped in his swadling cloaths, so was the infancie of Christs church maintained by the company of their faythfull fellowship. Oh that wee could loue and liue thus together, in the bond of vnitie, and Christian concord, that as we are members of one body, so we should not be so strange one to another, as if the eye had neuer seen the foote, or the head neuer knowne the legges: such is the scornefulnes of our age, wherein men are ashamed of Christ in his members, if they be a litle fallē into decay, how hardly will they cōfort them, as these Ephrathites do Naomi, a poore widdow now, though once a noble woman. They wil rather curse thē with Shemef, than blesse thē with Tziba, but let the faithfull like feeling members of their brethrens afflictions, looke vpon the Naomies in our daies, some are poore and friendlesse, other sick & harborlesse, some sorrowfull, some hungry & many destitute, let vs gather to vs these members of Christ, our company will more refresh them then our contribution, our talke more then our almes, but feeling

Psa. 125. 1.

Luc. 1. 39.
Ioh. 11. 33.
Act. 9. 39.
Mar. 2. 4. 40

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ling and fellow-prayers, more then the distribution of our money, let vs lay hold on that, and yet forget not this, for as God hath giuen both to vs, so he looketh we should giue both to other. Thirdly, by this we obserue, how the world is woont to comfort one another, for these Bethlemits say vnto her, *Is not this Naomi*? that is, they comfort her with the consideration of her name, which in Hebrew signifieth beautifull or pleasant, as if they had said vnto her, Although thou art old, yet thou art beautifull, for thou remaineſt Naomi still, thy name is a prophet vnto thee, to forewarn thee of thy welfare, and if thou be now like the stubble after the crop, yet thou shalt shortly be as the green hearb or pleſant plat, comfort thy self, Iacob always preuailed with God, because his name was alwaies Israel: the doue shall bee chast, because it is a doue: the eie shal be bright, because it is an eie, & Naomi shalbe, blessed, because she is Naomi. Thus worldly persons wish worldly things, & the best they desire most, is outward prosperitie. Neither is this simply vnlawfull, for such as is the sore, such must be the salue, and where the wound is, the medecine must be ministred: if in the world they bee oppressed, in the same they may not onely wish, but pray for release, yet alwaies remember, that friendes and parties must so desire and request it, as may bee most for the glory of God. Therfore this is our dutie, that in praying for earthly benefites, we aime at God his will, but in desiring spiritual blessings, we must regard our saluatiõs. And more also, we must not so rauish the mindes of the worldly afflicted, as if they had no other hope, but this temporall welfare: but so promise the blessings of God, as they may haue a spirituall signification, for worldly miserie is abated but with euerlasting felicity.

*And Naomi said.* In these words Naomi answereth to the comforts of her friends, & telleth the she rather deserueth to be called Mara, then Naomi, that is bitter then beautifull: whereby shee teacheth vs how vaine are outward and worldly titles: for which cause Iames wisheth vs not to be called many masters, knowing we shal receiue the greater damnation, as if he had said,

Iam. 3. 1.

worldly

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worldly honor bringeth death, but desire or loue of eternal comforts, cause damnation. When the arke of God was taken by the Philistines, & the sons of Heli both slain, the wife of Phinehas, the son of Heli, died after his trauaile, & named her son Ichabod: which is by interpretation, wher is the glory? although there a manchild was borne, yet the woman forgat not her sorrow, because the Arke of God was taken by the heathen, for if shee were the daughter to the chiefe in Israel, as shee was, and wife to the third, yet what glory had she of her place, when her husband was iustly slaine, and her people ouercome, therfore she called her son (no glory) for neither dignity of place, highnes of birth, fruitfulnes of children, or the dominion ouer a whole countrey, may minister any comfort to them whome the Lord hath hũbled. Rabel that bid Iacob giue her childrẽ, or els she should die, at the birth of her second child died, and yet had children, she supposed if she were made fruitful, & had many children, she could not chuse but liue in felicitie; but hauing the first, she called him Ioseph, because God would adde more, yet at the second, she called him Ben-oni, which is the son of her sorrow, because she died in trauaile, so that she which accounted bearing of children her chiefest ioy, by that which she loued, came her greatest sorrow. Thus Naomi, which was once as beautifull and pleasant in prosperity as any, yet now in aduersity, who more bitter then she, yea, the very remẽbrance of her name increaseth her griefe. Were she the daughter of a Prince, yet now being a begger, it is a greater discomfort vnto her, then if she had been born poore, for mans nature is like a pleasant plant, which prospereth whẽ it groweth higher & higher, but decaieth if it fal lower and lower: if Naomi had bin a Lady, yet hauing lost her husband, children, & wealth, the cogitation of her woonted welfare, encreaseth her disquietnes, euen as Phinehas his wife and Rahel, at the birth of their children. Why thẽ do men thus highly esteem of worldly vain-glory? Cannot one measure of honour afford one mite of cõfort to a distressed persõ? Do not mẽ because they are proper, wax proud, & because they

1Sam.4.21

Gen. 30. 7.

Gen.35.18.

are

are learned, proud, ambitious, what then is the fruit of worldly titles? is pride the reward of proportion? lofti-tines of worship? scornfulnes of riches? and ambition of learning? surely these things in the day of trouble, cā minister no medicine to make ease, if godlinesse be not with them. What was Achan the better for his gold, when he was stoned to death? Absolon for his beauty, when he was hanged? Haman for his honour, when he was mounted vpon his owne gallowes? the sorcerers of Egypt for their knowledge, when darkenes was ouer the land? or Herod for the peoples voyce, whē they cried a God and not man, and the wormes fell vpon him and cōsumed him? Trust not therfore in Princes, much lesse in the titles of princes, in the strength of an horse, much lesse in the wealth of man: say not, I shall be the better because I am a gentleman, a doctor, or a noble man, for when Salomon had considered al these things, he said all is vanitie and vexation of spirit.

Ecc. 1. 17. 18

*For the Almighty hath.* This is the reason wherefore she denieth her name, or rather chāgeth it, shewing that her first name had nothing in it which did expresse the relation betweene her selfe and it, but her second name doth most significantly declare her bitter affliction. Where we first of all obserue the cause which moued the fathers to giue such names to their children, which to signifie or put them in mind of their dutie or some other euent. So God called the first man Adam, which is as much as man or earthly, because hee was made of the earth, or the red earth: so Adam called his wife *Chauwath* (which we call Heuah, by reason of the Hebrew letters) because shee should be the mother of al liuing: the like may bee said of Noah, Seth, Abraham, Isaac, Israel, Samuel, Iohn Baptist, and many others, who being named either by the Lord himselfe or by other, were so called, to put them in mind of their duties, or to note the thankfulnes of their parents. The which is also lawfull for godly parents now to imitate, in giuing such names to their children, as may bee notes to all the world of their profession. But some cannot brooke this liberty, accounting it pownes and precisenes

Gen. 1. 27.
Gen. 3. 20.

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cisenes in them that vse it, as though it were a deadlie sinne one iot to depart from the custome of the multitude. But this curiosity is well confuted by the name of Iohn Baptist ancestors must not alwayes bee followed, those which are new creatures in Iesus Christ, may also haue new names. Luc. 1. 59. 60 But in this, the world bewraie their palpable ignorance, for they liked the olde names, which were very plaine in their owne tongue, wherein they were giuen, but English names they cannot abide belike for very feare, least their names should bee witnesses of condemnation against their licentiousnesse. Againe, they account it a glory proper to a few persos to be called by the worldly surnames of some of their great auncestours; but they will not beare these names of reioyceing, thanksgiuing, repentance, godlines, mercy, constancie, and such like, they will as easily admit them, as a deafe Adder the voice of the charmer. But let the godly in this vse christian wisedome and auncient liberte, for that which was lawfull in this point in the first age, the Iewes common wealth, & the Primitiue church with the practise of all ages since, is also lawfull for the to giue holy and significant names to their children, for I would haue all (if it were possible) to haue no other names but such as they vnderstand: if they bee called by the names of the ancient fathers kings or prophets, which we read of in the scriptures, it is also needfull that they vnderstand the liues and the dispositions of those persos, that as they haue them for the euidence of their names, so they might looke vpon them, as the examples of their faith and manners.

Secondly, by this we note, what God his children thinke of their suffering, which Naomi setteth out by this word *Bitternesse*, for bitternes of all other tastes doth most dull the sense, and corrupt the stomacke, so that they account their afflictions, as sharpe to them as tounie, and may as lawfully complaine of them vnto the Lord, This I speake for instruction of them that are ignorant, and the comfort of the afflicted. First for instruction, beeause some thinke they are not truely religious, except they feele their miseries no more than a



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stone, when they are afflicted, and this maketh them so to wauer and doubt of themselues, that in their great plagues, they can hardly receiue any comforte, being alwayes troubled with this, that if they were faithfull they should delight more in their tribulations, yet beloued, marke a little, Naomi calleth it in this place bitternes, as if shee had called the enemie to her health, for when Peter would expresse the daunger of Simon Magus, because he offered mony for the gift of the holy Ghost, he telleth the he is in the very gall of bitternes, by that metaphor or allegory, declaring the loathsomenes of sin to his soule, as bitternes to the body. Dauid saith, that his affliction was his death, as if hee had said, euen as a man striueth to be deliuered in the pangs of death, so he from his tribulation. Iob that mirror of patience, did so delight in his sufferinges, that in one place he seemeth to accuse God himselfe, to adde to his transgressions, that is, to make his sins seem greater the they were, & how doth he desire to pleadwith God about his affliction, and cursed the day and houre of his death? Our sauiour would neuer haue warned vs that in the world we shuld haue sorrow and Lamentation, had he not knowne that the smart of our sufferinges would thrust forth aboundance of teares, through the vehemency of the paines, and presently he addeth a secret comparison between a woman in trauaile, and a christian in persecution, so that as the one hath most vehement sorrowes and pitifull lamentations, so also may the other: infinite testimonies might bee brought for the proofe of this, to teach vs that God his children are made of flesh, as well as of spirite, and the flesh is weake, though the spirit bee willing: therefore wee may feare, and crie vnder the burthen of our paines, that our afflictions are bitter vnto us, and that the hand of the Lord is grieuous vppon vs. Againe, for the comfort of the godly I speake this, that if any haue more grieuously complained of their sufferinges, let them impute it to the sharpnes of their paines, and the weakenes of their natures: wee see this Naomi calleth bitternes vnto her, such as shee would not willinglie

Act 8.23.

Psa 31.10

Ioh. 16.18. 19.

take

take, except it were for the phisicke of her soule, and now almost ten yeares space this griefe hath growen vpon her, so that it may seeme of al others she was most grieued, for now shee vttereth her minde as freshly, as if the potion were yet vndigested in the stomacke. Be comforted therefore my sorrowfull brethren and sisters, you see you are not alone in this miserie, for Dauid, Iob, Naomi, Annah, Nehemiah, and many other are as far indebted to the Lord in this poynt, as euer was any: striue to suppresse it by prayer, & quench it by singing of Psalmes; neither let vs iudge but charitably of those which in this case are troubled, be it for the losse of their children, the death of their husbandes, the decay of their wealth, or the lacke or want of their health. If they seeme impatient and weaker then our selues, let vs beare part of their burthens vppon our christian comforts, that they with vs, and we with them, like feeling members of the same infirmities, may sustaine our crosses by our mutuall supplications, and obtaine our deliuerance by the bloud of Christ.

*I went out full.* In these words she amplifieth her former complaint by this comparison of a full vessell and an empty, shewing that as the fullest vessell is the soundest and the emptiest good for nothing, so it fareth with her, when she looketh vpon her former life, when shee went forth shee had plentie, but now shee returneth in want: then she was sound, but now broken; then ioyfull, but now sorrowfull: why should she be called pleasant or beautifull, or by her old name, seeing God hath humbled her, whereas in times past he vphelde her in prosperitie, but now hee hath cast her downe into aduersitie. Where wee first of all obserue the nature of worldly prosperitie, which to day is like a full vessell, but to morrow like an emptie, now it is greene, anone it is withered, now it groweth, anone it is cut down, now like Nabuchadnezzar sitting vppon his throane, with his Counsellors and Courtiers of estate about him, but anone both Court and Countrey driue him to the companie of wilde beastes, for as a little breach empteth the barrell, so a little trouble



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bringeth worldly welfare to wallow in the mire. Therefore we read pf noue, either king or country, which had such a prosperous estate, but it had one enemie or other to work his woe; if we consider the reigne of Salomon, where gold was innumerable, and siluer as plentifull as stones, yet it wanted not his miseries, the people were punished by payments to their prince, the king was threatned with the losse of ten parts of his kingdome, & God stirred Hadad the Edomite against him, where ended their peace. Where is then the royaltie of Salomon? was it not cast downe in one day, his riches consumed, his buildings burned, his children captiuated, his wisedome turned into idolatrie, his prosperitie decayed, and all his honour ouerturned? Oh, hat worldlings would consider thier fickle estate, and be admonished of their imminent danger: the Lord puteth the into his ballance, and finding them too light, casteth them out. Ieremy saith, they are but fatted sheepe, kept for the day of slaughter, now in the pasture, & presently in the fire, they are but aduaunced to be cast downe againe, as the vessell is filled to be emptied in due time, the eares which are now filled of corn in the field, anon shall lie without on the dunghill, Babilon the queene of the world, which ruled as yet, was troden down, & made seruaunt, Tyrus that crowned men with her wealth, was consumed by water: for the Lord of hosts decreeth all this, to staine the pride of glory, & to bring to contempt all that be mightie vpon the earth. Weep, weepe O daughters of honor, the daies wil come when ỳ reder shal not be regarded, for your wealth shall not alwaies endure, the crowne abideth not frõ generation to generation, your houses shall bee ouerturned, your names forgotten, your children impouerished, your glory defaced, your inheritance changed, your welfare powred ou the earth like water, and your worshippe shall bee neuer repayred. This haue God his dearest children felt, and the greatest trees haue beon scorched with the fire of God his wrath, for hee is not delighted in worldly brauery, but hath buryed great treasure in the sea, which shall neuer bee found, to keepe mankind

1.Kin.10. 17.

& 11.cap. 11.14.

Ier.12.3.

Esa.23.9.

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kind from the end of his purpose: for this is their honour, they get nothing but with much paine, and in one houre loose labour, life and wealth.

Secondly, that which in our text is, *The Lord hath humbled me*, in the Hebrew is, *The Lord hath testified or witnessed against me*, for by his iudgements he humbleth vs, as it were producing witnesses to accuse vs of our iniquities, as we see in common iudgements, all things passe by euidence, if they be auncient, & by witnesses if they be late, so the Lord when he hath a quarrel against vs, he first prouoketh vs guiltie by witnesses of our sins, and then punisheth vs for committing transgressions. For this cause Moses commandeth the booke of the law to be layd vp in the side of the ark of the couenant, for a witnesse against the people: So the Lorde speaketh by Dauid, Heare O my people, and I will speake, heare O Israel, and I will testifie vnto thee, for I am thy God: and after this he reporteth his witnesses against them, first that their sacrifices were corrupted, that their religion was all outward, they spake well, but did ill. And thus God witnesseth the sinnes of commonweales by the changing of their prince, the sins of publike persons, by casting them out of their office, the sinnes of priuate persons, sometimes by imprisonment, sometimes by scourging or pouertie, & sometimes by sickness, alluding to trials of iudgement, where the noble is condemned for treason, as well as the meaner person for stealing. And this how bouered, hath the Lord testified against vs, our peace hath beene interrupted by warre, our prince by treason, our bankrupting by famine, our excesse by penury, our pride by pouerty, our peoples contempt of preaching by pestilence, and still the Lord iudeth our sin fro his wrath, that we might repent for all. Then we must needs set downe with our selues, what our actions are noted, our prophaning of sabbaths registred, our contempts against God his ministers described, the times of our drunkennesse, idlenesse, & wantonnesse, numbered, our owne consciences examined, the witnesses produced, we arraigned, and now, even now, before God his iudgement seate in danger to

Deut. 31. 26.

Psal. 50. 7.

Pro. 28. 1.

Esth. 7. 9.

Esa. 22. 15.

be euerlastingly condemned, for as Naomi saith, the Lorde emptieth vs of his graces, & testifieth against vs: who shall plead for vs when the iudge knoweth our guiltines, surely, surely, there is no hope of pardon but to the penitent, & patience must be praied for, that our suffering may be eased.

*So she returned with Ruth the Moabitesse with her.*

This verse is the conclusion of this first chapter, where is described the time of Naomies returne vnto Bethlehem from the countrey of *Moab*, which was the beginning of barley harueſt, that the report shee heard in Moab, (how God had visited his people and giuen them bread) might at her first arriuall bee found true: wherein is noted the blessing of God vnto her, that she came in the beginning of harueſt, the pleasantest and profitablest time of all the years. This barly harueſt was in the latter part of the first moneth, and the beginning of the second among the Iewes, which with vs are called March and Aprill, for the warmnesse of those countreyes are such, that their harueſt ripe much ooner then in ours.

By the which also we note, that she had a prosperous successe in her iourney, that euen in those dangerous daies shee came safely to Bethlehem, all those doubts which in the beginning we shewed you, might haue hindred her iourney, shee well ouerpassed: for no doubt in so rare a matter if any lette had bene offered, the holy ghost would not haue omitted it. So that this teacheth vs with Naomi, that as shee was not hindred in her trauaile from Moab to God his people, euen so must not wee be stayed from the profession of true religion. She was an old woman, yet shee would go so tedious a iourney to the companie of the faithfull, therefore let no man think, that age excuseth them from the true worship of God, or sincere profession of religion. She had little companie to encourage her, onely poore Ruth her daughter in law, wayted vpon her, therefore it must not hinder or discourage vs that fewe follow Religion, for Christs flocke is a little flocke, like the first fruits of the harueſt field, which is

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but

but a handfull to many cartloades, Naomi aduentured her body and forsake her goods, to come to the house of the Lord: Oh how colde are our dayes, when men neede neither of both, yea they will hardlie go any farther for knowledge then the vilest Atheist in the worlde: & to conclude, many dangers hung ouer her head, yet by the prouidence of God she escaped all, euen so my brethren admit no delayes, inuent no excuses, receiue no hinderances, imagine no suspitions, and abstaine from all stayes which may let you from comming to the mountaine of the Lord, the companie of the faithfull for blessed are ỳ people, whose God is Ichouah, and it is better to abide but one day in the courts of the Lord, than a thousand years in the pallaces of the wicked, Now let vs giue praise to the Lord.

The end of the fourth Lecture.



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# The fist Lecture.

Ruth, Chapter 2. verse. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

1 *Now Naomies husband had a kinsman, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz.*

2 *And when Ruth the Moabitish said vnto her mother in law, Let me go I pray thee into the field, to gather eares after him, in whose eyes I shall finde fauour, and shee said, Go my daughter.*

3 *And she went and came to gather in the field, after the reapers: and she met with the possession of a field, pertayning to Boaz, who was of the familie of Elimelech.*

4 *And behold when Boaz came from Bethlehem, he said to the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they said, The* Lord *blesse thee.*

5 *And Boaz said to his seruant which was appointed ouer the reapers. Whose is this maide?*

6 *And the seruant which was appointed ouer the reapers, answered and said, This is the Moabitish maid, which came with Naomi from the Countrie of Moab.*

7 *Which came and said, Let me gather, I pray you among the sheaues after the reapers, and so she came, and stayed here from morning vntill night, onely she tarried a little at her house.*

IN the former chapter we heard by our generall diuision, that the occasion of this history was therein contained. but now in these three Chapters following, is declared the meanes whereby this marriage was accomplished, whereof the first is described in this seconde Chapter, which is the acquaintance of Boaz and *Ruth* and the circumstances thereof, as shall appeare in the speciall treatise of euery particular thing. The occasion of this acquaintance is the gleaning of *Ruth* in the field of

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of Boaz. These seuen verse containe two partes, the first and principall part is of Boaz house, the seconde of Ruth. The first part is contained in the 1. 4. 5. 6. 7. ver. wherein Boaz is described, ver. 1. to bee Naomies kinsman by her husband, secondly to bee a man of great welth, in the other verse is set downe his diligence which came to the field to visit his workmen, & view the companie. His actions after he came to the field are, first the salutation of the reapers, ver. 4. and they doo the like to him: secondly he asketh his seruant who Ruth was, ver. 5 To which question the seruant answereth, first telling his Master that it was Ruth the Moabitesse, the companion of Naomi, ver. 6. secondly hee excuseth her gathering, because she asketh leaue, and tarried there but onely that morning, ver. 7.

The second part, which respecteth Ruth, is contained, vers. 2. 3. Wherein first she asketh leaue of hen mother to goe and gather eares, where she should find fauour, and her mother graunteth, vers. 3. Secondly, the place where she gathered is described, which was the field or possession of Boaz, her husbands kinsman. Of these partes let vs briefly speake as the spirit of God shal giue vtterance, and the time permit.

*Ver. 1. Naomies husband.* In this verse is contained the description of Boaz, vppon whome the whole historie following dependeth. This Boaz was the sonne of Salmon, who was sonne to Naasson, the Prince of the hoast of Iudah: the mother of Boaz was *Rahab* the harlot, which receiued the spies of Israel into her house at Iericho, as wee see in Mathew, and is commended for her faith, by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrewes. So that euery way wee see this dignity commended vnto vs: if wee looke for birth, his grandfather was the chiefe of the princely tribe of Iudah: if for authority, he was, saieth this scripture of great power: if for wealth, his inheritance rule, besides he great, who was deriued of such noble ancestours, and the reaping of his corne lasted to the end of all harnest, & the chiefe of all, his religion is excellently commended vnto vs, in the text and history following. So that wee haue not to

1. Chr. 2. 10
Ios. 2. 4. 5.
Math. 1. 4.
Heb. 11. 31.
Cap. 2. 23.

deale

deale here with meane and base personages, being all of a kindred, howsoeuer some are sooner come to decay then other; but out of this we learne many profitable lessons.

First, that seeing Boaz and Elimelech are saide to bee kinsmen, as those which are descended from the same predecessors or ancestry, wee are admonished of the frailty and vanity of worldlie dignity, that howsoeuer parents prouide for the maintenance of posterity, yet the Lord must dispose the decay of their children. Here we see poore Naomi hath a wealthy and an honourable kinsman, yet she is a destitute and a desolate widdow. Her husband and she were no meane persons, but vndoubtedly both descended of noble families: the yeares were but few since the death of Iosuah, vnder whom the inheritance of euery tribe, was giuen by lot, and all the Iewes & Iraelites wealthy professors, yet see this godly Naomi is faine to liue of the gleaninges of her daughter, which neither her parentes, nor her husbande did euer thinke vppon. Beholde therefore as in a glasse, the perfect image of temporall felicity, the Father a King, the children beggars, the father honourable, the sonne not worshipfull, the predecessors the chiefest in authority, but the successors the meanest in calling: this made the Fathers thinke that the world was like the sea, here a mighty waue and there a greate downe fall, some thought it to bee like Ile, where a man can neuer stand sure, but the one will be breaking, or he be sliding, some like to trees, where of the tallest are soonest ouerturned, but all agree in this that worldly felicity is miserable vanitie. For our present wealth is like a pleasant summer, which must needes come to an ende: though all the world should striue to the contrary: it was accounted to King Dauid, for a speciall blessing of GOD, vnto him, and none other, that hee shoulde not bee without a sonne to sit on his seate, if his posterity should obserue his commaundementes: yet we see in Ioseph and Mary the mother of Christ, being both of his offspring, how they could not obtaine

1. Sam. 7. 12



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in his owne Citie, a Chamber to lie in; but were faine to lodge in a stable, so that this is not onely to the wicked, but to the dearest Saints of God. Adam continued not still in paradise, but was cast out, that his felicitie might be heauenly, and not earthly: euen so the posteritie of the righteous are brought into pouertie, that they set not their mindes vppon temporall glory. Therefore the Lorde doth heere correct vs, with pinching pouertie, that there wee should not with the world, be condemned for delighting in vanitie. Then by this wee learne humilitie in our wealth and worship, honour and dignitie; setre not vppe your hornes so high, sayth Dauid and if riches increase, setre not your hearts vppon them; for the Lord resisteth the proude, and giueth grace to the humble and meeke. Wee reade of stately Kings and Emperours, which haue been cast from the throne to the footestoole, of wealthie persons, which in one houre haue beene vtterly vndone, but of children, whose parents were honourable, rich, many thousandes brought to perpetuall miserie. If you feare not your owne estates, yet care for your posteritie, and make much of them whome now you see cast downe, the poore, the destitute, the despised, the miserable: for if Ionathan, in his honour, make of Dauid in his humilitie, when Dauid commeth to his Kingdome, hee will aduance his offspring to his owne Table: euen so if you make much of them that are poore, nowe when you shall bee humbled in your posteritie, the Lorde shall prouide for your issue by these that haue beene fauoured by you. The Wheele of the world runneth rounde, sometime that which was lowest is highest, and that which was highest is made lowe againe: so bee you assured, the Lord aduanceth dayly out of the dust, to sitte with princes, therefore make you friendes of the vnrighteous Mammon, that when you shall haue neede, they may receiue you into their euerlasting habitations. Distribute liberally, giue plentifully, liue peaceably, walke humbly; for the wealth of the world doth not

Luc. 2 7.

Psal. 62. 10.

alway last, neither the crown from generation to generation.

Secondly, by this we gather, that the godly may safely enioy great possessions, & of the blessings of God be exceeding rich men: but some will say: indeede they may bee wealthie, but with the hazard of their soules, for Christ sayth, How hardly shall they which haue riches, enter into the kingdome of God: it is easier for a cable to go through the eye of an needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of heauen. Then if the danger of it be so great, the poorest condition is the safest welfare. I graunt you, but Christ speaketh of carnall wealthy, which make their goods their God, as after he saith, those that put their trust in their riches. Of this sort the world was neuer fuller: as on the contrary, of the other there was neuer fewer, you shal haue them in all places which speake against the Gospel, because it is an enemy to their liuings and offices, promotions, and honours like Demetrius for Diana, a heathen diuell: you shall haue other that will offer largely to the Gospel, like the yong man that came to Christ, but when it toucheth a little greater cost, then farewell religion. But this is the fault of the men, not of their wealth, and yet I am perswaded that there are many wealthie Abrahams, which will giue of the tenthes of their possessions, to the heauenly Melchisedech Iesus Christ, many Lots, that will harbour the angels of God, and rather wish violence to their owne daughters, then to the righteous: and finally, like to this Boaz in riches and religion, of whom we daily pray the Lord increase the number.

Luc. 18. 25.

Thirdly, we see in this Boaz an excellent example of the reward of religion and faith, for wee haue heard that he was the sonne of Rachab, which receiued the spyes of Iosuah, who afterward was married to Salmon the son of Nabasson, by whome came this godly and wealthie Boaz. In this then we see, that the saying of the Apostle, that godlinesse hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come: for in her selfe she was blessed with an honourable marriage, in her posterity with

a god-

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a godly and a wethy sonne. This my beloued is a notable encouragement to religion, for Christ sayeth that whosoeuer shall for him forsake father and mother, wife or children, shall receiue many times so much in this world, but eternall saluation in the life to come. This Luc. 18. 30.
aunswereth and stoppeth the mouthes of the enemies which call the professors, Bankeruptes, impouerished and decayed persons, yea as base as beggers in this world which by their religion vndoe themselues, and their posterity. But on the contrary wee affirme that religion bringeth no discommoditie, euen in worldly things the reason is, because it teacheth vs to vse our riches aright. If a man had mountaines of money, and knew not how to imploy it, what profite could he receiue thereby? euen so surelie, without Christ and his gospell, I meane the true knowledge thereof, there is no lawfull vse of these worldly benefites, and except euery one learne to apply them by the word of God, he possesseth his wealth; as a thiefe doth the purse of a true man, and in the presence of God is no better then a violent robber, which taketh away the money from the lawfull possessors which haue prooued and learned the way to vse it, and as they haue it without his knowledge, euen so they shall vse it without his blessing. Therfore be not discouraged my deare brethren, come forward: in religion it is the deuill that telleth you, you must make bread of stones, that is, you must relie vppon the world, and follow the custome thereof; there is greater plenty and store in the garners of God his word, then in all the cornfieldes of the world. He which could feede fiue thousande people with fiue barley loaues and two fishes, hath he not enough for the maintenance of thy family? Hee which fed Ioh. 6. 13.
the hoast of Israell almost forty yeares with Angelles foode: are not the heauens his for euermore? when almost all the world was in a famine, did hee not prouide for his seruant Eliah, first commaunding the rauens to bring him breade and meate, morning and euening to the brooke Chetith, and that being dried vp, sustained him with a widdow and her son, by a handfull of meal & a little oyle for a long season. Did not our 2. King. 1 3. 4.

gracie

2 King. 5. 12 gracious father multiplie the oyle of a poore prophets
34 widdow into many vessels, which before could not fill
one? And what shall I say more? I haue neuer seene
the righteous forsaken, or their children left destitute;

*And Ruth.* After the holy ghost had set down the de-
scription of Boaz, as the necessarie occasion to vnder-
Vers. 2. 3. stand that which followeth, in the next place hee ex-
presseth this of Ruth. Wherein he sheweth vs the care-
fulnesse of Ruth, for her mother and her selfe being in
a strange place, would not in hunger harbor at home,
but rather aduenture her perill in an honest labour, by
going abroad to gleane in the fieldes, therefore to her
mother she commeth and asketh leaue, which beeing
granted, forth shee goeth, the prouidence of the Lord
directing her iourney, she commeth to the harueft field
of Boaz her kinsman.

Where first of all wee gather, what manner of life
they lead after they came to Bethlehem, namely, a very
poore, base, and a despised estate, not halfe so good to
see to, as that which they lead and liued among the
Moabites, insomuch as one may nowe say vnto mee,
you told vs euen now, the golden rewardes and preci-
ous commoditie of true Religion, which it bringeth
to al them that faithfully receiue it, but you see these two
godly women, as armed examples against your selfe,
they liue wealthily in Moab, but poorely in Iudah,
with the wicked they found gentle liberalitie, but with
the godly they endure woefull pouertie. What cold
entertainement doe they find at Bethlehem, euen in the
Church of God, for whose sake one forsooke her coun-
trie, the other her wealth, and both of them their wel-
fare? so that the profession of Religion looseth our
friendes, denieth our country, disqueteth our peace, in-
gendreth our trouble, consumeth our wealth, and de-
cayeth our substance. Is this the profit of your professi-
on, which promiseth mountaines of securitie, and pay-
eth multitude of miseries? How shall wee be incoura-
ged to Religion, when at the first entrie we shall pay so
great an in-come, and depart from a fine worth all our
substance? To this I answere, that if the beginning bee

not

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not so ioyful as you or they wished: yet in the end answered their expectation, I grant, you shal first finde a little want, but in the end you shall possesse a great gaine. A man that hath a thousand poundes laid beside him, and layeth it out vppon a bargine, whereof hee shall receiue no profite in many yeares, but the date expired and the day of receite come, he receiueth his own, and many thousand pounds for his gaine, you will graunt at the first he emptieth his coffers and bags, and leaueth him selfe bare and monylesse, yet you would account him a foole, if he would not vpon sure bands of so great aduantage aduenture his owne, and giue foorth his monie: Euen so it is in religion, it is a pearle for which we must sel both liuing & lande, and yet it is woorth both and many a thousand times more: if thou feele not the profite at the first, tarry a while, thou hast the promise & band of the Lord of hoasts, he is able and willing to performe and pay at the time appointed, and if thou canst abide a little want of earthly commodities, shortly thou shalt see them rolling vppon thee in excellent abundance and exceeding quantities. And this teacheth vs with what minde we must embrace religion, not for any present commoditie, or temporall gaine, but with denial of our liues and riches, that they may serue vs as ordinarie expenses in our iourney to euerlasting saluation, the kingdome of heauen. For they are much deceiued, that receiue the truth to increase their wealth, making Christianity a gainefull trade, for although it hath the promises, yet it hath not alway the possession of thinges in this life, but as the right heyres are many times put beside their inheritances, which are possessed by vnlawfull owners, so the godly are the right heyres of the whole world, although the wicked haue driuen them out of possession, for the which the Apostle said, that godlines hath the promises of this life, and also of the life to come. Againe, those promises that the meeke shall possesse the earth, and their seede shall inherite the land, and especiallie, that the verie same which are the elected heyres of grace, are also the appointed inheritours of this world.

But

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But this my beloued must establish our minides, that as the seed which is cast into the ground, seemeth for a long season to be lost, yet in the end, reuiueth for the comfort of mankind, and the great profite of the possessors, so although at the first, the fruits of religion is perhaps vnpleasant, but sharpe in worldly affaires, nyuertheless wee waite like the husbandman vntill harueste, our conciences shall bee plentifull garners of heauenly comfort, for the present comfort of our liues, and the perpetuall benefite of our soules. A man dresseth his vineyarde all the yeare long, and doth nothing but empty his purse, and weary his body in the tillage and pruning and digging thereof, yet there is but one vintage or time of gathering grapes, euen so we must willingly depart with our wealth and trauail in diligence, for the preparing of our soules to beare fruit to the Lord, and the end will bee most profitable, though the beginning seem most chargeable. The like may be said of the Marchant, which cutteth the seas, of the Goldsmith that meltetb his mettall, and of euery worldly trade which at the first begin with charges, but at the last acquite the cost, and satisfie the desire, & end with the encrease of substance, which are but carnall and outward things, to put vs in minde of inward and spirituall significations, for as in none of these we are discouraged by the costlie entrances, so more accursed shal we be, if wee forsake the Well of the water of life, the running fountaine of euerlasting health, to rake in the puddles of transitory riches, for feare the one will giue vs bad much ease, and for feare the other will withdraw our wealth, which is like the Gergesites sin, which had rather possesse their heardes of swine, then inioy the presence and preaching of Iesus Christ. Come not so religion for hope of worldlie abundance, for neither Abraham, or the Israelites, or Rachab, or Ruth, or Zacheus, or Cornelius, or any of the faithfull had this intention. But the Lord for our farther strengthning hath giuen two blessings, that if the temporall fail which are but conditionall, yet the euerlasting benefits shall neuer determine, for although the leaues fall, yet the bodies of the trees abide continu-

Gen. 12. 1.
Exo. 12. 38.
Ios. 6. 29.
Heb. 19. 8.
Act. 10. 1.

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continually. Therfore let vs ſtay our mindes vpon this doule ſtring, which is grounded vppon the credite of him that giueth the promiſe, before whom heauen and earth ſhall decay, and the ſunne ſhall looſe his light, rather then he fraſtrate the hope of the godly.

Secondly, here wee note a moſt excellent example of obedience to parents, and auoyding of idlenes, Ruth was lately come to Bethlehem, where it is likely ſhee might long haue tarried, before her mother would haue entreated her to ſo baſe a labour as gathering of barley, but ſeeing her ſelfe employed in nothing, firſt ſhee commeth to her mother, and after asketh leaue, as one deſirous of ſome honeſt, though neuer ſo ſimple a calling. If ſhee had departed, not acquainting her with it, being to labour for their liuing, ſhee might well be excuſed: but this ſeemeth much, that ſhee muſt come vnto her, not to tell her ſhee would go to ſuch a buſines, but to giue her leaue to gleane in the fieldes, promiſing ſhee would not go beyond her boundes, but onely gather in that place, where the owner thereof ſhould grant their licenſe: vnto which when the mother had graunted, foorth ſhee goeth to the fielde of Boaz, Where wee ſee what effect godlines worketh in the hearts of children, for Ruth offered her ſeruice, which her mother intreated not, ſhe abhorred no labour, were it neuer ſo baſe, ſhee was not aſhamed of her pouertie, euen in a ſtrange countrey: and all this muſt bee imputed to her religion. For as Ioſeph for the feare of God, bore with the wrath of his father, when he told him his viſion of the ſun and the moone, and the eleuen ſtars bowing vnto him: ſo did Ruth with the poore eſtate of her mother in law, which had nothing to liue by: thus the Apoſtle teacheth children to obey their parents in all thinges, that is, not onely to be willing to performe their commandements but alſo to bee alway contented with their eſtate, for this wretchednes of curſed children, is worthie to bee condemned, wherein thoſe which haue wealthie parents, will pleaſe them, till they haue gotten their riches, which are like the prodigall ſonne in the Goſpell: other becauſe their parents

Gen. 37. 10

Eph. 6. 1



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are

are poore, will thinke they are bound vnto them in nothing, because they haue little or no wealth to leaue behind them: both these kindes of children are here condemned by the example of Ruth, who did not onely forsake her wealth to goe with her mother, but also labor with her hands to maintaine her liuing, yea, to her step mother, which is more commendable then if it were done to her naturall parents. The vse of this doctrine is, to exhort and stirre vp parents, to bee more carefull to teach their children the feare of the Lord, then to leaue them mountaines of riches behind them, which if they will practise, would their countenances be so sorrowfull as often they are? would not their naturall oliues, I meane their children, anoint their faces with the oyle of cheerefulnes? if mothers either would or could doe as Naomi did for Ruth, teach their children the feare of the Lord, their hearts should not bee so heauie, for their vngracious life. But since parents had no care to instruct their children, children had no feare to disobey their parents. Will they in these daies acquaint their fathers & mothers with their iournies & labors? or returne not they headlong to their own vtter vndoing? they chuse them masters and seruices without fathers consent, they marry and are married against parents good will: doe they not take pleasure for profit, & pastime for godlines? thinking themselues to be born for wantonnesse, referring the care of their old age to their gray headed parents, and neuer considering til beggery catch their bodies, and damnation their souls. Surely, as their fruit is sower because it is not grafted, so their manners are wicked, because they want religion: this lieth then in the ouer-louing parents, who make such dandling of their babes, while they are yong, that they care not for their fathers, when they bee old. They consider not, that Lyons are tamed when they are yōg, that trees are bowed when they are twigges: And that Salomon sayth, Instruct a child when hee is yong, the way of his life, and when he is old, hee shall not depart from it. Their owne ignorance is so palpable, that their children learne nothing but follie: they themselues so vaine, that the other are wanton: they so obstinate, that

Pro. 22. 6.

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their seede is rebellious, and finally, a wilde vine bringeth foorth nothing but wild grapes, and ignorant parents must haue vngracious children. Therefore seeing by nature you would haue obedient and wise children, teach them the feare of the Lord, for that is the beginning of wisedome, and if you would haue your names in your posterity long to endure, the praise of it continueth for euer. Thirdly, here wee may note an example of christian honesty, one of the fruites of religion; for she telleth her mother, she would go gather where shee could get leaue, as if the holy Ghost had saide, the gleaninges are for the poore, yet poore men must not take them, without the consent and fauour of the owners. The Lord euery where exhorteth to giue to the poore, but he neuer bid the poore take where they found, vnknowing to the possessor: but they must as Ruth heere doeth, not take their right, the very gift of the Lorde, without the fauor of man. This condemneth the rashnes of many, which thinke if they bee poore, that men are bound to giue to them, and small matters they may take freely, without the consent of him that possesseth it: yet we see not onely religion, but also plaine reason to gaine-say it: for the least thing a man hath is his own, as well as the greatest, & one law condemneth the taking of a handfull, and a bushel of corne, though the offence bee not great. But some say, it was permitted by the Lord, that a man might take the eares of corne and rub them in his hand and eate them, as the disciples did, without the consent and trespasse of the possessor: he might also take a bunch of grapes & eate them, and likewise the fruit of the orchard, by the same law, and therefore we may take without the consent of him that possesseth it. I aunswere, if the question bee made of an apple, or an eare of corn, or a bunch of grapes, as then it was permitted, so I thinke, there is none that will now stand in it: but then you must remember by the same lawe, that no man might put a sickle into the corne to reape down a handfull, neyther yet fill anie little measure with grapes or apples without the consent of the owner. But now men will take great measures

Pro. 17.
Psa. 111. 10
Leuit. 19. 9
Deut. 15. 7
1. Cor. 8. 7.
Deu. 23. 24. 25.



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and quantities, and yet thinke not themselues satisfied, and being winked at for once, yet will not proceed till they be forbidden. and then will they vncharitably and vngodlie report of such men as wil not suffer their goods to be spoyled by them.

Lastly, when her mother had graunted, foorth she goeth, and commeth to the possessions of Boaz, her kinsman: where we may behold the hand of the Lorde fauouring her diligence, and leading her to the appointed place where among all other she might bee, as shee was most gently intreated: for shee a silly straunger, knowing none beside her mother, not acquainted with people or countrey, was ignorant whether to goe but God which directeth the goings of all, ordered her footsteps to his possession, where first shee should finde fauour and feeding, that by this meanes the waye for her marriage might be prepared. Where we see an excellent example of the prouidence of God, looking vpon the poorest as well as the richest, and working all thinges in the world from the highest to the lowest. Hee which directeth the descending of the sparrowes vppon the ground, doth he not also consider the goinges of the poore. It is no dishonour to him, (as some woulde haue it, that they might more freely giue themselues to iniquitie) to note euery vile and loathsome thing in the world, or to looke vpon the base as well as the best: surely if any thing be vncomely, it is to the sinfull, but to him which is alwayes righteous are all thinges pure. What parents doe not loue the basest partes of their childrens bodies, which were borne of themselues? yet greater is the loue of God vnto vs, then the loue of a mother to her own sonne, neyther doth he, nor can he but loue the meanest worke of his creation] as well as chiefest and the silly flye as well as the stately king. Oh how doth this comfort vs more then all the worlde beside, when we know the king of glory beholdeth our nakednes and pouerty, and giueth his Angels charge ouer vs, that not the poorest Lazarus may be lost, but our bodies eyther eased with reliefe, or parted from life, our soules may ascend to the bosome of Abraham. Euen

Mat. 10. 14.

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euen he which directeth the seruant of Abraham to the city of Nachor, and brought Rebecca out to draw water, and moued her answere to his prayer, her curtesie to satisfie his expectation, did also lead Ruth to the fieldes of Boaz, and guideth all the faithfull to the end of their desires, knowing the counsels of the heart, disposing the wordes of the mouth, feeding the hungrie with good thinges, and sendeth the rich away emptie, cōducting vs al for his mercies sake to walk in his paths of righteousnes.

*But behold*, After these thinges set downe by the holy Ghost concerning Ruth, he returned to Boaz againe, and this verse is the beginning of the second parte of that which respecteth him, in the which is declared his comming from Bethlehem, his salutation to the reapers and their answere to him againe.

By the which wee gather the duty of all maisters of families, and greate persons in the world, which is, not onely to be carefull their busines be performed by other, but also that themselues as the eye witnesse of their seruants fidelity, should looke ouer their labours, This we may see in Boaz, hee commeth from the Citie to the haruest field; hee had committed the care of the Reapers to a trustie seruant: yet not contented therewith in his own person he commeth to the worke And surely, this diligence of Lords and maisters, causeth faithfull labourers and seruants: as the idlenes and negligence of the one causeth the vnfaithfulnes and slacknes of the other, for whiles the Maisters follow their worldly pleasures, the seruantes omit their carefull businesse. Therefore we may read in the building of the first & second temple, there were ouerseers of the worke, beside the ordinary labourers: and often times would king Salomon, and Nehemiah come in their own persons to view the workes. The like may we reade of Elisehahs host, which was abroade in the field with his reapers, when his little sonne fell sicke, insomuch as this seemed a point of necessitie, that euery one, whome the Lord hath made a maister of possessions, although hee labour not, yet must hee certifie him-

1.Kin.5.16

2.Kin.4.18

himselfe of his labourers diligence, with his owne eye sight, which condemneth many inferiour maisters, of negligent slothfulnes, and idle negligence, in not regarding their worldly talentes giuen them of God, but referring the disposition to their stewardes and seruants refuse in their own persons to deale with God his benefits, as too base thinges for their occupations, which is, the cause that so many maisters fall to be seruants, and so many seruants ascend to bee maisters: their wealth is quickly consumed, & these which woulde not bee their own seruants to keepe themselues in labour and wealth come to be other mens slaues in drudgery or beggery, eyther in themselues or their posterity, as the iust iudgment of God: for he that would not vse his talent, had it taken from him, Therefore seeing this auncient nobility were imployed in their own busines, let not the new & sodaine vpstart wealthy man among vs, disdaine at poore laboring persons, or thinke it any disgrace to do as their fathers did, faithfully to labour in the meanest vocation. Secondly, after Boaz came to the field, he saluteth the reapers, and saith, *The Lord be with you*, & they answered, *The Lord blesse thee*: where wee see the first thing he doth, he prayeth for the labourers, in this his godly salutation, for he wisheth the presence of God to be with them, which is his fauour, for his presence signifieth his fauour and blessing, as absence betokeneth his iudgements and cursings. This we may see in the dedication of the Temple by Salomon, the glory of the
1. Kin. 8. 11 Lord so filled it, that the priests were not able to sacrifice in it, & ỳ Angel saluteth Mary ỳ mother of Christ with the selfe same words, *The Lord be with thee*: wherein hee signified the wonderfull fauour of God vnto her which should be the mother of the Messiah. And on the contrary, the absence of the Lord is the heauy wrath of his ma-
Luc. 1. 28. iesty, as appeareth by that complaint of Dauid, Wil the Lord absent himselfe for euer, or hath hee forgotten to
Psa. 77. 7. be mercifull? and Paul saieth that the wicked are separated with euerlasting destruction from the glory and presence of God. By the which we learn how reuerently we must vse our salutations, least when we wish the fauour of the Lord to be present with others, his mercie

through our vnaduised praier bee absent frō our selues: for how lamentable is it, to heare in many places, with one breath praiers to be powred out for other, and bitter blasphemies against the maiestie of God, with wofull curses to the death of their soules? May wee gather any comfort by these salutations, when men in derision passing by other, shall vse the salutation of Boaz, other wishing they know not what, do as well by their ignorant greeting pray for their owne destruction, as their neighbours prosperitie? such precious balmes let them not come vpon the heads of the righteous, for this is as certaine as the worlde shall haue an end, that all their supplications, either at morning, noone, or euening, are but meere customarie speeches, proceeding of the vsage & manner of men, not of the spirit or religion of the faithful. Yet let it not grieue vs to vse this lāguage of Canaan, the phrase of the scripture, in our ciuill and godly communication: & though all the world cry out, puritanisme, puritanisme, yet blessed is hee that is not offended at Christ. Let the Samaritanes worship in their mountaines, but wee wil worship at Ierusalem in spirit and in truth: & let vs vse in despight of the world, the weightie words of God his spirit, that they may be our owne mother speech, we the children of the Church, & the heires of saluation. But in this it is noted, to bee the dutie of all men, to salute them whom they meete, to pray for the successe of labourers & workmen. For wel we must remember, that except the Lord doe build the house, the builders build but in vaine, and except the Lord doe giue the victorie, what though millions of horses be prepared for ȳ battel? surely it is in vain to rise early, and go late to bed, & eate the bread of carefulnes, to labour hard, and to compasse the world by a thousand deuises, except their own praiers, and the praiers of the faithful, appeare in the presence of the eternal for them. And this noteth the carnal constitutions of many mens hearts amongvs, which rashly enterprise their workes without calling on the Lord, and vnprofitably end them to their own destruction. Oh how it grieueth God his Saints, daily to heare his name abused by swearing,

Iam 3. 11.

Psal. 12. 7. 2



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euen among them that husband the earth. They crye out on their seruants morning and euening, abroade, abroad, to worke, to the field: but who sayth, come let vs first fall downe together, and humble our selues in the presence of God, and call for a blessing vpon our labours, or say thus much, The Lord be with vs: no, no, that will hinder their daies worke, they hire ther seruants to labour, and not to pray. Therfore the Prophet sayth, You sow much, but you bring but little in, you eate, but you are not filled, you drinke, and are not satisfied, you cloath your selues, but you are not warmed, and hee that receiueth wages, putteth it into a broken bag: therefore thus saith the Lorde, Hearken vnto my wayes. This is the plague vpon vs that mind our wealth, and not the welfare of God his Church, therefore wee labour like slaues, but others receiue the benefit by vs: wee imagine the earth bringeth forth of it self, children are borne by nature, the cloudes must needes raine, and our fruites must needes increase: thus wee make many Gods, while wee ascribe the power of God to his creatures. But be not so rude as brute beastes, the dogge will craue his meat at the hands of his master: more accursed are they which pray not for a blessing at the hands of God the father.

Hag. 1.6.

Thirdly, by this salutation of Boaz, wee obserue the dutie of elder persons or superiours, which is, first to salute or speake to their inferiors, as masters to seruants magistrates to subiects, and pastours to their people:, yet against this, in outward behauiour wee haue many and dayly offences, for you shall haue Gentlemen and Yeomen, which will hardly speake to a poore man, being asked a question by him, much lesse whē they meet him will they giue any courteous or friendly greeting. But here we see Boaz, though, honourable, yet humble, saluteth his poore and hired reapers, who condemneth ten thousand that are contrarie minded, for proude and surly persons. Old Eli would speake to yong Samuel, a little boy, though hee were the highe Priest, yet hee scorned not so gentle a childe, what then shall become of this stately person, which beeing saluted, will not salute

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lute againe, as if euery word were gold that commeth from them, so sparing are they to speake to a poore or a simple man, whereas with their betters, their tongs are too bigge for their mouthes, whom they weary with their vnprofitable bablings. This kind of emll spirit will not be cast out till the heart bee humbled, pride abated, sorrow for sinne increased, and the whole man perfectly regenerated, for by thy words thou shalt be iustified, & by thy words thou shalt bee condemned, for an humble heart will shew it with meekenes, but a proude hart will looke strangely.

Fourthly, as Boaz prayed for the reapers, so the reapers returned to him, and sayd, *The Lord blesse thee:* Where wee see a mutuall salutation much commended, for as hee saluted, so was hee saluted, like to the Queene of Shebah, which giueth princely gifts to king Salomon, and Salomon gaue royall rewardes to her againe: so that inferiours are bound, by the same lawe with as kind affection to pray for other, as they themselues were first entreated: for this too much shamefastnes in many is worthie blame, because it doth not onely couer the countenance, but also couer the tongue, leauing them speechlesse, when they are to answere their superiours: but as these labouring reapers vse Boaz, so also must wee any of our betters: which is with reuerence to speake our mindes, and godlines to praye for their welfare: & therfore wee must put on the spirit of meekenes, and euerie one esteeme better of another then of our selus. But some wil say there is no such necessitie of salutation, as you would make it, for Elisehah sending his seruant, commanded him to salute no man by the way, and if any saluted him, hee should not answere them: likewise our sauiour Christ sending his disciples to preach, willed them not to salute any by the way: therfore it is no such signe of pride as you wold make it.

2. Kin. 4. 25

Luc. 10. 4.

To the which I aunswere, first that Elisehah sent his man in wonderfull hast, which respected the life of the Shunamites son, therefore hee willeth him to admit no let or hindrance in his iourney, but with all speed to go forward,

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forward, insomuch as hee should not doe the common courtesie of strangers, either in salutation or answere; Euē so meaneth our sauiour, that his disciples being hastily sent, as it were, to gather the harucst of the Lord, might admit no delay, either in necessary or vnnecessary busines. And this teacheth vs that the labour of preaching excelleth all earthly duties, yea, that al other must serue to it as handmaides and seruaunts, to further the course, and not hinder the proceedings. Therefore this must remaine inuiolable, as grounded on the law of God and men, that courteous and godly salutations are very commendable.

*Then Boaz.* Now in these three verses following insueth the communication had with his seruant, who Ruth was: vnto which his seruant telleth or answereth in the 6. and 7. verses. First, that it is Ruth which came with Naomi from the country of Moab: secondly, that she asked him leaue to gather among the sheaues: thirdly, that shee came but that morning, and had continued till that instant. Where we see the carefulnesse of Boaz in doing good, would know the persons whether they were worthie or not: and the faithfulnesse of the seruant, which so plainely declareth the truth to his master. And this is the pure meaning of the wordes: other doctrine can none be drawen from hence, and therefore let vs giue praise to God for that which hath beene spoken.

The end of the fist Lecture.

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# The sixt Lecture.

Chap.2,verse,8.9 10,11,12,13.14,

8 *Then said Boaz, to Ruth, Hearest thou my daughter, go to none other field to gather, neither go from hence, but abide here by my maidens.*

9 *Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reape, and goe after the maidens: Haue I not charged the seruants that they touch thee not? Moreouer, when thou art thirstie, goe vnto the vessels and drink of that which the seruãts haue drawen.*

10 *Then she fell on her face, and bowed her selfe to the ground, and said vnto him, How haue I founde fauour in thy eyes, that thou shouldst know me, since I am a strãger.*

11 *And Boaz answered and said vnto her, All is told, and shewed me that thou hast done vnto thy mother in lawe, since the death of thy husband, and how thou hast lefte thy father and mother, and the land where thou wast born, and art come vnto a people which thou knewest not in times past.*

12 *The Lord recompence thy Worke, and a full reward be giuen thee of the Lord God of Israel, vnder whose Wings thou art come to trust.*

13 *Then she said, Let me find fauour in thy sight, my Lord for thou hast comforted me, and spoken to the heart of thy Handmaid yet I shal not be like to one of thy maids.*

14 *And Boaz said vnto her, At meale time come thou hether, and eate of the bread, and dippe thy morsell in the vinegar: and she sate beside the reapers, &c.*

N these wordes the holy Ghost declareth the cõmunication which Boaz had with Ruth, for so soone as hee vnderstood who shee was, hee turned his speech from the man to the woman. This conference, according to the number of the persons, hath two partes. The first is of Boaz. and the second, of Ruth. The first parte which respectetb Boaz,

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is the singular curtesie he offereth to Ruth:ver,8.9.14. Wherin first he biddeth her to gleane freely among his maidens,not onely in that fielde, but also wheresoeuer the reapers bestow themselues: secondly,he commandeth his seruants that they do her no iniury, but giue her drinke when she is thirsty, and himselfe called her to meate,and gaue her so liberally, that she being sufficed,left not her mother.

The other part which concerneth Ruth, is her manner of behauiour to this curteous entertainment of Boaz,wherein first shee boweth her selfe to the grounde, verse 10.secondly, she confesseth the greatnes of his kindnes in the same verse, because she was a straunger, and her vnworthines of any benefite,verse 13. because shee should bee as one of his maidens. For this speech of Ruth. Boaz sheweth the cause of all his curtesie, ver. 11, because shee had dealt so well with her mother in law, and had forsaken countrey and kindred to come to the people of God, therefore she deserued to be honourably intreated: secondly he prayeth for her,ver.12 that the Lord would not frustrate his promise, deceiue her hope,but recompence her labour, and shielde her with his wings. Of these partes let vs speake in order, as the spirit shall giue vtterance,and the time permit.

*Then said Boaz.* So soone as he vnderstood who that woman was, whereof hee had demaunded his seruant, hee turneth his speech vnto her, that so soone as might be he might comfort her afflicted pouerty, and testifie any good will to a godly straunger where first of all it is commendable,that he vouchsafeth to call so base a person by the name of daughter, for truely this louing word bewrayeth the tender affection of a godly heart, forgetting his lofty degree, and calling an abiect stranger by the name of daughter,which proueth that hee longed to giue vnto her some comfort of kindnes. This humble and most tender title of daughter and sonne are very vsuall in the scripture,for when the Lord would comfort the Church of the Iewes against the blasphemies of Senacherib and Rabsaketh,he calleth it a virgin
Esay.17.22 the daughter of Sion,as if he had saide, euen as a father



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is carefull for the wealth of his daughter, so doe I watch for the welfare of my Church, in like manner. Christ our sauiour comforted the woman that wept at his death, by name of the daughters of Ierusalem. Luc. 23. 28

Out of the which wee gather this profitable doctrine, that it is one property and duety of an humble minde, to speake kindly where it wisheth friendly, especiallie, when we talke to our brethren, and the professors of the same religion, our hearts must bee as the sweet roses and our words as soft as butter, to supple and refresh their troubled dayes. For wee must not doo as many haue both in their writinges and familiar speeches, comforted them with the vilest reproches, tanting speeches, and vncharitablest titles they could inuent, that the poyson of aspes may seeme to lodge in their mouthes, being by their wordes right deuils, they speake so cursedly: but handle them, if they be faulty with gentle wordes, for men in authority must punish them with the sworde of magistrates, not the wordes of slaunderers, equalles by admonition, not by reuiling: inferiors by petition, not by exclamations. If we will haue humble heartes, wee must shew them by gentle wordes, for out of the abundance of the hearte the mouth speaketh: the faithfull are compared to sheepe which are meeke and silent, but the reprobate to dogs which are alwayes barking & brawling. If we brand other with the marke of contempt, we burne our selues with the iron of an vngodly tongue: many can bee content to distribute their wealth liberally, but their scornfull words disgrace their deuotion, because they taste more of wormewoode, then of the rose: and this I haue noted in many great persons, that their wordes are as kind to their dogs as to the poore, Oh how vnlike are they to the Lorde himselfe, which calleth vs sons to this godly Boaz, which calleth Ruth his daughter, to the Apostle Paul, which called the meanest in the church of God a brother. Why do you forget your selues to be the children of Adam? or rather will you not be their fellowe heyres of grace, & thus raign ouer your brethren in disdaineful speeches, as though heauen were not high inough for you both

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to abide in.

*Go not hence.* Now we are come to another curtesie of Boaz, which consisteth in his commaundement hee giueth to *Ruth*, first that shee should not goe into ane other field to gather: secondly, that she should ioyne her selfe to his maidens: thirdly, that she should follow the reapers whether soeuer they goe: that by this it seemeth: the man was delighted to handle her gently. Was it not sufficient that he suffered her without deniall or reproof, or if he gaue her leaue by name aboue many other (as no doubt but there were many in the field) but hee must admit her into the company of his own maidens: or hauing giuen her that libertie, he must also bid her to follow his reapers, whether soeuer they goe surely this was strange kindnes to a strange woman, to bee intreated more like a daughter then a Moabitesse. nay he addeth the second part of his commandement, telling her that he had charged his seruants quietly to endure her presence, and giue her for her necessity. Where we first of all note the heauenly exãple of godly liberality, how far it differeth from worldly pinch-penies. They giue in gentlenesse, the other in pride: they in chearefulnesse, the other in murmuring, they in liberality, the other in couetousnes: and looke how many degrees the moone is aboue the earth, so many the gifts of the godly surpasse the carnall: the reason of this is, because the one are perswaded to what end they giue, but the other do
Exod. 36. 9. think it to be cast into the sea. We read of the Israelits when the tabernacle of the Lord was to bee builded, they offered so much, that Moses proclãmed they should offer no more: this heate of liberlity is well cooled in this frozen age, for wee haue much ise, but little water: as the ise will afforde no water till it be thawed, so men will giue nothing to the Church, poore, or tabernacle of the Lord, till they be dead: now there is such striuing to go formost in godly contributions, that euery one sitteth still, many plucke from the church, personages, & profits, tithes, & sanctified offringes, but few adde one mite into the Lords treasury. Let the poore be famished, the gospel vnfurnished, the Churches vnbuilded, the

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people

people vntaught, learning contemned, idle and ignorant persons aduanced, and many poore soules condēned for want of the bread of life: yet they say stil, come let vs search for more treasure, let vs take to our selues the houses of God his possession: yea, they spare not the verie altars of the Lord, but thinke it a charge that the sacraments should be so often administred at the cost of the parish. Oh most miserable and vngodly behauior of wicked worldlings, who, like the Lions den, suffer all to come in, but none to come out: like the adamant, which draweth all things, but casteth abroad nothing. Where is the wonted contribution, which in the primitiue Church wee reade? The Apostle commended the Macedonians, that they gaue beyond their power, willingly, not of constraint. Which answereth the carnall obiection of many which say, they must giue of their abundance, so if they haue not abundance, they are exempted from giuing. But the holy ghost would exempt none, for euerie one of his abilitie is bound to giue to Church and poore, none must appeare before the Lord empty, he which had not a lambe, must offer a doue, & sh: which had no more, gaue two mites into the Lords treasurie. The seruant for his wages, the labourer for his hire, the craftsman for his taking, the yeoman for his profits, the gentleman for his office, the noble man for his reuenewes, must euerie one giue somewhat to poore and religiō: but some take from the Church one hundred pounds a yeare, and giue scant an hundred shillings, some haue more, and some haue lesse, & they pray vpon vs as the Eagles on the altars, carrying with their commodities coales of fire, which shall burn both their houses and progenie, because they tooke it from the Lord.

1. Cor. 16. 1
2. Cor. 8. 23

Deut. 16.
Leuit. 18.
Luk. 21. 2.

Secondly, in this kindnesse of Boaz vnto Ruth, this is woorthie to bee noted, that hee commaundeth his seruants to offer her no wrong: for to touch, is to iniurie in many places of Scripture, as when the Lord speaketh by the Prophet Dauid, Touch not mine annoynted, neyther doe my Prophets any harme. That is, neither doe you hurt my Prophets,

Psa. 105. 15
Zach. 2. 8



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or annoynted. And againe by the Prophe Zacharie, Hee that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye, that is, which hurtteth you, harmeth the tenderest place of all his owne body: euen so doth Boaz take it in this place. For well knew that good man that her simplicitie would bee quickly abused by the rigour of his seruants, and we know it hath beene, and also is a common plague to most of the godly, euill & discourteous seruants, as appeareth in the history of Abraham and Lot, and very often the masters which are well affected in religion, are abused by their seruants, in their friendes. If they bee worshipfull, then the seruants will churlishly entertaine those godly persons which resort to their masters houses: if they bee higher, they will scorne them: if baser, they will enuie them: this mischiefe had godly Ioseph noted, when hee commanded his seruants to vse his brethren so kindly: and Dauid by a seruant was whetted on to bee reuenged vppon Saul. Therefore right worshipfull, and yet our brethren in Christ, as you are carefull in your owne persons to do good to the godly, euen so followeth this Boaz, in commaunding our selues to deale friendly also. I knowe you shall neuer choose all your seruants of your owne disposition, yet if you often warne them, you may chance to winne them, for the beginning of religion is the loue of them that professe it, euen as hunger in a sicke person is a token of recouerie. Then shall you cheerefully receiue Christ into your houses in his poore members, and ioyfully assure your consciences, you haue vnfaignedly loued him, for he which hath giuen his Angels charge ouer vs, willeth also that wee should giue our seruants charge ouer our brethren: the vnkindnesse which many poore soules haue receiued at the hands of your churlish and stubborne seruants, hath discomforted them more then all your liberalitie hath comforted them. What accesse could the little children haue to Christ when the disciples forbad them: euen so, how shall we repaire to your dwellings, when your owne seruants, so much as in them lyeth, diswarne vs of your houses, keepe vs from your presence, enuie

Gen. 13. 7.

Gen. 48. 15.
1. Sam 24. 35.

Mar. 10. 13

our

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our meetinges and deride our possessions.

*Wherefore she fell.* This verse concerneth Ruth; and her answere to those words of Boaz, first her gesture is described, that she fell vpon the earth, & bowed her selfe to the ground, that is, with all shew of humilitie, secondlie, shee commendeth this his kind curtesie, because she was a stranger: so that by outward behauiour, shee gratifieth his gentlenesse, and exalteth his liberality toward her, by the consideration of her own person, which was a stranger, & therefore vnworthy of so great kindnes.

Out of the which wee chiefly obserue, first, that it is a duety of the poorer sort, not onely to acknowledge their thankfulnes by woordes, but also to testifie it by outward submission: for Abraham himselfe vsed it euen to the idolatrous Hithits, when they gaue him leaue to bury his dead, twise together. This noteth a greater thankfulnes then all the wordes of the worlde: in so much as it is accounted a speciall duty belongiug to superiours, as wee may see in Bathshebah to her husband, when she came to tell him how Adoniah raigned, and likewise in king Salomon toward her, when she came to aske Abisag. Now, if these stately persons bowed themselues but in curtesie, much more ought wee of duety. Then is here condemned, the vnciuill behauiour of many stoute persons, which are so farre from bowing, that they will hardly thank their brethren for their liberalities, accounting it their duety as they say, to giue, as if also it were not their duetie to be thankfull. The known example of the ten Leapers, doeth much commend this kind of thankefull behauiour, and also condemne the ingrateful affection. Other there bee that are in such loue, with this cappe and knee, that it doth them more good to see the poore people bend vnto them, then they reioyce that they haue giuen for Christes sake, insomuch as they giue that themselues and not the Lord might bee honoured

Gen. 13.7 12

1. Kin. 1.16
1. Kin. 2.19

This lacke of reuerence in the one, and loue of honour in the other, are both vnlawfull, because



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they both proceede from one root, which is the pride of our owne heartes, and the conceite of our owne persons. But some will say, we doe but as that godlie Mordecai did, which refused to honour the wicked Haman, so wee abstaine from doing reuerence to the proud and vaine glorious, because wee will not feede their disposition. Vnto whome I aunswere, that there were many causes for which Mordecai refused to bend vnto Hamon, which they can neuer alleadge for themselues: the first, because hee was a wicked Amalekite, of a nation whome the Lord commaunded the Iewes vtterly to destroy, neyther to spare man, woman or childe, as appeareth in the historie of Saule, who because he transgressed this commaundement of God in sauing Agag their king and certaine oxen to sacrifice, it cost him his kingdome and displeasure of God. Because of this law of the Lord, Mordecai woulde doo no honour to this childe of destruction, and was blamelesse.

Hest. 3. 2.

Exo. 17. 41. Deu. 25. 17.

1. Sam. 15. 9

Secondly, it is thought that the honour which Haman obtained, was proper onely to God, because hee was aduanced aboue all other; and such kind of reuerence we must alway beware of, for Shedrach, Meshach and Abednego, had rather dye then fall downe before the image of the King of Babylon: euen so wee must not giue more to man then is his owne, but vnto Cæsar the thinges which are Cæsars and vnto God the thinges which are Gods. And if any for these causes defend their stately behauiour, let them consider that the Lord bids vs not to destroy, but rather to loue our enemies. And though they require such worshippe as is due onely to God, yet we must not refuse to giue them that which belongeth to man. Other can be content to honour them whome they know to be godly, but the wicked they thinke vnworthy of all reuerence, because our Sauiour would doo none to Herod or Pilate, Paule to the high Priest, when hee called him painted wall.

Dan. 3. 16. 17. 18

To whome I aunswere, that Christ (though hee called Herode a foxe, and would do no miracle before him,

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because he desired but to wander, and not to glorifie God by it.) Yet gaue to Herod that duetie which pertained vnto him. Likewise vnto Pilate, when hee tolde him, his power came of the Lord: so Paul did reuerence, not onely the high priest, but also Felix, Festus, & Agrippa, who were heathen men, though magistrates, and therefore were honourable by the lawe of God. So then this must remaine for a grounded truth, that our betters must bee honoured as men, not worshipped as God: wee must with Abraham bend as well to the idolatrous Hebron, as with Bathshebah to godly Dauid, if they receiue more then they are worthie, it is not our default, but their danger, let vs giue to the prophanest person his right, and vngodliest cayrife, that which is his owne.

Secondly, by this wee note, that the godly in giuing, must haue no respect of persons, country, or kindred, strangers, or neighbours children, as Boaz did here Ruth, who by her owne confession was a stranger, and therefore vnwoorthie: but wee shewed you this in the first Chapter, by the example of the Moabites, to Elimelech and his familie, to bee a thing incident by very naturall men, and by them condemned that vse it not, much more in them that haue knowne the truth. The which Abraham did to the Angels, wherupon the Apostle wisheth, to keepe hospitalitie, for so some haue receiued Angels, in steed of men. The Lord commaunded very sharply, that no violence bee done to strangers, neither yet that any should oppresse them.

Gen. 1. 18. ad 9.
Heb. 13. 2.
Exo. 22. 21.
Leui. 19. 33.

Whereby the vngodlye entreating of strangers, that many wish for among vs, is too wicked, enuying that any should bee permitted to come and sojoume among vs, like free-borne children: Yet heeere in wee are to prayse GOD, that these persons cannot bite, although they barke at poore harbourlesse straungers, and also that he hath blessed our magistrates with more pittifull mindes. And lette these persons knowe and consider, that it is as easie to goe out, as to come into England, that is, they may as

sone be driuen to other places out of their owne countrey, to be strangers there; as these are, repayred for succour hither. The vncertaintie of worldly estate, that hath brought great princes to extreme pouertie, shuld bridle their churlish and vngodly affections, from offering one thought of iniurie to those poore harbourlesse strangers. We know the parable of Christ, of a man that trauailed from Iericho to Ierusalem, and fell among theeues: the kindnesse of that stranger a Samaritan, should moone vs to doe good to strangers, while the world standeth, seeing wee are more helped by their presence, then by our owne neighbours: but these kind persons that thus rayle vppon poore strangers, are such as are grieued against God & men, who in their hearts would haue no man liuing in the lande, besides themselues, and their cursed posteritie. But some will say, you make too much account of strangers, the Lord doth not make such reckoning of thē, because, forbidding vsurie to the Iewes, yet he permitted them to take vsurie of the strangers. I answere, those strangers were the cursed Cananites and none other, whome God had vowed to destruction; to the intent the Iewes might haue them in all slauerie. Of them he permitted to take vsurie: for this is the blessing of God vpon that people, that they should be able to lend to other, but stand in no neede to borrow of other. Therefore that being but a permission for the Iewes onely, hath ceased in that Common-wealth: but in Christ there is no difference of Iewe or Gentile, Male or Female, bond or free, for all are his, and hee the Lordes: so that now the name of a stranger is quite ceased, but all are neighbours and brethren for euermore.

Deu.23.20

Deu.28.12

*And Boaz answered.* In this verse is contained the reply of Boaz vnto the speech of Ruth, wherein he set downe the true cause of his liberalitie vnto her, first in regard of her mother in lawe and his kinswoman, with whome shee had delt so well in her own Countrey, secondly, in regard of her selfe, shee had forsaken father and mother, with Countrey and kin-

derd

dred, and come among strange people.

Where wee first obserue a singular encouragement to obey our godly parents, for wee see that our good actions neede not to be preached abroad by other for our farther commendation, but at the time appoynted they will shewe themselues, as the life of trees by sending foorth leaues in the spring time of the yeare. Ruth, as wee haue heard, dealt most louingly with her mother in lawe in Moab, yet you see that her kindnes hath followed her to Bethlehem in Iudah, many myles distant the one from the other. If it had beene knowen there to a fewe onely, it had been sufficient: but being spread abroad, the chiefest man in a Citie doth commend her for it, among a multitude in a harvest field, the place could not hide it, were it neuer so far off, the time not conceale it, be it neuer so secret: the commendation of it be couered, because shee was a stranger, nor the credite of it bee lost in another countrey. Such is the nature of good things which wee doe rather, that no oblivion canneuer bury it. What needeth this boasting of our almes deeds, like the blowing of a trumpet: this bragging of our worthines: some of their manhood, some of their friendship, other of their riches, and many of their labour: as if they slept not soundly, till al the world did ring of their commendation. This one thing loseth all our reward, for it is better that the works then the words should witnes it. Wee may also by this assure our selues, that wee haue doone nothing so secretly to the flocke of Christ, but it is knowen, and the name of God prayised for it: for as euill deedes remaine to the graue, so goods works redound to perpetuall memorie. Reu. 14. 13.

Secondly, by this we obserue the excellencie of religion, for whose sake it is commendable to forget nature, and praise-worthie, to forsake our parents and people. Which if wee should doe for any other cause whatsoeuer, we were accursed.

When the Lorde would establish his couenant with Abraham, hee called him from Father and

Gen.12.1. countrey, to shew that for religion sake it is a glorye,
Leuit.7.44 and not onely to do thus, but also for to be scourged,
Act.5.41. yea, and to suffer death.

Why then is it so contumeliously vpbraided, so scornefully refused of many, and but of few receiued till this day? Among all the world, onely Abrahams posteritie had the couenant and promises, and nowe though men bee as the sande on the sea shoare, and
Rom.9.27 the starres of heauen, which cannot bee numbred, yet shall but a remnant bee saued, none come vnto it, but by the especiall grace of GOD, whereby he draweth them as it were, against their mindes: fewe persons would so resort to Noahs Arke, because they scorned his preaching: euen so fewe are religious, because they count it a base woorke, to heare the worde of God plainely opened, and sincerely expounded. Where is then become this auncient zeale, that made men and women, as well noble as base, to bee obedyent to the calling of the Lord, for which cause they forsooke both wealth, parentage, countrey, and kindred, but in these daies men will forsake Christ, and his Gospel, religion and preaching, for the least of these. Once the Apostle sayd, hee accounted all things as dungue in regarde of Christ, but now Christ is regarded as dungue in comparison of the worlde. Once Christ sayde, whosoeuer loueth father or mother, wife or children, house or landes more then mee, is not worthie of mee, but nowe whosoeuer loueth Christ more then these, is not worthy to liue.

Once it is sayde, first seeke the Kingdome of God and the righteousnesse thereof, and all other thinges shall bee cast vppon you: but nowe, first seek the worlds riches and wealth, and religion will follow too soone. Oh what miserable dayes are wee fallen into, where ignorance aduanceth it selfe like the moone, and is not ashamed, the Gospell reuyled by euerie atheist, the ministers molested of euerye papist, the sacraments prophaned, the professours scarmed by slaunderous tales, which for Christs sake

haue

haue lost their kindred and aduentured their liues. Surely, surely, some great plague is approching, for the quenching of this burning heate of sinne, when they shall say, there is a God that rewardeth the righteous, verely there is a God that iudgeth the world.

Thirdly, wee obserue out of this verse, that wee must not without consideration giue liberallie to all but with speciall fauour do good to the godly: for you see Boaz telleth this second cause of her forsaking both cõtrey and kindred, as if he were bound to doo for such as for his owne Children, thereby signifying that if wee haue neuer so much to giue, yet wee can neuer giue inough to the Saintes of God: This our Sauiour signifieth when he sayeth, There were many widdows in Israell in the dayes of Eliah, yet to none was he sent but to Sareptah, a cittie of Zidon, to a woman a widdow; as if he had said, as God with speciall kindnes relieued her in the three yeares famine, euen so must we with the like fauour succour the godly and labouring poore. Therefore when Paule biddeth do good vnto all, hee addeth, especially to the household of faith. Luc. 4. 26. 27 Gal. 10. 6.

This is profitable for our dayes, that wee might also learne to whome wee may giue, for now our land is full of wandring and roageing beggers, who as their life is most base, yet their manners are far worse; first, they worke not at all, but are idle, and hee that worketh not must not eate, because hee walketh inordinately: Secondly, they are for the most part, vtterlie voide of all feare of God, atheists, ignorant persons, blasphemers, prophaners of Sabbaothes, disobedient to Magistrates and Maisters, common whoremaisters and Whores, hauing almost euery weeke new husbandes and wiues theeues and such drones as sucke away the almes from poore labouring persons. They will praye at euery doore for any simple reliefe, with their hattes on their heads most vnreuerent, but if any man appeare before them they will presentlie break off their prayers, and vncouer their heades, esteeming more of the presence of a seely man or woman, then of

of the maiesty of the eternall God: if they bee not satisfied they wil curse more vehemētly, then before they praied earnestly. Those are the poor which get our alms; but for other I heare of few, for I speake nothing but that which I haue heard and seene with my owne eyes. And to speake nothing of their changing of their voice, their counterfeyting sores, and their common drunkennesse: I thinke I may euery way conclude, they are the Caterpillers of our countrey, the Cananites of our common wealth, the vngodliest and vnprofitablest members among vs.

For whome I haue two sutes, the one to the Magistrates, that so often as they finde such persons, they would duely execute the law vppon them, that the other may beware: and my other to the people, that they would be deafe at their cries, and shut vppe their compassions from them, and bestow it vppon the poore labourers among vs, to encourage them with patience to endure their trauailes, and to discourage the other from this kind of wicked life. Whatsoeuer you giue them is but seed cast into the sea, whereof shall come neuer any profite: but those that are of the house of the Lord, let vs wish them prosperity.

*The Lord recompence.* This is the second part of this replie of Boaz; which is his prayer for Ruth: wherein as we shewed you, are deliuered two thinges: first, that the Lord would giue her some reward: secondly, hee comforteth her, in that he telleth her, shee is come to trust vnder the wings of God. Where first of all here seemeth some holde for popish merites, seeing hee prayeth for a recompence and perfect reward. Therefore it may be probably gathered, will they say, from hence, that works after faith merite grace: for here I cannot conceale the subtlety of our English papistes which they learned from the Romish Seminarie, being asked whether workes merite, they aunswere no, meaning those workes which goe before faith, whereas they euery one doo confidently beliene that workes after faith doo merite eternall life. Thus they blinde our eyes with the Schoole distinction



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of workes before faith, and after faith, that they might the better couer their sophistry, but we (praised by God for it) most confidently affirme, that no workes eyther before or after faith, doe concurre in the manner or cause of iustification. As for works before faith, wee acknowledge they are sinne, for whatsoeuer is not of faith is sinne: and for workes after faith, wee constantly beleeue, with Paul, that our saluation commeth not by them. But let vs come to this scripture, and continue a little with our saluation workes. Wee grant Boaz prayeth for a reward: What then? therefore (works) eyther merite, or he prayeth amisse: both which wee denie, and will confirme by this scripture. First did Boaz thinke that Ruth had merited by this forsaking of her countrey? I answere no: why then doth hee pray for her? if she had deserued it, God is not vniust, but hee that commaundeth that the hire of a labourer should not be kept backe one night, would not, nor needed not to be intreated for that, which he must of necessitie performe. By the which we see, that the praier of Boaz, the merit of Ruth, and the iustice of God, cannot stand together.

Rom. 14. 29.
Rom. 4. 2.
Galat. 2, 16.
Eph. 2. 6.

Secondly, for what cause doth hee pray for a recompence? Was it not because shee had forsaken her owne idolatrous people, to come to the Lordes common wealthy? verily, it was so. Then was it of faith or of workes? no work assuredly, but faith: for faith daused Moyses when hee was growen vp, to forsake the court of Pharao, and to ioyne himselfe with God his afflicted people: Faith caused Abraham to come into the land of promise, from his owne idolatrous countrey: and this same faith caused Ruth to come from the Countrey of Moab to the people of the Iewes, and therefore Boaz alleth, that shee was come to trust vnder the wings of God, but confidence proceeth of faith, and not of works. Therefore to conclude, Boaz prayeth for such a reward, as God had promised to all the faithfull: for as the sunne looketh vppon the earth, and the earth looketh vpon the sunne again, so faith respecteth the promise of God, and the promise

Heb. 11. 2.
Heb. 11. 8

of

Ioh.3.18. of God regardeth faith: because it is written, whosoeuer beleeueth in me hath euerlasting life, but whosoeuer beleeueth not (though hee purchase landes for Catholiks, build Churches, ordaine chauntteries and go neuer so far on pilgrimage) yet is he condemned alreadie. But now they will renew their wonted outcry saying, We preach for faith, we condemne workes, wee driue men to a wicked life, and tell them all is well, if they believe well: we condemne say they, housekeeping, giuing to the poore, with builders of Colledges and Churches, and founders of hospitalles with all charitable actions, but these are great thunderclappes, but yet without raine. I aske the resolutest papist liuing, where euer he read any of these, in all the writings of the protestants, once mentioned without singular cõmendation: for I am sure none of you ỳ are resolute papists will come to ỳ churches, to hear our preachers speak against thẽ yet you crie out, believe them not; they broch heresies that is broght vnto you by your pensioners hangbies, & like warme Professors, papisticall Atheistes, which come to our Churches to sleepe, and there dreame who being come vnto you, make you believe that their dreames were the preachers sermons, and you that are apt to believe lies, believe lyers. But to come to the purpose, you accuse vs for condemning good workes, when wt attribute no merits vnto them: this wee deny, for the reason is like this: None will become a Papist, but he that hopeth to be Pope: So none will do good workes but hee that hopeth to bee saued or crowned by them. If they graunt the latter, then they must giue the former: Which I am assured many honest minded Papists would not bee, though they might haue as much as the Popes Father, the Deuill offered Christ, which was all the World. Therefore as a Papist is not a Papist, because hee would be a Pope, so good workes must not bee done, that men might bee crowned by them. Euery Catholike which beleeueth as the Church beleeueth, must not presentlie steppe into Peters chayre; no more euery one that doth a good worke, must by that ascend vp into hea-



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uen. Good workes haue another vse then to iustifie. Because the eye cannot smell, shall it therefore bee pulled out? no, it was created to see, and not to smell: because good works iustifie not, shall no man do them, God forbid, they were giuen to the faithfull, for outward testimonies of faith, and of God his spirite, that by them that they might assure themselues and others to be sanctified and elected: not that they should help in their saluation. As the tree dyeth without the harke, and fire is nothing without heate, so workes without faith, and faith without workes, is cursed and vnprofitable.

Therefore wee say, let euery one that calleth on the name of Christ, depart from iniquitie, eschew euill, and doe good, feede the hungrie, cloathe the naked, visite the sicke and imprisoned, harbour the harborlesse, prouide for children and widdowes, yea and builde Churches and Colledges for the maintenance of God his worship and learning. Yet wee say, we are iustified by faith, wee haue peace with God through our Lorde Iesus Christ, by whome we are brought to this grace, through which we stand, & glory vnder the hope of the glory of God: for all the works in the world cannot satisfie for one sin, because there is none other name vnder heauen, by which wee must be saued, but onely by the name of Christ. Rom. 5.1. 2.3

Out of this, first wee gather the goodnesse of God, which of his owne promise and owne mercie, accepteth that little obedience of faith, which wee offer vnto him. What can we doe to the fulfilling of the law? if wee keepe all, and yet faile in one, wee had lost all our labour: but if we keep one point onely, and faulted in the rest, it were like to a man that was bounde to pay ten thousand pound, and should offer a shilling: but wee keepe none, and yet hee accepteth vs in the death of his sonne, that our righteousnesse might abounde to euerlasting life. Rom. 5. 21.

Nowe, the vse of the mercye of God is, that heereby wee shoulde bee made more fearefull and carefull not to offende him: not as some imagine, that hereby is giuen the greater liberte

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1.24.18 to sinne, because the Lorde speaketh peace vnto vs in his beloued Christ; for this is as the prophet speaketh, being escaped out of a ditch to fall into a snare, and as a man which is drawne out of a riuer should cast himselfe into the sea. But the regenerate must bee more afraide to offend the mercie of God, then the vnregenerate at his threatning iudgements. They will not sinne, because they loue God, the other will abstaine for feare of punishment: the promises of the Gospell terrifie them more then all the terrors of the Law: for they find a sweeter comfort in the presence of the spirit, then to rest in all the gardens of pleasure, when they finde accesse to the throne of grace, through the blood of Christ, and by him all their infirmities couered, their petitions graunted, their sinnes remitted, and they at peace with God: like ioyfull men discharged from euerlasting imprisonment, they walke in holynes and righteousnes before him all the dayes of their life. Oh that these mercies would sinke deeper into our hard harts, that the force of the cogitation of the bloud of Christ, might both soften and mollifie, purge and clense them from wauering and doubting, wantonnesse and presumption, and prepare our fallow grounds fit to receiue the Lords owne seed, his euerlasting word which is able to saue our soules.

Secondly, by this when he saith, vnder whose wings thou art come to trust: the dignitie of the faithfull is commended vnto vs, for they liue vnder the wings of the Lord. Which is a Metaphor or borrowed speech, comparing him to a hen which couereth her chickens with her wings, shewing vnto vs, that then we are in safetie, when wee are couered with the winges of the Lord. This our Sauiour noted when hee sayde, that hee would haue gathered the Citie of Ierusalem, as
Ma.23.37 a henne gathereth her chickens. This dignitie of the faithfull, is by many such speeches manifested in the scripture, wherein the Lord sheweth vs the care hee hath for our safetie, when he calleth vs the apple of his eye. He sheweth his loue, when he calleth vs his childre, his brethren and spouse, to teach vs our duties: he calleth

leth vs the branches of a vine, which are good for nothing but to bring forth grapes: euen so are the godly pleased with nothing which they doe, saue onely the worship of God. This consisteth in the holy fellowship which the faithfull haue with God, which Dauid sayth, bringeth life for euermore, with whome is a well of life, and the fulnes of all ioy. And in another place, the Lord saith, Behold I stand at the doore and knocke, if any man open; I will come in, and suppe with him, and he with me: and Iohn saith, He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the father & the sonne. 2. Ioh. 9. Here is the comfort of the spirit that dwelleth in vs, the assurance of faith which ouercommeth all the world, the euidence of our saluation, euen the confession of the Gospel with the mouth, and the beleeuing in the hart, the hearing of it when it is preached, and praying in the assemblies of the faithfull, for wheresoeuer are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the middest of them, saith the Lord: for he dwelleth among his Saints, the Arke is with his ministers, the couenant or tabernacle of presence with them that feare him for euermore. 1. Ioh. 3. 24. Oh, who will not be drawne to be the member of Christs owne bodie, the heauenly temple for the holy ghost to dwell in, the sincere professor of true religion, that they may haue both the Father and the Sonne. Who will not open to the Lords knocking, that he may receiue the king of glory for his guest? Finally, who would not forsake the shaddow of all the trees in the world, to bee couered vnder the wings of the Lords presence? Where is more comfort to bee found but one day, then a thousand yeeres in all the thrones of maiestie?

Thirdly and lastly, by those wordes, as is noted the dignitie of the faithfull, so on the contrary it vttereth the desperate and comfortles estate of the wicked, namely, they are like vncouered birds also, that neuer are shielded with the wings of the Lord: they lie open and scattered, subiect to all the foules of the ayre, euery minute in danger to be torn in peeces by the hellish, & infernal diuels.

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Therefore Dauid saith, howsoeuer they bee nobles,
Psa.73. 18. and Princes of the earth, and haue houses and possessi-
19. ons, after their owne names, yet they stand but in slip-
perie places, so soone as they mooue they fall. Out Sa-
uiour saith. They are like a man hauing no wedding
Mat. 22. 13 garment: so soone as the King espieth him, he is cast
Ephes. 4. 18 into vtter darknesse. Paul sayth, they are straungers
from the life of God, so that being liuing, yet they are
but condemned persons, which euery howre looke for
the tormentor, then to bee burned in euerlasting fire.
Oh fearefull estate of all Atheists, Papists, idolators,
Iewes, Turkes, and Pagans, carnall men and hypocrits,
despisers of the ministerie and Gospel of Christ, who as
in this world they are without God, so in the worlde to
come, shall be seperated from his presence with the Di-
uell and his Angels. Looke on your reckoninges, you
guiltie consciences, which euery day adde thousandes
to your former iniquities. The greater your debte
is, the sharper shall bee your imprisonment. The
oftner you are warned, the more shall be your stripes.
As none were saued but those that entred into the
arke, so not one of you shall euer see the face of God,
(except at your condemnation) vnlesse you become
zealous professors, and heare our Sermons, bee parta-
kers of our prayers, and as obedient to the voice of the
Gospel in the mouth of his ministers, as if there were
a law of present death, to bee executed on you for e-
uery default.

*I find fauour.* This is the second parte of the speech
of Ruth, wherein shee thanketh Boaz, and excuseth her
selfe. She thanketh in the first wordes when hee sayth:
*I find fauour in thine eyes, oh my Lord, because thou hast
comforted mee, and hast spoken those things which are to
the heart of thy handmaide.* For shee confesseth his
courtesie and thankfulnes, by the verdite of the learned,
in the humble confession of a benefite. Shee excuseth
when shee sayth, *I shall not be as one of thy maidens.* As if
she had sayd, I am vnworthie of this courtesie, because I
come to labour for my selfe, not for thee, as these thy
maydens doe. Out of which wee obserue these
things,

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things.

First a holy example of commendable thankefulnes much accepted of God and men, as vnthankefulnesse is abhorred by heauen and earth: we haue examples hero of in many wicked persons, as Laban his discurtesie to Iacob, Saule vnto Dauid, and the wicked Amonites to his Ambassadors: To speake nothing of Pharaohs butler vnto Ioseph, of Naball vnto Dauid, and also the inhabitants of Keilah, which being famous in the scripture for the enemies of God, so are they branded with this note of vnthankfulnes, as if it were an especiall fruite of vnrighteousnes. And truely this is most worthy to be vrged in our sinfull age, for the children forget their duties to their naturall parentes, the people treade their preachers vnder their feet, for telling them the truth, we alwayes remember what we haue giuē, but forget what we haue receyued: whereas it is a to ken of the best nature to forget what we haue done to other, but to remember what we haue receyued: Surely, surely, vnthankfulnesse towardes God, and towardes men neuer raigned or raged more. Toward God, for the continuance of his Gospell, peace, plenty, and welfare of our coūtrey: toward men, in gadgeing the benefites that are daily bestowed, by casting in the teeth, as if they were deserued. The heauens abhorred this wickednes, and the heauens will raine down destruction vpon these thākles persons, as they did vpon Sodom and Gomorra for the like offence.

Gen. 21. 2. 1. Sam. 19. 10. 2. Sam. 10. 1 Gen. 40. 23 1 Sam. 25 10 1. Sam. 33. 12. Luc. 17. 27. 28.

Secondly, by this wee gather, that the prayers of the righteous, are more acceptable to the godly, then giuing or taking of almes. For when Boaz promised Ruth this kindnesse, she thanked him, and no more: but nowe, when hee prayed for her to the Lord, she protested that he comforted her, and that hee had spoken those thinges which were to the heart of his handmaide, (that is) which pleased her exceedingly well. As if she had saide, I am bounde vnto thee my Lorde for thy kindnesse, but thou hast comforted mee more with thy prayer then with that: So that here for her selfe and for all the godly, she protesteth, that of two benefits

Verse. 10.

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she was most of all comforted by his prayer? which noreth in her, a more longing and thirsting after righteousnes, then after all the maintenance of this present life: for whosoeuer drinketh of that water of worldlie welfare, shall thirst againe: but whosoeuer drinketh of
Ioh. 4. 14. the water of faithfull prayer shal neuer thirst any more. This one consideration made the blind men of Iericho cry so importunately after Christ, saying: Iesus thou sonne of Dauid haue mercy on vs. Some heauenly benefite they looked for, earthly he had none. And this teacheth vs, that when we giue, wee should also pray for a
Eccles. 11. 1 blessing vpon our beneuolence: for Salomon compareth the giuing of almes to the casting of corne into a moist or fruitfull lande, so as the husbandman prayeth for a blessing vpon his seede, euen so hee which giueth to the poore must pray for a benefite vpon his beneuolence. But if any gather by this my speech, that it is sufficient to pray, and not to giue to the poor, I answere,
Iam. 2. 15. 16. This scripture condemneth this folly, when it sayeth. If a brother or sister be naked and want meate, and thou say vnto him, go warme thy selfe, and feed thy selfe and yet giue them nothing, this is a dead and damnable not a liuing and sauing faith: of these kinde of people the world is full, which saye alas God helpe you, God prouide for you, God giue you patience, but nothing commeth from them, saue onely faire words. To whome we may say as a beggar once did to a popish Bishoppe, desiring a peece of money of him, were it neuer so little, but the Bishop said no, hee would giue him a pardon: to whome the begger replyed, I perceiue if your pardon were worth any thing I should not haue it: euen so if the prayers of these people were any thing worth, they woulde not giue them, because they giue nothing.

Lastly by this verse, when Ruth excuseth her selfe that she should not be as one of his maidens, shee setteth downe a true example of Christian simplicity: for it may be she thought that Boaz was deceiued in her, that he might chinke shee came to worke for him, and not for her selfe: therefore she telleth him plainely that

she

she should not be as one of his maidens, that is, as one of his hyred seruantes. So that these wordes of Ruth tend to her owne hinderance, if Boaz had beene deceiued in her, yet godlines will not conceale that, which maketh against it selfe, if the question be made of profite. Whereby we note, that encrocching for bargaines, facing for promises, suing for counterfeit titles, & such like actions, cannot agree with the simplicitie of a godly minded Christian, whose conscience is his court, his religion his atturney, and the word of God his iudge, to pronounce definitiue sentence against his owne cause, if it tend to the perill and damage of his neighbour, or discredite of his profession. Oh that wee had more of this simplicitie, and lesse of this subtiltie, whereby wee deceiue our owne soules, betray the glorious Gospel of Iesus Christ, confound the weake mindes of our wauering brethren, make shipwracke of pure consciences, & cast our selues headlong for the world into the fire of hell.

*But Boaz said.* This last verse sheweth vnto vs, that Boaz was not deceiued in Ruth, but shutting vppe the communication, by calling her to meat, and dealeth to her so abundantly, that shee leaueth some. By the which wordes there is noted two degrees of the kindnesse of this man. First, that in his owne person he calleth her to meate: secondly, that with his owne handes he gaue her aboundantly. Where we see again and again commended vnto vs the humilitie & liberalitie of this Boaz, he disdaineth not to call so simple a guest to his table, knowing her to be a faithfull sister, for whose sake, if neede were, he was bound to lay downe his life. Wherby we are instructed to cast off the statelines of our stomackes, standing vppon our pantoples, scant vouchsafing to looke friendly on a poore man or woman, much lesse to speake kindly to eyther of both. Againe, his liberalitie, by giuing so plentifully vnto her with his owne handes, it appeareth hee was none of these counterfeit giuers, which promise much and performe lit-

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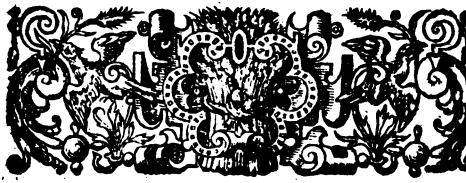
whispering, withdraw their promised and bounden liberalitie, from Church and poore, from minister and religion. Oh how cold is this deuotion, which proceedeth from a sodaine humour, and soone endeth to God his dishonour: better had it beene for those men, not to shew any fauour at all, then after they haue rashly begunne, causeleſse to withdraw their beneuolence from Christ. But I consider, there shall bee some that shall say at the latter end vnto our sauiour, wee haue prophesied in thy name, we haue eaten in thy presence, and yet hee shall say vnto them, depart from mee yee workers of iniquitie, I know you not: then shall they bee blessed, which haue wasted their wealth for religion, consumed their liuing on the faithfull, and continued their liberalitie vnto the ende.

Now let vs giue prayse
to God.

The end of the sixt
Lecture.



# The seuenth Lecture.

Chap. 2. ver. 15. 16, 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22, 23.

15 *And when shee arose to gleane, Boaz commanded his seruants, saying: let her gather among the sheaues and do not rebuke her.*

16 *And let fall some of the sheaues for her, & let it lie that shee may gather it vp, and rebuke her not.*

17 *And so she gleaned in the field till euening, & she thre-*

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*shed*

*shed that which shee had gathered, & it was about an epha of barley.*

18 *And shee tooke it vp, and went in to the citty: & her mother in law saw what she had gathered, & she tooke forth & gaue vnto her, of that which she had left, when she was sufficed.*

19 *Then her mother in law said vnto her, where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? Blessed bee he that knew thee: and shee shewed her mother in law with whome she had wrought, & saide the mans name with whome I wrought to day, was Boaz.*

20 *And Naomi said to her daughter in law: Blessed be hee of the Lord, for he ceaseth not to do good both to the liuing and to the dead. Again Naomi said vnto her, the man is neare vnto vs, and of our affinity.*

21 *And Ruth the Moabitesse said, he said also certainelie vnto me, that thou shalt be with my seruants, vntil they haue ended all the harueſt which is mine.*

22 *And Naomi answered vnto Ruth her daughter in law, it is best my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meete thee not in an other field.*

23 *Then she kept her by the maides of Boaz, vnto the end of barley harueſt, and Wheate harueſt, and dwelt with her mother in law.*

THese verses vnto the ende of this Chapter containe those things which Boaz and Ruth did, with Naomi also after that Ruth had dined. The wordes haue two partes. The first betweene Ruth and Boaz in the field. The seconde betweene Ruth and her mother in law at home.

The first part is in ver. 15. 16. 17, wherein is set downe what Ruth did after dinner: *That she arose to gather eares* which is declared by the time, verse 17. and the quantitie in the same verse, *An epha of barley*. Secondly, Boaz reneweth his commaundement to his seruantes for



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Ruth, wherein hee willeth them, first that they suffer her to gather where she please, verse 15. Secondly, that they willingly let fall vnto her out of the sheaues, and suffer her to take it vp.

The other part of Ruth and Naomi, is contayned ver. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. & declareth what these twayne did after Ruth came from the field, and after her comming home, vers. 18. bringing both her gleaned corne, and reserued victuall, They twaine commune of those thinges which Boaz had done to Ruth, First Naomi asketh Ruth where she had gleaned that day, ver. 19. To which Ruth answereth, telling the name of the man in whose possession she had gathered to be Boaz, ver, 19. Secondly, his curtesie toward her, not onely for that present, but also biddeth her to abide with his maides vnto the end of his harueſt, after this, Naomi first prayeth for the man, ver, 20. alleadging his kindnes not onely to them that are liuing, but also to those that are dead, and telling Ruth that the man was her kinsman. Secondly, she counselleth Ruth, verse 22. that shee take his proffer, and abide with his maidens, for feare shee be denyed in another field: which Ruth persourmeth, ver. 23. and keepeth with them to the ende of barley harueſt, and wheate harueſt, and afterward with her mother Of these parts let vs briefly speake, as the spirit shall assist, and the time permit.

*Then she arose.* After dinner like one careful of her busines, she repaireth to her former work, Where by the way this question may be made, whether Ruth gaue any thanks to God for her meate, seeing it is not mentioned: for this doubt must not be omitted, nor passe vndissolued, lest our carnal companions in this age, which come & go to their meat like bruit beasts, may seem to haue the example of some godly persons, for the defence of their abhominable vnthankfulnes, To which I answeth first, if any godly person haue at any time, omitted his duety, we must not by his example be drawne to do the like: for we must liue by the rule of the word of God, not by the examples of the faithfull: Secondlie, wee must know that euery thing or circumstance is not needfull

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in euery place of the scripture to bee declared particularly, for in this place wee reade not that Ruth gaue any thankes to Boaz for her meat: yet wee must not conclude that she gaue none at all, & if she thanked a man, much more the eternall God, whtch framed his minde to shew her that fauour. Thirdly, she being with Boaz it was his duty at his own table to pray, and to giue thanks, which no doubt but hee did, and shee did with him. Therefore to the words, where wee first note the true vse of eating and drinking, the benefites of God, which is, that by them we may bee enabled to follow our vocations: For here we see Ruth after meat, returneth to her worke againe, as if the holy Ghost had flatly set downe, that for this cause we must eate and drinke that by them we might worke more freely, and labour more diligently. Therefore Salomon pronounceth a blessing vpon a whole countrey, whose princes and nobles eate for strength and not for drunkennes: and these are accounted two sinnes of Sodome, idlenes and fulnes of bread, that is, eating and no working. This point can neuer be stoode inough vpon, that the belly-gods and vnorderly persons of our age might be perswaded therewith to leaue their drinking & drunkennesse their eating and gluttony, and their plaies and pastimes: for the meate is no sooner out of their mouthes, but the renewing of their sport entreth into their harts, how they may spend more time in idlenes and vanity. And aboue all, this is profitable for seruingmen to note, who wish nothing but liberty, and their owne consciences know, that if they may choose, they wil dwell with no maisters but where they may do little worke: therefore came the old prouerb a yong seruingman, an old begger: because vnthriftines in youth is seldome worne out in age: This I speake not against that calling which no doubt but is good & lawful, but onely to warn them & exhort thē, to banish their vntimely eating and drinking, and to put away idlenes, with some lawful & profitable busines: and let vs all be Ruthes in this point, as in other her conditions, that wee may eate our bread in the sweate of our browes, and rise to labour, not to pastime, that wee may

Eccle 10.17

Ezec. 16.53

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remember our old curse which came by reason of sinne and ease the contagion of our diseased natures, with the dayly following our honest vocations.

Secondly, by this also may we vrge (although the holy Ghost in this place speaketh not of it) the worship and obseruation of the Sabboth: for as men go from worke to meat, and after from meate to worke againe: euen so reason would, that as we sanctifie the Sabboth in the forenoone, by preaching and hearing, the afternoone should be hallowed with the same exercise. But of all works, this the greatest is in smallest reputation: for men go from hearing to their meate: but from their meate eyther to sleepe, or to open prophaning the Lords day: with most execrable & accursed pleasure or negligence. They say onge a day is inough, yea & too much also, except they did it better. Such clipping of God his seruice to satisfie our pleasures, will not stand with the least and the smallest point of Christianity. And this they may be assured of, that in the last day, their owne diligence & weekely labours, in worldly busines, shall stand vp in iudgement against them, to condemne their negligence in the trauaile of godlines: yea and till this slacknes bee amended, the time lost and past repented, they shall neuer come to the knowledge of God or his truth, themselues or their own saluation: for he that sanctifieth the Sabbaoth, hath all religion, but he that prophaneth the Sabboath hath none at all.

*And Boaz*, In these wordes Boaz reneweth his commandement to his seruants concerning Ruth, which we shewed you was vttered in the ver. 9. and now hee willeth them, that though shee gather among the sheaues, yet none should shame her: meaning, none should reprehend her: for reprehension to a godly and modest woman, is a matter of blushing or shame: And this is to bee noted, that his minde is, though shee deserued blame, yet none of them shoulde say, blacke bee her eye, (as the Prouerbe is) that is, once accuse her for any fault. Where wee note the wonderfull care that Boaz had of her, that the longer hee looked on her, the better hee liked her: her solitarie behauiour

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her contented trauaile, her diligent order in going so orderly to her busines againe, were as orations or perswasions, to make him being godly, to pproue and commend her aboue all the residue. Which teacheth vs, that wee should bee haled on with the same cordes of honestie, diligen ce, and religion, to extend our liberalitie in large gifts and courteous speeches, to euerie poore person that wanteth our helpe: and that the rather, considering pouertie is a curse of sinne, wherein wee are all as guiltie as they : therefore like feeling members of our brothers miseries: where wee see the foresaid graces appeare, there let our bounden benuolence excell, that they may bee encouraged with our benefites, and wee may bee comforted with theyr prayers, and both conioyned in this life, and in the life to come.

Secondly, Ruth would not gather among the sheaues, because no doubt shee was studious to auoyde offence, for if she had so done, shee must needes incurre the suspition, though not the reproofe of misbehauiour, coueting more then was her due: for the eares, & not the sheaues were appoynted for the poore. Whereby wee note that the poore must bee carefull aboue many things, they abuse not the libertie of the rich: although they may goe without correction to the sheaues in the fieldes, or the heapes in the barne, yet they must not eate vppe more then beseemes them to aske. Now it were without conscience to aske so much as the owners cannot giue, without the shortening of their handes to other their poore brethren. And this condemneth the raking desire of them, which are neuer contented: and those vngodly robbers and theeues, which aske, and yet haue no neede both which kind of people will to the vttermost, craue and haue all a mans possessions, without any mercie, vnder pretence of pouertie, yea, and will neuer accept the willing mind of them that are not able to giue, but like the sea gape for the water out of the little land brookes. These are officers and bribers, extortioners & vsurpers, rackers of farms, rayses of rents, takers of fines, and defrauders of

simple

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ſimple perſons in bargayning, who all are condemned in the laſt commaundement as the couetours of other mens goods: & therefore guilty of eternall damnation.

*And do you.* These wordes are the ſecond part of his cõmandement, wherby the former point is confirmed, that Boaz knew Ruth would not picke the ſheaues, and therefore willeth to let fall on the ground plentifully, for her to auoide her farther and more vnprofitable labour, which he therefore doth, that he might teſtifie his goods to bee not onely his, but all theirs that feare the Lord: for no doubte but there were many that did gleane in the field beſide Ruth, with whome Boaz did not thus deale: ſhewing vnto vs, that there may bee a diffetence in giuing, and that wee are not bound to giue equallie to all, but as the perſons are, ſo muſt be the gifte. the pooreſt muſt not haue the greateſt ſhare, but the godlieſt, for pouerty without godlines is like the apple of Sodome, which is as faire to looke on, as any other, but being taken in the hand, reſolueth to ſmoake, and powder, ſo if vngodly poore folkes be a little examined they ſhall bee found as the apple not worth the eating. ſo the other not worthy to be giuen to; although they crie like the horſe-leaches daughters. giue, giue, yet wee muſt anſwere thẽ with ſpare, ſpare, but Boaz doth in this place, as Ioſeph did to his brethren, he feaſted al of them,
Gen. 43. 34. but Beniamins part was fiue times ſo big as the reſidue;
Cap. 45. 22. afterward he gaue to euery one chaunge of garmentes, but vnto Beniamin he gaue thtee hundred ſhikles, and fiue chaunge of garments, the reaſon of all this was, becauſe he was Rachell his own mothers ſonne, but all the other were his Fathers Children onelie: euen ſo muſt we doo good to all that are our fathers children by creation; but to our mothers children, which is, the Church of Chriſt, the houſholde of faith, whereof Rachel was a type, we muſt with ſpecial portions for feeding their hunger & clothing of their nakednes, compaſſe their wants, with the ſupply of our beneuolence, for which cauſe Saint Paule in his preaching was willed by the other Apoſtles, to haue a ſpeciall and heed-
Gal. 2. 10. full care ouer the poore Bretheren; which if it were

put

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put in practise, we should be more able to do good vnto the godly, and to denie the contrary minded. This one thing is aboue all other to be required, ỳ euery one giue where God may most of all bee glorified, but the vngodly sort take their reliefe as the hungry houndes their feeding, if they bee hindred, they will flie vppon their owne masters, in like sort the wicked will blaspheme God liberally, and not humbly thanke or praise him, for any thing they receiue. What if they murmur against thee and saye, my parte is not so good as thine, you giue him more then to mee, and you care for none but these precise fellowes: Tell them againe, it is lawfull for thee to doe with thy owne as thou wilt: neither ought thy eye to bee euill, because my hand is good: the vnworthiest in the world, shall haue the worthiest portion: they which with them are last, with thee let bee first, and the first with them, bee last with thee: for spirituall men must looke for spirituall hearts, to cast the seed of their alms into good ground, where the fruit may be increased, the want of the faithfull may be relieued, the glory of Christ may bee magnified, thy o'vne duetie may bee discharged, a good conscience satisfied, and thy soule for euer comforted. Secondly, by this wee obserue that Bohaz might haue admitted many hindrances, whereby hee might haue beene better aduised before he gaue such large libertie, either to Ruth, or to his seruants for her, as to gather among the sheaues, or to let fall handfulles vnto her. Hee might haue thought thus with himselfe, it was lately a dearth for long time together, it may be shortly the Lord will send such another, and then all that I haue will be too little for my selfe and my familie, and therefore I must bee wise, and giue not so much, till I know what I shall lacke, but all this could not turne away the heart of Boaz, from doing good vnto Ruth, for hee esteemed more of one godly Ruth, then of all the possessions hee had: neyther ought any of the godly once to admit any such doubt in their minde, as to bee vexed in distrust of the mercie of God to come. They must pray with Dauid, O Lord incline my heart to thy testi- Psal. 119.36

monies

monies,& not to couetousnes The widdow of Zarep-
1.King.17. tha might haue aunswered Eliah, that shee had but so little left, as would onely suffice for one meale, and giue him no thing, yet shee was obedient and beleeued the word of the Prophet, and her store increased, that she wanted no more.

The Church of the Macedonians might haue sayde, that they were poore Saints as well as the residue, ther-
2.Cor.8.2. fore as they asked no thing but were content with their
8.4. pouertie, so none should charge them in giuing to o-ther, but yet the Apostle Paule sayd, they supplyed the want of the Corinthians, and gaue them more then they were able. And euerlasting is the commendation which he giueth of Onesiphorus, how often hee refre-shed him and was not ashamed of his chains, but came
1 Tim.1.16 to Ephesus and visited him there, and followed him
17.18 to Rome many hundred miles, that there also he might succour him with his charitie: which teacheth vs, when we haue to deale with the godly, as all these persons had, no cost must be spared, couetousnes not admitted, no feare of want suspected, for he which is the Lord o-uer all, is also rich vnto all.

Obadiah in a famine fedde an hundred Pro-phets, yea, and hidde them in caues, from the wrath of Iezabell. What want did he sustaine thereby? sure-
1.King.18. ly none, for distrust causeth want, and not liberali-
13. tie, for hee which maketh thee to feede his Saintes nowe, will also prouide another to feede thee when thy store is wasted. Oh hearken to this you possessors of the earth, vppon whome in this time of dearth the eyes o fthe poore doe looke vppe, as on the hands of the Lorde, whereby hee filleth euery liuing thing with his plenteous goodnesse. Open your gates wi-der, that more poore may come into your houses, to bee refreshed with bread; open your purses far-ther, that more beneuolence may come out, to bee caste into the fruitefull lande of the famished poore, for after manye dayes you shall finde it a-gaine, put on the bowelles of compassion, and let not

your

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your owne Brethren want, seeing you haue inough. Hee that willeth you to doo this for his sake, will commaunde heauen and earth, to restore his owne debte, which you haue lent him: feare not that you shall want, for the Lord is the owner of the earth, and this is sent vppon vs, to trie your charitie and compassion towarde the poore for his sake: if you now bee liberall. Paule hath prayed for you that you may finde mercie in the day of the dissolution of all things, and the Lord hath promised to the mercifull mercy, at that day when hee lyeth sicke vppon his death bed, Make you treasures therefore of this worldlie wealth, and send them by the handes of the poore into God his kingdome before you: spare not the sheaues in the Barne, the eares in the fielde, nor the heapes in your Garners: for hee that spendeth for the members of Christ, shall receiue the greater aduantage. Remember you are the partakers of the same Faith, which they had that solde their possessions to giue to the Saintes and to gaine heauen: but you neede not to sell any landes, onely deliuer your corn plentifullie to the poore: which if you doo not, they shall rise in iudgement against you at the latter day, because they spared neyther landes nor liues, and you will not giue a little Corne for the name of Christ.

*And so shee gathered.* This is the last parte of that which Ruth did in the fielde, shewing her diligence shee vsed in her labours, by working out the whole day vntill the Euening, and gathering an Epha of Barley: for by this appeareth, that shee laboured as faithfully for her selfe and her Mother, as if shee had beene an hyred seruant, or her Mother looking vppon her. By the which is noted vnto vs, the diligence of Children and Seruauntes, in their labours and businesse of their Maisters and Parentes, for they must not seeke or couet to please them with eye seruice, but their duties are required, as well in the time of their absence as in their presence.

Be

Be *Ruther*, my beloued in this point, whosoeuer are bond or free, for they which are faithfull in a little shalbe made great rulers, and they which haue not beene faithfull in the earthly treasures, shall neuer bee trusted with the heauenly. By this also they may learne, which think they may lawfullie take their ease in their owne busines; but wee see by this example of Ruth, that religion bindeth vs to be as diligent in our own, as in another mans trauaile, committed vnto vs vpon trust, for as to him we are faithfull, because wee receiue wages, so in our owne we must bee painefull, least the Lord arise against vs for the mispending of our time, we owe more dutie to our heauenly father, then to all the earthly maisters of the world.

Againe, the quantity of her gathering is here described, to be an epha of barley: for the vnderstanding whereof, we must note that there were three kindes of measures among the Hebrewes. which are mentioned in the scripture: the first was an homer, which was the measure of Manna that the Lord allowed to euery houshold when they were wandering in the wildernes, and contayned of our English measure, sixe pintes, and somewhat more; the second measure was a hin, which after our measure contained ten pintes, and somewhat more, the third was an Epha, which is this that measured the barley of *Ruth*, and it contained ten homers, which commeth to sixty pintes, which being deuided by eight, amounteth to the quantitie of seauen gallons and one pottell, which is a bushell lacking one pottell, after our English measure. By the which we may obserue, how largely the Lord prouided for *Ruth*, by the liberality of *Boaz*, for she gathered more in one daye then otherwise shee could in two or three: where the Lord himselfe sheweth vs how shee tooke the curtesie of *Boaz*, and the seruantes scattered for her according to their maisters commandemente, that her hand might be quickly filled, her trauaile the more eased, her labor better rewarded, & finally mother & daughter bee both more comfortably refreshed with their kinsmans kindnes. *And when she tooke vp.* The day being ended &

Leui. 19.26 & 27.16. Exo. 10.36

Ruth

Ruth wearied with her vnwonted and yet diligent trauaile, vp she taketh her bundell of corne, and the scraps of meate she shad reserued, and trudgeth to her mother, that she might vnderstand of her good hap, and they both together reioyce for the corne Ruth had gathered, and the good will which Boaz had offered. Out of the which we may first of all obserue a heauenly and godly example of obedience and loue toward her mother in law, for wee see in this place, that she dooth not onely labour for her liuing, but refresheth her with that which was giuen her to satisfie her owne hunger; while she was in the fielde in her diligent labour. Was it not sufficient for Ruth that shee had left her people & country to come with her mother in lawe, but shee must also goe for her, she sitting at home, in a poore and contemptible manner to gleane in the fielde: or if she did that willingly, yet must shee saue the meat from her own mouth, and put it into Naomies? Here wee see she failed in nothing that might eyther commend her loue, declare her obedience, and signifie her care toward poore and olde Naomi her deare and godly mother. And this teacheth vs, that we must be Ruthes to our aged parents: we must labour abroad, and they must tary at home; wee must set our nimble bones to the heauy busines, & their wearied bodies must rest in the houses: It is vngodlines to say, that the olde man or woman, shall labour and care for our wretched riot, and careles expenses, but rather let the young gallant take his owne parentes vppon his backe, carry them from their house of trouble to the harbour of peace. Let Esau & Iacob hunt venison for Isaack, for hee is olde and must tarry at home. Let Iacob and little Ioseph tarry in their Tents, and the lusty youthes his sonnes and brethren lie in the fieldes and keepe their fathers sheepe, and rather then old Iacob should go, let yong Ioseph trudge to his brethren though hee be sold for his labour. Let Ruth go gleane for Naomi, and not Naomi for Ruth, for this is the first commaundement with promise. But oh the gracelesse generations of our vngodly age, where men are become so tender ouer their disobedi-

Gen. 37. 3.

Gen. 37. 19.

ent

ent broode, that in their labours they will ſpare their wanton Children, and weare their crazed cakarſes, they had rather put both feete into the graue by their ouer labours, then bring their vntamed ſteeres, and vnruelie heyfers, their ſonnes and daughters to the yoke of diligent trauaile. And theſe graceles impes, will looke and laugh vppon their parentes, and ſay, it doeth their olde bodies good: And doth it ſo? why, it is better for a tyred horſe to runne a race, then for a reſty palfray? You are ready inough to catch that which is good from your parentes, why take yee not their labours, if they bee ſo good for them? No, no, you are the heauineſſe of your parentes: you ſhoulde bee oliues to make them looke chearefully, but you are onions that make them weepe bitterly. But yet let not Ruth and the godly exhorte vs in vaine, for if wee doo the labour, wee ſhall haue their hyre, if wee honour our parentes, with our actions and deedes, as we doe with our wordes, then ſhall our dayes bee multiplyed in the land, or elſe our liues ſhall bee ſhortened with vntimelie death, and our poſterity rooted out by the iuſt iudgemẽt of God.

Secondly, by this example of Ruth, that ſhee brought her mother of that which ſhee had left? wee learne this doctrine, if our friendes giue vs liberally, and wee haue plentie, let vs not conſume all vppon our ſelues, but let vs reſerue ſome for other. When our Sauiour had twiſe feaſted many thouſandes, ſtill there was ſomething left which hee commaunded to bee taken vppe, ſhewing vs thereby, if God liberallie poure out his benefites vppon vs, it is not that wee ſhoulde the more notouſly lauiſh them out vppon meate or pleaſure: for it is a common auuſwere in theſe dayes, if wee reprooue Gameſters for their play, drunkardes for their coſtes, and proud perſonnes for indecent apparrell, wherein euery one ſpendeth more then woulde ſuffice twoe or three poore perſonnes, they will tell vs they ſpende nothing but their owne, and what haue we to do with it? But wee replye, that they ſpende more then is their own, for the

earth

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earth is the Lords, and all that therein is. They are but stewards of their goods, and not Lords and masters, and therefore they shall giue account for euerie penny mispent, when it shall not profite them to say, we wasted our wealth at dicing and gaming, we consumed our landes by eating and drinking, and spent thus much money in gaye apparrell, and other brauerie.

Secondly, God gaue them those benefites, not so much for themselues as for others: for as the Sunne shineth not for it selfe but for vs, the earth bringeth foorth fruit, not for it selfe, but for vs: so wealthy men, are not wealthie for themselues onely, but for al the poore members of Christ, that they might liberally bestow vpon others. The heathen King Assuerus, making a feast to all his Empire, yet he gaue this law, that none should bee compelled to drinke or to eate more then they needed or pleased: so abhominable is gluttony, euen in nature, that it hurteth man, spoyleth beastes, and killeth the fruits of the earth: for the rankest corne is none of the best. Then heere is temperance by this example commaunded: For the Phisitions say, that it is most wholsome to come and rise from meate with an hungrie stomacke, and the word of God sayth, that wee must eate for strength and nature, not for appetite and drunkennesse. But oh that our fatte Basanites would admitte this as a wholsome and a godly doctrine, then woulde not their bellyes and paunches grow so great as they are, nor their hearts so hardned against the poore: for their dogges should goe emptie, theyr aboundance would bee minished, theyr gluttonies aud drunkennesse banished, their pleasures nnd delights expelled, and their pride and apparell bee humbled, and their godly and needie brethren succoured. Est. 1. 8.

Thirdly, by this wee note, that the poorest must striue to bestowe somewhat vnto theyr brethren that wante, yea, though they spare it from theyr owne necessities: but especially children to their parents, and one kinsman to another: for

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thus

thus wee see Ruth doeth, shee spared when shee had i-
nough, and that shee gaue to her mother that wanted.
Which godly kindnes putteth vs in minde of the poore
widdow in the Gospel, that came and gaue two
Luk.21.2. mites into the Lordes treasurie, and the Lorde doth
greatly commend her for it, aboue the rich offerings of
the wealthie: as if a little thing that a poore man doth,
were more accepted then the multitudes of rich men.
Indeede to the world the largest gift maketh the grea-
test shew, but to the Lord the little portions of a wil-
ling minde, if it be but a cup of cold water, is greater
then the flesh pots of Egypt, and all the daintie fare of
the King of Babilons court. For our Sauiour encoura-
geth vs by this meanes that they which haue little to
giue, should not abstaine, but certtinely know that the
Lord looketh on the heart, not on the hand, on the
minde, not on the gift, for that which in the presence of
the world is despised, in the sight of God is best ac-
cepted. Therefore euery one must looke to deale some
good by their liuing, bee it neuer so small, for as there is
no hearbe, but it yeeldeth some fruite so there must be
no man but hee must giue somewhat, that so he might
fulfill the glorie of the Gospell.

*But her mother in law.* Heere in this verse Naomi
seeing the plentie of the gleaned corne, and reserued
victuall, like a godly woman falleth to prayer for a bles-
sing vpon him that had giuen so liberally vnto Ruth:
which is as a thanksgiuing for the benefit receiued: and
afterward shee questioneth with Ruth, where shee had
gleaned that day, Ruth telleth her in the possession of
Boaz.

Where wee first of all note the duetie of parents to
their children; and masters to their seruants, which is,
to call them to a reckoning where and howe they be-
stow their time, therefore sayth Naomi, where hast
thou gathered to day, and where hast thou wrought:
Condemning this softnesse & suffering in such kinde of
parents, as are afraide to speake to their children & ser-
uants, not for their worke, but for their mispending the
Sabbaoth, the idle iourneyes they make to tauernes and
playes,

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playes, to feasting and dauncing, should bee examined by their gouernours as Naomi doeth Ruth, where hast thou wrought to day? Whose businesse was thou imployed in? what place did call thee from the seruice of God? and what motion did cause thee to dishonour the Sabboth? No, no, they can suffer them to violate the Lords day in pleasure, that they might drudge all the weeke after in their worldly trauailes. Why doth not some man giue recreation to his seruauntes of his owne sixe? but they must robbe the Lord of the seauenth also: How vnequall is this, to put him out that hath but one part, and to score him vp that hath so many. I am perswaded that of all other tokens of irreligion among vs, there is none greater then this, to suffer our children and seruantes to violate the Lords owne day, that they might the more willinglie labour and trauaile for them on the weeke dayes. But yet let the authority of parentes remaine, that God hath giuen this power vnto them, and let the duety of Children and seruauntes appeare, that as Ruth giueth answere to Naomi from point to point, how and where shee applyed her time, euen so they are bound vpon paine of God his eternall curse, to giue willing and gentle accounts to them when they are demaunded in such like matters.

Secondly, by this prayer of Naomi, *Blessed be he of the Lord that knew thee.* that is, which approoued thee and shewed thee fauour, wee note this to bee our duety to pray for our benefactors, seeing wee cannot reward them, so doeth Naomi in this place, and so doeth Paule for Onesiphorus, that the Lord would shew mercy vnto him in the day of his appearing: teaching vs that our spirituall prayers are more necessary for them then their temporall benefites are for vs, and therefore let vs learn to pray aright, seeing it is our duty to pray for our frends These painted prayers of many which come from the lips or from wicked harts are such as the prayers of roaguing beggars at euery dore for base reliefe, and also the commonest that are among many poore people in these dayes, are abhomination in the eyes of the Lorde, no benefite to them for whome they are vttered, and 2. Tim. 1. 18



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the poyson of those that thus do vse them. Therefore beloued, learne to account of them as they are, cloudes carried about with euery wande, welles and no water, great wordes, but no grace in them, stoppe your eares at these bread prayers, and withdraw your handes from giuing any relieſe to them that abuse this heauenly blessing.

*Then said Naomi.* In this verse Naomi repeateth her prayer, and addeth a reason of the same, because hee hath not ceased to doo good toward the liuing, and toward the dead, that is, he did good to my husbande and children when they were aliue, and now to vs their posterity, they being deade, for doing good to vs for their sakes, they doo it to them; for eyther interpretation will stand. For we must not imagine, that this liberalitie doeth any good to them that are dead, because they were in Moab, these in Iuda, they were consumed in their graues, and vnfit for any beneuolence, as for their soules they needed no earthly beneficence: for that remaineth true for euer which Salomon saieth, the liuing know that they shall die, but the deade know nothing, nor yet haue they any more
Eccl. 9 5 6. part, seeing their remembrance is forgotten, the thing which they loued, and the thing which they hated, and the thing they desired is now perished with them, neyther haue they any more part of all the thinges that are done vnder the Sunne. By the which we may see the deluſion of them which teach vs to buye prayers and pardons for our frends that are dead, that their paines may bee eased which now they endure: for if nothing can profite them that is done vnder the sunne, then neyther our prayers nor our purses can giue them any relief, but by these words we learn, that if we do good to the children & widdowes of our deceased friends, it is all one, as
2. Sam. 9. 11 if wee did good to their own persons. Thus said Naomi in this place, & thus Dauid did good to his friend Ionathan being dead, when he did kindly entreat Mephibo-
Mat. 25. 40. sheth his sonne being aliue. The Lord himselfe protesteth in the Scripture, that he did good to the Israelits and Iewes, for Abraham, Isacke and Iacobes saks,

and

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and our sauiour in the Gospel declareth, that the good wee doe to the least of his brethren being on earth, we doe it to him which raigneth in heauen, for this is the duetie of true friendshippe, to make much of our friendes when they are departed, to be a friend to their friends, and to be an enemie to their enemies, as the Lord promised Abraham. Therefore let vs cast away this counterfait kindnes, and performe this godly loue, wherein others before vs haue walked, and as wee were wont louingly to receiue the parents being aliue, so lette vs ioyfully entertaine the children nowe they are deade. for true frendshipe loueth at all tymes, and godly kindnesse must neuer be remoued. As wee wish that others should vse vs when wee are gone, so let vs vse others now they are absent.

Gen.21.23.

Pro.17.17

*Moreouer Naomi sayde.* In these wordes she giueth comfort vnto Ruth, shewing her, that his beheuolence was causelesse, seeing hee was neere vnto them, and of their affinitie, beeing an appoynted person to redeeme their inheritance. For in the lawe of the Lorde, hee hath decreede for the poore of the Iewes, that if any person had solde his inheritance, the next of his kindred might redeeme it, and restore it to the family againe, which comming into the minde of Naomi, shee hopeth that by this meanes they should come to their inheritance againe, seeing Boaz, who was one of the next of her kindred, had so courteously entreated the widdow and heyre.

Leui.25.25

Deu.25.5.6

Whereby wee note the great care that the Lorde hath ouer the poore, which by a lawe decreed, that they should not for euer bee depriued of their inheritance, for at the farthest they should come to it againe, at the yeere of Iubile. And truely this lawe beeing ceased, because the Iewes common-wealth is ouerthrowne, yet the Lord executeth the same in some measure amongst the Gentiles dayly. For nowe wee may see and heare, how hee exalteth many from the dust, to walke and sitte with princes: howe hee



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giueth great possessions vnto them whose fathers had not one foote of land, and casteth many from their vnlawfull titles. And euery day wee heare of some cast downe and humbled, and others lift vp & exalted. Who doth this? but the hand of the almightie, that putteth downe Haman, and raiseth vp Mordechai: refuseth Saul, and chooseth Dauid: remooueth Abiathar, and establisheth Sadoch: banisheth Shebnah, and aduanceth Eliakim: and finally, that in fewe ages changeth all things: Therefore promotion commeth neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the wildernesse, but from the throne of the Lord of hosts, which openeth, and no man shutteth, humbleth, and no man setteth vppe, exalteth, and no man casteth downe, and ruleth the course of all mankind by his vnchangeable decree. Let not then the mightiest bee proude for theyr honour and dignitie, for the Lorde destroyed the Anakims great Princes and Giants, before the family of Caleb: much more will hee doe those that are lifted vp by their wealth, that should rather cast them downe: & let vs doe good to those poore brethren among vs, for they shall bee lifted vp to riches, when the greatest and wealthiest among vs shall be cast downe into pouertie. But in this matter wee shall haue more occasion to speake in the fourth Chapter.

*But Ruth sayde.* In this verse Ruth maketh relation of these things which Boaz sayde vnto her, and praying for a blessing vppon him, because hee vouchsafed to take her into the companie of his maydens, and gaue her leaue to gather to the ende of harueſt. So that in this place by these wordes of Ruth, wee haue an example of perfect thankfulnesse, omitting nothing that might serue to commende the kindenesse of Boaz: and also of woman-like and godlie modestie, that concealeth the cause of all this courtesie, which was her owne commendation, as already wee haue shewed you. So that it is no part or poynt of godlidesse, to doe as our euill conditioned and ingratefull persons doe, which omitte that which serueth most for to commend their benefactors, and to

lay

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lay all the prayse vppon theyr owne deserte. But Salomon willed that another mans, and not our owne mouth should prayse vs: and most vngodlye it is, when men will not in so ample manner confesse the benefites they haue receiued of other, but by all meanes extenuate them, which maketh men vnwilling to doe any good, because they can haue no thankes for their labour. And this it is that caused couetousnes and briberie, extortion and vsury, to enter vpon their bodies and wealth, that would not gratifie with kind and deserued reports. So that nowe men will please themselues with money and rewards, that would haue beene satisfied with thankfull words: which is a iust iudgement vppon the world, that would not be contented to recompence kindnesse for kindenesse, and are now plagued with couetousnesse for kindnesse.

*Wherefore Naomi.* This is the last parte of this conference or Dialogue, wherein Naomi counselleth Ruth to follow and take the proffer of Boaz, and abide with his maydens, to auoyde all dangers, if the reapers denie her in another fielde. Where wee first of all note, that if wee acquaint our parents and friendes, with our actions and enterprisers, it might goe farre better with vs in the thin ges of this life, for their aged counsell which they haue bought with much experience, may stay our vnsteddy minds with theyr approoued aduise: Ruth in this place, declaring the courtesie of Boaz, hath it confirmed with the counsell of Naomi, and grounded vppon a reason which shee knewe not, nor feared not. For shee thought, that in euerie place shee should haue found the like entertainement, and the reapers that then were, would so continue to the ende of harvest, but Naomi knewe they were often changed, and so in the end it might fall out otherwise, then Boaz appoynted, or Ruth expected. And this (mee thinketh) doeth shew vnto vs what manner persons parents ought to bee: for if children want counsell, they should bee



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aduised by their parents: if comfort, it should be minished by parents, if necessaries, they should bee prouided by parents: if instruction, they should bee guided by parents: & finally, if correction, they should bee ordered by parents: which is not onely to bee wished, but
Eph. 6. 4. is required of the Lorde that they bring them vppe in the feare and nurture of the Lord. And if this were duely weighed, and reuerently considered, as Eliahas cloake parted the waters of Iordan, so this would part a sunder, and breake off many thousand marriages in our daies, where parents are not able to counsell, nor willing to bee counselled, which if they would they had not beene married. This I speake, not to the discredite of Marriage, but onely to exhort, as from the Lord, that those which either are, or intend to be married, would looke or trauaile first for wisedome, and then for wiues, first for vertue, and then for husbandes, wherein, if they follow my aduise, I assure them theyr marriages will be much merrier, and their posteritie much happier.

Secondly, by this wee gather, that it is a daungerous or indecent thing, for women to trauaile or worke alone without any company, for the weakest
Gen. 34. 1. are soonest oppressed, and women are quickly conquered. We know Dinah trauailing alone, was taken and rauished by Sichem: and Abigail when she went to pacifie the wrath of Dauid, tooke seruants with her, as in this place Naomi counselleth Ruth, to abyde in the company of the seruants of Boaz, accounting it an indecent and vnseemely thing for women and maydens, to bee seene alone. And truely if seruaunts in our daies had manye times more companie, there would bee lesse dishonestie among them; for wee know and see to our griese, that the daylye and vsuall familiaritie of a fewe, hath bredde some disease in our Church, and distemper in our commonwealth. This I speake, that euen in these dayes of peace, men would bee more carefull ouer daughters and seruaunts, and not to employe them so

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commonly as they doe, in iourneyes and trauaile and solitary busines, but for more assurance keep them with company, which may be their defence against all dangers if any happen, and the auoiding of dishonesty if any be so lightly disposed.

Thirdly, by this wee note what company were best for both kinde of youthes, eyther young men or maidens, when Naomi sayeth it is good for thee to goe foorth with his maidens; that is, thou art a woman, and abide among his women and maidens; for all companions are neyther fit nor lawfull, maidens among men, and men among maidens, is for many causes disallowed. First, because there is no such equality in the sexe, that they might keepe together: for if they labour, it is not alike, and if they sporte, their pleasures are contrary, and if they dally it is flat iniquitie. In consideration whereof in olde time the wiues had one tent to dwell in, and the husbandes another: As wee may see in Abraham, in Sara, in Iacob and his wiues, and like this it is that Miriam, and the women of Israell prayſed God by themselues after their deliuerance out of Egypt, and Moyses and Aaron her brethren, with all the men of Israell by themselues. And also we know how the virgins of Israell went vppe euery yeare into the wildernesse to lament and talke with the daughter of Iephehath. Whereby wee are taught, that not onely for feare of daunger, but also for modesty and conscience sake, we must auoid this mingled companies of men and women, except in necessarie occasions, as prayer priuately and publikely, communication of godly pretended marriages and such like businesse. Whereby also wee see at once condemned the feasting, dauncing, meeting, playing, and running of men and maidens together, without all respect of honesty and modesty. And that which is worst parentes and maisters will beholde their pastime, and delight in the vanitie of their wanton children, trayning them vppe in a dissolute life, and commending their indecent and vnseemely behauiour. Amend this neg-

Gen. 18.30
Gen. 31.32
Exod. 15.20
Iud. 11.37.



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ligence in the shell of infancie and your Children will grow vp to your greater comfort, and prosper to their more happy welfare, and the occasion of manie sinnes will be cut off, if wee follow the counsell of the spirit of God.

*And so she abode.* This is the conclusion of this chapter and second part of this historie, shewing vnto vs that Ruth followed the counsell of her mother, abiding with the maidens of Boaz to the end of barley and wheate harvest, and afterwardes dwelleth with her mother again where we obserue an other example of obedience in Ruth, that hearkned to the voice of her mother, & went foorth with the maidens of Boaz. And surely it is commonly seene, that such as the mother is, such is the daughter: for more Naomies would make more Ruths, and moe good mothers would make more good daugters: And in these dayes all the faultes of children may iustly be imputed to the folly of parentes, as the olde crabbe goeth, so goeth the young, and as the old cocke croweth, so croweth the young: a Serpent hatcheth a serpent not an eele, so euill parentes bring foorth euill and vngodly children, but good Fathers by diligent instruction and tender admonition, by praying with and for their children, as Iob did, shall liue to see their generations as blessed as his was.

Iob. 1. 5. & 4. 22, 18

Secondly, by this we learne an excellent example of godly liberality, in that Boaz suffered Ruth to gather wheate as well as barley, the best as well as the meaner. In like manner must wee as willingly depart with, for Christes sake our wine as our water, our drinke as our draffe, and as wee commonly speake, our white as our browne: and truely in this manie good men offend, not because they giue it not, but because they thinke it too much to giue as if our best giftes were not best accepted in the presence of God. Hee which fedde the Israelites with Angelles foode, woulde also that wee should feede him in the godlie poore with our worshipfull and daintiest fare. This I speake not, that those which aske, should bee discon-

contented with the meanest and fittest for them, for the prouerbes, beggers must not bee choosers, as it is couetousnes not to vouchsafe the best wee haue, (if need require) to the poore, so it is scornefulnesse for the poore, like the Israelites which loathed Manna and desired flesh to be discontented with their necessarie and present foode, and to lust for that which is aboue their vocation. But the vse of this point is, to perswade to be like minded vnto Boaz in this, to the godly poore, that wee euerie one without partialitie or grudging, whe necessitie requireth giue our gold as well as our siluer, and distribute our dearestalmes to our poorest brethren.

Thirdly, harvest being done, Ruth abideth with her mother in law, for none of the godly will make a dayly and continuall trade of asking almes, or forsake their own parentes or poore habitations, for worldlie respectes, as appeareth by this example of Ruth. For it is no doubt, she fared well euery day with the seruantes of Boaz, and much better then her poore mother could prouide for her at home, but shee is not drawen away therewith, but is as contented to eate the huugry morsels with her mother at home, as the plentifull abroad. And it is great pittie any should bee succoured, which are not contented to liue hardly at home, and then to aske, when there is no other honest meanes left to liue. And this condemneth the common walking mates, which haue neither houses nor honesty, and it is greatest pittie that they should bee eyther succoured or suffered so to doe, for they are drones which neuer come in hiues but to the hurt of other; they waste all, but get nothing, neyther haue they any other care, but to charge the godly and charitable people. Vnto such giue not as we haue often said, for they which will not liue of the sweate of their browes, let them not eate of the breade of our labours. Now let vs giue praise to God.

The end of the seuenth Lecture.

The

# The eight Lecture.

Chap.3.ver. 1.2.3.4.5.6.

*1 Afterward, Naomi her mother in law said vnto her, shall I not seeke rest for thee my daughter, that thou mayst prosper.*
*2 And now, is not Boaz our kinsman, with whose maide, thou was, behold he winnoweth barley in the floore this night.*
*3 wash thee therefore and annoint thee, and put on thy clothes, and goe downe into the floore, and let not the man know thee, vntill hee haue made an end to eat and drinke.*
*4 But when hee lieth downe, marke the place where he lyeth: then come thou, and vncouer the place of his feet and lie downe and hee shall tell thee what thou shalt do.*
*5 And shee said vnto her, whatsoever thou hast commanded me, that will I do.*
*6 And so shee went downe into the floore, and did altogether as her mother in law had commanded her.*

THis thirde Chapter is the second occasion of this marriage, wherein Naomi especiallie dealeth with Ruth, how shee should make knowne her sute to Boaz. The whole Chapter hath these two partes, first, the counsell of Naomi to Ruth, secondly, the effect of that counsell. The counsell is contained in these sixe verses now read, consisting also of two partes, first, her care for Ruth, verse 1. that her desire is to procure her prosperitie: secondly, the means whereby Ruth might performe that which she aduised: first, because Boaz was then alone in the floore winnowing of barley; secondly, shee must prepare herselfe to go to him, first, in her body by washing and annointing it: secondly, in her ornament, that she put on her best cloathes, and so go downe to the

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the floore: after shee was come thether, shee instructeth her, how to behaue her selfe: first by keeping out of his sight and knowledge, till he had supped: secondly, by marking the place of his bed, and lying down at his feete, and declaring her sute vnto him: & that hee would tell her what shee should doe. After all this Ruth promiseth obedience, verse. 5. 6. and accomplisheth her mothers desire. Of these parts let vs briefely speake as the spirit of God shall assist vs, and the time permit.

*Afterward Naomi.* In these words is declared vnto vs the great care that Naomi had of her daughter in law Ruth, for they are thus much in effect. Nowe both of vs are in quiet, and peaceable rest at home, yet I see that our welfare cannot alway endure, for I am olde, and the graue gapeth after mee, thou art yong, and a good mariage tarrieth for thee: it is my dutie to looke for thy welfare, and to prouide for thy continuall rest if I be taken away: and being carefull of it, I haue nowe inuented the means, &c. Out of the which we note these two profitable doctrines.

First, that it is the dutie of parents to prouide for their children, when themselues shall bee taken away, yea, though they haue no certaine assurance, whether they shall neede it or not. This wee may see here practised by Naomi: for shee was neuer in better ease since her arriuall at Bethlehem, then shee was at this present: Harueſt was ended, prouision obtained, houshold furnished, & these two poore widows liued louingly together, yet then we see in her best estate, shee is most carefull for the mariage of Ruth. And truely this is required of all them that haue any children, to prouide for them that they should not care onely for their present maintenance, but also for their future commoditie. And this maketh many godly persons to maruaile, why men doe trouble their houses with theyr children, when they are able honestlye to prouide for them abroade. Why then doe many permitte and suffer theyr sonnes and daughters, to spend the best of theyr youth in single estate, when it is rather required

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that while they are young, they should bee bestowed. Truely this maketh so many mariages against the parents mindes, when they are negligent to looke to their children, & then the children prouide for themselues. Men looke for offers, as the mariner looketh for wind, and when the wind seruetb, the tide falleth, so many would prouide for their children wheitis toolate. This iniury is all heaped on the children, they match without wealth or blessing, they are detained in the best time of their daies, and finally, are discredited by their own parents. Would God, you that are naturall parents would learne of Naomi, which was but a stepmother. She differred not the time, shee knew it a sinne against nature, that youth should bee wasted, and not in marriage, she had a conscience of her duetie, and a care to her daughter in law, that her welfare might increase, her solitarie life bee comforted, her name aduaunced, & her religion rewarded, with a temporall blessing of a godly husband, and eternall saluation in the kingdome of heauen.

Secondly, by this wee gather that for many causes marriage is better then the vnmarried estate, if with the
Verse 9. feare of God it be vndertaken. For in this place Naomi calleth it rest, as shee did in the first Chapter: and therefore by relation, the vnmarried life is disquietnes, and as rest is better then trouble, so the married life is better then the other. And truely, in the vnmarried life, wee find many inconueniences: First, the heart is neuer satisfied: if a man haue riches, honour, pleasure, health, and fauour, yet wanting a conuenient marriage, hee is not at rest, but desireth that. If he be in sicknes, the diligence and care of a wife is better then a phisition. Nature biddeth him marry to increase his name. The world biddeth him marrie to multiplie mankind. The Lord biddeth him marry, to prepare some heyres for the kingdome of heauen: So that if nature, world, and religion require it who shall speake against it? Secondly, in the vnmarried estate, is either too too much solitarinesse, or too too much pleasure: the meane betweene both is mariage, where hee shall alway find companie

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to expell sorrow, and ioyfull care to drine away ouer merry pastimes, it calleth a man to grauitie. it admonisheth of death, it sheweth the world to bee vanitie, & hath no hope but in heauen. Therefore Salomon speaking of our kinde, and alluding to both, saith: Hee that findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and receiueth fauour of the Lord: euen so may a woman say, if she find a godly husband, shee hath a great fauour. Christ taketh greatest delight in his Church, and his Church in Christ. Such is marriage, when the heart of one resteth in another, that is the rest which is to bee required. As for temporall blessings which further it, they must bee sought for by diligent labour, and prayed for by faythfull supplications, because it is the Lord that giueth power to get riches, grace to vse them, and his blessing to increase them. Wee know, all the fathers so soone as their children were growen vp, they willed and wished them to marrie, that their minds might first bee stayed at home, as it were the foundation, and then their actions would bee wiser abroad, which would make a perfect building. But some will say, Paule affirmeth, it is not good for a man to touch a woman, that is, to marry. I aunswere, that saying of Paule is because of troubles that are incident to marriage, by reason of the wickednes of the world. The Marchant that ventureth on the Sea, hath greatest gaine, and sodaineft losse, not as if the sea were in fault, but because the stormes fall on the sea, euen so, if any finde their marriages bitter vnto them, let them know, the fault is not in the thing, but in the time, place, or persons: and though troubles follow it: it is but sower sawce to sweete meat: as the furnace doth purge the golde, that their loue might be manifested, their fidelitie tryed, their patience approoued, and their religion, if they haue any, declared.

Againe, they will obiect, the same Apostle sayth in the same Chapter, He that giueth to marriage doth wel, but he that giueth not to marriage doth better: therfore the vnmaried life is better then the maried: to which I answere, first, he speaketh to them that haue the gifte

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of chastitie, but wee know the fewest part are endued therwith: Secondly, his speech is for those troublesome dayes of persecution, when the faithfull were in continuall troubles and feare of their liues, then was it better to die single, then leaue many helplesse widdowes behinde, that they might the better flie in daunger, be constant in affliction, and haue no lets or pul-backes, to keepe them from Christ: so hee wisheth and protesteth, for their troubles were meanes to keepe them from mariage, in which sense the Apostle calleth it better not to marrie, and yet yeeldeth the other to be good and lawfull. But in times of peace, where there is plentie and libertie, the swelling nature will not bee appeased but onely by marriage, where the gift is not, and the Apostle saith in those daungerous times, that it was better to marrie, then to burne, that is, to bee vexed with the dayly desire, through the feeling of our owne necessitie.

Thirdly, they may obiect that the vnmarried care for the things of God, but the married to please their husbandes and wiues: to the which I aunswere, that marriage hindreth not the seruice of God, but furtheretb it in many respects, first, because a houshould is a little Church, where the married persons are the ministers of their familie, by priuate instruction to drawe both children and seruants to the kingdome of heauen. Secondly, it putteth them in minde of the loue of God to them, when they loue one another: and admonisheth them of their duties, which is to loue God againe. Thirdly, they haue moe priuate blessings, as the seales of God his fauour toward them, which also stirreth them vp to serue the Lord. Fourthly, two are better then one: for if one be negligent in the worship of God, the other may whet his fellowes on, and their prayers are more acceptable, because the number of them that pray is greater, and if any omitte these duties, the fault is in the persons, not in the marriage: for that is it which the Apostle Saint Paule condemneth, when eyther partie are so much inclined to one

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another, that they weigh not the loue of God, and care of heauenly things, for the fondnes ouer themselues and trauaile for earthlie commodities: but wee must bee married, as if wee were vnmarried in this respect, we must vse the world as if we vsed it not, and reioyce in the company of one another, as if we reioyced not. Therefore to conclude, mariage is honourable in al, instituted by God himselfe, obserued by the fathers before Christ, both princes, Priestes, and Prophetes commaunded by our Sauiour and his Apostles to bee vndertaken, that such persons as haue not the gifte of Continencie, might marry and keepe themselues the vndefiled members of Christes misticall bodie. Let vs then bee exhorted to bee patient in the troubles that accompanie it? for although a bitter shell do compasse the nut, yet how sweet is the kernell that lyeth within: although it haue as many miseries, as the winter hath colde dayes, yet vnspeakeable is the comfort of it, to them that are equallie minded. And as our labour in innocencie was nothing but pleasure which now is nothing but sorrow, So marriage was then more sweeter, though now for sinne it is become more bitter: but the hardiest labour hath some profite and the poorest marriage hath much comfort. But most accursed are they which for to auoide the troubles they haue conceiued of mariage, do giue their bodies to most filthy whoredomes and wretched adulteries: Of whome Saint Paul sayeth, That God shall iudge them, that is vtterly condemne them: for they shall neuer bee made the members of Christ, which haue incorporated them to bee the members of harlots, and heyres of eternall and euerlasting damnation.

*And is not Boaz.* As in the former verse wee haue hearde the diligent carefulnesse of Naomi, for Ruth, to prepare her some rest, that is, a marriage. So now wee are to entreate or speake of the meanes whereby this might bee accomplished which Naomi expresseth in this verse to this effect. By my daily study I haue founde out a meanes, whereby thou mayest

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mayest come to more continuall rest, Boaz, with whose maidens thou hast gleaned and did so curteously entreate thee, hee is our kinsman and defendour by the law, and euen now hee is alone in the floure, winnowing his barley, to whome if thou wilt go, and follow my counsell, hee will shew thee the way that tendeth to thy wealth.

Out of the which wee gather an example of auncient nobility, how they followed not their dayly pleasure, but continuall labour, how they honoured the wealth that God hath giuen them, with the diligent labour of their owne personnes: that euen this poorest worke of winnowing and threshing as wee reade of Gedeon was not onely committed of their seruauntes, but performed by themselues. Whereby wee are taught that it is no such vnseemely thing as many would make it for men of wealth, to follow their basest laboures. This Boaz had a Prince to his Grandfather, and hee was the heyre vnto all his possessions, yet here wee find him alone winnowing his owne corne. Wee reade of Iudah the sonne of Iacob, a progenitour of this Boaz, that he went in his owne person to the shearing of his sheepe: and so did the sonnes of king Dauid, when Ammon was slaine by the seruantes of Absolon, because hee defiled his sister Thamar. Examples of this are more plentiful, then the time will suffer me to rehearse, which are left to vs for patternes of thankefulnes, in their diligēt labours and witnesses of our vnworthines in all our possessions. Adam coulde not dwell in paradice except in his own person hee tilled it, but many with vs, I thinke would deride him and all their Fathers, if they saw them in any thing but the Gentlemans trade: for being hindered neither by the Magistracy, nor by the ministery, they had rather follow hawking or hunting gaming or playing, then at any time to foyle their handes with their own labours, but wasting their wealth in vnprofitable pleasure, while they might encrease their substance by godly trauaile. Cast away therefore this worshipfull idlenes, for men thinke nothing maketh them Gentlemen but abstinence from bodily labour,

Iud. 6. 11.

Gen. 38. 13.
2. Sam. 13. 24.

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where-

whereas that one thing is the greatest blot to our lackt nobilitie, that they haue cast of the care of their labours to others, applying their time to greater liberte, opening by idlenesse the passage of all manner of iniquitie. Remember, the fattest Oxe commeth first to the slaughter, when the labouring beast is merrie in the yoke: euen so the idlest bodyes are soonest seysed by sicknesse, and consumed by death; whereas labouring persons haue many dayes, insomuch as it seemeth a matter of murder, by idlenesse so hasten the death of our bodies. Therfore some loathsome labor take themselues to licentious riot, & sweate out their sicknesse in vnlawfull pastimes, but bodily exercises profiteth little, and will rather in the end procure the paines they most of all abhorre, like the hayre of Absolon, wherein hee most delighted, with which was wrought his death. But the conclusion of all this is, that those which are the chiefest in spending, should be the chiefest in working: and the princes of the possessions, must be the principal in the labours. 2.Sa.18.9.

*Wash thee therefore.* These words containe the preparation, which she counselleth Ruth, before shee descend to Boaz in the floore, that shee wash her and annoynt her: Two vsuall things in these countries: & the meaning of Naomi is, that Ruth prepare her self in most comely maner to go downe vnto him, whom shee desired to be her husband. For these actions of washing & annoynting were, and are very common in those places: washing, to scoure off the filth of their bodies, & annoynting, to make them looke cheerefully. So we read of Dauid, 2.Sa.12.20 after hee had long fasted for his adulterous childe, 2.Sa.11.12 hearing it was dead, hee washed and annoynted himselfe: & as Bathsheba was washing her selfe, it happened that hee saw her, wherby his heart was taken with her loue, & drawen frō God at one time. In somuch as we see it an vsual & accustomed thing in these daies the washing of men & women, & for annointing our Saui- Mat.6.17. our speaketh, that when we fast wee annoynt our selues; that wee seeme not vnto men to fast. Heere then



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wee see Naomi commanded Ruth no vnseemly and
dressing of her selfe, but such as was vsuall, in com-
mon among her owne people, and lawfull also for her
to put in practise. Whereby wee first of all observe,
that comely ornaments, and honest addressing of our
selves, either of men, or women, is a thing required of
them that feare God, for the outward cleansing and wa-
shing away of the filth of our bodyes; being the sa-
uour of sinne raging now in vs: inasmuch as it is a bru-
tish thing to goe in their bodyes, as many will, with-
out all respect of person or humanitie, hands vnsprinkled,
face bo-meared, countenance disfigured, and their natu-
rall complexion defaced in them, through their daylie
vncuttill and vnnaturall behaviour and negligence, who
by their cruell labouring to gette the world, loose the
comfort of their owne bodies, while in swinish loyes
they wallow in the companie of God and men.

Secondly, by this wee gather, that the Lord hath
given the fruits of the earth, as well for our ornament,
as for our nourishment, because it is as necessarie
in some respects for the comelinesse of the body, that
to be rayed vp to handsomnes, being nourished: as
that it should be nourished being weake. Therefore
sayth David. With wine bee refresheth the heart of
man, and hee hath given oyle to make him haue a
cheerefull countenance: and in the verse before hee
sayth, He maketh the grasse to grow for the beast, and
the greene herbe for the vse of man: not simply for
the meate, but for the seruice and vse of man. And note-
able is the historie of a woman, that came to annoint
our Saiuiour before his death, that powred on him a
rich and costly boxe of oyntment, and he excused her?
and commended her for it. And it was in vse in olde
time to annoint the bodyes of them that were dead: as
we may see how these three women, Mary Magdalen,
and Mary the mother of Iames, and Salome,
came to annoint the body of Christ lying in the graue.
If this was lawfull to bee done to the dead carkases,
much more is it to the lyuing bodyes of God his
Saints,

Psa.104.15 14.

Mat.14.34.

Mar.16.1.

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saintes.

And here by the way wee may profitablie describe, what is to be thought of starching, because the godly are much troubled therewith: for some thinke it vtterly vnlawfull, some suppose it to bee indifferent, but other imagine it to bee necessarie: and euerie one of those doo mutuallie condemne one an other: Therefore let vs heare the reasons that are brought against it, if they be weightie, receiue them; if light and of little force, wee will leaue it to the discretion of the faithfull.

First, they say against it that it consumeth the graine of wheate where of it is made, so that the same which was ordained for foode, is transferred to an other vse, which is vnlawfull. To which I answere; so was oyle ordayned for nourishment as well as wheate, yet the godly might take that most comfortable creature, and apply it to the adorning and setting foorth of their bodies: which was lawfull for them, and therefore the other for vs, if it be sparingly vsed. But they will say, oyle was applyed to the body, but this is onely in the apparrell, therefore the reason of them is not alike: To which I answere: that which is done to the apparrell, is done to the body, because it is done for the bodies sake as we reade of Izaacke, which smelled the sauour of Esaus garmets, that Iacob wore when he gou the blessing, and vpon that pronounced his blessing. Gen. 27. 19

But they reply againe, and say it mantaineth pride, and therefore is vnlawfull: but I answere, it is harde to condemne, except we knew the harte, for that is the seate of pride and not of apparrell. Againe if any doe so abuse it, they more offende in that by a thousand parts, then if the thing it selfe were vtterly vnlawfull: therefore the fault lieth in the persons, not in the manner of addressing themselues.

But they obiect againe. That it is a great losse of time, for it asketh much more labour then simple washing: but I answere, so did this annoynting and if the reason bee good against the one, it auail-eth



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also against the other: so that of the three former iudgments, I thinke it in the meane to bee indifferent. And thus in a worde, and briefly I haue touched it as a thing not worth any farther handling, and haue vttered my poore iudgement in the same, in the behalfe of them that indifferentlie vse it, because some haue slaunderously giuen out, that none but proud and singular persons vse it, others haue scornefully aunswered, that none but precise fooles mislike it. But let vs in the spirite of meekenes and gentlenes neither condemne them that vse it, nor contemne those that doo forbidde it. Neither do I speake this to persuade any to imbrace it, whose consciences haue alwayes been against it: but I charitably desire them, to beare with their Brethren, and in these vnnecessarie trifles, to suffer all the faithfull to enioy their Christian liberty. But especially, let vs learne to praise the Lorde, which hath thus carefullie and plentifully prouided for vs euery way, outwardly in our bodies, making his creatures to comfort vs: and inwardly in our soules, giuing his owne spirite to bee the earnest of our saluation: that wee might wante nothing to draw vs away from his maiesty: but in all thankesgiuing to walke before him in the profession of the Gospell being compassed aboute with the helpes of this life, as Elisha was with the mountaines of Angels: that the comfortlesse sorrowes of worldly miseries may neuer driue vs to desperation.

*And put thy garments.* This is the seconde thing which Naomi willeth Ruth in her preparation to goe downe to Boaz, for first as shee commaunded her to dresse her body: so now shee willeth her to put on her best apparrell, as the goodliest ornaments of her body: for we must not imagine, that Ruth went naked in the house, although she bid her put on her apparrell; but her meaning is, that she should put on her best apparrell thet euery way she might be furnished to deale with so noble a personage, and so weightie a cause: Out of the which we note.

First,

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First, another duty of humanity, that if God giue any blessing vnto vs, we should also bee carefull in these bodies of sinne, to prouide for our selues chaunge of apparrell. For we know after Adam had sinned, the first thing hee thought on, was somewhat to couer his nakednes. By the which we may learne that the first entrauance or occasion of clothing was giuen by sinne, that wee might couer the shame of our bodies; for if Adam had continued in his estate of innocencie, there had beene no shame of nakednes, no cause of garments no feare of colde, or terrour of heate, and therefore before all thinges he sowed some figge leaues together, for the hiding of his offence, but God made them garmentes of skins, So then we must be very carefull for the conscience of sinne, that wee couer our bodies with outward apparrell which indeede is a type or shewe, how our soules must be clothed with Iesus Christ. For this cause it was vsuall in auncient time that they not onely prouided simplie a garment for the present necessitie, but many chaunges for their bodies commodities. And as the world grew so sinne increased, and as sinne increased, the miseries of our bodies multiplied: like a ruinous house that euery day falleth to decaye more and more: Therefore more helpes were inuented in the dayes of Abraham, then in the life of Adam: and more in the time of Moyses then in Abrahames and more in Salomons, then in all the residue or former: for as the sore spreades it selfe, so the salue must bee lengthened, now the ayre is intemperate, the earth vnfruitfull, the bodies of mankind molested by a thousand diseases, and euery herbe which was the first mans nourishment, is our surfet; insomuch as the auoiding of all these must bee carefully prouided by lawfull deuises. Which the Fathers ordayned and appointed by long experience, to bee not a little holpe by the change of apparrell. And here wee see these poore people haue this benefite for their bodies, as well as the rich.

Gen. 3. 7.



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Now, because in some the excesse hereof is so great, that they passe all humanitie: and in other the want is so indecent, that it shameth mankind to see their brethren goe so basely: Some being able, yet like asses laden with much wealth, they haue no power to bestow it on themselues or other: againe, manie poore soules, which haue nothinge to prouide, or to couer them, are neglected by them that are able: Therefore in this place wee must set downe some rules out of the word of God, to take away all these extremities.

And the first thing that must bee knowne, is the cause for which it is not onelie needefull, but also lawfull to prouide apparrell which allreadie wee haue shewed you to be the sinne of Adam which wrought in vs the shame of our naked bodies, and brought vppon vs could and heate, sicknes and soares, surfets and death, so then the bodies couered by clothing are made comely againe, are armed against heate, warmed against cold, strengthened against sicknes, and tho dayes of health lengthned, life prolonged, and death auoyded: For as the prisoner looking vppon his irons, thinketh vppon his theft, so euerie one when hee seeth his garments, must thinke on his sinnes. And this one consideration striketh downe all deuises of fashons, or conceites of pride: For alas what glorie hath the theefe in his bandes, or what profite by their making; for now he is clogged with them, but anone he is tucked vp in the halter: so proude persons are now pranked vp while they looke on their feathers, but anone are paide for their fashions with eternall damnation. For the Lorde crieth out by the prophet that hee will take vengeance of the princes & the sonnes of the king, for vsing strang apparrell.

Zeph. 1.8.

Secondly, there may be a difference of apparrell, one kinde for the rich, another for the poore, one for the prince, another for the people. One for the noble man, and another for the gentleman: for our sauiour speaking of the royaltie of Salomon in all his apparrell doeth

Mat. 6.30

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doth not discommend it: and wee haue heard an ca-
dye of the apparell of Esau lying in his father Isaackes
house. And this may be also in many sutes, as Iacob Gen.27.29
had sent him by his sonne Ioseph, and Ioseph giue his
brethren to euerye one garments, but to Beniamin
hee gaue fiue chaunges. But some will say, our Sa-
uiour biddeth vs not to haue two coates, and therefore
this change is vnlawfull. To which I answere, that
it is vnlawfull to possesse change, or varieue of gar-
ments, when wee see and behold our brother hath
none: therefore our Sauiour Christ addeth, that hee
that hath two coates must giue to him that hath none;
So that our aboundance must neuer be to the want and
necessitie of our brethren.

But alas, where is this difference in manner of
garments? I speake for the matter wherefore they are
made: wee may make the old complaint of a christi-
an father, a thing woorthie to bee seene, yea rather to
bee lamented: The mayde followeth the mistresse in
such beautie of apparrell, that it is hard to know whe-
ther maide or mistris goeth formost. Such confusion
of degrees, consuming of wealth and goods, condem-
ning the humble, and aduauncing of base persons by
apparrell into the place of worthy men, is the ouer-
throw and destruction of a whole country, the ruine
of a common-wealth, and the defacing of the Church
of Christ. But all this while the naked may goo naked
still, for any clothing they can geeue of these that haue
such plenie and aboundance: so that men cloath them-
selues in the finest silkes, feede themselues with the far-
rest calues, and ease themselues in the softest beddes:
while Christ in his members is harbourlesse without
houses, hungry without breade, and naked without a-
ny rayment to cast vpon him. Oh woe be to you dainty
persons, that thus prouide for your owne maintenance,
and neglect the substance of the poore: you are clo-
thed in soft and gorgeous apparrell, and fare delici- Ezec.16.58
ously euery daye: you eate vp the needie like breade:
you are deafe at their cryes, blinde at their naked-
nes,

Luc 17.18. nesse, and like so the Citizens of Sodome, vnmercifull to their miseries: consider that their eating and drinking

Luc. 16. 17 brought brimstone from heauen, with fire to burne vp their Cities and soules. Consider the end of that rich glutton in the Gospel, which was so tormented in the paines of hell, that hee desired but a drop of water, and could not obtaine it. Your brauery shall bee turned into shame, your pride into paines, your ease into restles trouble, your aboundance into euerlasting want, your friends to diuels, your honour into hell, your vnmercifull hearts into insufferable plagues, and your pleasures repayed with eternal destruction both of body and soule. The like may bee said of those couetous persons, which goe as farre vnder their calling as other aboue, and will hardly bestow any garments on themselues worth the wearing, and disgrace the proportion of mankind through their base apparrell, and vnreuerent addressing themselues, without all respect of honestie, regard of religion, conscience of their places, and knowledge of the true vse of the benefits of God. But many spende all that they can get vpon their bellies, neuer caring howe simple they goe in the face of the world, so they haue any thing to couer their nakednesse? and wee know what kind of beasts are the punishment of such slouthfulnes. Therefore let vs euerie one helpe those that are not able to prouide, yea, and to buy them apparrell: and let vs all learn hereby, what care wee ought to haue of the change of our bodyes, that if wee will bee ruled by the example of the godly, wee must rather studie and trauaile for our couering, then for our nourishing: Therefore wee must pray for our cloathing of him that cloatheth the Lillies of the fielde, in such measure as wee may bee comforted, our nakednes couered, our shame abated, our comelinesse adorned, and the sauour of sinne expelled, that wee might prayse his power for euermore.

Secondly, by this wee may also note, what reuerence we owe to magistrates and to men in authoritie, that wee

we must be carefull in their presence to giue no offence euen in ous apparell: for heere wee see Ruth going to Boaz, an elder of Bethlehem, shee is commaunded by Naomi to put on her best apparell, as a duetie of all the faithfull, that they make not their presence odious in the sight of their rulers, and for this cause wee read in stories, that when any were woont to come before the magistrates hauing any sute vnto them, they were apparelled with white, which signifieth the innocencie of the person, and puritie of the cause? and also they had one suit, that in all decent manner they might deliuer their mindes in the presence of the magistrate; for the basenes of apparrell, is loathsomnesse to many. But this shall suffice for the touching of this matter.

*Let not the man.* After she had commaunded her to prepare her selfe, she descendeth to instruct her, of her behaiour: after shee commeth downe to the place: which was this, that shee let not him know of her till hee had supped, and were gone to lie downe in his bed, which shee aduertiseth her diligently to marke, and to come and bestow her selfe at his feete. Where it may seeme that Naomi counselleth her daughter an vnlawfull thing, yea, rather to play the whoore, then to get her a husband by a lawfull meanes: for shee biddeth her to trimme and smoothe her selfe vp, she warneth her not to come to the man till hee were layde to his rest, and finally, she counselleth her to lie downe at his feete. Truely in outward shew it seemeth vnlawful, yet in substance very honest, if we consider euery circumstance. First I demand, what is it that seemeth dishonest in this whole discourse? some will say, first the dressing of her selfe is seant the part of an honest woman, for it is very likely, Naomi had this intention, by this meanes to draw the old man in loue with her, for shee tooke him as it were at aduantage alone in the floore, and such saith Salomon is the part of whoores. I answere that them other of Salomon sayth, that it is also the point of a wife and a godly woman to watch in the night, to be finely apparelled, to clothe her household and such like. Therefore seeing

Pro. 7. 9. 10 11.

Pro. 31. 10. & 21.

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an honest woman may doe these thinges. Ruth did no dishonestie in this. Againe, this kinde of dressing in Ruth was needefull, because shee had to deale with an honourable man, and therefore the more carefully and comely shee must appeare in his presence. But you will say, that Naomi had some such meaning, because shee bid her that shee should not lette her selfe be knowne till the man were gone to his: I aunswere, this shee did, that they might more freely talke together of the matter of her marriage, for if shee had come before he went to supper, the day would not haue sufficed to communne of the cause of her comming, neither would the old man haue gone to his lodging, if he had known a woman to bee present. Then you will say, why dyd shee not come to his owne house at home, and that in the day time? I answere, because it was a reproch to Ruth, to bee knowne to deale publikely in her owne marriage, which must needes bee knowne if it hadde beene done in the Citie, or in the day time: and therefore, seeing time and place were now conuenient, the man being alone, they tooke opportunitie by the forelocke, and prepared themselues for the aduenture of her marriage.

Why then, will some say, what mooued Naomi to giue such counsell vnto Ruth, seeing shee knewe it might bee defamed? I aunswere, Naomi knew Boaz to bee an old man, not giuen to such lewde and filthy conditions, but especially shee knewe him to feare God, and Ruth her daughter in lawe to bee a vertuous woman, and trusting in his age, and both theyr godlinesse, shee is emboldened to giue this aduise. And this may suffice any sober mindes, from suspition of Naomies counsell, Ruths dishonestie, or the religion of Boaz. But some will saye, if the matter bee so cleere as you will make it, then may wee also follow the example and doe the like. To which I answere, if any doe so, it is much amisse: for wee must not imitate euery example wee reade of in the scripture, as that of Rebeccaes counsell to her sonne Iacob, whereby hee got away the blessing from

Esau:

Esau. There is not cause that can moue vs, as there was Naomi, for Ruth must bee married in her kindred, we neede not: she was bound to one or twayne, but we are free to many thousandes: she might challenge in her owne behalfe, for the law of God, but wee cannot doo so except there bee a promise of marriage: therefore neyther must wee follow this example, nor yet suspect the actions of eyther.

*And Ruth.* Now the counsell propounded, and the meanes for the execution thereof declared, Ruth approoueth her mothers aduise, by promise of obedience, that first shee would doo it, and in the verse 6. shee doeth performe it. Where we haue a good example, in the matter of marriage for all children to depende vppon their godly and religious parentes, If any aske mee, whether they bee bound vppon necessitie so to obey their parentes, that if they offer them husbandes, or wiues they cannot refuse them, but their parentes may compell them; to whome I aunswere, first if it bee possible, hearken to the voice of thy parentes, but if thou canst not, thy parents cannot commaunde thee against thy minde, for they must propounde it conditionally, not absolutely. In thy bodie (concerning thy laboure) thou must obey them in all thinges, beecause they are the parentes of thy bodie, but thy mind or soule which commeth from God, is alway at libertie. So that disobedience to parentes is the refusinge of their temporall commaundement, but mariage is euerlasting to the death of man.

Secondly children may refuse, beecause the Lorde many times reuealeth that to the childe which he shewed not to the parentes: as wee may see in the example of Sampson, when hee would marie with a philistine woman, for his parents gaine saying it, the scripture sheweth the reason of it, beecause they knew it not to come from the Lord: but Sampson did, & therefore stood in it & his parents harkned vnto him the end & got him that womā for his wife, By the which we gather

Iud. 14. 5. 4. 5.

gather that no children may lawfully celebrate their marriage without the parentes consent: secondly, that must bee very circumspect to marry their Children: thirdly, that they cannot in any good conscience deny their consentes to their children to keepe them from honest marriage, if there bee any equalitie betweene the parties or hope of honesty in the time of louing.

But of this matter wee haue often spoke: and therefore this shal suffice for this time. Now let vs gaue praise to God.

The end of the eight Lecture.

The

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# The ninth Lecture.

Chap, 3.ver.7.8.9.10.11.12,13.

7 *And when Boaz had eaten and drunken, and made his hart mery he went and laied downe beside the heape of corne, & shee came softly and vncouered the place of his feete and lay downe.*

8 *And at midnight the man was afraide, and turned himselfe hither and thither: and behould a woman lay at his feet.*

9 *To whome he saide, who art thou? and shee said I am Ruth thy handmaide, spread the wing of thy garment ouer thy handmaide, for thou art the kinsman.*

10 *Which said, Blessed be thou of the Lord my daughter, for thou hast performed more kindnes, at the last then at the first, because thou followdst not young, were they poor or rich.*

11 *Now therefore my daughter feare not, whatsoeuer thou saiest I will doe vnto thee, for euery one within the gates of my people knoweth thee to be a vertuous womã.*

12 *Now indeede it is true that I am thy kinsman yet there is one neerer then I.*

13 *Sleepe here this night, in the morning if hee will doe the part of a kinsman let him: but if he will not doe the kinsmans duetie, I will doe the kinsmans duetie, as the Lord liueth sleepe vntill morning.*

NOw it followeth, in this scripture to speake of the effect of this counsell, and of those thinges that hapned after Ruth came downe into the floore: and the happy successe shee had with Boaz, The wordes doe easily deuide themselues into two partes, the first respecteth Boaz the other Ruth.

The first part concerning Boaz, is that which hee did after his worke, and before his sleepe ver, 7. that hee

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hee eate and dranke and made his heart merry, and lay downe beside his corne. For that he did after his sleepe, verse 8. First, hee feared when he felte a woman at his feete: and secondly, hee asketh who shee was. After hee knew her, hee blessed her, verse 11. In these wordes, Feare not my daughter. His comfort hath 2. partes: First, his confession that hee was her kinsman, verse 12. Secondly, the counsell hee giueth to her verse 13. to tarry vntill the morning, and then hee would trye her other kinsman: if hee refused, Boaz promiseth by oath to confirme her right, and do her kinsmans duety: and therefore biddeth her to sleepe vntill the morning.

The second parte which concerneth Ruth, is her behauiour after shee came to the place appointed, and hath these two braunches: first that which shee did alone, verse 7. That shee came and lay downe at his feete: secondly, that which she did with Boaz: first shee telleth him her name, when shee perceyued the man was afraide: secondly, shee sheweth him her petition, desiring him to spreade the wing of his garment ouer her, verse 9. Of these parts let vs speake in order as they lye, by the assistance of the spirit of God and permission of the time.

*And when Boaz.* These words concerne Boaz & that which dee did after his worke the day being ended and his body being wearied, hee went to his meate, eating and drinking, refreshing his stomacke and cheering his heart with those blessings of God which he had present; afterwardes getting him to his lodging at the end of his corne, in stead of a softer bed hee harboureth vpon the straw. Out of the which wee obserue these thinges.

First, the blessing of God vpon his creatures, that are moderately taken: for it is saide that hee cheerde his heart after his eating and drinking; his bodie was not onely nourished, his hunger abated, and his stomacke filled, but also his heart was

cheered

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cheered thereby: as if the holy Ghost had sayd, Heere is my blessing vppon meate that is moderately receiued, that the powers of the soule are refreshed by it: therefore wee reade in the Preacher, that a whole land is blessed by the moderate receiuing of these benefites in eating and drinking. The experience whereof, is plainely prooued euery day among vs. For what is the fruite of this immoderate deuouring the benefites of God, but as Salomon sayth, the corruption of the body, the swelling and redness of the eyes, woundes without cause, quarrels and contentions to the woe of many? wherein they that reioyce are voyde of all reason, which ought to bee the grounde of all their mirth, but like beastes some from feeding to sleepe conuey themselues other from eating to gaming turne their bodyes, delighting in nought but vanitie, being as farre from this cheerefulnesse of heart by their meate and nourishment, as Nabal was after his feast, when one worde of Dauids anger strooke his heart dead. But this Boaz was heere alone, and none beside him: and yet you see, that in his solitarie barne, voyde of companions, hee made himselfe merrie, with the fellowship of the blessing of God vppon his meate. Euen so assuredly, as the handes of many could guide their mouthes, their mouthes rule their appetites, and both were gouerned with the spirite of God, that they receiued for strength to nourish their weakenes, not for gluttony to fill vppe their stomackes, they should with greater comfort sitte down to their meales, and exceedingly fully rise vp againe. But seeing our mindes haue as many deuises, as our stomacks receiue morsels, wee eate and yet wee are not satisfied, wee drinke, and yet wee are not merrie, but ouercome with the good creatures of God, wee seeke after idle songes, vaine iesting, and vnprofitable fables of falshood, and forged conceites in vngodlye bookes, which drawe our

Eccl. 10. 17

Pro. 13. 29.

spirits

spirituall ioy, and plungeth our mindes in the gulfe of worldly mirth and woefull miserie. Then let vs learne the wisedome of Christ, and looke for ioye which standeth not in laughter, but in the inward comfort of the assurance of the spirite, being perswaded wee feede in the presence of God, wee may haue Christ at our temporall and worldly meales that wee may eate and drinke with him in his euerlasting kingdome.

Secondly, by this we obserue, that our meate after our labour is much more ioyfull to our hearts and profitable to our bodyes, then if it be receiued in an idle life: for Boaz had wrought hard all this day, and the reward of his labour is the worke of his meate, which in the end of all maketh his heart merry. In consideration whereof, the Lorde inflicted this as a punishment vppon mankinde, that their meate shoolde bee vnprofitable vnlesse it were eaten in the sweate of our browes: for as sleepe to a man that hath long watched, so is meate to a man that hath long laboured, and as the coursing of the Hart maketh him to breathe for the water springs, so labour causeth men to hunger more vehemently, to eate more liberally, and disgest more effectually their desired morsels. We read of Ionathan the sonne of king Saul, when hee had wearyed himself in the slaughter of the Philistines, and being very hungry, did but dippe the toppe of his barre in a honey combe, and putting it to his mouth, his eyes receiued sight: so acceptable are the crummes and drops to them that labour, that they restore the life & power of the body, and for this cause the greatest persons in the first and purest age, (when the life of a man was many hundred yeeres) were not exempted from bodily labour. On the other side, as Salomon saith, they which sit long at wine and seeke after strong drinke, meaning those which with idlenesse follow their bellyes, are more noysome to the world, vnwholsome to themselues, and woefull for euer: for their end will bee as the byting of a serpent, and the stinging of a cockatrice: teaching vs that labouring mens morsels are most sweete: & if we should ioyfully recreate our selues

1.3.19.

Psal.42.1.

1.Sa.14.27

Pro.23.20.

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in the benefites of God, wee must diligently prepare our stomackes in some honest trauailes that the basest fare may bee acceptable meate vnto vs: for the health of the body is preserued by laboure, as the planted corne by the diligence of the husbandman: for hee which tilleth the earth is satisfied with bread, but idlenesse is neerest kinsman to madnes. Against this wee haue often spoken heretofore, and let this suffice for this time. Pro. 12. 14.

Thirdly wee must note, what manner of mirth or cheerefulnes was this of Boaz, it could not be in talking for hee was alone, nor yet in iesting, for the former reason: nor yet was it in outward singing, for it is said his heart was cheerefull, as if there were a mirth that were not outward. And truely, where the holy Ghost dwelleth, there abideth this inward ioy. Which proceedeth from it as a streame from a fountain, or heate from a fire. Saule could bee merrie when Dauid played on his harpe, the king of Babilon was merrie in the middest of his dilicates, Assuerus was merie among his princes, & Naball was merrie in the middest of his reapers: but what marketh the godly merry among the wilde beasts, ioyfull in the dungeons of the earth, and sing hartily when they receiue browne bread? nothing but this ioy of Boaz, which is the ioy of the holy Ghost. This maketh men ioyfull in death, merrie in miserie, and leaping vnder the yoke of christian troubles: which all the princes in the world cannot do vpon their thrones of maiestie, this is mixed with no feare, because it proceedeth from so excellent a roote. Why doe men meruaile, ỳ so many godly persons liue so solitarily? the birde had rather bee in wildernes alone, then with thousandes of her fellowes sitting in a cage, and the godly are most mery when they are farthest from worldly companie. If the godly bee a company together, this their ioy must bee expressed by singing of psalmes as Iames saith, and our sauiour with his disciples practised this at his last supper, for when they had done they sung a psalme, and went into the mount of oliues, yea euen then when Christ had prophesied of his death, and they were Rom. 14. 17. Eph. 5. 22. 1. Sam. 16. 24. Dan. 5. 4. Est. 1. 10. 1. Sam. 25. 36. Iam. 5. 13. Mar. 14. 1.



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sorrowfull, yet this inward and spirituall ioy was not extinguished, wherin we see an excellent commēdation of singing after meat, that it might bee an outwarde testimonie of our inward ioye. This striketh downe all foolish talking for stirring vppe of mirth, and aunswereth to them that say, if they follow not vaine pastimes they cannot bee merrie: Truely that pleaseth the flesh, but displeaseth the spirit: and let them assure themselues whosoeuer they bee, that this temporall and wanton sporting will bring vppon them euerlasting lamenting. But some will say, is this singing and mirth at tables commendable, seeing the prophet speaketh so against it: They sing to the viole, and frame to them selues songes like the songes of Dauid, &c. I aunsweare, all curiositie and pleasure in outward singing at our feastinges is forbidden by the prophet, which hee doth notablie describe in the same plate by these markes. First, when it is vsed to forget their sinnes, and to driue awaye the terrours of their consciences.

Amo. 6. 5, 6

Vers. 3

Vers. 4.

Secondly, when it is added for pleasure and ease. Thirdly, that with greedier appetites, they might deuoure their meate and drinke, to draw away their mindes form the remēbrance of the Lord. Fourthly, such mirth as maketh them forget the afflictions of the church of God, if any desire mirth for these causes, the woe of the prophet taketh houlde vppon them.

Vers. 6.

And surely heere is condemned all playing on instrumentes and singing at table when wee eate our meate, as a thing against which the prophet much aymeth, and is too much vsed amonge vs here in England, for nothing maketh vs more readily to forget the affliction of Ioseph then that doeth: when two occasions of mirth are ioyned together, meate and musicke it is like two diuers plaisters laide to one wounde, which by their vehement operation, increase the sore. In like manner wee are more apt to bee made worse then to bee amended by the benefites

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of God. For as too much raine drowneth and ouerfloweth, and too much drought chippeth and cleaueth the earth: so too much mirth & pleasure ouercommeth the heart of man. This I speake, not to discommende musicke, which I acknowledge freely with all the godly, to be holy and lawfull: but I exhort and admonish, that it may not bee vsed at the present time of eating, but sparingly before or after our feasting. And let vs all choose rather to sing one Psalme from a feeling spirit, with a grace in our heartes and mindes, then to heare a thousande songes vppon instruments of pleasant musicke, without inward comfort.

*He went to lie downe.* Now wee are come to the second part of that which hee did alone, which in these words is declared to be the choise of his lodging, at the end or one side of his corne. Where wee note another vsage or custome of auncient nobilitie: in steade of a pallace, they had a cottage, in steede of attendors and waitors, they had the instruments of their labours: and as this Boaz, a heape of strawe, in steade of a bedde of downe: such as his toyle and labour was, such is his lodging: a harde worke, a harde bedde: for hee that is wearied with trauaile or labour, can sleepe and quietly take his rest on the grasse. And this putteth vs in minde of the estate of all our forefathers many yeeres agoe, before this softnesse and tendernesse was inuented, they were gladde wee see, though they were great Lordes, yet to bee labourers: And although their possessions excelled ours, yet they had lesse bodily ease then wee: for the richest and highest estate of dignitie is not the quietest life. By the wicked wee are admonished, with all kindenesse, to harbour the poore and needie though it be but in a padde of strawe, considering they bee the images of the auncient nobilitie, who were contented with the like entertainment: & the poore are exhorted with patience to abide their tedious trauailes and hard lodgings, seeing the Lords of the worlde, had no better estate, they which had most wealth, had



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least ease, and we which haue scant one mans inheritance among twenty, do peaceably enioy more worldly securitie, and truely this maketh vs to feele, that euery commoditie is tempered with some molestation: the Israelites being deliuered from Pharao, thought they were well, but then they were driuen to goe through the bottome of the sea, and being come to the land of Canaan, they found many enemies, and did not ouercome them all, till the raigne of Dauid: so that euery pleasure is mingled with some worldlye sorrow: they which vse the sea, get much wealth, but yet with great danger, and they which are on the land, are in safetie, though not in such wealth. And thus must wee frame our mindes, that when wee enioy the end of our desires, yet it bringeth with it alway some occasion of dislike: therefore it is better to bee contented with hard fare, then discontented with daintie cheere, to like in hard harbour, then dislike in the softest beddes: and better is a little thing with a quiet minde, then the possession of a kingdome, with the trouble thereof.

*And Ruth came*: Boaz beeing wearie with his labours, and sufficed with his meate, no doubt but being quietly layd a sleepe had soone taken him: and Ruth, when shee had spied a conuenient time, came, and conueyed her selfe softly to the place of his feete, which at midnight was perceiued by Boaz, and not before. For shee so layd her selfe, as hee being awaked, might quickly spie her: whereby wee see the occasion that mooued Naomi to counsell Ruth to come so neere him, which was this, that Boaz might first bee grieued, and then should Ruth best vtter her sute. But of all this wee haue spoken before, and therefore to the petition of Ruth.

*Spreade the wing.* Ruth omitting no opportunitie, so soone as shee had vttered her name, shee putteth vp her petition, and by a figuratiue speech, desireth him to bee her husbande and defendour. For to spread the wing, we know is taken from birdes,

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who keepe their yong ones vnder their winges. And this speech of Ruth to Boaz, is indeede to intreate him to bee her husband: for wee reade the sence of these woordes to bee spoken to Sara by Abimelech the King of Gerar, that her husband Abraham should bee vnto her a couer, against all those that would oppresse her. And therefore in auncient time women were wont to bee couered in the presence of their husbands: And Ruth sayd to Boaz, spreade thy wing ouer mee, that is, bee thou my husband to couer mee: for in times past it was a thing very odious to bee without husbandes, euen as odious as to bee starke naked, or a masterlesse dogge, as the prouerbe is: Which appeareth by that complaint of the Prophet Esay, That seuen women should laye holde vppon one man, and desire to bee called by his name, promising to prouide their owne liuing. So that this figuratiue speech doth most notablie describe the duetie of husbandes towardes their wiues. First the wing signifieth protection, for it is the dutie of husbandes to defende their wiues, to be able and willing to shield them from iniuries, prouide for them necessaries, couer them in dangers, minister to them comfort & strength in their weakenesse. But truely it is pittie to see what marryed men wee haue in these dayes, and how little commoditie many helplesse wiues receiue by their retchlesse husbandes, that surely they are driuen with Abigail, many times to shift for their owne liues, and the liues of their families. These roysting companions, hastie and headie husbandes, which for euery light occasion forsake their families, or weary their wiues with their presence, minister neyther couering nor comfort, according to their bounden duetie, but like periured and forsworne caytiffes, that haue falsified their faith to GOD, the Church, and their wiues, runne headlong to their owne destruction, and decay of their posteritie. Oh how sorrowfull is the estate of women, if they bee not supported with the handes of their yoke-fellowes. Bea-

Gen. 20. 16.

Esa. 4. 1.

Psa. 63. 7.



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ring of children is nothing in comparison of this: for that is their deserued punishment of God, but the other, the intollerable land of the Diuell. We reade, that the Pellicane will teare out her owne breast to feede her yong ones: but wee reade of fewe so vnkinde as to feede vppon their yong ones, saue onely these vnnaturall husbandes. We reade that the Storkes are alwaies fedde so long by their young ones when they are olde, as they nourish them when they were yong. But these godlesse fathers care neyther for to nourish their little ones being yong, nor how they shall be maintained when they are olde.

Finally, by this, wiues are iustructed their obedience to their husbandes, that as the little birde is at the bill of his damme, so wiues must bee ready at the becke of their husbands. And let vs looke vpon the bruite beasts for example of liues, who in theyr brutish kinde condemne our humanitie. The Emmet Laboureth and prouideth for winter, that condemneth sluggardes. The Asse knoweth his owner, and the Oxe his Masters cribbe: These condemne vnthankfulnesse to God. The Doues teach vs innocencie, the Serpents wisedome, the dogges watchfulnesse, the Foxes warinesse, the Lyons courage, and the little birds our duties to wiues and children. Therefore let vs not bee more graceless then these, lest their diligence, like the voice of Balaams Asse, condemne our disobedience to perpetuall miserie.

*Blessed art thou of the Lord.* Now commeth the second part of the conference betweene Boaz and Ruth to bee handled, wherein onely Boaz speaketh. And first of all, hee blesseth or prayeth for her, saying, *Blessed bee thou of the Lord, for this latter fauor is greater then the former:* Then thou forsookest thy Country to come with thy mother in lawe, but now thou forsakest yong and youthfull husbandes, to come to mee a diseased olde man: neither wealth nor pouertie can alter or change thy minde, from following the com-

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commaundement of God to thy owne hinderance. for in this example we haue an excellent patterne of true and vnfained religion, which is this: when Ruth is obedient to the ordinance of God, euen in that which seemeth to her owne discommoditie and earthly consolation: for shee was a young woman, and therefore by nature desired a young companion, and not to bee troubled with a withered ould man; from whome sheo could receiue but littell bodilie comfort: yet becauso by the law shee was tied to her neerest kinsman of her deceased husband, forsaking all other, shee cleaueth to him, making the law her choise, his age her honour, and the triall of his former curtesie, as bandes of assurance frō his future kindnes. This was the faith of Ruth, that caused her like Leui to forsake his custome: like Zacheus to departe from his wealth: like the courtiers of Herod to forgoe their honour, and also the saints of God to forsake their dearest frends, to follow the voice of the Gospell.

Luc. 5. 28. & 19. 8. 9. Act. 13. 1.

And this teacheth vs, to cast off earthly commodities in worldly busines, to forsake nature and naturall affection, to forgoe life and liuing, and accounte all thinges but dung in regard of obedience to the word of God. This is it that toucheth the quicke, and will proue the heart of euerie christian. If this condition were propounded, Christ saith: That for him wee must forsake all that wee haue: Now, if this law were made, that whosoeuer went to hearing of the word, should presently confiscate his goodes at the pleasure of the law maker. Who would in this case bee obedient rather to the bare voyce of Christ, then to the threaning wordes of the law. Examine beloued, and then arraine euerie man his owne hearte for this point and you shall see, whether the loue and desire of the world hath not droue out the loue of the father. Euery dastard will offer and make shew to fight hardely, till hee come to approach the feilde, but in the face of the enemie if he abide, there is the triall:

may if hee see but one way to escape hee will surely take that, though it bee to his owne discredite So I feare mee, I feare mee, many, if daunger were, would not onely turne from vs, but fight hotely against vs for all their faire faces to vs. They which now will hardly of one hundred poundes giue one to the Gospell, will not then leaue the principall to follow the truth: but as the glare-worme doeth not glister but in the night, so true christians will not bee knowne, till the daies of darkenes & errour come, when these dissembling hipocrites shall bee found to bee nothing but rotten wood, good for nothing. But to come to Ruth: shee performeth her promise to God, as Dauid saith, though it bee to her owne hindrance: shee knoweth it with the apostles, better to obey god then men, to follow Christ and not the flesh, for the world it selfe shall bee shortly consumed, and then the louers thereof shall bee vtterly condemned. Oh, let vs then practice the deniall of our selues before the time of triall come, let vs as the martyrs did, trie the burning of our fingers, before wee venter our whole bodies: let vs giue some of our wealth to the poore now, rather then keepe all to bee spoyled by the wicked apostates then: but how will men doo this at the fierie triall, when now in peace they will forsake and forsweare the Lord; some for their marchandise, other for rentes and reuenewes, some to bring the poore Nabaothes into destruction, many for worldly profite and temporall gaine: but this queen of worldly desire shall one day bee meate for the dogges? when it shall bee saide, that happie are all you that in wealth and pouerty, haue followed the sonne of righteousnesse in sincerite.

Psal. 15. 4. Act. 4. 19.

*Feare not my daughter.* His prayer and the reason there of being ended, now followeth the consolation hee giueth to Ruth, in these wordes, bidding her to cast away feare, for whatsoeuer lyeth in his power hee would doe: for the whole citie would testifie

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testifie the estate of person, and vprightnes in her liuing: and therefore hee should bee much to blame, if hee denied so lawfull a request. Out of the which wee note.

First here is set downe the duety of all magistrates, which is with meekenes and gentlenes to heare the petitions of their suters: for Boaz was a publike person, or els Naomi had complained to the magistrate; but himselfe beeing a godly elder, the sute is first priuately handled with him. Therefore they must follow the example of Boaz here declared, which is with the kindest wordes to intreate them, and iust iudgmentes to proceede for them, alway yeelding to equitie where the Luc.8.24.5
cause is required. For our sauiour accompteth a magistrate that is contrarie minded, neither to feare God nor to respect man: that is such one is hated of God and man: For if magistrates loue God or regard their subiectes, they must bee easily intreated by the voyces of their suters. Therefore is that euerlasting commendations of Moyses: that hee sat in the doore of his tent in iudgment from euening vntill morning, where all the people might freely haue accesse to his presence, and godly conference with his person, the which all the iudges in christendome might imitate, without impeachment to their honoures. Olde Samuel when hee had annointed and appointed Saule to raigne in his stead ouer 1. Sam. 10
all Israell, appealed to the people what iniurie he had 2.3.4.5.
done to any, and the people iustified him in all thinges: now hee was easily come vnto at all times, when Saul & his fathers seruant seeking for Asses would go to the man of God, meaning Samuel. Oh that all that are in authoritie would harken to these examples, that withall gentlenes they might intreate the people of God committed to their gouernment, that they might freely come to them, and friendly speake with them that at the day of their deathes, they might haue the poore saintes of God praying for their deliuerance, their consciences vnburthened their duties discharged.

euerlastingly saued.

Secondly, by this wee gather, that Iudges and iustices must especially looke to the godly: for Boaz saith, that all the cittie knew Ruth to bee a godly woman: So that hee bindeth himselfe by her religion to be as carefull for her being a stranger, as if shee were his naturall daughter. For as all the cittie knew her religious, so they would all reioyce to see her aduanced. And this is the cause wherefore the Lord hath so much commended vnto vs the estate of widdowes and fatherlesse
Deu. 10. 18 Prow. 3. 3. children, because for the most part they are oppressed, and not oppressors: vexed and not vexors: receiuers, and not doers of iniurie. And surely, such are simple godly men, they will beare many burthens before they complaine, and for euerie trifle they will not trouble a magistrate. Therefore euerie magistrate must say
Psal. 101. 6 with Dauid. My eies shall bee on them that speake truth on the earth and they that walke vprightly shall bee my seruants: so haue you respect of persons, though not in iudgment, yet in commō opinion: for the professors of religion are your dearest friendes, who without ceasing powre forth their prayers for you, that in equitie you might draw your sword for them. Oh how lamentable is it to heare, how poore godly men are daylly blasphemed and reproched for their religion: when wicked Atheistes, carnall persons, common swearers, and godles wretches, haue their hearts desire at the hands of the magistrate. Surely such persons, who desire your ayde against others, deserue your swordes of iustice against themselues: for they never come into your presence, but to the dishonour of God. Execute iudgment therefore for them and vpon them.

Thirdly, by this wee gather what it is that most commendeth women: for Boaz saith vertue: & if all the world crie the contrarie, yet Bathsheba the mother of
Prov. 31. 31 king Salomon will confirme it: for thus she sayeth, Fauour is deceitefull, beuty is but vaine; but a woman that feareth God, shee will get praise to her selfe: for vertue and the feare of the Lord are both one thing. So

that

that this is the thing they are most commended for, if religion will take any roote in their hearts: for beauty is worne by age, proportion of body lost by sicknes, loue of men at the wagging of hand, and braue apparrell when wealth decayeth, onely the feare of the Lord endureth for euer. Wee reade that Vasti the Queene of Assuerus was exceeding beautifull, but shee disobeyed her husband, and was putte from her princely roome, when godly Ester was taken in her steede. If the feare of God had beene in the former to obey her husband, Ester had not soone come into her place. But the Lord, that hee might punish the pride of the one, and reward the religion of the other, lifted vp vertuous Ester, and cast downe that stately Vasti, to shewe vnto vs, that much better is the feare of the Lorde, then all the beautie and glory of the world. Est. 1. 16.

We finde many commended in the worde of God, for their faith, but fewe for their faitnesse, that all should learne more earnestly to labour, that the hid man of the heart may bee found in incorruption of a gentle and quiet spirite, which is very precious in the sight of the Lorde. 1. Pet. 3. 4.

Lastly, let vs all learne by this, as well rich as poore, gouernours as subiects, men as women, that aboue all thinges we follow the example of Ruth, to please God more then themselues, to labor for vertue and religion as for a treasure hid in the ground, to search for it, as for gold and siluer, that wee may boldly come before the iudges of the Lord, and plead as subiects, seeing the knowledge of the law resteth in our hearts. And lette vs diligently labour for good reportes, that the magistrates may speake for vs, as Boaz doth for Ruth, to her singular comfort, that wee may with boldnes stand to be iudged, & not to suffer as euill doers. For a good name is better then a precious oyntment, & the godly and guiltlesse are more honorable, when they are causelesse accused: euen as Ioseph, the neerest way for him to come to the Kings fauour, was first of all to be wrongfully imprisoned. So if we study to lead holy conuersations, let them draw vs to the iudgement seate as offen- Eccles. 7. 1.

dors,

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dors: yet our religion shall speake for vs, not guilty: and though all the world should vniustly condemne vs, yet the sonne of God shall sue out our pardon.

*And true it is, I am thy*: We shewed you in the beginning, that this consolation hath two parts. The first his confession in this verse: and the other his counsell in the next. Now then commeth his confession to bee handled, wherein hee graateth himselfe a kinsman, and therefore bound vnto that dutie shee required of him, but yet withall hee soberly telleth her, there is one neerer then I: meaning to shewe her, that the whole care of the matter doth not cheefely depend vpon him. Whereby wee gather, the singular conscience and humilitie of Boaz: for if the feare of God had not hindred him, hee might like scornefull persons, haue denied that hee had any kindred so base: and therefore hee might haue tolde her, that she was come to a wrong man, that shee had mistaken her marke, that shee must not looke so hie, as the choyse man in Bethlehem, and some baser husband wil beseem a Moabitesse. But hee doth not so, for hee confesseth against himselfe that her sute was equall, and hee bounde to deale in it. Where againe wee haue another worthie example for all magistrates to imitate, euen to pronounce iudgement against their owne causes, and giue euidence against their owne commodity. For what a simple thing was it for Boaz to marrie with so poore a woman as Ruth, by whom hee could hope for no great portion, but onely religion. Oh that this vprightnes would enter into the hearts of men in our daies, when they handle their mutuall affayres, to speake the truth indifferentlye, as well against, as for themselues, yea, and forsake their deerest friendes in vnlawfull sutes. But rather it reioyceth them at the heart, to see badde matters bolstered vp, and wrong iudgements through ignorance vniustly pronounced: whereas the plaintifes and defendants themselues, doe eyther of them in their owne conscience, know their cause to be naught: yet against both conscience, iustice, and equitie, will spende their money and hearts also,

to

to be throughly reuenged on their christian neighbors, to ouerthrow their cause, bee it neuer so equall: yet this is their drift, to make the righteous law, the onely defender of all their vnrighteous and vngodly dealings. How if there were no law nor magistrate, would these malicious persons behaue themselues, that dare to wrest the helme of iustice by corruption in these peaceable dayes, and are more fitte to bee the inhabitants of Sodome and Gomorhe, then the fellow-dwellers with the godly and faythfull? Would God that euery offendour were bound to restore for euery default foure times so much, then would our quietnesse bee greater, our sutes vprighter, the truth vttered before danger, causes ended without chargeable costs, wise men should bee the lawyers, the truth should bee the euidence, yea, and equitie should giue iudgement against our selues.

*Tarry this night.* This is the counsell that Boaz giueth vnto Ruth, that seeing it was night, shee should tarry till the morning, and then hee will deale with her kinsman in the behalfe of his right, which if hee will doe vnto her, Boaz cannot withstand him, but if hee refuse, then will Boaz performe the duetie. Which promise hee confirmeth by an oath, *As the Lord liueth*; bidding her to sleepe vntill the morning. Where we see first of all the kindnesse of the man, that would not presently thrust a poore woman from the place of her lodging, but quietly suffered her to harbour beside him, yea, and biddeth her to tarrie at her rest, & to sleepe vntill the morning.

Secondly, hee would doe nothing which might preiudice the cause of her other kinsman, before hee had gotten his consent to the deliuerie of his right, teaching vs thereby, that it is not lawfull to enter into the least part of our neighbours titles, though wee may seeme to haue as great right in it, as Boaz had in Ruth, without the free and willing agreement of him that hath any propertie or interest therein.

Lastly

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Lastly, Boaz confirmeth his promise with an oath, which is the last speech vnto the woman, for her assurance to depend on his credite, and the last thing that must be vsed in all our communications: But of these matters wee haue already spoken, and therefore thus much for this time. Now let vs giue prayse to God.

The end of the ninth Lecture.

The

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# The tenth Lecture.

Chap. 3. ver. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18.

14 And so shee lay at his feete vntill the morning, and then shee arose when one knew not another. For Boaz said, let no man know that a woman came into the floore.

15 And then he said, giue me the sheete wherewithall thou art couered, and hold it vp: then he measured sixe measures of barley, and laid it vpon her: afterward he went into the Citie.

16 But shee came to her mother in law, which sayde, who arte thou my daughter, and she declared what soever the man had done vnto her.

17 And shee said also, he gaue me these sixe measures of barley, for he said, thou shalt not returne empty to thy mother in law.

18 Then said shee, bee of good comfort vntill thou know how the matter will fall out, for the man will not rest vnlesse hee end it this day.

THese words are the last parte of this Chapter: wherein is shewed vnto vs howe Boaz dismisseth Ruth, after they had slept till the morning: and Ruth returneth ioyfully to her mother againe.

The words containe two partes generally in them: The first part is betweene Boaz and Ruth, verse 14. 15. The second is betweene Ruth and Naomi, in the three next verses following. The first parte betweene Boaz and Ruth, is of those things which they did together in the barne. First, that Ruth lay at his feete vntill the morning. Secondly, that shee arose early before day, because Boaz would haue none to knowe that a woman came into the floore. After

they were both risen: Boaz giueth to her sixe measures of barley, layeth them vpon her, and sendeth her away. Secondly, hee himselfe goeth into the Cittie, verse 15. to performe that which he had promised vnto her.

The other part betweene Ruth and Naomi, in the three next verses, containeth a declaration of those things which passed betweene them twaine after shee came from Boaz. Wherein Naomi first asketh who she was, because comming home early before the day, she could not know her by her countenance: To whom Ruth declareth all thing which passed between Boaz and her, shewing vnto her the sixe measures of barley which the man gaue vnto her for Naomies sake, verse 16. 17. Secondly, after Naomi vnderstood the proceedings of Ruth, shee comforteth her, verse 18. assuring her of the diligence of Boaz, that hee would not sleepe till hee had ended the matter the very same day. Of these parts lette vs breefely speake in order, as the spirit of God shall giue vtterance, and the time permitte.

*And so she lay at his feete vntill the morning.* As wee haue heard in the former verses, the conferēce had betweene Boaz and Ruth, the ende and conclusion whereof was this, that Ruth should content her selfe to tarry with him, and sleepe vntill the morning. So in this place, the performance thereof is noted vnto vs. For the holy Ghost vndoubtedly expressing these words, doth it to signifie vnto vs these two things: First, that Ruth remained satisfied with the answere of Boaz, and troubled him no more with further talke. Secondly, that hee might deliuer these two innocent persons from all suspition of incontinency: for neyther talked they any more, or turned one to another, but either of them both contented with their hard lodging, gaue themselues to quiet sleepe vntill the morning.

Where first of all wee note, that the gift of continency or chastitie, is not in the nature or power of mā, but is a holy fruit of true and vnfayned religion, yea, a

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speciall worke of the spirit of God, as appeareth in both these godly persons: for if either of both had bene giuen ouer, no doubt but nature hath put them forward to the satisfiing of their carnall lustes: But seeing, as Christ saith, none can haue it but them to whome it is giuen, and euerie gift commeth downe from the Father of lightes. This among other, is a speciall and extraordinarie blessing of God, vpon many persons truely religious: not for any other cause, but that thereby they might more freely giue themselues to please the Lord, as Ioseph answeared his wanton mistresse, how shall I doe this, seeing I feare God? The vse of this pointe is this, seeing wee acknowledge this benefite, to come from the Lord, let vs among our prayers desire the same that wee might crucifie the workes of the old man within vs, sanctifie the powers of our soules and bodies, bee strēgthened to resist the temptatiōs of sathan, & bring euerie wanton desire, and wauering affection into subiection of the spirite of God which ruleth and raigneth in the heartes of the faithfull. And aboue all thinges let vs earnestly laboure for the feare of the Lorde, that wee may haue the tree aswell as the fruite, the fountaine as well as the streame, the roote from whence it springeth as well as the blade, and increase of the same, for except the streame bee supplied by the spring it will quickly die, except the blade bee nourished by the roote it will soone bee withered, except the fire of the holy ghost bee increased with the coales of the knowledge of God, it will soone bee quenched with the colde water of humane infirmitie; or els willingly goe out of it selfe. And if euer this exhortation were needefull, it is most necessarie in these our vncleane and filthie dayes wherein fornications, adulteries, whoordomes and all actions of incontinencie did neuer more abound, and the reason hereof is this, because men and women, haue refused the knowledge of God: and therefore as the Apostle saith, hee hath giuen them ouer to worke filthinesse one with another. As the flesh lusteth against the spirite, so the spirite lusteth against the

Mat. 19. 11.
Iam. 1. 17.
Gen. 39. 9.
Gal. 5. 25.
Rom. 1. 24



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the flesh: the one is carnall and bringeth damnation: the pure knowledge of God is spiritual and worketh saluation: but if the bodies of men were made the temples of the holy Ghost, how could they conuert them to the members of harlotes; But bee not deceiued, for God who is true, is not mocked: you which now delight your bodies in the pleasures of vncleannes, shall lament your woes in the sorrowes of bitternes: when your soules and bodies for their wanton follies, shall eternally curse them selues, and crie vengeance vengeance to all their desertes: yea though ye Almightie should graunt you repentance, yet the consideration of your whoredomes will trouble your consciences, that it will be much longer before your heartes be eased, or sinnes released, for such as is the festred wound such must bee the searching & purging corasiue: hee that stole little hath but little to restore; but hee that stole much, must recompence much againe.

Secondly, by this wee note, the diuersity of the distribution of the giftes of God, for many godly persons are cleare from one sinne which raigneth in other, and haue some proper giftes which are denied to other, some are subiect to one sinne and some to another. In this place Boaz and Ruth are declared, and commended for continent persons, but in another place Dauid and Bathshebah godly also, are ouertaken with this folly: Iudah the sonne of Iacob was a good man, yet hee lay
1.Sa. 11. 4. with his daughter in-law Thamar, sitting in the like-
Gen. 38. 18 nes of a whore: Ioseph his brother also feared God, yet hee refused his Lady and mistresse: And as it is in this;
Gen. 39. 9. so it falleth out in all other, for some that haue greate giftes of God his spirite, yet are too much giuen to the loue of monye; others againe like Zacheus distribute the greatest part of their possessions, to satisfie their iniuries and relieue the poore: other of the faithfull
Luc. 19. 8. like the Apostles Iames and Iohn, desire the superioritie, and chiefest places in the Church: but manye, like the other Apostles, enuy and disdaine them for it.

And

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And thus the Lord which deliuereth his spirite by measure, giueth to some a lesse, and to some a greater measure thereof, euen as a rich man distributeth his almes, giuing to one a good reward, and to another a small, so the Lord leaueth some to bee ouercome by their lusts; other by their money, many by their honour, some by their office, other by their pride, & euery man hath some speciall sinne that raigneth in him aboue other: for diuers men being called to one hope, and obtaining the like precious faith in regarde of Christ, and diuersly affected and infected with sinne, and this teacheth vs these doctrines: first that wee neuer condemne the persons of the sinners, but the sinfull acts they doe commit, who should condemn Noah for drunkennesse, Dauid for murther, Iudah for incest, the Apostles for aspiring superiority: surely they were godly persons, and had their seuerall falles, that the mercy of God might be magnified in their rayssing vp againe: for none of the godly are able to goe vppon the waters, as Peter would, but they must sinke as Peter did, and yet they perish not, but are lifted vp, and saued by Christ, as Peter was: though our old Adam cause vs to committe many sinnes, yet our newe Adam will remooue all: wee must iudge charitably of all our bretheren that are ouertaken in their seuerall sinnes: Sara lyed vnto the Lorde himselfe. Onesimus was a theefe and a runne away from Philemon, Rebecca caused Iacob her sonne to beguile his owne father, and all the holy Patriarkes had many wiues, yet none must bee so bold as to condemne any of them, notwithstanding their seuerall and manyfold faults: Euen so in these our dayes, though wee see and behold out bretheren, some ouercome with the world, other by promotion, many by their lusts and concupiscences, other by their braue apparrell, nay, if they steale and robbe, yet wee must not iudge but charitably of them. I speake not this to encourage any hereunto: for if grace abonnde aboue sinne, yet cursed are they that sinne, that grace and blessing might abound vnto them: for if wee may not doe



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euill, where we know certainely good may ensue thereof, much lesse may wee doe euill, to make the mercy of God the baude of our sinnes, but this wee must remember, that there is no condemnation to the righteous, although they fall seuen times a daye, but if any sinne vppon presumption of God his mercies, their damnation is iust, and are like a theefe that stealeth, because he seeth one among twentie pardoned by the Prince.

Secondly, there are many that condemne the whole profession, because they liue not all in the same perfection, and bring not foorth the same fruits which by this doctrine we see here condemned: For as the grapes of the vine haue some lesse and some more sweetnesse, yet all are grapes, and grow of the vine: so the Saintes of God, haue some more puritie, and some lesse, and yet all are nourished by Christ the Vine: what if some (sayth the Apostle) haue not beleeued, shall the grace of God be made of none effect, and what if some haue often fallen into sinne, shall the whole Gospel for their sakes be discredited? nay the Lord hath alway some that liue so purely, such as Isaacke, Ioseph, Boaz, Daniell, Zacharie, and Elizabeth, whome all the world can neuer blemish: howsoeuer others haue their publike faults, first that the woorke of repentance, which is a grace of God, might bee practised: Secondly, that God his mercy in sauing great sinners, might be magnified. Thirdly, that the faithfull (seeing their dayly falles) might more earnestly desire their finall deliuerance. Lastly, that the wicked by this meanes might haue occasion, by their blasphemies to worke their owne damnation.

Iohn. 15. 1.

Ro. 11. 12.

2. Pet. 2. 1.

1. Cor. 11. 6

*Afterward shee arose, for Boaz said*: Now the night well passed in quiet sleepe, and the dawning of the daye approaching, Ruth at the commandement of Boaz ariseth before the daylight, least any should know she had tarried with him al that night, wherby the good old mã signifieth vnto vs, that it is no new thing in the world, that slaunders should be raised, for this was the thing that Boaz feared, that if any should haue seene the woman,

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man with him, they would presently conceiue it were for no goodnes. For the world museth as it vieth, and they will soonest espie a mote in the eye of a godly man: it euer was, is, and shall be, the causeles surmises and reproches, shall be brought vp vpon the godly, for princes nor people can be freed there from: the which Dauid felt wel inough, when he said in a certaine place, that one blessednesse in God his kingdome, shall bee this, to bee kept from the strife of tongues, thereby insinuating, that they must needes endure them in this life present. We know what our sauiour reporteth of the Pharisses, how they accused him to bee a friende of Publicanes, harlots, and sinners, and Iohn Baptist to haue a Dinell. Therfore this must worke patience in the faithfull, that are like affected and afflicted with venimous tongues, for wee are not better then those fathers are, who many yeeres agoe sustained the same reproches, and left the brethren behinde them, to bee borne by vs, for the world is no changeling: that which then they spoke against them, nowe they spit against vs, and though the authours of these slaunders bee many yeares since departed, yet their manners and heyres shal abide while the world standeth. But now to come to the woordes, wherein the minde of Boaz is, that none should knowe that women were with him, at such a suspected time: Why? will some say, is it such a matter to talke with a woman priuately and alone, wee may doe it publikely, and who can say nay vnto it? I grant wee may, and with lesse offence, yet Boaz would giue no occasion of offence, because wee must abstaine from all appearance of euill: wee must not onely bee carefull wee sinne not, but Christians must be carefull to auoyde all suspition of sinne; it is not lawfull for Christians commonly to company and keepe with enemies, because it may be thought that they are secretly in league with them: it is not lawfull for a Christian to goe into the house of a harlot, because it will discredite his name, it is not lawfull for a Christian to goe into a Temple of Idols, vnlesse it bee to deface them, because it may bee thought hee goeth

Psa. 31. 20.

Mat. 11. 18. 19.

1. Thes. 5. 22.



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to worshippe: the like may bee sayd of all other in the like kinde, where men are as guiltie to looke on, as they that are the principalles. And behold I would to God that this carefulnes, to auoyde and shunne the outward appearance of iniquitie were well considered: the extraordinary charges in diet or apparell would bee eschewed, lest wee bee accounted daintie and prodigall or proude: slacknesse in going to Sermons would bee amended, lest wee be deemed idle and secure Atheists; buying, selling, playing and gaming, on the saboth day, would be punished, lest it bee thought we haue no feare or care to worship the Lord: the dayly and most lamentable swearing of rich & poore, old and yong, parents and children, masters and seruants, husbandes and wiues, men and women, would with terrour of the Lordes iudgements bee restrayned. idlenesse would be reformed, drunkennesse in euery degree would bee corrected, dalliance and wantonnesse ashamed, coseming and deceiuing simple persons bee banished, and finally, if this fearing the shaddow of sinne would rest in the hearts of mankinde, neyther should the substance thereof ouercome them, the pleasures allure them, the hope deceiue them, the profite compell them, the glory prouoke them, or the end ther of condemne them. Let vs therfore beloued, neyther frequēt or approch to persons that are suspected, or places that are corrupted: wee can touch no pitch but wee must be polluted, nor any vncleane thing, but wee are defiled: sinne is a contagious disease, it will infect the walles and garments where it is committed, and what agreement is betweene the children of God and Belial, touch not their meates, handle not their pleasures, and taste not their companies, for the world seeth thee & wil slaunder, the Lord seeth thee, & will recompense. Wee auoyd the sight of serpents, as Moyses fled fróhis rod, why should we not thē flie from the sight of that old serpent the father of lies, which by al meanes possible seeketh to deface the name of Christ, & the nature of the faithfull, we come not to the picture of the diuell, which is deuised by a painter, but we loath the presence

and

and abhorre the proportion of it, why should wee not then, as much the workes of himselfe, whereby hee is more slily communicated vnto vs, then in all the pictures and images of the world: wee auoid the aire where the cockatrice layeth her egges, beecause she poisoneth the same: but alas, wee dayly delight in the pathes of vnrighteousnes, where is greater danger to our soules, then all the poisons of the world can bring to the bodies: thus wee escape out of the snare, but wee fall into the ditch, wee straine at gnates but we swallow vp cammels: wee play with the Lion and are afraide of the Lamber death is at the end of our iourney, and yet wee will not see it. Therefore againe and againe beware of offences, that is take heede you bring not the glorious names of Christians to discredit, your fayth to ignominy, your hope to shame, your libertie to slauerie, and fill not the mouthes of the wicked, with your vnwise and intemperate walking.

Secondly, by this wee note, that we must not onely abstaine from the appearance of euill things, but wee must also beware, we make not good things euil, but Boaz knew it was lawfull for him to talke priuately or publikely, day or night, alone or in company with any woman liuing: but hee was afraide lest any should take his example, as a rule or defence for their priuate wantonnes, or iudge his company with Ruth to bee vtterly vnlawfull whereby the name of a magistrate, the title of an Elder, and the credite of two faithfull seruantes of God might bee impayred.. Therefore to stop these occasions, with timely arising hee was carefull that the knowledge thereof should come vnto none, that a lawfull thing misunderstood or conceiued should not bee made vnlawfull. And truely, this teacheth vs also, in christian wisdome, to weigh all our doinges by the rule of the Apostle, when hee saith, all things are lawfull, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawfull, but I will not bee brought into bondage of any: where hee willeth vs not onely to see what wee may doe without daunger to our selues, but also without daunger to any other: Secondly that in nothing 1. Co. 12. 13.



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we preiudice our christian libertie: wherby we gather ȳ euerie thing must be considered with the circūstance of time, place, & persons, a lawfull thing in time may bee of place, and being lawfull for time and place, yet it may be vnlawfull for ȳ persons, this we will make plaine by the exāple of alms & fasting which our sauiour Christ himselfe vsed. It is lawfull & a holy thing, to giue almes at all times, yet if it bee done in a market place, or with
Mat.6.1.2. a publike signe, as to blowe a trumpet, or tolle a bell,
3.4.5. or such like, it is hipocrisie by the sentence of our sauiour, and therefore vnlawfull: euen so to pray contynually is a good thing, but if it bee done in the corners of the streetes, or in the churces while all the congregation bee hearing the preacher, it is vtterly vnlawfull the same may bee saide of preaching and reading, eating and drinking, laughing and weeping, working and playing, buying and selling, watching and sleeping, with such like, all which are good, necessarie and lawfull, yet as they exceede in time, place and persons, they may be vnlawfull, and therefore not to bee done. By this let all the godly learne, to vse the meane in all their indifferent actions; and specially according to this present scripture of Boaz and Ruth, I would to God, that this too common companying of men and women together were altogether buried and banyshed from vs. I meane such as is in this wanton manner, not onely in the maried who with their open and publike daliance giue great offence to sober mindes, but also in the vnmarried, in their vnseemely meetings, daungerous conuenticles, wanton feastes, and immodest running and dauncing together, which in many vnstaied persons, stirreth vp the fire of concupiscence,
Num. 25.8. that ought rather to be quenched. Euē as Phineas stroke ȳ Israelites and the Madianitish woman, together vpon one speare, so would God our Zimries and Cozbies had some punishment, to stay other from committing the like in euerie age, for it is much to bee feared, that the heauie hande of God is gone out against vs, by reason of our open and publique whoordoms, for euen now the children are infected with the

example

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example of their elders and what hope can there bee of the ages to come when those that must bee the parentes of them, are thus poisoned with sinne, in the dayes of their youth: surely as the rotten seede bringeth but a sorrowfull harueſt, so corrupted and wicked children will bring foorth a wofull and lamentable posteritie. Put away therefore this euill, of laying stumbling blockes before the blinde, giuing offences to the weake bretheren, breeding the sclaunder of the holy Gospell, greeuing the heartes of the sober minded, drawing the curse from heauen vpon vs: and vtterly drowning our selues and all our progenie in euerlasting destruction.

*And when hee had sayde giue me thy sheete.*) This is the first thing which the holy Ghost reporteth of Boaz since hee awaked from sleepe, and arose from his lodging, wherein hee calleth for the sheete wherewithall Ruth was couered, (which no doubt but shee brought from home with her) the which hee filleth with sixe measures of barley the which measures as I take it, were Hins, and contained an Epha, which wee haue shewed you was seuen gallons and a halfe of our englisih measure, for so much gathered Ruth the first day of her gleaning. Out of the which wee note the duety of euery godly man, which is this, neuer to bee wearie of distributing to the Church? for Boaz had often bestowed much upon Ruth and Naomi, yet wee see so often as hee could conneniently, he still continueth his liberalitie. For this cause Paul willeth vs neuer to bee wearie of weldoing, for hee which needeth our liberalitie to day, will also want our reliefe to morrow, and so often as the faithfull brother cõmeth and complaineth, so often are wee bound (if wee haue) to succour his necessitie. I know many are willing to do good once or twise in one person, but to giue so often as Boaz did to Naomi they cannot abide, yet this is our weakenes and hardnes of heart, for as wee pray euerie day for our dayly bread, so euery day (hauing enough) wee must distribute our bread: therefore wee must followe the counsell of Paul, not to be slacke in doing of good, for in due time wee shall reape if wee faint not and therefore

2. Thess. 3. 13.

Gal. 6. 9. 10

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fore while wee haue time, let vs doe good vnto all, but especially to the houshould of faith, for as a father doth euerie day sustaine and prouide for his owne houshold, so should wee which are the stewards of the Lords possessions, giue of his owne to his poore seruants, for wee shame his maiestie, if wee suffer his family to want. Wee reade that our Sauiour came often to one house, yet was not accounted a chargeable guest. We read that all the poore in the primitiue Church, were dayly maintained at the cost of the wealthy: Our Sauiour hath tolde vs that wee shall alway haue the poore among vs, to whome wee may doe good. Not that wee should once or twise bestowe liberallie, and euer after close vp our beneuolence, but that the same poore persons that dwell among vs should dayly receiue their dayly reliefe. For how shall wee desire of God to finish his worke of redemption begun in our soules, when wee cease to perfecte our liberalitie bestowed on the poore. And now beloued in the Lorde, if euer you did put on compassionate heartes towards your poore bretheren in this time of dearth, & thinke not sufficient to distribute once, but stretch out your handes againe and againe, to helpe the necessities of the poore saintes which dayly cry vnto you giue, giue, that your loue may increase, your compassion augment, and your fellow feeling of the same hunger, may worke a fellow feeding on the same reliefe.

*And she came home.* Now wee are come to the second part of this scripture, which concerneth Naomi and Ruth. And first heere is set downe her comming home to her mother in law before day, to whome shee declareth how the man had vsed her; what promise hee made her, and what gift hee sent her where wee see the diligence of Ruth, who hasted to her mother in law to shew her the newes, and to auoide the sclaunder which wee spoke of before. And this teacheth vs a mutuall concord in the duties of our profession, that the weaker should bee warned by the elder, as Ruth was by Boaz, for wee must not let any bee lost through default of our negligence, but the wisest must gouerne, and the other

must

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must obey, if any be wearie, let thē lay their heads vpō our aduise, for the credit of the gospel pertaineth to al, & therfore al must be carefull to maintaine the same.

*Then sayd shee.* Naomi hearing the report of this prosperous successe, & seeing the corn that Boaz had giuen her, comforteth her daughter to tarry the issue, looking for a ioyfull end of so happy a beginning: for she knew Boaz would not faint in that cause ỳ so much concerned his credit as this did, nor sleepe till he had ended his intended deuise. Whereby we first of al note, that here is a godly example for parēts to imitate, to stay their children by exhortation, to depend in all things vpon ỳ leisure of the Lord, for if they be sick, the cōfort of parents is much worth, if in trouble, the counsell of parents may ease them, if in labour, the parents aduise will much encourage them, if in danger, the care of their parents may deliuer them, and if they be obstinate, who but parents can reclaime thē, for as Abraham answered Isaack his sonne when hee asked him for a sacrifice, the Lord sayd hee will prouide a sacrifice, euen so parents must shewe their children, the prouidence of God to maintaine them, his loue to embrace them, his care to defend them, his word to instruct them, and the merits of Christ to saue them. Secondly, by this wee gather a worthie example of a godly Magistrate, who by his woonted and accustomed diligence, had wonne and deserued this commendation that here Naomi giueth of him, that hee would not rest till hee had finished the matter, and followed the sute of the widdow to the end, which is a worthie example for men in authoritie to imitate, that for conscience they should labour as faithfully in the cause of the poore, as if they were hyred by fee in the sute of the wealthie, and would God this could enter into their mindes, which like dull horses will trauaile no further, then the spurre of money pricketh them forward? how farre are they from the vprightnesse of Iob, which was an eye to the blinde, feete to the lame, father to the poore, and diligently sought out the strife which hee knewe not: they

in mercy forbeare them not, and in iustice reward the not. But of this we haue spoken before: now let vs giue prayse to God for that which hath beene spoken.

# The eleuenth Lecture.

Chap. 4. Verse 1. 2. 3. 4. 5 6.

1 *And Boaz went vp to the gate and sate down there, when beholde the kinsman came by of whome Boaz had spoken, to whom he said, hoe such a one, come hither and sit downe heere: who came and sate down.*

2 *Then Boaz tooke ten men of the elders of the City, & said to them, sit downe heere, and they sate downe.*

3 *Afterward he said to the kinsman, Naomi that is come againe out of the country of Moab, will sell a parcell of land, which was our kinsman Elimelechs.*

4 *And I thought to aduertise thee saying, buy it before the assistantes and elders of my people, if thou wilt redeeme it, redeeme it, but if thou wilt not redeeme it, tell mee, for I know there is none beside thee, to redeeme it, and I am after thee. Then he answered, I will redeeme it.*

5 *Then sayd Boaz, what day thou buyest the fielde of the hand of Naomi, thou must also buyest of Ruth the Maobitesse the wife of the dead, to stirre vp the name of the dead, vpon his inheritance.*

6 *And the kinsman answered, I cannot redeeme it, least I destroy mine owne inheritance, redeeme my right to thee, for I cannot redeeme it.*

OW, by the permission of the Almightie, we are come to the last Chapter, and last part of this Historie, wherein the holy Ghost sheweth vnto vs, howe Boaz performeth his promise made vnto Ruth in the former Chapter, and taketh her to bee his wife: the whole chapter containeth two parts, the first is the marriage of Boaz, and the second is the description of his

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his kindred, as well his auncestors, as his ofspring. The first part of his mariage is described in the first fifteene verses of this Chapter, with all the circumstances thereof necessary to be knowne, and wee will diuide it into two parts: first, must bee considered that which passed betweene the other kinsman and Boaz in the first ten verses: secondly, the manner and circumstances of the mariage, vnto the end of the 15. ver. The thinges that passed betweene Boaz and his other kinsman, are first their conference about the matter in these first 6. verses: secondly, the alienation of the right from the other kinsman to Boaz, in the foure next verses: the conference is described by the place, that it was at the gate of the Citie, vers. 1. secondly by the witnesses, that it was before the elders of the Citie, vers. 2. The matter being thus prepared, Boaz propoundeth the cause of their meeting in two parts, first for the redeeming of the land at the hand of Naomi, which was the inheritance of their kinsman Elimelechs, wherunto hee answereth that he will redeeme it, ver. 4. secondly, he propoundeth vnto him the mariage of Ruth, that the case so standeth, if hee redeeme the inheritance, hee must also marry with the widdow, for otherwise shee would not agree, and this is the fift verse. Vnto which latter condition the kinsman answereth, that hee cannot doe it, first, shewing the season of it, least hee destroy his owne inheritance, secondly, yeelding him power to redeeme his right in this behalfe, ver. 6. Of these parts let vs breefely speake as the spirite of God shall giue vtterance, and the time permit.

Chap 3. 15.

*And Boaz went vp to the gate.* Wee haue heard in the former Chapter how Boaz, after hee had dispatched Ruth backe again to her mother in lawe, himselfe went into the Citie, to finish vp the matter, nowe in this verse we see the place mentioned where Boaz bestowed himselfe after hee was come thither, which is the gate of the Citie, where he waited till hee could see his kinsman come in or out, and seeing him, called, who came vnto him, and sate downe beside him, Now the gates of the Cities in those auncient dayes, were the publike

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Gen. 4.34. publike places of iudgemēt, as appeareth in many places of scripture, among other, when Hemor and Siché would persuade their people to bee circumcised, it is sayd, they sate in the gate of the Citie: the like is that of Moses, that the obstinate sonne should bee brought by his own parents to the elders of the Citie, & to the gate of the place, likewise if any man should accuse his wife Deut. 21.19 & 22.15. not to be a virgin at the day of her marriage, then her parents should bring the signes of her virginitie to the elders of the Citie, and the gate thereof. But wee must also know, that the publike iudgemēts and trials were doone so openly for diuers causes: First, that no truth might be concealed, & so wrong iudgement pronounced, for thither euery one might freely come and speak their minds. Secondly, that strangers might haue lawe and iustice, as well as their naturall and natiue inhabitants, and therefore it was at the very entrance of their Gen. 23.10. Cities, so we see Abraham a stranger, in the iudgement place was heard before Hebrō & Heth, whē he bought Gen. 22.17. Gen. 24.60 his burying place. Lastly, because that munitiō, strēgth, Rebecca. furniture, power and defence of the Cittie, lay in the Mat. 16.16. 18. gates: as God blesseth Abraham and so also Laban and his mother blesse their sister Ribkah, that their seede should possesse the gates of their enemies, that is their strongest defence? And our Sauiour Christ, shewing his Apostles that would build his Church vppon the faith which they had confessed, saith, that the gates of hell should not preuaile against it, meaning the whole power of the diuell should neuer ouercome it.

And this teacheth vs by many things, first, that in matters of triall, equitie and iustice, it is an iniurie, if publike faults be priuately adiudged: for Abraham dealing but for a peece of lande with Hebron, which was but a priuate matter, could not obtaine it till it came to the gate of the Cittie, the publike place of iudgement, & if a matter so honest and lawfull could not bee ended, without such an open & publike assembly, much more open offences, which are in themselues wicked and dishonest, for the Apostle saith, that those that sin openly, 1. Tim. 5. 20. must be openly rebuked. Surely there is none of vs that

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are ignorant of the great euill which commeth by the priuate handling of offences, for thereby guilty persons escape vnpunished, vniust matters are by conceit confirmed, publike peace is much abused, as if colours were discerned by blinde men, or gold without the touchstone in the light: Yet herein are wee much bound to magnifie the Lord, who hath vouchsafed vs opē courts for deciding of controuersies, punishing of fellons, and maintenance of peace, some for waightier, and some for higher contentions, for as the waxe meltetb before the sunne, so the subtiltie of offenders at the examination of the magistrate.

Secondly, by this wee note that wee must in iudgement haue regard both to the stranger and to the free borne, to the poore, and to the rich, to the widdow, and to the married, & finally both alike to women & men, for thus the Lord commandeth, Peruert not the right of the stranger or infant, neither take the garment of a widdow to pledge. For wee must remember that Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, the fathers of the faithfull, were all their liues strangers in other lands, and therefore wee which either would or should bee their children, by doing iniury to harbourles strangers, doe reuile and oppresse our spirituall fathers, when wee loue not their persons, maintaine not their right, receiue not their suites, and heare not their supplications, though they were against our owne selues, if wee iustly deserue them, but of this matter wee haue spoken in the first & second chapters. Thirdly, by this wee learne, that publike Iudges, Iustices and iudgements, should bee defended by publike authoritie, for as these Iudges sate in the gate where the munitions were, that if any should refuse them, they had power and strength to compell them: euen so, if men of wisedom haue not authoritie, who seeth not that euery disordred person doth contemne them. But if they haue authoritie and do not shew it in punishing of offenders, without feare or fauor of mē, they are like to Saul, when God had commanded him to kill the Amalekits, & spare neither man, woman, child e or beast aliue, yet contrary to this cōmandemēt, he

Deu. 24. 17

1. Sam. 15. 33.

he saued king Agag, but the Lord refused him, and cast him out of fauour, and Agag was hewen in peeces by the Prophet Samuell: euen so it is to be feared, that there be a great many Saules in euery place, whose affections stand for lawe, sparing their friendes for fauor, and great men for feare, who are likewise reprobated of the Lord, and rebuked by his ministers. And heere wee haue good occasion to be thankfull to the Lorde, which hath giuen our Magistrates this power, that al things are done in the name of the Prince, and assisted by the countrey, for the punishment of offendours: and I pray God increase more obedience to their authority in others, and more courage in themselues, to strike asunder with the sworde of iustice, the indissoluble knots of iniurious and contentious persons, and to giue the offendours their deserued reward. Then here wee haue Boaz sitting in the iudgement place, as one that was not ashamed of his lawfull cause, & the Lorde which guideth all things, and would now regard the religion of Ruth, bringeth the other kinsman to the sight of Boaz, who calleth him, and hee commeth at the request of Boaz, and there tarrieth and sitteth downe, where we will leaue him, and goe to the second part, which is the witnesse of this conference.

*Then Boaz tooke tenne men.* The witnesses of the actions, which are to passe in this place, wee heare in these words to be ten men of the elders of the Cittie; there are onely tenne in my iudgement, because euery Cittie of the Israelites had twelue gouernors, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, to whome appertained the ordering of all ciuill causes among them, for they mingled not with religion: now it is very likely that Boaz and this other kinsman, beeing men of so great kindred and wealth, were two of the number of the Elders, who being the parties in suite, had the residue of their fellowes, to be witnesses of the actions that passed betweene them. And this interpretation is confirmed, by the diligent examination of the place, for it is sayd that Boaz tooke them, as if hee were equall or greater in authoritie then they, and the other beeing a

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man of greate wealth as appeareth by this that hee was willing to redeeme the inheritaunce of Naomi, which could bee no small charge considering the late troublesome dayes, and after wee shall heare in the 6. verse that hee would not take Ruth for feare of his owne name should bee put out in Israell, wherby appeareth his calling not to bee meane, beside his linage which was to the greatest house in Iudah, by the which it must needes followe that hee was an elder or ruler among them, which beeing plaine both by this and other places of Scripture, that the ciuill gouernment of the people was excercised by elders, and that the elders themselues could do nothing without the consent of their fellowes. Wee see here noted vnto vs this excellent doctrine, namely, that men in authoritie and gouernment must exercise nothing without the due execution of their owne lawe and decrees: wee see here this Boaz a man of greate authoritie, and lead by the spirite of God, hauing a cause for himselfe, would not desire or goe about to accomplisht it, but in the iudgement seate and presence of the elders, so that no fauour of persons may breake the course of iustice, whereby a common wealth is ruled. Some thinke it a base thinge that greate men shall stand to bee iudged in the place of common persons: And I thinke it as greate a fault that common persons should haue any accesse to Magistrates to bee iudged by them; for as it debaseth their estate to bee ioyned with these in iudgement, so it troubleth their quietnes to bee iudges ouer them. But some, & they of the greater sort, which haue their law in their owne handes, deale with it as Iudah did, when it was told him that his daughter Thamar was with childe, then there was nothing but fire and fagot to punish her for her whoredome, till shee shewed him that hee was the man by whome it came, as Nathan did with David, but then the heate of the fire was well cooled, when himselfe was found to bee the greatest offendor: euen so many deale against the weaker and poorer sort, the lawes are executed to the vtermost, but the rich and wealthie which offer all the iniurie, gather all

the friendship, which is not onely a fault to other, but in their owne consciences, for how can they iudge another, when the same offence condemneth themselues? and therefore as there was one generall place of iudgement, so there was but one common manner of triall: like as God iudgeth the rich and poore, so a good Magistrate should equally receiue both, and bee as willing to bee iudged themseles, as to giue sentence vpon others.

Secondly, by this example of Boaz and the elders of Bethlem wee obserue that in our publike busines, wee must resort especially to the Magistrates euen in those things that require nothing but record and witnesbearing. This Boaz might haue gotten some of his priuate friendes before whome hee might haue effected the matter, but wee see him heere the solicitour of his owne cause, and craueth no friendship, but the witnesse of the elders, by the which this doctrine is confirmed; and therefore our Sauiour hauing cleansed a leper, biddeth him to shew himselfe to the Priestes for a witnes vnto them, and for this cause it was cõmaunded in the law, that the weightie matters should bee brought before the priestes, for Magistrates must heare as well the conclusion of peace, as the contentions of disquietnes betweene man and man, Wherein we are bound to render most humble and earnest thankes to almightie God, who hath vouchsafed vs this blessing, that the contractes of matrimonie, the conueyance of possessions, the redeeming of morgaged landes, the records of inheritances, and the purchase of euerie lawfull thing remaineth written in the seuerall courtes and offices of credite, that they might bee euerlasting testimonies for the posterities succeeding.

*Afterward Boaz said.* Boaz like a wise man conceaileth his mind from the elders and kinsman, till they were all quietly set together, and then he beginneth with one parte of his sute, telling the kinsman of the lande of Elimelech which was to bee redeemed by his nereest kinsman, the which Boaz propoundeth but verie obscurely, that thereby he might throughly trie his mind

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and good will toward Naomi, and making it knowne in the presence of the elders, hee might by no meanes recall his words. And this teacheth vs not only innocent vprightnes, but also godly pollicy, that wee be carefull for the speaking in iudgement, so much as may further our iust and lawfull cause, and not hinder it. For thus dealeth Boaz, he did not at the first shew the drift, and secret of his minde, which was the marriage of Ruth, whereof as yet he knoweth nothing, but beginning the matter with the redemption of the lands, coloureth the mariage by the restoring of the inheritance, for by this meanes he openeth the secrets of his kinsmans heart, that he bore some good will to the cause of Naomi, but of this matter inough.

*Wherefore he determined.* In the former verse, and in this Boaz propoundeth the matter to his kinsman, testifying thereby, that of duetie and conscience he did it in the behalfe of the widdow, and requireth him for his duetie and conscience, to performe the part of a kinsman, which is either to redeeme the right, or to render it vppe, shewing that beside them two, there is not one that was bound vnto it: and also promising, that if hee refused, then hee himselfe would discharge that duetie. Where we see first of all a holy example, teaching vs to deale with our neighbours, for our selues, or for other, euen as Boaz did in this place: for hee might haue charged his kinsman, that hee had no loue or care to Naomi, that he had omitted his duetie in not redeeming the inheritance before this day, that this couetousnes was so great, that he had forgot the very law of God: and finally, hee might haue called vppon the Magistrates for some punishment to bee inflicted on him for his disobedience to the lawe of God, and neglect of his duetie toward Naomi. But hee doth none of these, but soberly in the presence of the Elders, hee turneth his gentle speech to the partie, and hauing propounded the matter, requireth a present answere. Whereby wee are admonished, that with the like charitie wee handle our neighbours, if we haue them as

Mat. 5.5.29
1.Cor. 13.5
Ephe. 4.2.

any aduantage, for this is that meekenes that causeth to inherite the earth, for thereby wee follow Christ, with whom we shall find rest to our soules, for loue dealeth not churlishly, it seeketh not his owne, it is not bitter, it thinketh no euill. Therefore as Paul intreated the Ephesians, so must I intreate you, that wee so walke, as is worthy our vocation, vnto the which we are called, in all modestie, meekenes, and gentlenes of minde, bearing with one another through charitie. Oh howe vngodly are these clamorous accusations amongst vs, for which many lie in waite, that they might haue any cause to draw their brethren, as it were starke naked into the presence of the magistrates, that is, with most impudent and shamelesse vntruthes, to charge and examine them vppon their owne suspitions, neuer thinking on the iniuries they offer vnto them, or looking for the same measure againe at the handes of other. Some there are also, which for euery trifling farthing, will call their neighbours before the Magistrate, delighting in their owne iniuries, the troubles of their friends, the disquietnes of the Magistrates, and the abuse of the law: whose impatient constituion calleth for vengeance at the hands of the Lord, and the curse of the land is gone out against them, nothing is wanting, but that the braunches of their vnquiet spirite, should bee pruned by the sword of iustice, by them to whom they make their complaints.

Secondly, by this example of Boaz wee gather, that the onely cause of bringing suites before the elders and magistrates, was the peace and quietnes of the people, not for the kindling, but the quenching of contention before it arose, that the dayly brawling, rayling, chiding, and quarrelling, might bee preuented by the wisedome of the Magistrates, for as the Philistines tooke away all the armour of the Israelites, to keepe them from rebellion, so Magistrates hearing of causes with seueritie and iustice, should take away the instruments of oppressions, and the weapons of contentious persons from the common-wealth. Thirdly, by this also wee gather the diuersitie of proceedings in

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iudiciall causes in these dayes, and in times past. Then men in their owne persons did pleade in iudgement their owne causes, but now others make gain of it, then suites were not so tedious, as now they are, then men sought not out such slyding shiftes to couer their false hoode, but they did as Boaz and his kinsman doeth, the one simply propoundeth his griefe, and the other gently answered his question, for so should euery one vtter the truth indifferently, both to their benefit and damage; then the world was not troubled with writs, fees, or counsellors, but euery man brought his cause and his witnes, so the iniury was quickly confessed, easily tried, and speedily remedied, finally, wee retaine almost nothing of the auncient manners in this point, but only the bare and outward names. By the which we are admonished of humane miserie, for as the world groweth, the troubles thereof are increased: in the first age they had no warres: in the second age they had no certaine dwellings, in the third age they had no chargeable suites, in the fourth age they had no quietnes, and euer since wars haue multiplyed bloud, one countrey carryed to another, mens lawfull inheritances are taken by violence, the Church is spoyled of her libertie, the world of her peace, our bodyes of their health, our goods of their continuance, our names of their credite, our corne of increase, our lands of their fruits, and all our liues of their naturall benefites. Our Sauiour shewed vs, that before the end, the loue of many should waxe cold, but surely it is not onely cold, but frozen in our lamentable age; the Apostle hath shewed vs, that men should bee louers of themselues, and louers of pleasures, more then GOD, when shall these dayes be, if they bee not now? may wee not see that euery one raketh for his profite, as the Egle raueneth for her pray, if they may gette house or land, leases or farmes, goods or cattels, money or meate, apparell or ease, they care not though all other lie harbourles in the fieldes, naked in the streetes, and pining in their weary and dayly labours. Doth not now the Gentleman make more account of his worship,

then the worship of God, the Marchant of his profite, then of Iesus Christ, the husbandman of his fruits, then of the feare of the Lord, the labourer of his wages, then the wealth of his soule, the begger of his almes, thē of the vnfained deuotiō, & euery craftesman of his trade, more then of true religion. when shall the day of vengeance come? for the Church of GOD trauaileth with childe of these miseries, and euerie day is a thousand til she be deliuered, surely the day cannot bee long before the finall remedie appeare.

*But Boaz sayd.* After hee had entred with the land, and the other had graunted to redeeme it, hee proceedeth also to the second part of his speech, telling him, if hee redeeme it, hee must redeeme it at the hand of Ruth the *Moabitesse*, the wife of the dead, with whom he must tarrie, to raise vp the name of the dead vppon his inheritance. This lawe for a man to marrie with the widdow of his deceased brother, as it is commaunded by the Lord, so it had a speciall regard to many things, first, for the continuance of the first borne in euery family, who were the Lords by the law, signifying thereby, that Christ the first borne of the Almightie, should remaine with all his Church, like the first borne of this world, and bee the heyres of grace for euer and euer. And as hee would not suffer any familie to want a first borne, because it was the Lordes, so not one of the faithfull can bee lost, because they are the Lordes. Secondly, because it was an image of the resurrection, for as a man being dead without issue, his brother taketh his wife, begetteth a sonne, which shall bee called the sonne of the deceased, and hee which is dead shall liue in him, in as much as his name is receiued: euen so the body layd dead in the graue, shall be receiued at the last day by the powerful working of the Almightie, for as the first is wonderfull, so the second is admirable. Thirdly, by this law of subrogation, is signified the great care which the Lord had for the temporall augmenting of euerie familie among the Israelites, and in that, the loue of God in Christ to his Church, that though wee die without fruit in barrennesse, yet the

Deu. 25. 5. 6

Lord

Lord will giue vs a name, whereby after a few dayes we shall liue with him for euer.

But in these wordes wee first of all note, when hee saith that hee must buy it at the hand of Ruth the Moabitesse, the wife of the deceased; the one cause both of the redemption of lands, and marriage of the brother or next heyre to the widdowe, was for the womans or widdowes sake, namely, that shee should not bee left destitute: for wee reade in the Gospell of Luke, that barrennesse was a greate reproch among women in those dayes; now wee know that this law was onely for barren widdowes, and not for them that were fruitfull, and who would marry with such a woman, whome in his owne heart hee feared would bee fruitlesse: therefore the Lord to succour these poore desolate widdowes gaue this for a law, that the brother or neerest kinsman to the husbandes deceased, should take them to their wiues: where hee againe commendeth vnto vs the carefull estate of destitute widdowes, if they bee oppressed, wee must ease them, if rejected, wee must receiue them, if forsaken, we must comfort them: if reproched wee must acquite them, and finally if they will marry, they may, yea their owne friendes, or the Church must prouide them husbandes. And seeing the Lord would thus decree by a law, the safegarde of those that were despised, much more would hee defend by iudgement the cause of poore fruitfull widdowes, the mothers of many children. Now although wee are not bounde to this lawe of marriage, yet wee are tied to doe good to the widdowes, for the nature of the law being long since abrogated, yet the vse thereof remayneth for euer and euer. For maintenance by the word of God must bee allowed them wherewithall they may liue, their husbandes beeing deade. Therefore Boaz telleth his kinsman, that hee must redeeme the inheritance at the handes of Ruth the Moabitesse, beecause by her mariyage, it is made the widdowes, the husbande dying without issue, like as in this place wee obserue that all the inheritance descendeth to the wid-

Luc. 1. 25.

dowe, and therefore shee bestowed her selfe vpon the next of the kindred, who indeede with vs is the heire to all. Therefore by this wee must all learne but especially they married, or those that intend it hereafter, that it is one especiall duety of a careful husband, to prouide before hand for the maintenance of their wiues, that if death neuer so suddaine take them away, yet they may not leaue them as many haue done, harbourelesse without house, comfortelesse without friends, and wealthless without conuenient maintenance. By this wee see, the commendable assurance of iointures and dowers in landes or mony, which many parents do wisely take for their daughters, to bee a thing allowable by the word of God: yet many offend in the excesse that they will neuer match where they can haue none, though there bee neuer so great hope in time to come for that wealth and nothing els is the end of most marriages. Then by this wee see condemned first all those which hauing sufficient, will hardly leaue to their wiues any thing beside that which they cannot keepe from them, and hence it is, that many leaue to their children hundreds and thousands, but scant twenties or forties to their helpless widdowes. Other hauing many children, leaue the greatest part of their wealth to their widowes, through whose youthfull marriages, many times, their whole posterity is brought to poueryy. But a third sort there are which mind nothing saue onely marriage, and borrowe a little for their festiuall day, but afterward let the world sinke or swimme, children without breade, wiues without comfort, themselues as bare as the Grashopper in winter and their whole families most pitifully tormented; they repent, though all too late, the children wish they had neuer bin borne, the parentes curse the day of their first acquaintance, the family complaine of pouertye; the cuntrey of charges, the people of necessitie but they poore silly soules, the Innocent infantes are left to the mercilesse world, to liue in beggerie. Oh that this godly forecast would enter into the mindes of many headlong parentes, that their liues might bee more blessed, their children more happie, their families more contented,

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the countrey better furnished, and the poore better succoured, that there might bee no complayning in our streetes, no leading into captiuity, and not one feeble person among vs, that our sonnes may bee as the fruitfull garners, and our daughters like the polished corners of the temple? Oh blessed are the people that bee in such a case, yea blessed are the people whose God is the Lord. Then should the name of God bee honoured by our liues, and praised in our deathes, when our widdowes are prouided for, our children maynteyned, our families nourished, and our soules shall bee blessed.

*Then the kinsman said.* This second question of marriage beeing propounded, the kinsman in these wordes aunsweareth, that hee cannot redeeme the inheritance vppon the condition, and giueth a reason thereof, because then to saue others, hee should destroy his owne, meaning if hee had but one child by Ruth, that should bee for Machlon her deceased husband, and so his owne name should bee forgotten in his inheritance. Whereby wee see that hee opposeth the feare of the losse of his owne name, against the seuere commaundement of God, and doubteth that if hee follow the law of God and custome of the faithfull, his lande may lacke an heyre, his house a maister, and himselfe a sonne. The like vnto this was that of Onan the second sonne of Iudah, when hee should haue taken the wife of his deceased brother, would not performe his duty towardes her, but abusing in filthines his owne bodie, beecause hee would not benefite his brother, was therefore iustly slaine by the Lord. And I feare that a great many are sicke of the same disease, that loue the world aboue the worde, their land aboue the law of God, their children more then charitie requireth, who thinke they are borne for no bodie but onely for themselues: but especially in marriage, they had rather haue the land then the man, the portion then the woman, like this man which was willing to take the inheritance but vnwilling to marrie the widdow, for this cause they oppresse both children and widdowes they preferre

Gen. 38.

their priuate gaine, before publike godlinesse, who for their posteritie some are occupied in bribery, some in vsurie, some in extortion, and many vnlawfull bargayning, whose onely and chiefe care is for nothing, but that they may die rich: but better is poore Lazarus at his death, then all the rich gluttons in the world: for wealth maketh not to die well, but rather choketh the soule with insatiable care, onely religion is the surest badge of a godly man, whose riches is pouertie, whose pleasure paine, and whose regarde is saluation. But this man is well content to giue ouer his right to Boham wherein surely hee doth him a pleasure, but if there had bene any profite in it, hee would first haue serued himselfe: wherein wee haue a worthie example of a worldly minde, which graunteth all thinges till it touch his discommodity: for thus the world will heare vs preach till wee rebuke their couetousnesse, or craue their beneuolence, for euerie one will goe as farre drie foote as they can, but none will bee wet for the law of the Lord: that is, so long as wee tell them of their faithes, exhort them to repentaunce, perswade them from pleasure, and drunkennesse, but once touch their purses, as Iohn Baptist did Herodes whoredome, then farewell preaching, faith and repentance: but thus much shall suffice for this time Now let vs giue praise to God.

The end of the eleuenth Lecture.

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# The twelfth Lecture.

Chap. 4. Verse 7. 8. 9. 10.

7 *Now this was the manner before time in Israel, concerning the redeeming and changing for to establish all things, a man did plucke off his shooe, and gaue it to his neighbour, and this was a sure witnesse in Israel.*
8 *Therefore the kinsman said to Boaz, buy it for thee, & he drew off his shooe.*
9 *And Boaz said vnto the Elders, and vnto the people, ye are witnesses this day, that I haue bought al that was Elimelechs, and all that was Chilions and Mahlons, of the hand of Naomi.*
10 *And moreouer, Ruth the Moabitesse the wife of Mahlon, haue I bought to be my wife, to stirre vp the name of the dead vpon his inheritance, and that the name of dead be not put out from among his bretheren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day.*

THese words containe the finishing vp of the matter betweene Boaz and his kinsman, how the one resigneth his right to the other, and the knitting vppe of the marriage. They consist of two parts: first, a description of the auncient manner of alienation, or changing of titles, rights, and properties, in the seuenth verse, in these words: *Nowe this was the manner afore time, &c.* to the ende of the verse. The second is the manner how this man doth giue ouer, and resigne his right to Boaz, in the eight, ninth, and tenth verses: and containeth two parts, the first respecteth the kinsman in the ninth verse: where first hee biddeth Boaz to buye or redeeme it: Secondly, hee draweth off his

The second part respecteth Boaz, and sheweth how he receiueth it in the 2. next verses: wherein first hee calleth witnesse of the elders and people. ver. 10. Secondly he accepteth the proffer, or purchase, which is double: first, the land or inheritance, verse 10. Secondly, the widdow or wife of Machlon, verse 11. Of these lette vs breefely speake in order as they lie, with the assistance of God his spirit, and the permission of the time.

*Now this was.* First of all heere is described the manner of God his people, how in auncient time, they were wont to alienate, or put off their right from one to another, which the holy Ghost setteth downe for the better vnderstanding of that which followeth. And this manner of changing or selling was commaunded by the Lord himselfe, as we read in these words. Then the Elders of this Cittie shall call him and commune with him, if he stand and say, I will not take her: Then shall his kinswoman come vnto him, in the presence of the Elders, and loose his shooe from his foote, and spit in his face, and answere and say, so shall it bee done to him, that will not build vp his brothers house. And his name shall bee called in Israel, the house of him whose shooe is put off. In the which words wee note these things: First, that it was the dutie of a woman to complaine of such a man before the Magistrates, as we may see in the 7 ver. Secondly, that the Magistrates were bound to call and examine such persons, of the causes of their deniall. Thirdly, that the woman should pull off the shooe, and also spit in his face, which the Lord did doubtlesse command for the poore comfortlesse womans sake, that no excuse should bee admitted of delay, but that they might either be presently receiued, or presently refused: for she which was not fit to day, would not bee to morrow, where we gather the great care of the Lord for widdowes, which hath warned their friends to prouide for them mariages, & armed the magistrates to defend their weakenes, truly as they which are least accouted in the world, are most esteemed of the Lord; euen so they which are most regarded of the world, are least respected of the Lord: for

Deut. 25. 9 10.

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for in this law the almightie had an especiall eye to the poore, for hee knew the wealthy could want no husbands: Whereby wee are taught first, to magnifie the goodnesse of the Lord: which as Mary sayth, looketh vpon the poore degree of his seruants: and beholdeth the rich a farre off, his delight is in aduauncing of them that are cast downe, and all his lawes defende the causes of the oppressed. Secondly, that wee make no light account or reckoning of those whom the Lord in his word doth so highly commend vnto vs: for it is an especiall token of them that shall bee saued, that they make much of them that feare the Lord: what though they bee as poore as Lazarus, & neuer so contemptible in the eye of the world: yet it is a thousand times more cõmendable to be friendly to such, then to all the rich gluttons of the world, but of this poynt wee haue spoken before, and it is sufficient to touch it now.

Luc. 1. 48.

Psa. 15. 4.

Luc. 16. 29.

Secondly, by this wee also note, that if there bee any iniurie done to the children by the parents, or to widdowes, by their friendes in their marriages, it is lawfull for them to appeale to the Magistrates: As for example, if the parents would force their children, either not to marrie at all, or else to marrie against their mindes, rather then to yeeld to either of both, they may and ought to sue to the Magistrate: The which as it was lawfull for the Iewes by this law here mentioned, euen so it is left to vs to immitate, although the ceremoniall vse of it bee ceased, which consisted onely in their brothers marriage, and as long as Magistrates are, so long the true vse of it remaineth, as it doth in many others. Yet although the Gospel speake not of it, because it is a thing so farre against nature, yet it commaundeth, that they which doe euill, should feare the sword of the magistrate, because hee beareth it not in vaine: and moreouer it is flatly against the Gospell, that any should doe vnto other, which they would not haue done to themselues: much more this forcible dealing with friends or children: And if it bee lawfull for the wife or husband to flie to the magistrate in priuate iniuries, much more for the children, which are

Rõ. 13. 1. 4.

Mat. 7. 12.

weaker

weaker, and therefore neede more helpe. This I speake, not to stirre vp the mindes of any against their parents, but with the Apostle I exhort and commaund that euery one obey their parents in all thinges lawfull: for hee is accursed that doth otherwise, but to this end I vtter it, that wee may know what is lawful, & what is vnlawfull: for the same God which hath commanded that parents shonld bring their vnruly sonnes and daughters for to bee punished, willeth also that they which do any hurt to their children, either in soule, to draw them from the Lord, or in body, as in vnlawfull or vngodly marriages, in vnlawfull and vn godly actions, their only refuge should be to the minister of God, the lawful magistrate, to whō they owe more obedience then to their owne parents. Therefore Paul willeth parents, that they prouoke not their children to wrath, which is by their tyranous commandements to bind their consciences, and their cruell authoritie to murther their mindes: For if a priuate subiect may sue against the prince, & craue the law, much more a sonne or a daughter, being grieued by their parents: The vse of this doctrine is to teach and instruct vs, first what duetie wee owe to the magistrates, who haue greater care and charge ouer vs for the peace of our countrey, and publike welfare, then parents for our maintenance, and priuate obedience: therefore Paul willeth to pray and giue thanks for the magistrates, that vnder them we may liue godly
1. Tim. 2. 2. and quiet liues, for that is good and acceptable in the
13. sight of God our Sauiour, whereby wee may iustly complaine of the slacknes of our vnhappie age, wherein men murmur and grudge at any charge which ariseth for our Prince, but especially that there are so few, which in all their liues haue prayed for Prince or Magistrates, and if they haue, it was but a wish and no more, that they might liue in peace to gather wealth, not in godlines, for the profite of their soules: Againe by this all parents must bee instructed, howe to deale with their children, that they raigne not like Gods ouer the fruites of their bodies, but intreate them in meekenesse, being of yeeres of discretion, like their

fellow

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follow heyres of God his kingdome: euen as they will answere to the Almightie, who gaue them such issue, and to the lawes of our Prince, that requireth account of them, for the chiefest stroke lyeth not in them, but in those that gouern both Church & common-wealth, and wee haue already shewed that in some causes, it is a glory for their children, to decline from their counselles: Lastly, all children must herein also bee schooled, that with all reuerence they submitte themselues to the aduice of their parents: but especially like free men in Christ: they listen alway what the word of God sayth: for that must bee their iudge, and parents also, when it shall not goe for payment, that they did it for feare of their friendes: but they which feare them more then God, shall with them bee excluded for euer from God: and lette vs euermore giue thankes to the Almightie, which thus prouideth for our miserie, to defend our innocentie, that if wee bee in one place oppressed, we may be redressed in another, appointing courts of appeale from our owne parents, to his owne magistrates.

Thirdly, by this also wee obserue and note, when hee sayth that this was a sure witnesse in Israel, that it is a thing required in our religion, that of our publike affaires there may bee publike testimonies, as for example, our purchasing, buying, or selling, ought by religion and the feare of God, to bee doone with open and publike witnesse, for the better assurance to buyers and sellers, to auoyde deceite to the one, and couetousnesse in the other, and therefore it was sayd in the Law, that vnder the witnesse of two or three shall euery word stand. And further also, there must bee some outward signe to seale vppe the matter, in this place here is the putting off the shooe, which signifieth possession, and dispossession againe, the rendering of a mans right to him that hath it. Therefore in some places there is vsed striking of hands, as the shutting and making vppe of bargaines and conenants, and who knoweth not that in the purchase of Land, there is seisin and deliuery by a peece

of

of earth and a twigge, of houses, all go forth and the buyer entreth in alone, and there abideth, & this I may say is a sure testimonie in England. But you would know why the Lord beside the record of the Magistrate, required so outward and open signes: To which I answere, he did it for this cause, that the simplest among them might not bee deceiued, but might haue that as the euidece of his possession for euermore: witnes faileth, magistrates die, people are vnconstant, yea, and some will falsely sweare and witnesse to any vntruth, yet the shooe remained an eterlasting testimonie. Therefore among vs there is writing and seale, by the which things are confirmed, which passed many ages agoe, and this was taken from the anciet vsage, wherein mens names were entred in brasse and stone, and the quantitie of their possessions described. Therefore doth the holy Ghost so precisely set down the purchase which Abraham made with Ephron: where the field is named, the borders and boundes of it is described, the caue is mentioned, and the very trees that grew in the same, are made sure vnto him, the like may bee said of the stones in mount Gilead, that Iacob reared as a witnesse betweene him and Laban, and many other which serue to this ende, that as Paule sayth, Wee should not defraude one another: for if hee were accursed that remoued the land marke of his neighbour, what shall they bee which gette marks and lands both, some by deceiuing, some by forged euidence, other by false witnes, and some force their neighbours, will they, nill they, to depart from their dwellings and possessos, and to leaue them for little or nothing in the claws of these cormorants, their great possessions require great accounts, and I feare mee, when that day shall come, they will bee as ready to restore, as euer Iudas was, but it shall bee too late and without fruit, for the sentence is already pronounced, that fire shal consume their dwellings, and their children or posteritie shall bee vagabondes, but the righteous shal haue their land in possessions.

Gen. 23. 17.

Gen. 31. 52.

1. Thes. 4. 6

*Therefore the kinsman.* The verse sheweth how the

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the right was resigned, first the kinsman giueth Boaz authoritie, when hee biddeth him buy it for himselfe: and secondly hee renounceth his owne, when hee pulleth off his shooe. Where first of all it may bee demaunded, why doth hee plucke off his owne shooe? seeing by the lawe the woman should doe it, and also spitte in his face; as wee haue heardc allreadie, vnto which I briefly aunsweare: First the lawe beefore saide, wherein the woman was bound to plucke off the shooe; and to spitte in her kissemans face was for such as vtterly denied both to redeeme the inheritance and to marrie the widdowe, as also that woulde not prouide any substitute to doe it in their behaulfe: but this kinseman of Naomies, could Bee to redeeme his right, as wee may see in the 6. Verse of this Chapter, in these wordes redeeme my right to thee: Therefore that ceremony was needeles: Secondly I aunsweare, that the woman by the lawe was bounde to complaine to the Magistrates: but neither Naomi nor Ruth did make any complaint, saue onely a priuate petition vnto Boaz for to marrie her in his owne behaulfe; and therefore the matter beeing confessed before the complaint, as he was willing to release his title vnto Boaz, who was readie to receiue it, so with lesse rigour the lawe was executed vpon him: for a penitent offendor is worthy of most fauour. Thirdly neither Naomi nor Ruth were present when this matter was in hearing, because they were vncertaine of their kinsemans minde, who if he had granted, it had beene immodestv for them, seeing they neuer asked him before, and if he denied as he did, by their presence they should seeme to distrust the promise which Boaz made to Ruth: But seeing the consent of Naomi & Ruth was yeelded to Boaz, and that beeing but the first motion, they needed not to beepresent, and the matter at the first confessed, was at the beginning dispatched: Out of the which wee first obserue, that it is a pointe of godlinesse, and worthye of friendshippe, that in our sutes wee shoulde at the first confesse our oppressions: if wee haue done any; I knowe many will commit their vniust dealing to the



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triall of thy lawe, looking for a doubtfull issue of the same: wilt thou bee condemned, the charge is but ye more to my reste, but I reply and say, why dost thou not confesse thy folly, and the iniurie which thou hast done, or true the charge which thou pendest in the triall thou doest bee all marcher to thy malice, drunkennesse to thy thirst, and prodigalitie to thy couetousnesse: Thou hast ouer did robbed thy neighbour, by thy oppression, now thou go spoile the Lorde of those his goodes whereof hee hath made thee steward, by consuming them in law to defend thy iniuries. Follow the counsell of the Lord, agree with thy aduersarie quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him, least hee complaine of thee to the iudge, and the iudge deliuer thee to the Iaylor, and so forth; hee will serue no your matters at home, abide not the verdict of the lawe; it is too costly, for as you are accomptable to your neighbour for the vttermost farthing, so you shall bee answerable to ye Lord for euery iniure, you haue misspent, when the very money you haue laid out shall rise in iudgement against you to condemne your consciences.

Mat. 5. 25.

Secondly, wee more here in Naomi and Ruth: an excellent example of a good minde: for Naomi would shee might haue drawn with her kinsman and hee denying, shee might haue done him all the disgrace set downe in the law, to haue pulled off his shooe, to haue spit in his face, to haue detained him and his house for euer; but shee dealeth honestly, shee would not reuenge one iniurie by another; shee mindeth the matter sure before hand; that if hee refused, Ruth might bee married, and the other not disgraced: So deare is the name and credit of ones neighbour to a godly person, that they will aduenture their owne losse and hinderance, so saue the honestie of other. Therefore saith Peter, it is the glorie of a man to passe by the infirmities of his brother, Ioseph might haue disclosed the lustes of his mistresse, and saued his owne imprisonment: but hee concealed it which wrought first his misery, and then his felicitie. But oh howe fewe are there like Ioseph in our daies, which hauing their brethren at

Gen. 39. 17.

aduantage:

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uantages, will not to their vttermost accuse them. We haue many Zibaes, which accuse poore Mephibosheth to Dauid with gifts and with bribes, pretending simplicitie with words sweeter then hony; when warre is in their hearts, their lips haue learned their flattering style, they are of their father, that old accuser of God his children, but as hee is cast downe, so they shall bee condemned, yea, euen then when it is no benefite to them, how doth it reioyce them to see their neighbours imprisoned, their enemies slandered, their possessions remooued, their wealth diminished, their credite abased, and they deprised of friends and fauour at one time.

2. Sam. 16.

Reu. 12. 10.

Iob. 1. 10.

Is this the thing that you would haue them doe to you? might not the Lord haue suffered him to stand, and cast downe you, that he might haue laughed at your destruction. Consider your selues beloued in the Lord, and let vs bee the schollers of this godly Naomi, if wee may get our owne with faire speeches, let vs not vse these threatning wordes: If wee must hide the truth for the benefite of our neighbours, much lesse must wee conceale falshood, that not one word of disgrace bee vttered to the discredite of our neighbours. Oh that those which contend with their neighbours would bee instructed in this doctrine, how much would it moderate their malice, for the benefite of their aduersaries, and bring peace vnto both, neuer to bee repented of? Wherefore lay aside all maliciousnes and guile, dissimulation, enuie, and all euill speaking, as innocent and new borne babes: and let vs desire the sincere milke of the word of God, that wee may grow too bee perfect men in Iesus Christ, that as he suffred and gaue no aunswere, being led as a sheepe before the shearer, which openeth not his mouth: hauing many causes to alleadge against his aduersaries, yet in silence endured both their iudgement and reproches, that wee with the same lenitie and meekenesse, should forgiue other, euen as hee hath forgiuen vs.

1. Pet. 2. 1. 2



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Thirdly, by this also wee obserue, that the laws both of God and men, be they neuer so sharpe, yet in some causes they may bee moderated, according to the discretion of the magistrate, especially when they respect priuate persons. In this place the spitting on the face, and the disgracing of the name of the man is omitted: which the magistrates might haue constrained, if they pleased: neither are they to bee blamed, for the parte which was most grieued, by this denyall was best pleased, neither did shee call for extremitie. And as Christ would not in his iudgement, comdemne or accuse the woman taken in adulterie, but bidde her sinne no more, euen so the rigour of the Lawe is not to bee executed vppon euerie offender, but where hope of amendment is, there may bee a testimony of fauour. This is a worthy doctrine for our dayes, wherein men lie in waite as the Dragons doe for the Elephants, to gette their brethren within the compasse of the law, and though God his word and their owne conscience condemne them, yet if the law say it, deprive men of their liuings, Christians of their libertie, seruants of their freedome, in the seruice of GOD, parents of their children, wiues of their husbands, Churches of their preachers, and no man dare open his mouth for them, that if Christ himselfe were on the earth againe in his humane shape, they neede no other argument but this: wee haue a lawe, and by our lawe hee ought to die: But Woe be vnto you saith the Prophet, that vrge the lawes of Omri, that is, which dare maintaine the decrees of princes against any of the Lordes seruants: Surely it is an argument that men feare the creature aboue the Creator, which will not bee drawen from their lawes, bee they neuer so childish: but in our dayes it is most lamentable, that any good lawes should bee wrested against the course of the Gospell, which were made for the enlaging thereof, such as is the forcing of men to abide with dumbe ministers, when the Gospell preached, calleth for them at the next Church: But I speake not one word against lawfull authoritie,

Iohn. 8. 1.

Mich. 6. 6.

authoritie, or against the law, but onely the partiality of the executioners thereof, is worthy of blame, many times punishing seuerely, where is no, or little offence, and pardoning by sufferance notorious blasphemers. But let no Magistrates thinke when they may mitigate offences, that they may altogether bury the force of the law, when they shutte their eares against the crie of them that complaine, or execute it not for fauour or friendshippe: But on the contrarie, they must not in matters of iudgement repell any information or euidence: but if the partie grieued require extremitie, by wisedome they may perswade him, but by authoritie they cannot denie him: finally, in all things consider with the Apostle, not onely what is lawfull, but also what is expedient, that charitie being ioyned with authoritie, loue may rather amende our faults, then law, and securitie put vnto iustice, the greatest faults may haue the sharpest punishments, that not the words, but the mind of the Law maker may bee euer considered.

*And Boaz sayd vnto the Elders.* Now the ceremonie being ended, the resignation deliuered, the holie Ghost proceedeth to expresse how Boaz receiued it, where hee first of all calleth witnesse of the Elders, and of the people, that now hee hath bought the inheritance of Elimeleches, and whatsoeuer was Mahlons, & whatsoeuer was Chilions, hee hath bought at the hand of Naomi: So that heere hee testifieth with the witnes beforesaid, that it shall bee as his owne in possession for euer.

Where first of all here commeth in question whether then it were, or now is lawfull to sell inheritances, which by this place appeareth to bee very lawfull: seeing Boaz buyeth that which was Elimeleches: and if it bee so lawfull, then was Naboath in great fault, that hee did not depart from his in Iezreell: and so might haue saued his life. But Naboath had the expresse law of God on his side, which commaunded that the land should not bee solde to bee cutte off

1. Kin. 21. 3.

Leui. 25. 23

neglect of this pointe it commeth to passe, that greate liuinges are done away for a song, as the prouerbe is, young men priuately sell their patrimonies, their fathers beeing aliue, for little or nothing: others which haue not so much worldly wit, as were to be wished, make priuate bargaynes of their landes, when they are in want or pouertye, wherein they sell them halfe fornothinge. And thus young men are deceyued with the sight of a little gold, vnwise and vnthriftye personnes are cosoned, with nothing in regarde of the value of their inheritance: widowes left comfortelesse, children left harbourelesse, and the cuntrey troubled and pestred with such couetous encrochers, and why? bee cause they make subtill and deceitefull bargaines in secreate, whereof they would bee ashamed, if either before iudges, Elders or Magistrates this sale weere propounded. Therefore by the rule of God his worde, wee hould him a theefe and a robber, which hath thus bought to the hindrance of the seller.

Thirdly, it is lawfull to buy for necessity house or landes, or any other thinge lawfull to bee solde, the former conditions alwayes obsarued, but it must not bee for vaineglorye, or for the aduanceinge of their children or posterityе, or that they might bee lande-Lordes to many: Not euerie one that is wealthy, and hath much money must alway purchase land: the former example of Abraham proueth this: who beeing a very wealthy man: yet hee neuer offered to buy any lande, till Sara his wife was deade, and that was for necessity to bury her in. So did Iacob his sonne buy a parcell of lande of Hemor the father of Shechem for an hundred peeces of siluer, whereon hee pitched his tent, and builded an aulter: Hee might haue bought and purchased much more, as hee was able, but hee would not, onely a dwelling place and an Aultar roome hee prouided: surely wee haue an infinite and greate number that buy dwelling places, but few that giue any of their landes

Gen. 33. 19.

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or liuing to build altars or Churches on. Nay, who seeth not how men sue dayly to pull down the Aultars, and to make arrable land where they stand, that is, they pull personages and spirituall liuings to their nests, they gette away tithes and oblations, they enter vpon the lands and profits of the ministery, & I thinke verily in many places they are grieued that the Churches and Churchyards are so big, because they would haue the more profite, the persons I warrant you, are none of Iacobs children, nor Abrahams neither, which haue taken to themselues the houses of God in possession. Against these the Prophet cryeth, Woe bee vnto them that ioyne house to house, and field to field, that there might bee no more place, that ye may be placed by your selues in the mids of the earth: therfore heare their punishment. This saith the Lord is in my eares, surely many houses shall bee desolate, euen great and fayre houses without inhabitants: This shall be the end of these couetous cormorants, who desire to bee the Lords of the earth; And if good King Dauids posteritie within a thousand yeeres after him, had not one house to lodge in, but euen in the same, which was their fathers: Ioseph and Mary were faine to harbour in the stables, feare not you but your posteritie will bee beggered within a hundred yeeres after you, which neither are so wealthie, or so godly as Dauid was; but I may sooner poure out my very heart, then make any forsake their purchasing, so louing a sinne is the desire of wealth, that men choose it with aboundance here for a season, & damnation there for euer, but let the godly vse the world, as if they vsed it not, for the desire of money is the roote of all euill. Isa. 5. 8, 9.

But now we haue laboured for the buyers, whome I know will be more carefull of their profite, then my instruction, let vs in a word direct the sellers also before wee goe from this point. If any demaund wherefore, or for what causes they ought, or it may bee lawfull for them to sell their possessions, I answere briefly, for these causes a man may, and for none else. First, to relieue his poueritie, and being in sicknesse, for to recouer his

health,

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health being imprisoned for some good cause or law-
full debt, being taken a captiue, to pay his ransome,
or such like, all this is vnderstood by the name of po-
uertie, or any other meanes whereby a man may come
into pouertie: for the Lord which gaue inheritances,
gaue them for the benefite of the possessors, that they
might be helpes vnto them in this miserable life, for
they must euer esteeme more of their life, then of their
Gen. 47. 18. landes, of their libertie, then their inheritance, of their
19. welfare and health, then riches or wealth, and there-
20. fore the Lord permitted the Iewes to doe away their
inheritances: and mention is made of a godly woman
Mark 5. 25. in the Gospell, that had spent all the substance shee
26. had vppon Phisitions, which is reported to magnifie the
goodnes of our Sauiour vnto her, which cured her for
nothing, and deferred to helpe her, till she had spent all;
that shee might account more of her health, then her
wealth, of the kindnesse of Christ, then the cunning of
the Phisitions, but I neede not many reasons to proue
this, and therefore I will leaue it.

Secondly, a man may lawfully depart with some of
his inheritance, to helpe him that hath none at all, ei-
ther to sell it, or giue it. So did Ephron sell Macpe-
lah to Abraham that had none, so did Hemor sell a
parcell of land to Iacob that had none, and vnto this
I may referre the threshing floore of Araunah, which
2 Sam. 24. Dauid bought to build an Altar on, when the Lord
24. stayed the plague, after hee had numbred the people
25. this was to speciall vse, and therefore for some speciall
causes, I thinke it lawfull for men to giue or sell their
inheritance. By this we learne what to iudge of them,
which are so farre from giuing or selling, that it is a
hart-sore vnto them, to see such godly hospitals and
almes-houses erected for the poore, although not of
their cost, yet to their griefe, for they had rather be far-
ced with the rent of the houses, then poore and mise-
rable maimed people should bee fedde with the reue-
newes: these persons thinke nothing well spent, but
that which is bestowed in surfeiting and pleasures, in
costly apparrell and dainty fare, thinking the time long

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till these poore alms-mens gownes bee turned into velvet coates, but I pray God their possessions may bee hospitals, not hospitalles their possessions. Other thinke much if a poore body get a little Cottage to be builded vpon the Commons or waste groundes, they had rather haue sties for their swine, then dwellings for such destitute soules: surely let them take heede, that their owne styes, I meane their houses, wherein such fatte hogs as themselues are, liuing in pleasure and in follies; bee not made worse then the sillie houell of the other; and God curse them and their posteritie, because they haue hated him in his pouertie; for if he which giueth to the poore, do lend to the Lord, then he which reuileth the poore, reuileth (or as Salamon saith) scorneth his maker, then hee which taketh from the poore shall rob the Lord, and sure his iudgement shall bee very seuere, and his damnation very swift.

Thirdly, it is lawfull to sell inheritances, and to bestow or employ the money vppon the Church, so wee reade of the primitiue Church, how they which had lind, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it downe at the Apostles feete, and therefore is that excellent and fearefull historie of Ananias and Saphira his wife, who keeping backe but a part of the money that was their owne, and confirming it with a lie, were sodainelie stroke dead. I would to God the niggards of our age would consider this, which would deprive the poore of that which they owe them, and plucke from Church and ministerie that which is giuen them. But of this latter disease, few are sicke in our dayes, that they will sell their land to giue to the Church, rather spend it in gluttony for their bellie, and liberalitie for their soule in good fellowship among ruffians, then christian charitie among the faithfull, cloathing themselues aboue their calling, that for a season they may liue like Gentlemen, and euer after in wofull slauerie: these singing fooles of all other are most miserable, for their friends will not comfort them, their fellowes will forsake them, their wealth will decay, but their woe shall bee euerlasting.

Act. 2. 45.

Lastly

Lastly, by this verse wee note, that women and widdowes had the rule of their husbandes inheritances, if they dyed without heyres, for here it is sayd, that Boaz buyeth it at the hand of Naomi, because shee was her husbands heyre, and being past child-bearing, had giue ouer her right to Ruth: this wee haue already shewed you, was the singular care which the Lord hath ouer poore desolate widdowes, that they should not bee despised, although they were barren, and therefore, for their better preferment, willed the inheritance to discend vnto them: whereby wee may see it is no new thing that women should bee inheritours, for the daughters of Iob had inheritances among their brethren, the daughters of Zelophead had their fathers lot, and Caleb giueth his daughter Acsah with an inheritance vnto his kinsman Othoniel, which may suffice for proofe of this matter, for the perpetuities of inheritances are condemned by God and man: but I would to God that the wealth of many women were not their vndooing, and their riches the cause of their casting away, especially where friendes haue aspiring mindes, there the miserie of maidens and widdowes falleth in nothing sooner, for setting them aloft with wealthie portions, and forgetting what they are in nature, their riches fall to vnthrifts, and themselues to lamentable want.

Iob. 42. 15.
Numb. 36. 6. 7.
Iud. 1. 13. 4.

*And moreouer.* After the landes, he descendeth to his marriage, which is described in this verse: wherein hee protesteth that hee taketh the lands, that he might also marry with the woman, and hee marrieth the woman for no other cause, but to stire vp the name of the dead, according to the commandement of God: for what else should moue an old man, to doe that in his withered age, which he refused in his lusty youth. By the which wee first of all note, how wisely Naomi deals with her husbands inheritance: she might haue kept it to get her selfe a good marriage, yet shee giueth it to Ruth: she might haue sold it to fill her purse, but shee bestoweth it to preferre her daughter. Wherein shee teacheth vs, with what loue wee must doe for our children,

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dren, namely, that for them wee must depart with our owne maintenance, and vnto their good, not onely to the vttermost, but also beyond our power. And this is worthy to bee noted of widdowes which are wealthily left by their husbands, who are wont but little to care for their children, but to bestow their goods vppon youthfull companions: see here this Naomi hauing but a daughter in law, shee giueth her the whole inheritance, as if shee had beene borne for it: and truely, the onely cause in (regard of our selues) of all our wealth, is, that we might bestow it vpon our children, how grieuous is it in many places, to see both landes and liuings consumed by them, which neuer swet for them, and many poore children, to whom of right they doe pertaine, to be destitute both of friends and maintenance, and all through the wanton marriages of their youthfull mothers, but of this matter wee haue spoken already, and shall bee sufficient to remember at this time.

Secondly, by this we may gather, that a marriage is a meere ciuill action, because in the finishing thereof, there is not vsed either Priest or Leuite, as wee may see in this place, but is onely pronounced by the man in the presence of the Elders, euen in the place of iudgement. Hence it commeth, that in ancient time wee reade of marriages, but neuer celebrated in Churches but in priuate assemblies, except Princes, which were woont to make great and generall feastes. For this institution that marriages should be kept in Churches, came vp of late, many hundred yeeres since the dayes of the Apostles: but yet must not bee disanulled, but obserued as a holy and commendable order: first, for the auoyding of confusion, that those which are fitte, might bee 1
ioyned together before the faithfull: secondly, for the 2
more honour of the estate of matrimony, that they might know it was with all reuerence to be vndertake, seeing they came as it were euen before the face of the almighty, there to be vnited. Thirdly, & they might bee 3
begun with most earnest and feruent prayers, & thereupon came the ministers to haue a hand in it. Fourthly, 4
that it might be publikely knowne among all the congrega-

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gregation. Fiftly, that those marriages which were priuately kept and concluded, might be accounted suspitious and vnlawfull. Wherefore we must not in any wise breake this godly order of the Church of God, for as it was lawfull for the godly in old time to keepe them in houses, much more may the companie of the faithfull now celebrate them in Churches, alwayes remembring, that we make it no article of our faith, but hold it necessarie onely for order and vnitie.

Thirdly, by this wee also obserue the end of all marriages, which is first for the commandement of God, & secondly for the increase of the Church. Both these are here set downe by Boaz in these words, *to stirre vp the name of the dead vpon his inheritance, & that the name of the dead bee not put out from among his brethren.* This was the speciall commandement of God, that hee should marrie his kinsmans wife, and raise vp seede to his kinsman, which was as wee lately shewed you, for the multiplying of the Church. By the which wee may examine all the intentions of marriage, whatsoeuer. First, if we doe not take it in hand for the commandement of God, what hope can they euer haue of the blessing of the Lord vpon them, like as a labourer which setteth himselfe to another mans worke without his consent, hath nothing for his paynes: euen so all they, whatsoeuer they be, which haue married of their owne braine, without respect to the law of God, can neuer haue or craue any blessing of the Lord vpon themselues or their posteritie: Oh fearefull consideration, worthy to bee considered of all them, which vnaduisedly goe about to marrie, for a wild tree bringeth forth sowre fruit, and wicked parents which haue no regard of holinesse in their marriages, do seldome bring any wholesome fruit to the Lord. But some will say, how shall wee know how or in what sort to behaue our selues, that before wee marrie, wee may ayme at nothing beside the commandement of God? Hearken a little, & I will briefly instruct you out of the word of God.



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First of all, the care of those that will bee married, must bee for the onely blessing of God, which is the very finall cause of this institution. Therefore after the floode, the Lord in the resloring of all thinges, amongst other confirming marriage, Moyses saith, and hee blessed Noah and his sonnes, and saide, Increase & multiply, so that they which looke for any increase or fruite of their marriage, must first of all bee assured that the Lorde hath blessed them. But how shall wee obtaine this blessing of God? I aunswere, by diligent reading of his worde, and by prayer. Dauid asking this question, wherewithall a young man shall cleanse his way? and then hee aunswereth himselfe and saith, euen by taking heede vnto thy worde. And Paule saith, that the vnmarried care for the thinges that please the Lorde as if hee had saide, they must remaine vnmarried for no other cause, but that they might the more freely give themselues to the seruice of God. If a man want faith, hee may obtaine it by prayer, and if hee want the blessing of God vppon his marriage, which is a lesse thinge then faith, may hee not obtaine it by prayer? having beene married twentie yeares, yet was without children, and then hee prayed for Issue, and the Lorde gaue him two at one time, and may not prayer obtaine this for the vnmarried as well as for the married? yes verily, if either would take the paines to vse it. But oh who are they that euer in their liues once offered of their prayers to God to bless them with wives and husbandes? that is, that they might bee so married as the name of God might bee glorified by them. Nay, what young man or woman among a thousand in those dayes, that is delighted with either prayer or preaching, but rather affect nothinge but libertie, pleasure, and passime, they neuer thinke of any neede they haue of these thinges, but rather imagine that their youthfull dayes and yeares must bee consumed in riotous sportes, and wanton wandringes, so that most men and maidens come by their wives and husbandes at feasting and dauncing, by dallying and playing,

Gen. 9. 1. 7.

Psal. 119. 9.

1. Cor. 7. 34.

Gen. 25. 21. 22.

chosen

chosen by outwarde apparrell, not inwarde and secrete vertues, which are wonne with vanity, kept with pride, and forsaken to the destruction of wiues and husbands, therefore first seeke the kingdome of God, and the righteousnesse thereof, and all other things shall bee cast vpon you.

2. Secondly, the intention of them that marry for the commaundement of God, is that thereby they might liue more soberly in their seuerall vocations; for as the wanton oxe is bridled in the yoke, so vnruled youth is gouerned by marriage, for if wee regarde the minde of them that marry, it is stayed vpon one, if the company of the body, it is bound to one, if life, it cannot bee solitarie, if wealth, it must not bee possessed alone. Therefore Peter saide, husbandes dwell with your wiues like men of knowledge, as if hee had said, in your vnmaried time you were wanderers, but now you are married you are dwellers, in your vnmarried age you were inconstant, but now you are married you are as vnmoueable as a house: whe you were single, you were ignorant, but now you bee married, bee men of knowledge: and finally when you were young, you were troubled with the desire of many, but now you are married you are comforted with the loue of one, and as a man without a dwelling place, so is the vnmarried without a companion. Such is the commodity of mariage, if it bee duely considered, and ech party rightly instructed, that it is as sleepe to a weatie man as wine to the thirstie, as a house to the harbourlesse, and as a garment against winter: and therefore it is compared to the fellowshippe of Christ with his Church. How then commeth it to passe that men liue more riotously being maried then when they are vnmaried; for they amend nothing, but thinke all things as lawfull for them then as it was before, their houses without their presence, their wiues without their company, their families without their gouernment, so that you shall see married persons wandring abroade, as if they were vnmarried, disporting themselues as shamefully and as loosely as any in the worlde: not liuing in sobriete and modestye like

1. Pet. 3. 7.

Ephe. 5. 33.

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like the turtle Doue, but in gaming and daunting like the wanton Goate; these parties neuer married for the commaundement of God; but some rashe desires possessed their mindes, and a little youthfull lust tickled their fancies, much like the sauour of Iuniper, which continueth but a little while. Other are so farre from this pointe to marry, that they might liue more soberly, that they make their marriages the couer of their dishonesty making the world beleiue they liue in perfect chastity, because they are married, but priuily they giue themselues to most filthy adulteries but the Apostle saith, mariage is honourable, but adulterers God will iudge, that is, will vtterly condemne; and if their behauiours were well examined, you should find this the cause, that their houses cannot hold them, the filthinesse of these parties is codemned by the verie bruite beastes, and shal bee punished by the seuere iudgement of God: for they which make the members of Christ the members of harlots, shall bee with harlots the members of the deuill: therefore marry for modesty not for filthinesse, that your vngouernedage may be bridoled with the consideration of your present estate, your wearied dayes may be quieted in the bed of godly, holy and honourable mariage. Heb. 13. 4.

Thirdly, they which marry for obedience vnto God, must only mind godly and not wealthy matches, they must looke on the hearte not on the face, they must waigh the disposition, and not the riches, they must not say as the deuill said to Christ, all this will I giue; but they must say, as Iacobs sonnes said to Shechem and Hemor, if you will be circumcised you shal haue our sister: that is, if you feare God, and receiue his true knowledge, if you loue his word and honour his sacramentes, if you can benefite the soules as well as y bodies: But a man may weary himselfe many dayes before he finde any part of this inclination, for parents will deny their consents, if they see not the riches for their daughters husbandes, or sonnes wiues, keeping them in continuall burning, for lacke of this wealthy 3 Mat. 4. Gen. 34. 15.

lic sort, And I know many parents which haue cast off their children for poore marriages, but neuer any for the wealthy, were they neuer so wicked, therefore whosoeuer for this cause, denieth right to his childe, shall bee more sinnes for their vngodly disposition, then the children for their vnaduised marriage. Now in these dayes, it is a wonder to see how the minides of men and women can loue for wealth; that euen as a harlot humbleth her selfe for money to him, whome otherwise shee woulde not looke vpon, so men and women will marrie themselues for wealth, where if there were pouerty, they would thinke them vnworthy to bee their seruantes. I meruaile if the heathen lawe were now in force, that no man shoulde giue any thing to their daughters marriage, in what time of their dayes would these men marry, truely I thinke they would neuer marry, except it were to make drudges of their wiues. But these are not of Boaz his minde, for hee matched a stranger who had but little wealth, because the Lord so commaunded to take his kinsmans wife, although hee might haue refused yet hee was contented for this cause, to buy her as hee saith in this verse, to teach vs, that if God bid vs to marry, that is, if wee finde in our owne consciences that wee cannot liue otherwise, then rather aduenture thy wealth, then the displeasure of God. But some will say, is it not lawfull to desire and to sue for wealthy marriages? yea verily, with this affection, that thou like thy choice as well if there were little, as now there is much. And therefore thou must euermore remember these cautions, both in

1. the choosing and vsing of a wealthy marriage. First

Act. 20. 35. that thou desire it, to the intent thou mayest bee

2. more able to doe good to thy bretheren that want, for it is a more blessed thing to giue, then to receyue. Secondly, that thou mayest the more freely giue thy selfe priuately, and publikely, to the seruice of God; for wee knowe that pouerty taketh our greatest time to labour for wife and family, but the wealthy neede lesse labour, and may applie the

more

more time to the seruice of God, therefore was it that Paul sayde, the married care for the things of this life to please their wiues: shewing, that it is one miserie vppon the poore when they are married, that they are troubled about worldly and necessarie prouision, but if these things bee supplyed by a good marriage, thou mayest prayse God with the greater diligence. 1.Cor.7.34

But who are they which haue desired or obtained a wealthie marriage for either of these causes? if the poore should goe in collection for reliefe of them, which for this occasion haue richly ioyned themselues, what should they gather? or how farre should they goe? to how many persons might they come, before they gette a shilling? Truely for this cause they desire them, some, that they might lauish out the more in riotous expenses, with the rich man in the Gospel, to feede in pleasure, to bee cloathed in silke, to maintaine dogges, houndes, hawkes, horses, and retinues of idle men, but neuer the Church of God fareth the better for them. Againe by their wealth, they haue idlenesse and time to wander abroad, heere to feast and make merry, there to play and disport themselues in bodily exercises, and worldly vanities, but neuer one houre the more is spent in the seruice of GOD, but much the lesse, for the Diuels sweete and pleasant baytes draw away their mindes from the consideration of their owne miseries. Againe, they are many times a thousand fold more clogged with the cares of their wealth, then the poorest soule to prouide bread for his family by his bodily labour. Lastly, their desire is to leaue great possessions to their posteritie, that the honour of their houses may bee increased, and the name of their memorie might bee euerlastingly recorded, so that neither the glory of God, the promoting of the Gospell, the relieuing of the faythfull, or the succouring of Iesus Christ himselfe, is any part of the thought of these couetous wretches, but as they desire the inheritances of the Lord,



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to be their portion in this present life, so they haue them for the canker of their soules, the rust to consume them, the care to torment them, the feare to forsake them, the loue to enioy them, the trauaile to increase them, and the reckoning for abusing them, to the endlesse confusion. Therfore except the Lord doe build the house, their labour is but in vaine, that build it, except the Lord make the marriage, the riches of Salomon cannot continue them, for better is a little that the religious hath, then the great possessions of the vngodly.

Psal. 37. 16.

Lastly, hee that marrieth for obedience vnto God, must haue this care to prouide before hand things honest and lawfull for the present maintenance of wife and family. Therfore when Abrahams seruants came to the Citie of Nachor, among others which hee told vnto Laban, and the mother of Ribkah, hee shewed them what cattell, and flocks, seruants and maidens, his master had, which all should be Izaaks, thereby signifying, that al necessarie prouision for their maintenance, was alreadyprocured, and there wanted nothing, but a wife for Izaak. So Iaacob after his fourteene yeeres seruice with Laban, couenanteth to haue the profite of the flocks which should be spotted, and this was when he knew hee was to depart from his father in law, and therefore was bound to prouide for himselfe. Now this prouision is not so meant, as though euery one were bound to get al things before hand, which are needfull to marriage, but it is required, that euery one should procure somewhat according to their degree, and the maintenance of their calling. This poynt is clearer then the sunne, and it seruetb to the reproouing of them, which runne headlong to marry one day, but fall into wofull beggery the next, neither houses to dwell in, labour to worke on, meate to sustaine them, money to procure them, friendes to relieue them, or credit to help them, onely wiues and husbands they must needes haue, not caring what shall become of them afterward. And truely, if the hurt did onely redound to their

Gen. 24. 35

Rebacca.

Gen. 30. 32 33

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owne

owne hinderance, their pittie was the lesse, but wofull is to tell, how their miserable posteritie are thereby (euen through their parets rashnes) brought to euerlasting pouertie, and such as is most lamentable, for their mindes are not iustructed, they haue no knowledge of the true God, neither can they pray to their comfort, or hope for any saluation. If it were but the labour and pouertie of the body, it were much to bee desired, and nothing to bee feared, but being the endaungering of both body and soule, how much is it to be disliked, that any for their owne lusts should leaue their wretched posterity to the power of the deuill. Therefore beloued, counsell your acquaintance to be carefull for their children, as well as themselues, first to try and then to trust, first to prepare somewhat, that if sicknesse come, or charges come, or age ouertake thee, yet then thou mayest comfort thy selfe with thy owne gotten goods, and rather bee helpfull, then chargeable to any.

Fourthly, by this that Boaz saith, hee taketh Ruth to wife, for to stirre vp the name of the dead, and that the name of the dead bee no more forgotten among his brethren in the gate of his place: We note, that their marriages must be taken in hand also to this end, for the multiplying of the Church of God, wee haue already shewed how one cause of this brothers marriage, was for that vse and purpose, and in this place not vnnecessary to confirme. For the law of this marriage was speciall onely for God his people, and therefore for the augmenting of the number of the Lords flocke. And as this was among the Iewes, that euery family might haue some temporall inheritours, euen so is it among the Gentiles, that if it bee possible, euery one should bring one infant or other, to be an inheritour of the Lordes kingdome. By the which parents are taught to bee more carefull for the education and instruction of their children, then for their procreation and birth, for they are made the fathers and mothers of Christ in his members, there-

fore they must not leaue him to Herod, that is, they must not giue their children to the power of Sathan, by their negligence and want of teaching: they are accursed that lay stumbling blocks before the blind, and shall not they also that leade them into the sea, where is nothing but drowning? euen so if godlesse parents doe leade their children and innocent babes, into damnable ignorance, who shall answere for their soules? shall not the authours of this destruction? Had not parents neede then to looke to themselues, for if they haue as much gold as Salomon had, and as great inheritances as Caleb had, and as much possession of Cattell as Iob had, yet if they be not able to bring vp their children in the feare of God, it were better for parents and children they had neuer beene borne, then miserably to liue in wealth, and be euery houre in daunger of damnation. But how then will you say, must we be carefull for the instruction of our children? I answere, you must bee carefull for these two things: first, that you teach them that which is good, secondly, that you giue no euill example vnto them.

Concerning the first, for the teaching of them the truth, you must first teach them the matter of their fayth, and secondly howe to pray. The matter of their faith is contained in the twelue articles, commonly called the Creede or beleefe, which euery father and mother is bound to teach their children, with the pure vnderstanding thereof, and as they be able to shew them the proofes thereof out of the word of God, I meane as the children bee able to receiue it. Herein they must instruct them of the miserable estate of mankind after their fall, by the vse and vnderstanding of the moral Lawe, contained in the two tables of the tenne Commandements, with the proofes thereof out of the Scripture, and the deliuerance by the death and bloudsheading of Iesus Christ, the eternall and onely begotten sonne of God.

Againe,

Againe, you must teach them to pray according as the Lord hath taught vs in that forme which wee call the Lordes prayer, with the vnderstanding thereof out of the worde of God, for except you teach them what they pray for by the vnderstanding of it, you were as good to teach them in Greeke or Latine as in English. For there are many thousandes in Englande that call God Father in their prayers, but I know not that there bee any which know the meaning of the word. I my selfe haue reasoned with many both young and olde, and of men of good calling in the worlde, about that one worde, which is the easiest and playnest in all the worde of God, but some fewe excepted, which haue laboured for knowledge in the hearing of Sermons, I neuer mee with man, woman, nor childe, that could give mee any reasonable aunsweare vnto this question besides this, that God made them, and therefore is their Father which euerie Iewe and almost euerie Pagan knoweth as well as they: Therefore as our righteousnesse must exceede the righteousnesse of the Scribes and Pharisies, Iewes and Gentiles, so must our knowledge also, for by our knowledge of Christ wee are iustified to bee his members. And although wee repeate the Lordes prayer a thousand times euery day, and vnderstand it not, wee doe but babble before the Lord, taking his name in vaine, vsing it in our lips, when our heartes haue no vnderstanding, and therefore our prayers are without fruite.

Mat. 6. 8.

Isa. 53. 11.

Lastly, if you your selues doe not walke before them without reproofe, in pure and sanctified conuersations, whatsoeuer you teach them, you presently treade our gaine, for simple people and young children liue by examples, and not by precept: if you teach them to worship God, you must also beefore their faces worship the same, that they may practise by your example. If you bid them that they sweare not, you your selfe must bee carefull not



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to sweare or els they will not beleiue you, for as the people looke vpon the life of their pastour, so the young children behoulde the steppes of their parents. And wee see in bruite beastes that examples are much more effectuall then preceptes, they cannot speake, yet how doe they traine vp their young ones. It is reported of the Hartes of Scithia, that they teach their young ones to leape from banke to banke, from rock to rocke, from one turfe to another by their owne example, leaping before them, which otherwise they would neuer practise, by which meanes when they are hunted no beast can euer take them. Euen so, if you goe before your children in examples while they are young, fathan the hunter and roaring Lion shall neuer haue them for his pray. When they learne to speake, they take the words from our owne mouthes, euen so when they learne to worshippe, feare loue, honour, and pray vnto the Lord, let them take you for their examples, as Iacob did Abraham and Izaak. Now let vs giue praise to God.

Gen. 31. 53.

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# The fourteenth Lecture.

Chap. 4. Ver. 11. 12.

11 *And all the people that were in the gate, & the elders sayde, we are witnesses. The Lord make the wife that commeth into thy house, like Rahel and Leah, which twain did build the house of Israel, & that thou mayest doe worthily in Ephratah, and bee famous in Bethlehem.*

12 *And that thy house be like the house of Pharez, whome Thamar bare vnto Iudah, of the seede which the Lord shall geue thee of this young woman.*

AS we haue hitherto heard of Boaz and his kinsman, the one in resigning, & the other in receiuing his right, in the place of iudgment, and the presence of the elders and people: So now the holy Ghost proceedeth to declare vnto vs, the behauiour of this latter sort at this mariage of Boaz; which is their aunsweare vnto that speech of Boaz: when hee calleth them to witnesse the bargaine.

The wordes doe easily deuide themselues into two partes, the first is their confessions to bee witnesses of the contract, in these wordes: *Then spake all the people and elders, we are witnesses.* The second parte is praier they make for Boaz and Ruth in the next wordes consisting of two partes, the first is the fruitfulnesse of Ruth, when they pray she may be like *Rahel & Leah*: that hee may bee wealthy in *Ephratah, and famous in Bethlehem*: The second member of this second part is for the blessing of God vpon the posterity of these two new married persons: In the 12. verse, that their house might be like the house of Pharez the sonne of Iudah, which till that time, had the chiefest dignitie in the tribe of Iudah, and so continued till the scepter

was

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was taken from Iudah, & the lawgiuer from between his feete, which was almost fifteene hundred yeares, vntill the raigne of the Idumean Herode. Of these partes let vs briefly speake in order, By the assistance of God his heauenly spirite, and the permission of the time.

*And all the people.* These words as we shewed you are the first part, wherein the rulers & people acknowledge their testimony with one consēt, freely yeelding vnto the request of Boaz, and willingly reioycing at that so strange a matter, when one of the chiefe of their elders, for loue of the law of God, woulde so his owne discommodity, marry with a straunger, and so base a woman, looking neither on birth nor wealth but on the hidden man of the hearte, making vertue his choice and religion his portion. Out of which we note.

First, that it is the duety of the godly willingly in any good matter to giue their testimony for their bretherē: for men in this latter age are growē so fearfull, that they will hardly testifie the truth for dreade of some euill that might ensue thereby, these persons are not of the mind of these godly Iewes, both elders and others in this place, which of their owne accorde, giue witnesse vnto Boaz for the purchase of his land, and the mariage of his wife, so wee reade the people witnessed with Samuel when Saul was chosen king: yea against their owns selues, because they had refused him to bee their king, and chose a king to raigne ouer them, after the manner of the heathen. This is the more worthy to bee considered in this place, because this people did not after any seeming manner, but soberly and in the feare of God (as appeareth by their prayer) witnesse this contract vnto Boaz: the worlde in these dayes, if the like thing should fall out, that an olde man in the presence of so great a congregatiō should take to his wife so young a woman, would rather mocke, scorne and disdaine it, then with such reuerēt modesty pray for it: For herein the world sheweth it selfe, which is wont to condemne that in other

Sam. 12.4.

which

which in themselues they highly commend, and to looke but vpon the outward appearance, discerning and iudging but with bodily eyes and carnall minds, yet here these Iewes Bethlemites, shall speake for the godly, not deriding strange actions, not denying their voyces to a lawfull condition, not iudging but with a spirituall eye, pearcing through the barke of humane body, into the soule of a godly old man: and this is the more commendable, because the magistrates and elders themselues ioyne thē to the people in so godly proceeding, by whose example it is no doubt, the wauering multitude was much encouraged. And this teacheth vs how excellent is the profession and forwardnesse of men in authoritie, vpon whom the eyes of the common wealth dependeth: they are neuer alone, but as all beasts and creatures followed Noah into his ark, because hee went before, so all sorts will follow their disposition, be it good or euill: We read of the wicked iudges of Israel, which condemned innocent Naboath, had also wicked witnesses against him; for such as Ahab and Iezabell were, such were their iudges; & as the iudges were, the same were the people. if they be godly, the lights of their liues wil shine vnto others, if they bee prophane, their darknes is like the darknes of Egypt, which spread it selfe ouer al the land. Oh how cōfortable is your presence at our godly assemblies to the dispised mēbers of Christ: if you come many come: if you bide at home, many follow your steppes, the souldiours will follow the Captaines, into the hottest skirmishes, but without them, it is a grief to go into the easiest battels, so right worshipful, if you continue your diligence in hearing the Gospell, wee your subiects and seruants will follow you to the farthest, but if you fall away, we are discouraged also: one word of your mouthes in the commendation of goodnes, is like golden apples in dishes of siluer, but one steppe of your trauaile to the mountaine of Sion, the company of the faithfull, is like the company of Ionathan and his armour bearer, to driue a whole army of vngodly Philistines from the tents of

1. King. 21. 12, 13

1. Sam. 14. 16.

Gods

Iud.7.20. Gods Saints: If Gedeon be once mined, what are the company of Madianites: if the Magistrate or gentleman frequent the exercises of religion, al the mouthes of the swinish Atheists, which treade the pearles of the Gospel vnder their feet, are stopped. Looke vpon the Act.8.27. Eunuch to Queen Candaces, which came euery yere Luc.14. many hundred miles to worship at Ierusalē: he was a noble man, yet it was no discredit to his honor to be Act.21. diligent in God his seruice. Looke vpon that noble Theophilus, to whom Luke dedicateth his bookes, when all the world persecuted Christ, yet hee suffered his name to be formost in the Gospel, that none should be discouraged at the profession of Christ, when such a noble man would suffer his name to go publikely in the book. Look vpon the noble woman of Thessa- Act.17.4. lonica, which in greatest danger ioyned themselues to the profession of the Gospel. Looke vpon that excellent Lady, to whom Iohn writeth his second Epistle, and her sister also, whose children fauoured and confessed the Gospel, as wel as their parets, the day would not suffice to follow al that I might, these wet before in the world, and before in the Lord, that is, they were noted in wealth, but notable in Religion, they were singular in authoritie, but excellent in christianity, the memory of their wealth is lost, but the record of their fayth remaineth registred in God his booke for euer. These men and women were worthy of their places, such as could rule their riches by the word, feede their seruants with the Gospel, and cloath their soules with Iesus Christ.

Secondly, by this wee note that seeing they al witnessed, & they all prayed for Boaz, the dutie of them that are gathered together in any godly assembly, which is to ioyne themselues in the same holy exercises, if they heare the other most hear, if they pray the other must pray: if they sing, the other must also sing: for this is the fellowship of the Saints, or else nothing is. When Act.2.46. we read the church of God continued together in breaking bread, it is also said they continued in praier, as if the holy Ghost had said, as if euery one did earnest-

so

so euery one did pray to the Lord as it auaileth not a hungry man to see another eat, & he haue none, but rather increaseth his desire, so if you be euery day and houre where praiers are made, & your selus tast not of the, it doth but increase your damnation: So we reade whē the Apostls were forbidde to preach in the name of Christ, they came to their fellows, & lift vp their voices with one accord to the Lord, and when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled, and they all were filled with the holy Ghost, and spake the word of God boldly, such is the effect of god his faithfull, whē they pray vnto him with one accord, like the assault of the foure winds vpon Iobs childrēs house, which not onely shooke, but also ouerturned the same: many hands make a great labor to be lightly dispatched, and many mens praiers doe pull downe the mercies of God vpō vs. This I thinke is very needfull for our dayes, wherein this dulnesse is growen so grosse, that among a Church full of hearers, you shal haue very few which are not faultie in this doctrine: for it is a world to see how many haue their bodyes at the sermons, but their soules & affections are wandering in a thousand matters: these pray not when wee pray, heare not when wee preach, neither sing when we sing, what profite haue these persons by our prayers, or preaching: surely they are Idols, they haue tongs but speake not, eares, but heare not, eies, but they see not. And this is most lamentable, to see many vppon whom the Lord hath bestowed this gift of reading or learning, to come hand ouer head to Churches, without either booke or minde of profite themselues or other: Thus they bury the graces of God in the, they quench the fire of the holy spirit, they loose the costs of their parents, which they bestowed to bring them to learning, they disdaine to sing with the faythfull, they abhorre the labours of their youth, & mock the Lord with their presence: Looke vpon it my brethren: for if the Lord haue giuen any of you learning, that you are able to read his word, then hee hath planted you to beare fruit in his owne orchard, but if you vse

Act. 4. 23. 31.

not

not this gift, then you are fruitlesse trees, and the Lord will cut you downe and cast you into vnquencheable fire, if you say you haue no bookes, I answere, the fault lyeth in our selues, for if you be poore, aske the godly and your want shall be supplyed. if you be wealthie, saue some of your idle expences to spende vpon such a holy businesse. If you say you forget your bookes behind you, I answere; it is a signe you care but little for your iourneyes end, for if you had that reuerence, to come prepared to the exercises of the faithfull, which you ought to haue, you could not forget your bibles, nay, you should rather forget your apparrell then your bookes, if you considered as it becommeth you. But some say, they vnderstand well inough, though they say not amen to our praiers, and though they sing not to the Lord with vs, but Paul saith to such, that they doe no good to their brethren, because they edifie them not, and that it is better in the Church to speake fiue words to instruct others, then ten thousand for his owne Benefit: for in the Church we are assembled for out brethre, not for our selues onely, and whosoeuer prayeth not with his brethren in the Church or congregation, doth breake the fellowship of the faithfull, and standeth for a cipher among the saints: Therefore if you haue any care of your duty to the Lord, of the loue of the faithfull, of obedience to your parents, of increasing your talent of learning, or the saluation of your own souls, both magistrate and subiect, elders and people, rich & poore, old and yong, men and women, fulfill the expectation of the godly, pray when wee pray, sing with vs when wee sing, heare vs when wee preach: for with such sacrifice is the Lord pleased.

1.Cor.14. .16,17.

*The Lord make.* Now wee haue made an ende of the first part let vs go to the second, which is the prayer of these people and elders, the first member whereof is contained in these words, wherein they pray for the fruitfulnesse of Ruth, alleadging an example to testifie the loue they beare to Boaz, that they desire his wife to bee as fruitfull as either Leah, or Rahell, who

builded

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builded the house of Israel, so that they would haue him the father of much people, in so much as his name both of wealth and children, might aduaunce the dignitie of Bethlehem Ephrathah.

First therefore hence wee note the dutie of all the godly, which is to pray for the welfare one of another, but especially in marriage, for the praiers of the faithfull are as needfull for the married as skilful mariners, in the boate of passengers. Therefore we reade of few godly marriages in the scripture, but they were celebrated with praier, whē Rebecca was married to Isacke, her mother, brother, and friends, prayed that she might grow vp into thousand thousands, & her seede to possesse their enemies gate: and in this place these friends of Boaz pray the like for Ruth, for what make the peoples presence, the multitude of lookers, the number of acquaintance, at the time of celebrating marriages, except it bee to pray for the parties, wee haue shewed you the last Sabbaoth, that for the ignorance of the people which could not pray, came the minister to haue a hand in it, for supplying their want: and how lamentable is it to see in many places, and most persons that are marryed, where their company are none but godlesse ruffians, ignorant Atheists, prophane swearers, and notable blasphemers, to bee present at their vnhappie weddings, what prayers can these powre forth, for their newe married friends, can the Cockatrice breathe forth any thing but poyson, or the spider spinne any sounder cloath then her webbe, no more can these persons, but curse them with their prayers, not blesse them with their cursings: is it not a world to see how many against their marriages compasse the countrey, some to prouide delicate diuersities of meates, to feed both the belly and the eye, others to inuite their friendes, which come ruffling into the Churches, in silkes, veluets, sattens, and soft apparrell, & some to decke vp theselues in braue clothing, against their mariage day, but neuer one thought for the faithfull prayer of the godly, that their prosperous life may bee blessed in

Gen 24.60.

wedlocke

wedlock, this they ought to be most careful for, and yet not to leaue the other vndone, but godly prayers are better then great portions, and it is better to leaue poore Christ at our weddings, then a thousand thousands of these glistering gallants. Truly in these dayes how doe men and women prouide for mirth, not for modestie, that their day of marriage may bee ioyfull with worldly disports, not godly with Christian exercises: they bury and hire musitions, to passe the time in pleasant dancing, but neuer intreat or speake one word to the godly, to bestow their harty praiers vpon them. Let therfore beloued this be our direction, that as we marry for the Lord, not for the world; so wee study for prayer, and not for pleasure.

2 Secondly, by this wee gather that the greatest blessing in mariage is the bearing of children, the blessing vpon the vine is to bring many grapes, the blessing vpon the earth is to be fruitfull in bringing and springing much corne and pasture: the blessing on the seas is the multiplying of the fish, and the blessing of mariage is many childre: Therfore in this place they pray that Ruth might be like Rahel and Leah, which builded all Israel, that is, they were the mothers of a great nation, they multiplyed in their posterine to a number like the starres of heauen. For this cause the first blessing vpon mankind after the flood, was that they should increase and fill the earth, for this cause the fathers desired children so much, & the ouerloue of many children, encreased the multitude of their wiues: & for this cause the Apostle sayth, that wome through bearing of children shall be saued, if they continue in faith, and loue, and holinesse with modestie. For all other blessings may be had without marriage, wealth and riches, comfort and friends, honour and pleasure, quietnesse and rest, may bee found in the liues of vnmarried persons onely children must come of a graffted stocke, which is a holy and sanctified marriage, or wedlocke: When Abraham wanted a sonne, he praied for one: when Rebecca was barren, Isaacke prayed for her, and she conceiued: When Manoah wanted children

Gen. 9. 1.

1 Tim. 2. 15

children, he prayed, and the Lord gaue him Sampson: when Annah was barren, shee prayed and obtained Samuell: and when Zacharie and Elizabeth had no issue, by prayer they obtayned Iohn Baptist. So they accompted of their mariage without children, as a fair and pleasant garden without fruites, and as the one doth fructifie by seasonable showers, so the other doth multiply by faithfull supplications. Therefore here this people of God pray for Boaz and Ruth, that many pleasant twigs may spring out of their fruitfull bodies. By the which we see the ready remedy for barrennes, which are godly and zealous prayers, powred forth into the eares of the almighty, that hee would remoue his hand from punishing, and withdrawe the curse of barrennes from penitent sinners. But in our prayers we must alway take heede ỳ we appoint not the Lord what he shall giue vs, either sonnes or daughters, but rest vpon the will of God to receiue either of both. And indeed he it that children are the greatest blessing of mariage, yet al things cõsidered, it is much happier to be barren, for our miserable dayes, and sinfull times call for a scourge, and once more the saying of Christ shall be fulfilled, that there shall be woe to them that are with child, and that giue suck in those dayes, yea vndoubtedly our posterity count them happy that are vnborne, and themselues shall wish with Iob & Ieremy they had neuer seene the sune. Oh who are they that haue any desire to haue many children looke vpõ the world, it falleth to atheisme. looke vpon the church, it declineth to errour: looke vpon the Gospel, it is persecuted by the deuill, & vew euery degree, if corruptiõ groweth not vpon them truely, truly as Esau saide, the dayes of mourning for my father will shortly come: so may all the faithfull say, the day of mourning for ỳ Gospel and knowledg wil one day come, and the Lord knoweth how soone. Therefore if you woold leaue your children to be atheistes, your issue to be heretickes, your posterity to be afflicted, and all your offspring to be corrupted, and miserably punished in this life, or eternally plagued in the life to

Mat. 24.

Gen. 27. 41.

come, then desire little children, be it you can prouide lands to maintaine them, teachers to instruct them, learning to defend them, honour to aduance the, friends to assist the, & castles of security to keepe them from the hurt of the worlde. yet alas, alas, into how many thousand aduersities may their soules descend, I speak not this to discourage any from desiring children, but I admonish from the Lorde that you be wise in your petitions, and thinke as well of your infantes misery, as your owne suffering: now you desire ease without paines, but they in all manner of afflictions may send vpcries to the heauens and not bee heard. Oh ye all degrees both maried and vnmatried, would haue pitty on their posterity, before they be born, then should seyer be vagabonds then now are, & more be prouided for then now can be, then should men and women for their childrens sake, amend their loose and despite behaiour not fit for pagans, much lesse for christians, lest the children should be plagued for the fathers fault. Assuredly beloued, the Lord hath spoken it, that if your children proue wicked, they shall suffer & beare the sinnes of all their auncestors, yea though they be dead many hundred yeares agone.

Thirdly, by this prayer of these elders and people, we note that for the helping of our weakness in praiers, and relieuing of our wantes, we may set before vs the goodnes of God vnto others. In this place they pray that Ruth may be as fruitfull as Rachel and Leah which were the wiues of Iacob, who bare him eight sonnes & one daughter, expressing their hearty praier for Boaz and Ruth, by the example of these twaine. The like, vnto vs in the of the Apostles, when they prayed after their deliuerance from the rulers and elders, they alledge Dauid for their helpe, as he speaketh in the second Psalme. For we many times know not what to aske as wee ought, but the spirite which wrought these gifts in the fathers, helpeth our infirmities by the examples of the ancient godly, that we should aske the same graces which they enioyed, to leade the same liues which they liued, and obtaine the same

Act. 4. 24.

crowne,

crowne, wherwith they are all rewarded. Yet we must alwaies remember the rule of the Apostle, that this is our assurance, if wee craue any thing according to his will, wee receiue it: that is, wee must not desire the least thing in worldly affaires, but vnder this condition, If it bee thy will O God, because the Lord is not bound to giue vs any thing, no more then wee are to giue euery begger that asketh an alms of vs, but if we absolutely craue without this exception, we break the law of prayer, and bring the maiesty of God into bondage by our petitions. 1.Ioh.5.14.

This teacheth vs this profitable lesson, that before we pray, wee should learne and consider our wants by the word of Gods, that wee aske not at the hands of the Almightie, any thing beside that which is godly honest, and Lawfull: for many I am perswaded, doe sodainly and vnaduisedly start vp into the presence of the Lord, with rash and vngodly desires, because they want the knowledge of the word of God, and the due consideration of those things which they want. Of this sort are all the prayers of the papists, for they neither vnderstand their prayers in a strange tongue, nor yet will examine them by the word of God: Vnto these I adde the prayers and wishes of the ignorant multitude, which are as farre from the true prayers of the faithfull, as the Moone is from the earth; For as it is impossible for a man to goe without his legs, or to see without his eyes, so is it impossible for these to pray without the knowledge of the Gospell; For in our prayers wee must speake to the Lord in his owne tongue, as hee speaketh in his word, but what can these persons bring out of the treasures of the holy scripture? scant one sentence in the whole gospel rightly vnderstood, how then can they bring the matter of their whole prayers, if they want but one thing that will suffice? but, who is liuing which standeth not in needs of many thousand mercyes? But I knowe their old excuse, for they say they pray according to the Scripture, when they repeate the Lords prayer, which is set downe in the scripture: Mat.6.9.

to whom I aunswere, they doe well if they vnderstand it, but where doe they find those wishes to grow rich, those curses vpon them with whome they are angrie, whether it be man or beast, and tell me the vnderstanding of one petition in the Lords prayer. Therefore beloued, pray in spirit, but pray in vnderstanding also, vse the scripture for the rule of your supplicatio, for as no man can say that Iesus is the Lord, but onely by the spirit of God, so none ca pray rightly, but by the knowledge of the Gospel. If you once entertain this knowledge of God his word, then you will doe with it as a cunning workman in his trade: he will euer take delight in his work & occupation, euē so if you had this feeling, you would delight in prayer, which now is a hell vnto many, then your hearts both priuately would be as studious in meditating goodnes, as euer they were desirous of worldly pleasure, and would publikely breathe after it, as the Hart in his chase doth after the well-springs. But oh dearely beloued, this condemneth the world of hatred of God, of the pride of themselues, of ignorance in the truth, of coldnes in religion, of trusting in the world, mispending of time, louing of pleasure, and lacke of deuotion, that they are as hardly drawne to prayer, according to the common Prouerb, as a hare taken with a tabret. Think you that these persons, which absent themselues from publike petitions and priuate prayers, haue any loue of God in them: nay, are not those condemned which are drawne to them against their will, and where shall these cursed companions appeare, which forsake sermons, go out of Churches, lie idlely at home, & are disporting themselues in brauerie abroad, when the time of prayer calleth for their presence at home or in the Church, do they not seperate themselues from the faithful in this life, and therefore they shall be miserably damned with the Diuell and his angels, and euerlastingly excluded from Christ and his Saints.

Fourthly, by this praier of these elders we obserue, that we must especially pray for the multiplying and augmeting of the faithful, for they pray that Ruth may

bee

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be like, not to the daughters of Lot, of whome came the curs'd Moabites and Ammonites: nor yet to Rebecca, of whom came the vngodly Edomites: nor yet to Keturah, from whō came the godlesse Madianites and Arabians, but to Rahel and Leah, which builded the house of Israel, that is, which increased the Lords people, which multiplyed the heyres of the promised land, and augmented the number of the faithful. This our Sauiour commanded to be done, next to the glorifying of God: first we say, hallowed bee thy name, and then, thy kingdome come, which is, first that the spirit might raigu in our harts, & then that mo saints may be added to the Church: For we must pray for the friends, & not for the enemies of Christ. For this cause Paul compareth marriage to the coniunction between Christ and his Church: for as the one ingenderth many saints, so the other must beget many faithfull members: and truly as one pearse is worth teune thousand pebles, so one good child is better to the parents, then many thousand of euil. The vse of this doctrine is, that we should not bee like the Iewes, desirous of many children, because our families should grow great, but like the doues, which bring forth few, which might be the children of innocencie: the Elephant being the greatest, and yet the meckest beast, conceaueth but once in all her time, whereas the lesser and more hurtfull creatures increase many, yet it is better for the first to haue but one, which are good and huttles, then for the latter to haue many, which are euill and harmfull: euen so beloued, it is good to increase doues and not serpents, Elephants, and not Tigers, and better is one Isaacke the sonne of promise, then a thousand Ismaels, the children of bondage: We know the most precious hearbes bring the least fruits, and that is not the best, which doth most of all multiplie, so the godly like good trees, must rather desire one or two children like themselues: & to bring forth & grow in vertue sparingly, by little & little, then fondlyely to swell vp like the waues of the sea. We read that Israel had Gen. 29. 1. 2. 24.
twelue sonnes, all Princes, but Isaacke his brother had onely twaine, Iacob & Esau, & then he obtained by

Eph. 5. 24. 25.

prayer, so hardly the godly are borne and conceiued, when with the wicked they come as thick as the hailstones in Egypt, for the confusion of the fruit of the land. Therefore as the seede is cast in vaine vppon the land, which the foules doe presently deuoure, so those children had beene better they had neuer been borne, whom darknes blindeth, ignorance possesseth, malice ruleth, vngodlines leadeth, & Sathan tormenteth: for the fewest number are the godliest posterity, in whom light shineth, knowledge dwelleth, meeknes raigneth, godlines guideth, & Christ eternally blesseth. Fifthly, by the praier of these people we note, the secōd blessing of a godly marriage, which is to gather by lawful means much wealth: for ȳ which in the english is *doe worthily in Ephrathah*, in the Hebrew is, *gather wealth in Ephrathah*: For it is more general in the english, thē in the original, for to gather wealth by honest meanes, is to do worthily, because it is the blessing of God: Therefore we wil take the surest & the safest interpretation, by the which this collectiō is confirmed, and their meaning is, that Boaz which in his mariage respected not riches, should by his godly choise enioy a vertuous wife to bring vp faithful children, & increase his substance by the blessing of God, that hee might aduaunce the honor of their country and Citie. Neither is this vnknowne that after children, the growing in wealth is the next blessing of the lord, as Abrahams seruant telleth Laban, the Lord hath blessed my master exceedingly, and made him very great, for he hath giuen him flocks and heards, siluer, and gold, seruants and maidens, Cammels & Asses, all this did the Lord blesse Abraham with after his marriage with Sara: Again the holy Ghost describing Iob, after his children, which were seuen sons & 3. daughters, hee reckoneth his wealth, & saith: His possession was seuen thousand cattell, 3. thousand camels, fiue hundred yoke of oxen, and fiue hundred she asses, with a great houshold. For wealth in marriage, is the best seruant ȳ can be entertained. I might speak of many moe but few perswasions will suffice in this point, because wealth was wont

Gen. 24. 35.

Iob. 1. 3.

to

to be the maide, and godlines the mistresse: but now riches is become the mistresse, and religion the maide. For wealth, men rise early and go late to bed, labour diligently, and fare hardly, trauaile earnestly, & tweate painfully, and I can finde no fault but with too much following this wealthy trade: For first of all, I must complaine with Salomon, that there is but one and not a second, who hath neither brother nor sonne, yet there is no end of his labour, neither is his eye satisfied with riches, for this olde canker infecteth euery age, whereby it is a pleasure to certain couetous wretches, to toile their bodies with vntimely labours, to clogge their mindes with golden cares, & to weary their senses in numbring their wealth: & what is the end hereof? surely this the gatherer is like an asse which carrieth the treasure but cannot vse it, being laid on his backe it must bee taken agayne: the heyres like the drones spend all, but gather none for as they sweat not for it as it was in getting, so they spare not as long as it lasteth, lauishing out that in rietous company, which was gathered in couetous encrochinge. Others that they may thriue, coume all thinges lawfull: for they say God hath giuen the earth to the children of men, therefore they spend the sabbaothes in buying and selling, in bargayning & labouring: they get by right & wrong, forgery and deceit, play and worke, neither lands nor cattels come amisse to them, so they may haue them: But wee must alway remember, that wee neyther go to the right hand nor to the left, that is, if thou haue many children, thou must vse no vnlawfull meanes to keepe them: if thou haue none, thou must not hoarde vp thy wealth, as if thou haddest some, but remember the day of aduersitie, and deale somewhat for thy present neede, and not altogether for thy owne commodity. But you will say, shew vs some briefe rules, by which wee may practise the truth: by your fauourable audience I will giue you these three rules: the first is in getting, the second in keeping, and the third in departing from it.

Ecclef. 4. 7.

Eccles. 6. 2

Cōcerning the first, which is getting of wealth, first

Gen.30.33. our onely care must be for the blessing of God to encrease vs: we haue an excellent example in Iacob, hauing nothing in the world beside his wiues and children, yet would receiue no wages of Laban, but promised his seruice for the spotted lambes, choosing rather to depend vpon the blessing of God, then the policy of his owne wit, to testify his vprightnes in the presence of Laban, & to teach vs all, that thriuing cõmeth more by the fauor of the Lord, then the wise dõe of the world. for Labã thought he had made a good bargain for himselfe, which indeed proued to his great hindrãce, euen so whẽ mẽ thinke they haue compassed the
Deut.8.18. world to increase their profit, sodainly the Lord sendeth a crosse to disappoint their purpose ỳ they might know ỳ to be true which Moses saith, that it is the Lord which giueth power to get wealth: against this those offend which encrease their wealth, & liue vppõ vsury, for they depend not vpon the blessing of God, but bind their debters in bands, win or loose, they will haue both principal & increase. Againe others are so greedily bent vpon their profits, that their only desire is to wax rich, of whome Paul speaketh. They which
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we haue meat & clothing, we are therwithall contented. Againe if they be rich, the same Apostle sheweth how they shall beare their wealth in these wordes, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, neither trust in their vncertaine riches, but in the liuing God, which giueth vs all things to enioy aboundantly; that they distribute to other, that they be rich in good workes, that they be willing to giue, and easie to bee intreated, laying vp for themselues a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternall life. Out of the which words we must obserue these things. First, that riches must not make men proude, for they are the gift of God, but our rich men scorne and disdaine theire poore bretheren of Christ, commaunding and oppressing them both by word and deede, in most odious and shamefull manner. Secondly, they must not put any confidence in their wealth, but repose their trust in the liuing God, who gaue it to them, and to whome they shall giue an accompt for vsing and abusing it, for to put trust in their wealth, is to think they may doe with it what they please. Thirdly, they must distribute willingly, liberally and dayly, for as they are rich in substance, so they must be rich in good wrokes, that is, they must excell other in giuing, as they do in possession. Fourthly, that those men which doe thus bestow their wealth, haue laied the foundation of their saluation, and lay hold on eternall life. This is the way to keepe wealth after the word of God, and whoso euer doeth otherwise either in mariage or vnmariage, doth hoord vp but rust to tormẽt him, the canker to consume him, the care to molest him, and vengeance against the day of vengeãce eternally to condemne him.

1. Tim. 6. 17

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Luc. 19. 8.

Prou. 5. 15. 16. 17.



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it, but spend nothing in waste, for thou art but steward of thy goodes, now you know a steward must giue an accompt to his maister. Finally, that which thou reseruest, giue to thy childrē, as Abrahā & all the godly did to their posteritie: and whosoeuer followeth this counsel, shall be guiltlesse for mispending, clear from euill keeping, free frō wrong getting, & acquitted from the dreadful reckoning which all the world shall make one day to the Lord for abusing his benefites.

Now let vs giue thankes to God.

# the fifteenth Lecture.

Chap. 4. Verse. 12. 13. 14. 15.

12 *And that thy house bee like the house of Pharez, whome Thamar bare vnto Iudah, of the seede which the Lord shall giue thee of this young woman.*

13 *So Boaz tooke Ruth, and she was his wife, & when he went in vnto her, the Lord gaue that she conceiued, and bare a sonne.*

14 *And the women saide vnto Naomi, Blessed bee the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, and his name shall bee ceremoned in Israell.*

15 *And this shall bring thy life again, & cherish thine old age, for thy daughter in law which loueth thee hath borne him, which is better to thee than seuen sonnes.*

I haue shewed you the last sabaoth, that this 12. verse is a part of the prayer vsed of the elders & people at the mariage of Boaz & Ruth, for in the first part they praied for the fruitefulnes of the woman but in this they commend vnto God the blessing for their posterity, and because wee then deuided it, wee will first

first of all handle it, and then proceed to that which
followeth.

First therefore out of this second part in their praier, wee gather another duetie of the godly in praying for children, which is, to desire in some measure, the blessings of the world, either riches or honour vpon them: which in this place, these Iewes do vnfainedly pray for the house or posteritie of Boaz, when they say, and that thy house may be like the house of Pharez, who had the birth-right of Iudah, whose posteritie was the noblest of all the familie, from whome also descended this Boaz, as appeareth by the end of this Chapter, which flourishing estate, as it had continued in the progenie of Pharez for sixe generations, so they wish it might follow in his posteritie for many more, neither is this speciall in this place, but also dispersed through all the scripture, for wee know what promise the Lord made vnto Abraham, that vnto his seede hee would giue all the lande of Canaan, as a comfort vnto him, to thinke that his posteritie should be so well prouided for, whereby they might not onely bee continued, but richly aduaunced as the Lords of the earth. The like was it that hee promised to Dauid, that hee should alway haue a sonne to sitte on his seate, not simplie a sonne, but a sonne to sitte on his seate, as if the Lord had sayd, thou shalt alway haue the kingdome in the possession of thy posteritie, and they shall raigne as Kings for euermore. So on the contrarie, it is a curse when the name of houses are putte out, their memorie forgotten, their wealth dispersed, their honour abased, and their children like vagabonds vpon the earth, It was also a speciall promise to the people of the Iewes, that if they obserued the statutes of the Lord, then should they and their seede be able to lend to other, but they should not neede to borrow of any.

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Gen. 12. 4.

2 Sa. 7. 12.

Psa. 109. 8. 9. 10

Deu. 28. 12

These things considered by the example of those promises of the Lord, & the persons of these fathers, we haue an excellent way described for the maintenance

tenance of our possession, in the name of our posteritie: which is this, to commend it by praiers to the tuition of the eternall God, for that which hee hath promised, may we pray for, the same way, that maketh barren women to become fruitfull, the increase of the earth to multiply, the heauens to giue their raine, Countreyes to be deliuered from sword, famine, and pestilence, and pulleth downe all the blessings of God vpon vs, is also the appoynted meanes for the continuance of worldly families. But how long, how long shall I perswade the world before they beleeue it? doe they not spend their dayes in worldly deuises, to cõpasse the earth by multitudes of purchasings, which are alwaies trauailing abroad in restlesse iourneyes, by many bargaines to augment their substance, vsing all lawfull and vnlawfull means for to increase their wealth, and inlarge their possessions, that their posteritie might be honourable when they are dead, their children aduaunced by money, not by vertue, maintained by pride, not by humility, raigne like kings in all manner of pleasure vppon the earth, while the fathers are tormented in hell for their wrongful oppressions: thus men pray on the world, as the eagles on the altars, and the birds on Abrahams sacrifice, but not to the Lord, as the yong rauens that call vppon him, who being left of their owne parents, are fedde by the Lord, that his kindnes might bee manifested to our children, as well as to birds, & that their welfare dependeth vpõ the blessing of God, not the benefite of elders, the fauour of our maker, not the couetousnes of our fathers. Against these it is that the Prophet cryeth and curseth, because they ioyne house to house, land to land, field to field, inheritance to inheritance, that themselues might raign alone vpon the earth, this is the care of them, which are so fainly from the dust to the chayre of wealth aduaunced, from seruitie to honour, from beggery to riches, that they might (as the Prophet saith) build fayre houses, encroach greater compasse of landes, that their names might be famous vpon the earth. But who is here, that

Esa. 5. 8.

Psal. 49. 12.

makes

maketh any ordinary and dayly praier vnto the Lord, that his substance might be by his blessing increased, with his fauour preserued, and to his glory bestowed. Nay, nay if none had no more wealth then that which they had gotten by praier, their glorious shews would in little space grow as bare as the trees in the winter, when they haue neither fruit, nor leaues to couer them. This I speak not to the discredit of any wealthy persons, but shew them the way to attaine the ende of their desire, the continuance of their posterity in godlines and wealth, which is by prayer. For as Christ prayed for Peter, that his faith should not faile him, so parents must pray for their posterite, that their names may not decay in them. If any thinke when their barnes are inlarged, their corne gathered, they filled, health enjoyed, wealth increased, and rest obtained, that either soules or children shall haue the greater rest, like that foole in the Gospel, their markes are much amisse, for wealth and issue are lost both in an howre, looke vppon the example of Iob, the death of his children, & decay of his wealth. Again, none must be hereby emboldned, to present their prayers before the face of the Almightie, for the maintenance of their children in worldly vanitie, to make that the onely end of all their desire, which is, to be more carefull for the shoe then the foote, for the rayment, then the body, and for the body, then the soule: but this must be their direction, as the Lord commanded the Iewes, if they kept his statutes, then should their oxen be strong to labour, their sheepe bring forth thousands and ten thousands in their streets, their daughters like the polished corners of the temple, and their sonnes as their fruitfull garners, which neuer are empty. For vngodly Haman was hanged, though he were the Prince of Princes, but godly Mordecay was aduanced, which was as poore as the basest. Sheb na was deprived of his office, because he was wicked, when godly Eliakim was promoted to his place, euen so it is not honour, but the feare of God that bringeth and sustaineth honour, that you must pray for

Luc.22.32.

Luc.12.16

17.18

Deu.28.12

Psal.144.12

13.14

Est.7.10.

Esa.22.20.

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part sheweth, how Boaz taking Ruth, and vsing her as his wife, had the blessing of God, in conceiuing and bearing him a sonne: the other part of the women, in their reioysing with Naomi for this fruitfulnesse of Ruth, it comprehendeth two parts, the first, their thanksgiuing to God, ver. 14. in these word, Blessed be God, secondly, the matter of their thanksgiuing, in the words following, first, for Boaz his sake, in that God had left him to bee Naomies kinsman, secondly, because this child of Ruthes her louing daughter in law, should renew her yeares, and cherish her old age: of these partes let vs brifely speake in order.

*So Boaz took*: After the solemnitie of this mariage, in the presence of the people, and their praiers ended, which they powred foorth in the behalfe of both those parties, and their posterine, Boaz proceedeth to the end of this action, and taketh Ruth to his house to be his wife, as a duery of a kind and a godly husband. For all this while we must imagine that Ruth was absent from the place of this communication, & according to the counsaile of her mother, sate waiting at home, for some prosperous newes, and praying no doubt, for a ioyfull successe of this desired marriage, but of this wee gather.

Chap. 3. 18.

1 First, the dutie of all godly husbands, which is to take their wiues and dwell with them, as this Boaz doth Ruth, for it is no doubt, but that hee presently went to the house of her mother, & thence tooke her, bringing her to his owne house, that there they might liue and loue together. This phrase of scripture wee may finde vsed in many places, as in the history of Izaak, how they tooke Ribkah his wife, & brought her into the tent of Sarai his mother, and was comforted after his mothers death, where the holy Ghost doth not onely declare the kindnesse of Izaak, but also the commoditie of dwelling with a wife, for the presence of Ribkah caused her husband to forget the death of his mother, as if he had said, the presence of a wife is greater then the comfort of a mother. For this cause Peter exhorteth that husbands should dwell with their

Gen. 24. 67

Rebecca.

Rebecca.

1. Pet. 3. 7

wiues, like men of vnderstanding, giuing honour to their wiues as to weaker vessels, because they are the heyres of the same grace, and that their prayers be not hindred, as if he had said, they must dwell together, & they must pray together, for as Christ is alway present with his Church, so husbands must keepe the cõpanies of their wiues. This point being euident both by reason & religion, it condemneth the wandring abroad of many idle husbands, some which are neuer satisfied with riches, by markets and merchandise trauailing in ye world, depriue their wiues of their due beneuolece, others for their pleasure walke from countrey to countrey, spending their dayes in pleasant disport among carnall & suspitious companions, leaue wife and family, to the sea of this world, like children in a shippe, without guide or marriner; many are present, but to the discomodiie and discomfort of their poore wiues and children, oh how doe any of these persons take their wiues with godly mindes either to dwell or pray together. How can the vine prosper when the roote is vncouered, and how can women bee comforted, when their couer is taken from them, I meane their husbands, as Abimelech the king Gerar told vnto Sara, is not the body deade without a head, yea if it be but a minute of an houre, doe not then our wandring youthes murder the body of their own family, being absent about vnnecessarie busines, sometime for the space of many moneths? Is not the body maimed if it want but the least member, yea, but a finger, how is then those housholds wounded, where the chiefest parts either husbands or wiues be wanting or wandring a broad, and finally what is this but to diuorce themselues for a season without any lawfull cause, to put a sunder them whome the Lord hath ioyned together, to break the fellowship of holy wedlock, to despise the society of godly mariage to lay open themselues to the temptations of the diuels, and to thrust both bodies and soules into daunger of damnation? This I speak not, as if all absence fro either party (which consent for a time about

to whom I aunswere, they doe well if they vnderstand it, but where doe they find those wishes to grow rich, those curses vpon them with whome they are angrie, whether it be man or beast, and tell me the vnderstanding of ope petition in the Lords prayer. Therefore beloued, pray in spirit, but pray in vnderstanding also. Vse the scripture for the rule of your supplicatio, for as no man can say that Iesus is the Lord, but onely by the spirit of God, so none ca pray rightly, but by the knowledge of the Gospel. If you once entertain this knowledge of God his word, then you will doe with it as a cunning workman in his trade: he will euer take delight in his work & occupation, eue so if you had this feeling, you would delight in prayer, which now is a hell vnto many, then your hearts both priuately would be as studious in meditating goodnes, as euer they were desirous of worldly pleasure, and would publikely breathe after it, as the Hart in his chase doth after the well-springs. But oh dearely beloued, this condemneth the world of hatred of God, of the pride of themselues, of ignorance in the truth, of coldnes in religion, of trusting in the world, mispending of time, louing of pleasure, and lacke of deuotion, that they are as hardly drawne to prayer, according to the common Prouerb, as a hare taken with a tabret. Think you that these persons, which absent themselues from publike petitions and priuate prayers, haue any loue of God in them: nay, are not those condemned which are drawne to them against their will, and where shall these cursed companions appeare, which forsake sermons, go out of Churches, lie idlely at home, & are disporting themselues in braverie abroad, when the time of prayer calleth for their presence at home or in the Church, do they not seperate themselues from the faithful in this life, and therefore they shall be miserably damned with the Diuell and his angels, and euerlastingly excluded from Christ and his Saints.

Fourthly, by this praier of these elders we obserue, that we must especially pray for the multiplying and augmeting of the faithful, for they pray that Ruth may

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be like, not to the daughters of Lot, of whome came the curs'd Moabites and Ammonites: nor yet to Rebecca, of whom came the vngodly Edomites: nor yet to Keturah, from whō came the godlesse Madianites and Arabians, but to Rahel and Leah, which builded the house of Israel, that is, which increased the Lords people, which multiplyed the heyres of the promised land, and augmented the number of the faithful. This our Sauiour commanded to be done, next to the glorifying of God: first we say, hallowed bee thy name, and then, thy kingdome come, which is, first that the spirit might raign in our harts, & then that mo saints may be added to the Church: For we must pray for the friends, & not for the enemies of Christ. For this cause Paul compareth matrimage to the conunction between Christ and his Church: for as the one ingendreth many saints, so the other must beget many faithfull members: and truly as one pearle is worth tenne thousand pebles, so one good child is better to the parents, then many thousand of euil. The vse of this doctrine is, that we should not bee like the Iewes, desirous of many children, because our families should grow great, but like the doues, which bring forth few, which might be the children of innocencie: the Elephant being the greatest, and yet the meckest beast, conceaueth but once in all her time, whereas the lesser and more hurtfull creatures, increase many, yet it is better for the first to haue but one, which are good and huttles, then for the latter to haue many, which are euill and harmfull: euen so beloued, it is good to increase doues and not serpents, Elephants, and not Tigers, and better is one Isaacke the sonne of promise, then a thousand Ismaels, the children of bondage: We know the most precious hearbes bring the least fruits, and that is not the best, which doth most of all multiplie, so the godly like good trees, must rather desire one or two children like themselues, & to bring forth & grow in, sparingly, by little & little, then sodainely to swell vp like the waues of the sea. Were it de that Ismael had Gen. 25. 12.
twelue sonnes, all Princes, but Isaacke his brother had 22.
onely Esaue, Iacob & Esau, & then hee obtained by



Ephe. 5. 24. 25.

prayer, so hardly the godly are borne and conceiued, when with the wicked they come as thick as the hailstones in Egypt, for the confusion of the fruit of the land. Therefore as the seede is cast in vaine vppon the land, which the foules doe presently deuoure, so those children had beene better they had neuer been borne, whom darknes blindeth, ignorance possesseth, malice ruleth, vngodlines leadeth, & Sathan tormenteth: for the fewest number are the godliest posterity, in whom light shineth, knowledge dwelleth, meeknes raigneth, godlines guideth, & Christ eternally blesseth. Fifthly, by the praier of these people we note, the secōd blessing of a godly marriage, which is to gather by lawful means much wealth: for ẏ which in the english is *doe worthily in Ephrathah*, in the Hebrew is, *gather wealth in Ephrathah*: For it is more general in the english, thē in the original, for to gather wealth by honest meanes, is to do worthily, because it is the blessing of God: Therefore we wil take the surest & the safest interpretation, by the which this collectiō is confirmed, and their meaning is, that Boaz which in his mariage respected not riches, shuld by his godly choise enioy a vertuous wife to bring vp faithful children, & increase his substance by the blessing of God, that hee might aduaunce the honor of their country and Citie. Neither is this vnknowne that after children, the growing in wealth is the next blessing of the lord, as Abrahams seruant telleth Laban, the Lord hath blessed my ma-
Gen. 24. 35. ster exceedingly, and made him very great, for he hath giuen him flocks and heards, siluer, and gold, seruants and maidens, Cammels & Asses, all this did the Lord blesse Abraham with after his marriage with Sara: A-
Iob. 1. 3. gain the holy Ghost describing Iob, after his children, which were seuen sons & 3. daughters, hee reckoneth his wealth, & saith: His possession was seuen thousand cattell, 3. thousand camels, fiue hundred yoke of oxen, and fiue hundred she asses, with a great houshold. For wealth in marriage, is the best seruant ẏ can be entertained. I might speak of many moe but few persuasions will suffice in this point, because wealth was wont

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to be the maide, and godliness the mistresse: but now riches is become the mistresse, and religion the maid. For wealth, men rise early and go late to bed, labour diligently, and fare hardly, trauaile earnestly, & sweate painfully, and I can finde no fault but with too much following this wealthy trade: For first of all, I must complaine with Salomon, that there is but one and not a second, who hath neither brother nor sonne, yet there is no end of his labour, neither is his eye satisfied with riches, for this olde canker infecteth euery age, whereby it is a pleasure to certain couetous wretches, to toile their bodies with vntimely labours, to clogge their mindes with golden cares, & to weary their seruants in numbering their wealth: & what is the end here of? surely this the gatherer is like an asse which carrieth the treasure but cannot vse it, being laid on his backe it must bee taken agayne: the heyres like the drones spend all, but gather none for as they sweat not for it as it was in getting, so they spare not as long as it lasteth, lauishing out that in rietous company, which was gathered in couetous encrochinge. Others that they may thriue, count all thinges lawfull: for they say God hath giuen the earth to the children of men, therefore they spend the sabbaothes in buying and selling, in bargayning & labouring: they get by right & wrong, forgery and deceit, play and worke, neither lands nor cattels come amisse to them, so they may haue them: But wee must alway remember, that wee neyther go to the right hand nor to the left, that is, if thou haue many children, thou must vse no vnlawfull meanes to keepe them: if thou haue none, thou must not hoarde vp thy wealth, as if thou haddest some, but remember the day of aduersitie, and deale somewhat for thy present needé, and not altogether for thy owne commodity. But you will say, shew vs some briefe rules, by which wee may practise the truth: by your fauourable audience I will giue you these three rules: the first is in getting, the second in keeping, and the third in departing from it.

Ecclef. 4. 7.

Eccles. 6. 2

Concerning the first, which is getting of wealth, first

Gen.30.33. our onely care must be for the blessing of God to encrease vs: we haue an excellent example in Iacob, hauing nothing in the world beside his wiues and children, yet would receiue no wages of Laban, but promised his seruice for the spotted lambes, choosing rather to depend vpon the blessing of God, then the policy of his owne wit, to testify his vprightnes in the presence of Laban, & to teach vs all, that thriuing cõmeth more by the fauor of the Lord, then the wise dõe of the world. for Labã thought he had made a good bargain for himselfe, which indeed proued to his great hinderãce, euen so whẽ mẽ thinke they haue compassed the

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10 many foolish and damnable lustes, which drown men in euerlasting destruction: for the loue of money is the roote of all euill, which while some desired, they erred frõ the faith, & pearced themselues with many sorrowes. This striketh to the earth false measures, naughtie wares, breaking of promises, detaining of heirs, rayzing of rents, oppressing the poore, deceitful bargains, & vnlawfull trades: for none of these depend vpon the Lord, but giue their soules to the deuill, for encreasing their wealth. Secondly, you must know how to vse your wealth according to the word of God: which is thus, according to the counsel of the Apostle, if ỹ haue

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1. Tim. 6. 17

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19.

Lastly in departing from his wealth, first, if hee haue wronged any man, he must follow the example of Zacheus, restore foure fould, and he shall be blamelesse for that, spend liberally vpon his family in good sort, after the counsell of Salomon, for this pinching of seruants and families sauoureth not of God, nor of religion, nor of humanitie, the bruite beasts condemn

3.

Luc. 19. 8.

Prou. 5. 15. 16. 17.



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tenance of our possession, in the name of our posteritie: which is this, to commend it by praier to the tuition of the eternall God, for that which he hath promised, may we pray for, the same way, that maketh barren women to become fruitfull, the increase of the earth to multiply, the heauens to giue their raine, Countreyes to be deliuered from sword, famine, and pestilence, and pulleth downe all the blessings of God vpon vs, is also the appoynted meanes for the continuance of worldly families. But how long, how long shall I perswade the world before they beleeue it? doe they not spend their dayes in worldly deuises, to cõpasse the earth by multitudes of purchasings, which are alwaies trauailing abroad in restlesse iourneyes, by many bargaines to augment their substance, vsing all lawfull and vnlawfull means for to increase their wealth, and inlarge their possessions, that their posteritie might be honourable when they are dead, their children aduaunced by money, not by vertue, maintained by pride, not by humility, raigne like kings in all manner of pleasure vppon the earth, while the fathers are tormented in hell for their wrongful oppressions: thus men pray on the world, as the eagles on the altars, and the birds on Abrahams sacrifice, but not to the Lord, as the yong rauens that call vppon him, who being left of their owne parents, are feade by the Lord, that his kindnes might bee manifested to our children, as well as to birds, & that their welfare dependeth vpõ the blessing of God, not the benefite of elders, the fauour of our maker, not the couetousnes of our fathers. Against these it is that the
Esa. 5. 8. Prophet cryeth and curseth, because they ioyne house to house, land to land, field to field, inheritance to inheritance, that themselues might raign alone vpon the earth, this is the care of them, which are so dainty from the dust to the chayre of wealth aduaunced, from seuerie to honour, from beggery to riches, that they
Psal. 49. 12. might (as the Prophet saith) build fayre houses, encroach greater compasse of lands, that their names might be famous vpon the earth. But who is here (O

maker)

maketh any ordinary and dayly praier vnto the Lord, that his substante might be by his blessing increased, with his fauour preserued, and to his glory bestowed. Nay, nay if none had no more wealth then that which they had gotten by praier, their glorious shews would in little space grow as bare as the trees in the winter, when they haue neither fruit nor leaues to couer them. This I speak not to the discredit of any wealthy persons, but shew them the way to attaine the ende of their desire, the continuance of their posterity in godlines and wealth, which is by prayer. For as Christ prayed for Peter, that his faith should not faile him, so parents must pray for their posteritie, that their names may not decay in them. If any thinke when their barnes are inlarged, their corne gathered, they filled, health enioyed, wealth increased, and rest obtained, that either soules or children shall haue the greater rest, like that foole in the Gospel, their markes are much amisse, for wealth and issue are lost both in an howre, looke vppon the example of Iob, the death of his children, & decay of his wealth. Again, none must be hereby emboldned, to present their prayers before the face of the Almightie, for the maintenance of their children in worldly vanitie, to make that the onely end of all their desire, which is, to be more carefull for the shoe then the foote, for the rayment, then the body, and for the body, then the soule: but this must be their direction, as the Lord commaunded the Iewes, if they kept his statutes, then should their oxen be strong to labour, their sheepe bring foorth thousands and ten thousands in their streets, their daughters like the polished corners of the temple, and their sonnes as their fruitfull garners, which neuer are emptie. For vngodly Haman was hanged, though hee were the Prince of Princes, but godly Mordecay was aduanced, which was as poore as the basest. Shebna was deprived of his office, because he was wicked, when godly Eliakim was promoted to his place, euen so it is not honour, but the feare of God that bringeth and sustaineth honour, that you must pray for

Luc. 22. 32.

Luc. 12. 16 17. 18

Deu. 28. 11

Psal. 144. 12 13. 14

Est. 7. 10.

Esa. 22. 20.

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for your children, Kings for vngodlines were depriued of their seates and thrones of maiestie, whereunto they were borne, much more will the Lord execute his iudgements of pouertie and slauerie vpon those that would be aduaunced, and yet are wicked, for Salomō sayth, that the prosperitie of fooles slay them, and the crowne doth not indure from generation to generation, yet the feare of the Lord abideth for euer.

2. Secondly, by this verse we may note, when they expressly make mention of Thamar the mother of Pharez, and wish the posteritie of Boaz to be like his, the great blessing of God vpon that incestuous birth, for

Gen. 38. 18. 29. we know the history, how ȳ Thamar was ȳ daughter in law of Iudah, the wife & widdow of his eldest son, dissembling her selfe to be a whore, by her apparrell & place, had the company of her father in law, by whom shee was conceiued of two sonnes, the elder was this Pharez, & the yonger Zerach, yet wee see how ȳ Lord doth magnifie this Pharez with a glorious and godly posteritie. By the which he teacheth vs these two profitable lessons, that the sins of the faithfull are forgiuen, though they be neuer so great. Wee see this Iudah an excellēt man, yet ouercome in this action, had not any such plague inflicted on him as Ruben his eldest or other, or Simeon and Leui, but he which couered and omitted the sin of Abraham with Hagar, of Iacob with Bilhah & Zilpah, of this Iudah with Thamar, Lot with his owne daughters, & such like, wil also forgiue al the defaults of the godly vnto the end of the world. By the which wee gather exceeding gō sort when we come to this persuasion, that there is no condemnation to the that are in Iesus Christ, that the gates of hell shall not preuaile against the mercies of ȳ Lord, that the victory of our faith shall conquere the world, when Noah shal be cleansed frō his drunkennes, Moses and Aaron frō their doubting, Miriam from her murmuring, Dauid from his murther, Peter from his denialL of Christ, & all because the Lord wil couer the sins of his Saints, be they neuer so great, when he punisheth the faults of many thousand wicked persons with eternall damnation,

tion, although they haue not sinned with the like trasgression Secodly, by this we learn, that the Lord doth not punish the childre for the parets faults, if they cõmit not the like: themselues, for this Pharez begotte in incest, was blessed by the Lord, not only with tẹporall glory in himselfe & his issue, but also with this, that he was made one of ỳ fathers of Christ. And this teacheth vs, that this vpbraiding of men, for their birth, be they, base born or free born, is no frut of the word of God but the malice of the diuel, which first deceiued the parents, and now would discredit the child. Let it not therefore beloued, bee any speech in our mouthes, to shoot at the who the Lord hath wounded by nature, any thought of our harts to enuie their welfare, were their parentage neuer so base, but pray for the, that though they proceede not of a sanctified birth, yet they may grow vp to a sanctified & holy life, to make a godly & a blessed end. And finally, let vs be encouraged vnto religion by the fator of God, which dealeth thus mercifully with his Saints, neuer suffering any thing to be laid to the charge of his chosen, stopping the mouth of the diuel himself, that he neuer rise in iudgemẽt against the faithful, or bring any little sin of theirs into the remembrance of God, but washing them all in the lauer of regeneration, the blued of his sonne, & wil giue the white robes cleansed from filthines, that they may bee chaste virgins for the Lords seruice, and sẹde at his own table for euermore: this consideration made Dauid to cry out, & say, oh when shal I come & appeare before the presence of God? It made Simeon to say, now Lord let thy seruat depart in peace, it caused Paul to vtter these words, I desire to be dissolued, and to be with Christ, for blessed are the people that are in such a case, yea, blessed are the people whose god is the Lord. Thus much for this verse. Now let vs go to the verse following.

In these three verses following, the holy Ghost declareth the blessing of God vpon his mariage of Boaz and Ruth. These words contain in them two parts, the first part is of Boaz, ver. 13. the second is of the women that were present at the trauaile of Ruth. The first part

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part sheweth, how Boaz taking Ruth, and vsing her as his wife, had the blessing of God, in conceiuing and bearing him a sonne: the other part of the women, is their reioysing with Naomi for this fruitfulnesse of Ruth, it comprehendeth two parts, the first, their thanksgiuing to God, ver. 14. in these word, Blessed be God, secondly, the matter of their thanksgiuing, in the words following, first, for Boaz his sake, in that God had left him to bee Naomies kinsman, secondly, because this child of Ruthes her louing daughter in law, should renew her yeares, and cherish her old age: of these partes let vs briefly speake in order.

So Boaz took: After the solemnitie of this marriage, in the presence of the people, and their praiers ended, which they powred foorth in the behalfe of both these parties, and their posteritie, Boaz proceedeth to the end of this action, and taketh Ruth to his house to be his wife, as a duety of a kind and a godly husband. For all this while we must imagine that Ruth was absent from the place of this communication, & according to the counsaile of her mother, sate waiting at home, for some prosperous newes, and praying no doubt, for a ioyfull successe of this desired marriage, but of this wee gather.

Chap. 3. 18.

1 First, the dutie of all godly husbands, which is to take their wiues and dwell with them, as this Boaz doth Ruth, for it is no doubt, but that hee presently went to the house of her mother, & thence tooke her, bringing her to his owne house, that there they might liue and loue together. This phrase of scripture wee may finde vsed in many places, as in the history of Izaak, how they tooke Ribkah his wife, & brought her into the tent of Sarai his mother, and was comforted after his mothers death, where the holy Ghost doth not onely declare the kindnesse of Izaak, but also the commoditie of dwelling with a wife, for the presence of Ribkah caused her husband to forget the death of his mother, as if he had said, the presence of a wife is greater then the comfort of a mother. For this cause Peter exhorteth that husbands should dwell with their wiues,

Gen. 24. 67 Rebecca.

Rebecca.

1. Pet. 3. 7

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wiues, like men of vnderstanding, giuing honour to their wiues as to weaker vessels, because they are the heyres of the same grace, and that their prayers be not hindred, as if he had said, they must dwell together, & they must pray together, for as Christ is alway present with his Church, so husbands must keepe the cõpanies of their wiues. This point being euident both by reason & religion, it condemneth the wandring abroad of many idle husbands, some which are neuer satisfied with riches, by markets and merchandise trauailing in ye world, depriue their wiues of their due beneuolece, others for their pleasure walke from countrey to countrey, spending their dayes in pleasant disport among carnall & suspitious companions, leaue wife and family, to the sea of this world, like children in a shippe, without guide or marriner; many are present, but to the discomodi:ie and discomfort of their poore wiues and children, oh how doe any of these persons take their wiues with godly mindes either to dwell or pray together. How can the vine prosper when the roote is vncouered, and how can women bee comforted, when their couer is taken from them, I meane their husbands, as Abimelech the king Gerar told vnto Sara, is not the body deade without a head, yea if it be but a minute of an houre, doe not then our wandring youthes murder the body of their own family, being absent about vnnecessarie busines, sometime for the space of many moneths? Is not the body maimed if it want but the least member, yea, but a finger, how is then those housholds wounded, where the chiefest parts either husbands or wiues be wanting or wandring a broad, and finally what is this but to diuorce themselues for a season without any lawfull cause, to put a sunder them whome the Lord hath ioyned together, to break the fellowship of holy wedlock, to despise the society of godly marriage to lay open themselues to the temptations of the diuels, and to thrust both bodies and soules into danger of damnation? This I speak not, as if all absence fro either party (which consent for a time about

necessary businesse) were vtterly vnlawfull for so Iacob, Moyses, Aaron, Dauid & the Apostles, should bee faulty; but I speake against this willfull departing of one from the other, without either consent of man or wife, conscience of the law of God, or regard to their owne personnes, for the company of these twaine is greater then parents or childre, for which the Apostle
1.Cor.7.13 saith, that if one bee a beleeuing person, and the other an infidel, yet they must not depart if they be willing
Verse. 5. to dwell with them, and he giueth no liberte for breaking their company, except it be to pray the more feruently, and wisheth also that if they doe so, yet it must bee but for a season, that sathan tempt them not, so great regard must be had of the fellowship in marriage, that the zeale of prayer, the worshippe of God, the loue of our owne parents, the increase of wealth, and the pleasures of the worlde, must not seperate, without the voyce of both parties, and yet the time must be but short for the auoyding the temptation of sathan, and the daunger of their owne damnation.

Secondly by this we may gather who is the author and sender of children, which is the Lorde: for this
1.Cor.3.6. scripture saith that *the Lord gaue her to conceiue*, for as Paul saith of the corne that is cast vpon the earth, that it increaseth neither by the plater nor yet the waterer, but by the Lord so must we say by the seed of mankinde, that it lieth neither in the husbande nor in the wife, but in the blessing of God: for which cause,
Ge. 30.1.2 when Rahel saide to her husband Iacob, giue me children or else I die; he aunsweared in anger am I in
Psal. 137.3 Gods steede, that kept thee frō the fruite of thy wōb? as if hee had said, it is God that sendeth issue, and not man: therefore Dauid saith, that children are the possession of the Lord, and the fruite of the womb is his reward. By the which we are taught many excellēt & worthy lessons: first, that seeing they come frō the author of euery good gift, we haue ready way where to aske them, when we want them, for as when we want wisedome, the Apostle saith, we must aske wisedome



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at the hand of God, so when we want childrē, we must aske children at the hand of God. When Ribkah was barren, by her husbands praier she was made fruitful, so barrē women by their husbands prayers haue been made the mothers of many children. Annah obtained by her prayer at the temple, not only Samuel, but also three other sonnes & two daughters. Oh let vs not bee vexed then for many children, but let euerie one aske confidently by the will of God, and they shall receiue (if it so please him,) plentifully to their owne desire. Secondly, seeing children come of the Lord, wee are taught to vse them as the blessings of God, & as the child by nature should first know his mother that bare him, so we by instruction shuld first teach our childrē the feare of God that gaue them, it is farre better for many childrē that they had neuer been borne, except their parents had more knowledge to till their minds with the immortall seede of God his holy word, then to look vpon the Sun, as the condemned person which commeth out of prison, and so goeth to execution, in like maner children, without the knowledge of the feare of God, do come frō the womb of their mothers, which is their prison, to the fire of hell, which is the place of execution. Oh my beloued, looke vpon your tender children, and so often as you see them, you behold the blessings of God vpon you, make much of their soules by praying for their saluation. you haue brought them into the world, leaue them not to the deuill. Thirdly, seeing children are the gift of God, these which haue children haue greater account to make, then those which haue none, for of him to whō much is giuē, shall much be required, & they to whom the Lord hath giuen children and seruants, lands and cattels, shall annswere for euery one of these to the Lord: therfore parents must finish their reckoning, which they must giue to the Lord, and let not one farthing of their debt be omitted, for he will plague them as wel for not doing their duties to their own children, as graceless childrē for contemning of God. And this one cōsideratiō shuld mitigate the desire of posterity, because if they abuse thē, their own dānation shall be

Gen. 25. 21. Rebecca.

1. Sā. 2. 21.



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the greater, if they bee vnruly, they bring nothing but sorrow to their parents: if they be godly, the world will hate them, and if they be wicked the diuell will haue them. Were it not a pittiful sight to see the father burned, for murthering his sonne, how much more grieuous is it to see both father and sonne, mother and daughter, husband and wife, master and seruant, mistresse and maides, pastors and people, to goe all to damnation together, because the former did not guide the later; oh would God that the desire to escape this iudgement, would sinke into the hearts of all, that wee might euery one addict our liues to holines, our minds to knowledge, our bodies to obedience, our hearts to vnderstanding, our childre to instruction, our seruants to religion; and all our soules to saluation.

Thirdly, by this we gather, that it is a greater blessing to be the mother of a sonne, then the parents of a daughter, if it so please God to send them: for in this place the holy Ghost saith, that *the Lord gaue her, and she conceiued and brought forth a sonne*, as if he had sayd, the Lord gaue her her owne desire, and the best issue, which was a manchild: for this cause our Sauiour sayth, that a woman forgetteth her paines in trauaile, so soone as a manchild is borne into the world. Therefore is it that the Lord promised Abraham a sonne, that he gaue Zacharie and Elizabeth a sonne, and finally, therfore the Lord calleth vs all his sonnes, as a father reioyceth more for a son, so the Lord reioyceth in the saluation of the faithfull. By this wee are taught to magnifie the name of the Almightie, for euerie one his benefits in their degree, and if we want any, by praier to craue it at the hands of God, alwaies remembring that we leaue the end of our desires to be agreeable to his will. And here we see the praier of the people in the former verse to be in part fulfilled, whe the Lord did so soone blesse this good old man, by giuing him a sonne: for it is no doubt but the holy Ghost doth so presently after their prayer adde their conception and his birth, that hee might stirre vs vp with greater zeale, to desire the praiers of the faithful.

John 16.20
Gen. 18.10.
Luk. 1.13.

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which are alwaies aualeable in the presence of the Lord. Come therfore my brethren, and let vs fulfil the desire of the Lord, and account more of the petitions of the godly, then all the possessions of the wealthy: by prayer the earth is made fruitfull, and the heauens drop down aboundance: by praier famine is remoued; war appeased, and the wrath of God pacified, and the health of the body recouered, by prayer wisedome is increased, faith confirmed, remission of sins obtained; the barren woman made a fruitfull mother of many children, the dayes of life lengthened, peace of countries and conscience prolonged, and the kingdome of heauen eternally inherited. Therefore those which cannot pray, abhorre the presence of God, are weary of our assemblies, forsake sermons & congregations, depart from the fellowship of the faithfull, and haue their sinnes sealed vp, their liues accursed, and their soules euerlastingly condemned.

*And the women.* Now wee must proceede to the second part of this scripture, wherein is declared what issue and effect this wrought in other, for so sonne as the child was borne, it did not only bring comfort to the parents, but also ioy and gladnes to the godly citizens of Bethlehem: among whom these women are reported by the holy ghost (which no doubt, were present at the deliuery of Ruth) to magnifie the name of God, for this so great a benefit bestowed vpon the old womã: although her childrẽ were dead, yet her name might be recouered by her loving daughter in law. By this we first of all obserue the dutie of all the faithfull, which is to reioyce with them that reioyce, and to weepe with them that weep. for as these godly Iewish women reioyce with Naomi for the fruitfulnesse of Ruth, so must you euery one be like affected for the blessings that are powred vpon our brethren. The like vnto this, may we read of the neighbours and kindred of Elizabeth, hearing of the wonderfull mercy of God vnto her, they reioyced with her. This teacheth vs the same dutie, that the ioy of our brethren should be our reioysing, and their sorrow our lamentation, for there

1 Rom. 12. 12 15.

Luc. 1. 58.

is no fellowship, but there must bee a feeling of the same ioyes or miseries, not onely in publike affaires, which respect their whole common-wealth, but also in priuate busines, the benefit of euery particular person. The head is sore when the stomacke is sicke, the hand is grieued when the foot is maimed, and euery part of the body being in prosperitie, reioyceth together. For this cause Paul biddeth vs to endure all things with the same minde, meaning that euery mans minde
Rom.12.16 should bee like his brothers, either in sorrow or reioysing. But is this the fellowship that raigneth among vs in these dayes? or rather are wee not merriest when our neighbours are tormented, and doth it not grieue vs to see others prosper beside vs: yes surely, for there is no more heartie and vnfained friendship among men in our dayes, then is betweene the hauke and the birde, when either of them is taken, the other reioyceth. This is the cause that men are no more accounted after wealth faileth, friendship withdraweth when they stand most in neede, and least pitie is in the greatest extremitie. Euery tree is green in the spring, euery bird will sing in summer, and euery false-hearted Christian, will fawne vpon their brethren in prosperitie, but bee ashamed of their want in aduersitie: yea, there neuer wanteth priuie repiners and grudgers, at the wealth and welfare of euery one: for some say, it is too much if their neighbours corne increase, others say; it is too little, when they are vexed and troubled by losse of their goods, and this maketh many medlers in other mens matters, many backbiters for other mens welfare, many enuie that any should haue their shares as good as themselues, like him in the Gospell, whose eye was euill because the Lords hand was good, and as all the waues of the sea doe beate vppon the shore, so all the braines in the world doe breathe against the prosperous.

2 Secondly, the manner of their reioycing must bee considered, which the holy Ghost hath set downe in these words, *Blessed bee the Lord*: wherein they testi-



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fy perfect ioy both to the Lord by praising him and giuing thankes; and also to Naomi, vnto whome nothing could be more acceptable, then to heare the name of God to be blessed for her sake. To blesse in the scripture whensoeuer it is referred to God, signifieth to prayse or giue thankes: as when Zacharie saith, Blessed bee the Lorde God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people; that is, praysed bee the Lord God of Israel. Likewise the Apostle Paul saith, Blessed bee God the father of our Lorde Iesus Christ, the father of mercies, and the God of all consolation, that is, praysed bee God. And in another place he saith, If thou blesse with the spirite, how shall hee that occupieth the roome of the vnlearned say Amen to thy thanksgiuing, that is, if thou giue thankes with the spirite. In this place it is of the first sence, as if these women had saide, Wee prayse thee O God, that thy hast looked on the misery of Naomi, and hast referred her a kinsman, by whome the name of the dead might be raysed vpon the inheritance, & his owne honour continued in Gods people. By the which wee are taught what manner of ioy the faithfull are to haue for their bretheren, namely such as may redounde to the prayse of God, according to the saying of the Apostle, that hee which reioyceth, must reioyce in the Lorde: for as bodily exercise profiteth little, so carnall ioy profiteth lesse, such as is the framing of vaine songes giuing ouer our labours, and to reioyce in pastimes, and such as is vsed in ringing of belles, and the like sort, beeing onely for man and not for God. Therefore heere wee haue an excellent manner of reioycing, when God is glorified by our mirth. Thus wee read Moyses & Aaron with their sister Miriam did, after they came out of Egipt. Thus did Deborah and Barach after the victorie against Sifera. Thus did the women after the victorie of Saule and Dauid, when they came from the slaughter of the Philistimes. Thus did Zachary when his tongue was restored vnto him. Thus did the children of Ierusalem crie when Christ

Luc. 1. 68.

2. Cor. 1. 3.

1 Cor. 14. 16

1. Cor. 3. 11

Exod. 15.

Iud. 5.

1 Sam. 18. 4

Luc. 1. 68.



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Luc.1 9.38. came riding vpon the asse. Thus doe the faithful re-
Reuc.1 9.1 ioyce after the destruction of Rome Antichrist, sin-
2. ging, Praised be God, saluation and honour and glory
5. & power to our Lord God. And the Lord cried out of heauen vnto vs. Praise the Lord all ye his seruants, and whosoeuer feare him both small & great. Therefore beloued, seeing it becometh the iust to be thankfull, let vs praise the Lord both euening and morning; & let vs not see a sparrow light on the ground, without some praise to God, by whose prouidence all things are grounded, by whose will all things are ordered, for whose glory are all things appointed: that we should euermore giue thankes to him that sitteth on the highest heauens, and ruleth the mightiest princes; appointing the measure for the sea, and calling the whole world to iudgement, in whose presence is light and life for euermore.

Thirdly, the matter of their thankesgiuing, must be considered, for they praise God; because he had kept a kinsman aliue for Naomi, whose name should be continued in the people of God; so that in plaine wordes they commend the kindnes of God, because he had so prouided for this godly Naomi, as she might be comforted by his meanes, and his name continued by her daughter, and all three eased by this one child. By the which we are taught these two profitable lessons: first, that we must magnifie God for the life of our friends, so doe these Iewes for the life of Boaz, by whome the Lord brought such great comfort to both these destitute and desolate widdowes, for as we are sory for their deathes, when it is too late, so must we be thankfull for their life, when yet they are with vs: the son for the life of his father, and the father for the sonne, the wife for her husband, and the husband for his wife, the seruant for his maister, the subiectes for their prince, the people for their teachers, and the daughters for their mothers. There are few of these but they bring much benefit vnto vs, & no small comfort doth arise by their presence, which we shall better perceiue when we want them, then now we enioy them, & for

these

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1. Tim. 2. 1

these the Apostle also willeth vs to pray, and vnie cause of these two miracles vpon Lazarus and Dorcas, was that their life might be prolonged with the Church of God, & more kindenes shewed to their godly friends: Secondly, by this all those that are able to bestow any kindenes vpon other, are taught their duties to their owne kindred, that especially they bee carefull for the reliefe of their pouerty, the maintenance of their dignity, the preseruation of their honestie, and the nourishing of their own flesh, for vnto that end hath the Lord encreased their substance, continued their name, prolonged their dayes and aduanced their seats that they may be more able to do for their poore brethere̅ which are commended to them by the Lord, committed by the world, and compelled by nature, which are bone of their bone, & flesh of ther flesh, that they might be maintained as your own selues: when Dauid was made king he aduaũced his sisters sonnes and his kinsemen: when Saul was king he aduanced Abner & other his friends; and we know that many of Christes Apostles were his kinsemen: vnto the which end Paul exhorteth, that poore widdowes be prouided for by their friends, that the church be not charged with the. This condemneth the forgetfulnes of many in our age, which being in wealth, will scant acknowledg their poore kindred, wherby they shew the̅selues like vnnatural beasts, as if the Lord were not able to bring them down to the footstool in the place of the other that they might crie & not be heard.

Iob. 11. Act. 9.

1. Tim. 5. 8.

*And this shall*) In this verse is the second part of their ioy, in so muh as now Ruth hath brought forth a son it is better to Naomi then seuen sonnes, for seuen is taken for many, & not for any difinit number, as when Dauid saith, that he praiseth God seuen times a day ỳ is many times euery day. Also they protest in this vers that it reioyceth the̅ to see Naomi so comforted with the birth of this childe, as that now her life is restored, wheras before it was dying like an old stubble, which had no greene twigges vpon it, but now this one being shoot foorth, she reuiueth and gathereth comfort in

psal. 1. 3. 164.

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in her old yeares.

By this wee see the duety of parents, which is to reioyce when their children encrease, and they see their childrens children: these Iewish women no doubt but spake by the experience of their owne dayes, that a woman, lying at the point of death, being recouered, is ioyfull & thankfull for the same: euen so old persons haue new liues in their childrens children: for which cause they ought to be thankfull to the Lorde: for the comfort of their children, who may likewise reioyce when they see their parentes delight in their offspring. Thus no doubt but Abraham did whē he saw Esau & Iacob his sonne Isaackes children, being borne about fifteene yeares before his death: this did Iacob whē he saw Manasseh and Ephraim his sonne Iosephes children, kissing and imbracing them, and saying, I had not thought to see thy face any more, but the Lorde hath let me see thy seede & posterity, as if he had said, I thanke God for seeing thee, but I reioyce that I see thy children also. And truely, this I am sure will godly aged parēts do, who haue these for their examples, of faith and conuersation that they might with more thankfulnes praise the Lord who setteth thē see their childrens children, and with greater cōfort reioyce in them, that were borne of their owne bodies, but with greatest ioy and most willing mindes commend their withered age, and all worne yeares to the handes of the Lord: who hath multiplied their seede in this life, and will glorifie themselues in the life to come: Now let vs giue praise to God.

Gen. 48. 10. 11.

The end of the sixteenth Lecture.

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# The sixteenth Lecture.

Chap. 4. ver. 16. 17.

16 *And Naomi tooke the child and laid it in her lap, & became nurse vnto it.*
17 *And the women her neighbors gaue it a name, saying, there is a child borne to Naomi, and called the name therof Obed: the same was the father of Ishai the father of Dauid.*

IN the former words we heard the last Sabboath, the prayer and thanksgiuing of the people, or the women of Bethlehem, for the birth of this son of Boaz, and the comfort of Naomi: but now in these words the holy ghost proceedeth to the education and circumcision of the child in these two verses: wherein the holy Ghost deliuereth vnto vs these thinges: first, that Naomi tooke the care of the education of this child, verse 16. Secondly, the naming of the child by the neighbours, the women of Bethlehem, which they gaue vnto it by occasion of their owne words, when they sayd in the fifteenth verse, that hee should cherish her, namely Naomi; and therfore they call him Hobed, which signifieth seruing, thereby signifying, that hee should serue for the comfort of Naomi; of these parts let vs briefely speake in order, as the spirit of God shall giue vtterance and the the time permit.

*And Naomi tooke the child.* After the mercy of God in the blessing of Ruth with a sonne, who was the only heyre vnto the house of Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, which brought no final ioy to the old womã, to see her name, & the name of her family reuieued in the birth of this sonne, when it was vtterly decayed in the sight of the world, for shee was old and a stranger in Moab & had no hope of any moe children, neither

was

was it likely that her daughters in law (their husbands being dead) would returne from their countrey and kindred vnto a strange people, with whom they had small acquaintance, euen none at all, Naomi their mother in law accepted, so that the hope of their posterity being buried in Moab, & life of her family must needs decay in Bethlehem. Therfore her return to her own countrey was a fauour of God vnto her, & rayſing vp the minde of Ruth to be partaker of her iourney, and companion in her trauaile, was an especial comfort to her wearied age, but prouiding so honourable a marriage for her, & making her so fruitful a wife in short time, was the life of Naomies death, the renewing of her family, the restoring of her hope, & the resurrection of her dead sonnes, for the continuance of their names, in the gate of their places: and therfore she like a ioyfull and thankfull grandmother for discharge of her conscience, loue of the infant, & ease of his daughter, becommeth a fellow nurse for the better education of the child, out of the which we note.

First, that as we haue heard how the miseries of Naomi were cast vpō her together, so now the mercies of God are multiplied in the same in greater measure: For then her woe was begun by the death of her husband, continued through her long dwelling with the wicked Moabites, & repined through the death of her two sonnes: So now it falleth againe as the darknes departeth at the dawning of the day, and giueth place to the light of the Sunne, so her miseries are repealed, first with the loving and constant fellowship of her daughter in law Ruth, who was as a carefull husband to her in labouring for her liuing, and a blessed child to increase her posteritie: Againe, she now was in quiet dwelling among the people of God, enioying the companie of the faithfull, and the fellowship of her friends: moreouer, her posterity is restored in the fruitfulnes of Ruth, and she, euen shee her selfe liueth to see the day whē all this falleth vpon her, to the endles cōfort of her withered age, & present praise of the name of God. Thus we see it is a righteous thing with God,

first

first to wound, and then to heale, first to strike, & then to stroke, first to cast downe, and then to lift vppe: for this is certainely the cup of all the faithfull, that they must taste of many bitter afflictions, before they come to the possession of eternall blessednes, yea of worldly misery, they must sustaine some crosse, before they can be thankful enough for that which they quietly inioy. So we reade of Iob, how in one day he had his corne burnt, his cattell stolne, and his children slaine; this was bitter vnto him for many dayes, yet in the end hee was restored two for one, and saw more sonnes and more beautifull daughters, yea, his childrens children, to his vnspeakeable comfort. The like may be said of innocent Ioseph, he was rebuked by his father, hated & sold by his brethren, imprisoned by his master, forgotten by Pharahoes butler, all these were no smal discouragements to so yong a man, yet in the end hee was aduaunced to the highest step of honour, as a recompence for al the tribulatiõs he had endured. I may also adde this of Dauid, being persecuted by Saul, betraid by the inhabitants of Keilah, driuen to the Philistines his sworne enemies, to craue a dwelling of them, seeing many martered for his sake, in the end had the possession of the kingdom of Iudah, & after of Israel, which was the gift of the Lord, the reward of his afflictions, and his religion By the which we may see the hope of the godly: not that which they feele, but that which they may lawfully look for, the ease of their paines, the remedy of their griefe, the comfort of their troubles, & the end of their misery to be speedy redresse, if with patience they look & wait for the pleasure of the Lord: Therfore the godly say with Dauid, if tenne thousand compasse them round about, they will not be afraide, for the Lord is the eye witnesse of al their miseries: the hot furnace of Babilon feareth the not: the Lions den cannot driue them to dishonour God, if flames of fire consume their bodies to ashes, the darts of Sathan pierce their soules to the quicke, the reproches of the world destroy their names, and the enemies of God spoyle their substance, yet they are not left destitute, for

Iob. 1. 14. 15. 16. 17. & 42. 12. 13

Gen. 37. 10. 11.

their

their faith ouercommeth the world, their patience, all their afflictions, and their loue of God, their desire of earthly prosperitie. All which caused the Apostle to say, that hope was the anchor of the soule, meaning that as the anchor stayeth the shippe in the middest of all the waues, though they be neuer so great & huge; in like maner the hope of the godly keepeth them in the barke of Christs Church, among the thousandes of worldly tribulations: For Dauid saith, great are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lord deliuereth them out of all, as if he had sayd, the righteous & godly are afflicted to this end, that the Lord might shew his power in their deliuerance: And in another place hee complaining of his sufferings, and the sorrow of his soule: yet concludeth with this figuratiue speech: Why art thou so sadde O my soule? and why art thou cast downe within mee? trust still in the Lord, for by him I haue deliuerance against all my paines and griefe. Euen so do I say to all my poore brethren in the world, why are you so sad? if you want maintenance, the earth is the Lords: If friendship, the hearts of Kings are in his handes, as the riuers of waters: if libertie, hee can breake asunder the iron gates, and deliuer the prisoners from their tormentours: if health, in his presence there is ioy and life for euermore: if children, hee maketh the barren woman to bring foorth many children: if apparrell, hee clothed the Lillies aboue the royalty of Salomon: if meate, hee can multiplie the least morselles into the greatest measures: and finally, if defence, hee giueth his royall Aungels charge ouer the poorest of the godly, that the violence of Princes, and the force of the Diuell himselfe, shall neuer goe beyond the decree & purpose of the Lord? Therefore if gripes of griefe, and torments of sorrow doe lodge with vs all the night, yet ioy shall come in the morning, when the poore shall bee restored, the sicke recouered, the sorrowfull comforted, the faithfull rewarded, and the wicked eternally plagued.

Heb. 6. 19.

Psal. 13. 1. & 43. 7.

Secondly,

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Secondly, by this verse we also gather a worthy example of a godly grandmother, which for the case of her daughter, the loue of the infant, and the thankfulnes she owed to God, shee became a fellow nurse vnto this yong sonne of Boaz: for although the words of the scripture be these, that *shee became nurse vnto the child*? yet the meaning is not, that shee tooke it from the mother, but that her tender care ouer it was such, that during the weakenesse of Ruth, and absence of his mother, shee layde it in her lappe, and was as carefull for it, as any nurse that was hyred to that dutie; for Naomi could not bee a nurse in these old dayes of hers, without husband or milke: which wee know is the chiefest nourishment for yong children, and therfore a nurse in this place, is taken for one that had a great care to procure the welfare and ease of the child.

By the which wee note another duetie of aged parents, which liue to see their childrens children, namely that they bee as nurses vnto them, to bee as carefull for them as their owne, for therefore the Lord suffereth them to see the increase of their seede, that they might couer and nourish it in their owne presence. For this cause wee may reade, that the sonnes of Manasses, and his sonnes sonnes were brought vp on the knees of Ioseph, their great grandfather, for this laying in the lappe or on the knee, signifieth a most tender care ouer the infants, that they be alwayes not onely in the presence, but also in the handes of their grand-parents, as Rahell when shee gaue her maide Bilha vnto Iacob, and sayd that shee might bring foorth vppon her knees, that is, shee would bee as carefull in the nourishment of them, as if they were her owne. Then by this they are taught their duties, vpon whom the Lord hath vouchsafed to bestow this blessing, that they may see their childrens children, namely, that it is required at their hãds, that they prouide for their educatiõ, good instructõ, & bringing vp, for they may say as Labã said to his daughters childrẽ, that

Gen. 50. 23

Gen. 30. 3.

that they are their owne, and therefore the care of the bringing vp dependeth vpon them: we see the little twigs at the top to be nourished as well by the roote, as the bowes that grow out of the body of the tree, euen so grand-parents prouide as well for the maintenauce of their children's issue, as for their owne: so that in all kindnesse they must be intreated, in al wisedome be instructed, with all carefulnes be corrected, and with all religion be gouerned, for alas, if the twig faile, there can be no fruit, & if your seed be corrupt, there wil come but a hard harueſt, so if your childrens children be not ouerseene by you that are parents and rulers of both, your name will decay, your familie die, and your posteritie be vtterly forgotten.

Thirdly, in this place we may profitable enquire about the nursing of children, seeing Naomi is said to be the nurse of this child of Ruth: Whether it be lawfull at all to put out children to nurse from their own mother, or whether the care of parents be not to bring vp their childrē in their infancy, in their own persons or presence, or els cōmit the tuition of thē to other. Vnto the first question I answere, that euery woman being in health of body and mind, is bound by the word of God to nurse her owne children, & the reasons for the confirmatiō hereof are these, first because the Lord in the creation of their bodies, hath giuen to euery woman breasts, which are the meanes whereby children sucke their nourishment: and therfore eyther the Lord treated their breasts in vaine, or else they sinne, if they set them not to worke: if any say, that the Lord did giue § breasts not for any necessity that they are bound to doe, but that they might bee furnished with the meanes, if they had the pleasure to do it, to whō I answere by the like example, the Lord hath giuen to euery one hands to worke, eyes to see, eares to heare, and tongs to speake, is it in the choise of men, to cut off their hands, to pull out their eyes, to stop vp their eares, & to keep their tongues in silence al their life, & neuer vse them, as many women doe to their naturall breasts? I thinke not, for if they should, they must deface

deface the workmanship of God; dismember their owne bodies, and murther the parts of mankinde: Therefore as the Lord hath giuen to euery one hands, euery one must worke, or els he is accursed, vnlesse they wil be idols: of whõe Dauid speaketh, they haue hands & handle not, eies & see not, eares & heare not, feete and walke not, noses and smell not, and such are women that haue plentifull breastes, & yet giue no sucke. Gen. 27. 7. Exod. 2. 8. 9

Secondly, the example of all the godly confirme it, as we see in Sarah, which nursed hir sonne Isaacke in the mother of Moyses; which was carefull that her childe should be nursed by no other then herself: in Manoahs wife the mother of Sampson: so did Batshebah the mother of king Salamon, being a queene in Israel the wife of king Dauid; yet she thought it her duety to take hir owne child & nurse it: I wil speake nothing of Hannah, of Elizabeth the wife of Zacharie & mother of Iohn Baptist, of the virgin Mary which gaue sucke to the Lord of glory, Iesus Christ her Sauiour & of the mother of Dauid, all which are as patternes of natural affectiõ, for all the godly women in the world to imitate, and what blessing was powred vpon their children, who knoweth not. Therefore either womẽ must follow their godly examples, or shew some charter of their liberty aboue these, or proclaime open disobedience to God, & the godly, because they swarue from his holy word, and their most pure and worthy examples: but it is better to obey God then men, & to be ruled by the troublesome liues of the faithfull, then by the peaceable, and pleasant deuises of all the gentlewomen in the world whatsoeuer. Iud. 13. 4. 24 Cant. 8. 1. 1. Sam. 1. 23 Luc. 1. 80. Luc. 2. 7. Psal. 22 9.

Thirdly, it is a signe of the want of loue and naturall affection in the parentes (as the Apostle speaketh) when the mothers doe not bestow the labour to giue their owne children the naturall milke: for if they had the same naturall feeling of their dueties to their children, they could not (hauing no occasion) commit the nourishing of their children to straungers, who can neuer be so inwardly kind to the infantes, as the mothers are or either ought to be: therefore al- Rom. 1. 30.

though they pretend a kind of sorrowe for their children absence or departing from them, yet it is like the lamentation of Esau, which wept when hee could not get the blessing, whereas he sold it before, & was the onely cause of his owne reprobation: so women weepe at the departure of their children: whereas it lieth in their owne power to keepe them in their owne possession, and more thankefull would the child bee in his heart to his mother, if she had bestowed the labor to nurse him.

Fourthly, it is not so naturall for the childe to bee nursed where hee was not borne, for the same bodie whereof he had his being, is most fit for his feeding, as we see a plant doth best prosper when it is grafted where it sprunge vpp first of all, then being remoued into another grounde, so the bodies of children doe growe more freely, and like more cheerefully with their owne mothers milke, then withall the world beside, and the auncientest Phisitians say, that it were also better for the mothers if they gaue themselues to this labour, therefore they doe but hinder their owne infantes borne of their owne bodies, and as it were keepe them from their naturall welfare, when they giue them to bee made another nature, which is by their nursing and feeding: These causes and more also being duely and carefully considered, you shall finde it a greater sinne, to giue your children to other to bee nursed, then heretofore you conceiued of it, so that you must for this one thing, condemne the vse of your breastes, (which were the creation of God, and the practise of the auncient godly women, which were euery way as noble as any aliue) forsake the tender loue that a mother ought to beare to her innocent babe, bring your childrens bodies to a seconde, yea a contrary disposition and complexion, and stoppe vp the plentifull conduites of streaming milke in your breastes, to the loose and hinderaunce of your owne health: Therefore if any haue any power to performe this naturall duety to their childrens let them practise it: for all the carnall reasons of the worlde must not

preuaile

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preuaile against the least collectiō of the word of God. But some will say, admit that any through negligence doe put their children to be nursed of other, doth the fault onely rest in the parents, & nothing in the nurse? to whome I answere, if it bee vnlawfull for the parents to giue, it is also vnlawfull for the nurse to take: so that whatsoeuer is said against the one, may also be brought against the other. But in causes of weakenes in the woman, danger to the child, or sicknes in eyther of both, it is not onely a dutie of necessitie, but of conscience, to nourish and cherish the children of other.

Therefore although the mother had the nursing of their children, yet there were others also like peri-nurses, which had some especiall care in the keeping of the childrē, as we may read of the nurse of Rebecca, which was the true vse of nurses for the ease of their mother, to take the custody of the children in all things, saue onely in giuing them sucke, and therefore is it, that we may reade in ancient histories, that one childe had many nurses, that is, many to attend the welfare and nourishment of the infant: of this sort was Naomi at this present, who tooke vpon her some care of this sonne of Boaz, that they both might be more diligent for the education therof. Now for the other question, whether it bee lawfull for the parents during all the time of the infancy therof, if the mother be not able to giue it sucke, to commit their children to other to be brought vp: I answere, that euery man and woman are bound to see their childrens first instruction, that is, if it be possible, to haue them in their keeping at their first entrance into knowledge, and when they are first of all capable of any goodnesse. So wee reade Isaack remained with his father Abraham in the time of infancie, when God commaunded Ismael to bee cast out: so Iacob kept little Beiamin with him: neyther would he depart frō him vnto any, til Simeon was bound in Egipt: so we read of the king Ioash, whō his aunt Iehoshebah hid frō ye rage of Athaliah, who was

Gen. 24. 59.

Gen. 21. 17. 13. & 24. 4.

2. King. 11. 23.



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brought vp in the house of her husband Iehoiadah, where hee was most worthily instructed in the feare of the Lord: so we read our sauiour Christ kept, till hee was twelue yeares old, with his mother, and supposed father, and after he had beene at Ierusalem, he was obedient to them till the yeare of his preaching, which was when he came to the age of thirtie yeeres. Therefore the conclusion of all this is, that neither the nursing nor instructiō of our childrē, must be deferred to other, at the least so as wee seeme not but to be many waies as carefull for them, as if they were in our presence, to be euermore mindfull for the wealth of their bodies, and health of their soules.

Fourthly, and lastly, by these words wee may gather, how great & excellent is this work, the bringing vp of children, for which the Lord hath expressed in his word that it is required that many should bee applied, for in this place we see Naomi and Ruth bestow their labours fot the education of this new born babe: & we haue heard that Rebecca had a nurse that came with her from her fathers house to the land where Abraham dwelt, which signifieth vnto vs, that neither their infancie can be vnfedde, nor their youth vnruled, for this is not so base a worke as many thinke it, that one is inough, if not too much, to take ỳ care of their children, for wee know we are easily drawne to many inconueniences, neither can the parents be present to foresee al, but if any be helpers in this busines, their care is much eased, their children lesse endaungered, their welfare better prouided, and the parents dutie better discharged. Euery flock hath a keeper beside the owner, euery gardē hath a dresser, beside the mayster: and if it be possible, let euery child haue an ouerseer beside the parents, for alas the sillie infant is soone cast into the fire, falleth into the water, ouerturned with ỳ wind, and euery beast is ready to worke his destruction: all which may bee wisely preuented, though not with the presence, yet with the counsell & care of the parents, by prouiding such careful persons to be their guides, as may also defend them whē they


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are absent.

*And the women her neighbours.* In this verse is the second part, which concerneth the naming of the child, where the holy Ghost doth declare vnto vs the persõs that named the child to be the woman of Bethlehem, the neighbours of Naomi, which no doubt was then giuen to the child, at the eight day which was the circumcision, according as wee see in the history of Iohn Baptist, after the law of the Lord, calling him by the name of Obed, which signifieth seruing or a seruant, shewing how he should serue for the comfort of Naomi, Boaz, and his mother.

By this we first of all note and obserue, that it is the duty of the faithful to be helpers one to another in the seruice of God, and admonitions of their duetie: for here the child being circumcised, was accompanied with many godly women, whose seruise they vsed, and followed in the naming of the child. Indeed we may oftẽ read that the parents gaue names to their childrẽ, somtimes the fathers, somtimes the mothers, & somtimes the Lord himselfe, as in many persones we may perceiue, but wee neuer reade that the people were so kind to help in this matter, & to further the dutie of any godly minded, (onely this place excepted) so that these womẽ are a most godly example for al the faithfull to behold, how they must further and helpe one another in the cause of religion: for the naming of children in old time was very excellent, when they were carefull by their earthly and outward titles, to admonish them of their inward and heauenly duties. And that which these did in this one, must we do also in all other duties, to draw more & more to the loue of religion: as we read the Apostles did one another, whẽ they came to the first knowledge of the Messiah: for as a little leuen seasoneth a whole lumpe; euen so a few godly persons may draw a great many to religion. Therefore this one dutie of allother, belongeth to the flocke of Christ, that they help one another in the works of Christianitie. When the rulers of the Temple his daughter was sicke, for the little child he

went to our sauior, by which means he recouereth her life, this was the dutie of a godly father when the sick man of the palsie could not come to Christ, foure of his neighbours brought him to his presence, and the Lord forgaue him: this was charitie, and the dutie of neighbours: When Dorcas was dead, the women sent for Peter, who being come, shee was restored to life. And thus parents must helpe forward their children, neighbors, their fellowes, and euery man one another: if they want knowledge, let vs teach them knowledge out of the pure word of God: if they cannot pray, let vs pray with them, and for them, to the almighty God, if they trauaile to heare the word, let vs trauaile with them to encourage their carefulnes: but of this matter we haue ofte spoke. Now let vs giue praise to God.

The end of the sixteenth Lecture.

# The seuenteenth Lecture.

Chap. 4. ver. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22.

18 *These are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Chetzron.*
19 *Chetzron begat Ram: Ram begat Hamminadab.*
20 *Hamminadab begat Naschon, Naschon begat Salmā*
21 *Salman begat Boaz: Boaz begat Hobed.*
22 *Hobed begat Ishai: Ishai begat Dauid.*

NOw by the merciful kindnes of the Lord we are come to and last part of this history, and the conclusion of this Chapter, where the holy Ghost describeth vnto vs, the kindred of Boaz, euen all the generations, from Pharez to King Dauid: shewing vnto vs the increase of these Iews fro their dwelling to the land of Canaan,

before

before they went into Egipt vntill the time that Dauid was annointed and appointed king in Israel: we may for the easier handling of these words, deuide them into these two parts: The first is, those persons that were the progenitours, auncestors or fathers of Boaz, in the ver. 18. vs. & 20. which are set down to be Pharez the first, Chezron the second, Ram the third, Aminadab the fourth, Naschon the fift, and Salman the sixt, who was the immediate & naturall father of Boaz. The second part is the progeny, offspring and children of Boaz, which succeeded him: first Hobed: secondly, Ishai, and thirdly Dauid the king. Of these parts and persons, let vs briefly speake, so much as serueth for the exposition of the scripture, and the satisfying of the time, through the assistance and help of the spirit of God.

*These are the generations.* Now the holy Ghost had declared vnto vs this history of Ruth, though briefly & in a few words, yet in ample & large circumstances, for the vnderstanding of his minde: at the end hereof he annexeth the kindred of the persons, whose it chiefly concerneth; that he might shew vnto vs, that they were nomeane or base persons for whome this history was compiled, but such as descended of the noblest family in all the world, who were the appointed fathers of many kinges, and that which is most of all, the persons, of whose seede our saiuiour Iesus Christ tooke the beginning and substance of his humane nature. And therefore in this place we must declare the causes that moued the holy Ghost to bee so carefull in the rehearsing of the genealogies of the fathers: for we must not imagine, that he mustereth not the names of those auncient persons, to worke any wonder in our mindes at the recitall of them, or that the scripture could haue beene perfect without the seuerall generatiõs therein described: but we must know that there were diuers necessary & weightie causes by the iudgement of the auncientest and most approued writers, which moued the spirit of God to interseere these genealogies.



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First therefore according to the conditio of all mankind, there is equally described, the generations both of the godly and vngodly in the scriptures, for this cause to shewe the multiplication of mankinde: of this sort are the generations of Adam, Seth & Cain reported by Moyses, that hearing the number of mankinde so quickly multiplied, wee might the more earnestly giue praysse vnto God: Againe the genealogies of the sonnes of Noah are described vnto vs: to shew the replenishing of the earth, the destruction of countries, and the restoring of the world: But to come neerer vnto the matter wee must take this for a generall rule that the genealogies of the wicked are reported in the scripture, for to shewe the blessing and loue of God vpon the godly and righteous men: as for example, the Lord reckoneth vp the posterity of Ismael, the sonne of the bonde woman, shewing vs how great a people hee became, and how many Dukes or princes proceeded out of his loines: to shewe vnto vs the promise and couenaunt which hee made to his father Abraham, that hee should bee a great people, was fulfilled, and this serued to magnify and exalt the name of godly Abraham. We reade that the Lord bestoweth a great genealogie vpon wicked Esau or Edom, numbring or reckoning vp his sonnes, and his sonnes sonnes, his kingdome and the kinges of his seede that raigned after him, for no other end but to report and manifest the blessing vpon godly Isaacke and Rebecca his parentes, according to the oracle that hee gaue to his mother, when shee demaunded and enquired the cause of the strugling & striuing in her wombe. The like may be said of godlesse Cham for Noah his fathers sake, of the sonnes of Iacob for Israels sake, of Ephraim and Manasses for Iosephes sake. By the which wee gather and note this excellent doctrine, that if the wicked haue any good, it is for the sake of their godly and righteous parentes or friendes: Wee see they should not haue so much as a name in the booke of God, were it not for the cause of the righteous and godly:

Gen. 5.

Gen. 10.

Gen. 25. 13 16.

Gen. 21. 13.

Gen. 36.

Gen. 25. 28.

wee

we reade that when the Sodomites were ouercome in warre, their people lead captiues, and their goods spoiled by the company of Cedorlahomer, then for Lots sake, the Lord stirred vp Abraham, and armed him with men and courage, who wonne the victorie, recouered the spoile, brought backe the prisoners, restored their goods, and gaue them all liberty, for godly Lots sake, who was shortly after despised by them, but they for their wickednes were burned in brimstone, when righteous Lot was deliuered from thē. If Ioseph had not beene, they had had no corne in Egipt, If Moyses had not beene, the Lord had often destroied the Israelites while they wandered and wauered in the wildernes. For Iacobs sake the Lord increased the flocks of Labā, For Iosephs sake he blessed the affaires of Potiphar; For Paules sake hee saued all them that suffered shipwracke at Miletum. Euen so also hee blessed the house Obed-edomi, because the ark was kept therein & at this day giueth greatest peace to those countries, where his Gospel is promoted. Let the Atheistes think if there were none that feared God, they should quickely be condemned, let the drunkards knowe, if there were not some temperate persons, their bodies should bee quickly consumed, let the couetous wretches assure themselues, if there were not some liberall men, their owne goodes would turne to their death, let the profaners of Sabbaothes remēber, that if there were not some sanctifiers thereof, their delightful vanities would long a goe haue wrought their sorrowful destinies, let the contentious plaintifes bee certified, that if there were not some peaceable Christians among them, their wealth had long agoe beene wasted for the prayers of the faithfull are like the walled Cities against the rage of the enemies, to keepe the vengeāce of the Lord frō falling vpon vs: as the bloud of the Lamb spotted vppon the postes of the Israelites houses caused the Angell to passe by them, when all the first borne in Egipt were slaine, euen so the bloud of the Lamb of God, which is shed in the hearres of the Godly, maketh his messengers of death to departe

Gen. 14. 16

from

from our countrey and kingdome. If there were not a remnant among vs that are in league with the Lord that dayly are the hearers of his worde, the beseechers for his mercie, and as the ambassadoures of peace to disswade him from punishing our contempt of his word with condemnation, our abuse of his creatures into pining famine, our wantonesse and peace into lamentable warres, our riotous liues into forraine captiuitie, and our pampered bodies to the slaughter of the swerde. You, euen you, that blaspheme the name of God, if there were not a number that reproaue your abhominations, the heauens would raigne downe stones to reuenge your accursed toungues: you, euen you that spend the sabboaths in daunsing and playing, if there were not a company that restraine your pollutions, you had bene cut off from your pleasure with some fearefull death, before you had passed these many daies of security: you, euen you, that thinke the preaching of the Gospell like the voice of one that singeth, whereunto you owe no more obedience, then care seruices if there were not a remnant that heard the worde of power, which they beleeue is able to saue their soules, you had beene many yeares since, suffering the reward of such impious infidelity. What staieth the Lord from comming to iudgement, but the faithfull and elect company: what keepeth you in your possessions, reuenewes, and lands, but the poore Saintes of God, who are hardely admitted to the tables of your seruantes, who prayeth for the increase of your wealth, the prosperitie of your liues, the feeding of your bodies, and the continuance of your honour; but these despised persons who haue entred a conenant for your daylye welfare with the king of heauen and earth. They are the flocke for whose sake you haue the wooll to cloath you, and your milke to feede you; they are the bees for whose sake you enioy the hony for your delight, and the hony-combe for the pleasure of your meates: they are the birdes, which haue builded vp your pallaces and houses of rest for the defence of



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your weakeneſſe, they are the oxen that bring your corne to your barnes, and your ſtore into your garners, they are the beaſts, that beare you out of the dangers in ſafetie, and deliuer your liues from trouble. Finally, there is not an vſurer, but hee hath his money for their ſake, there is not a Gentleman, but hee hath his lands for their ſake: there is not a Prince but hee hath his Crowne for their ſake: there is not a rich man, but hee hath his wealth for their ſake, there is not a miniſter, but hee preacheth for their ſake, and there ſhould be no peace, proſperitie, or plentie, if it were not for them, for the Angelles are their ſeruants, the earth is their maintenance, and heauen is their inheritance. bee aſſured therefore beloued, if righteous Lot goe out of Sodome, or godly Noah into his Arke, then fire will fall from heauen, and the depths will open their fountaines of water to burne and deſtroy the world: euen ſo if the Lord take away the righteous from among vs, then, euen then preſently, ſhall follow the deſtruction of our countrey, the conſuming of our kingdome, the confuſion of the world, and the condemning of the reprobate, and therefore let vs make much of them, in whom we ſee any hope of religion, for they are the right heyres of the world, and you that haue their lands are but ouerſeers of their fathers teſtaments, and therfore ſhall giue an accoût of their poſſeſsions to them when they come to age, & be anſwerable for euery farthing which you ſpent not vpon them,

Secondly, another cauſe of their genealogies, or recitall of generations in the Scripture, is for the Chronologies or noting of ſeuerall times, wherein euery worthie thing was done, and how the world grew in yeeres, and the mercie of God in ſparing the wicked liues of ſo many godleſſe men, and chooſing but one family among all the world, with whom he would eſtabliſh his couenant: for this cauſe in the genealogie of Adam, we reade how long hee and euery one of his children liued, to ſhewe how long

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Gen.5. the Lord suffered the wicked before hee brought the floud, and in what age of the world the same ouerflowed, which by the genealogies there set down, appeareth to be in the yeere of the world one thousand, sixe hundred, fiftie and sixe, when Noah was sixe hundred yeeres old. Gen.11. Againe, wee reade in the genealogie of Sem, by the supputation of the yeares therein mentioned, how long after the flood, Abraham was called from his countrey, and receiued the couenant of promise, concerning the incarnation of Iesus Christ, and the saluation of the world. The same may be said of the often repetition of the age of Abraham, as at his calling, at the time of his circumcision, at the birth of Izaack, and at his death, which giueth a great light to euery part of the scripture, for thereby the occasions of many excellent histories are taken, the darkest places are opened, the faithfull are confirmed, and the Church of God instructed of her age, and her continuance, of her members, and her condition, which is subiect to many and often changes. Sometimes her glorie is greater, as in the first age, sometimes lesser, as in Abrahams time, sometimes afflicted, as the estate of Iacob in Egypt, and all his children testifieth: sometimes without any knowne and publike ministerie, or offices, as till Aarons dayes, sometimes without any ciuill or politique gouernment, as in the time of all the Patriarks, sometimes without peace in persecution, as in the time of the Iudges, wherein these persons heere named, liued, and sometime in most flourishing estate, as vnder Dauid, Salomon, Asa, Iosiah, and such like. By the which we gather, that it neuer standeth in one stay, but either increaseth or decreaseth, ebbeth or floweth, riseth or falleth, waxeth or wayneth: therefore herein lyeth the great comfort of the godly, euen in these troublesome dayes (but yet the best that euer are to bee looked for in this earth) wherein they see the auncient to depart, and new men in their roome, one generation commeth, and another goeth, iniquitie aduanced, coldnes in religion embraced, dissimulation and hipocrisie maintained, warres and

Gen.12.3.
Gen.17.14

persecu-

persecutiõ threatned to the Gospell: schismes defended, errors inuented, the world blinded, the truth declined, godlines defaced, and the Church of God disquieted, with a thousand greater calamities, this all the fathers suffered before vs, and this we their children must also abide, onely herein let vs reioyce, that we shal be accounted worthy to suffer for Christ, and that our names are written in the kingdome of heauen.

Thirdly and lastly, the especiall cause of this genealogie, & of all the fathers and children of Abraham in one kindred, was for to shew the naturall discent of Christ from Adam, and so forth vnto the Virgine Mary: for seeing he was to be incarnated, it behooued that his parentage should bee described from the beginning of the world: for this cause Luke the Euangelist, gathered togither the seuerall descriptions of all the genealogies pertaining to Christ, throughout all the whole scripture, as a necessarie ground of the Gospel, to declare the kindred of our Sauiour from the beginning of the world, wherof these persons mentioned in this place are apart, from whence hee tooke them into his nnmber. 3 Luc. 3. 23.

Now least any man should thinke, that the birth of Christ should be obscure, and the taking vppon him the flesh of mankind, should bee incertaine, as well to conuince all errors that arose about his humanitie, as to testifie the nobilitie of his birth, and worthinesse of his parentage, the persons of whom he descended, are in many bookes of the scripture seuerally named, and not without great commendation. For this family of Christ had many and speciall blessings, which were the armes of the same, by which it was distinguished from all other. In Adam it had this promise, that the seede of the woman should breake the serpents head, meaning, that Christ which should bee borne of a woman, should ouercome the force of the diuell. In Noah it had this promise, that the couenant of God should be established with him and his seede, meaning that his promise which hee had made Ge. 3. 15. Gen. 9. 9.

vnto

vnto Adam, should be performed in his posteritie, which was for the comming of Christ. This promise was renewed vnto Abraham, vnto Isaack, and vnto Iacob, and most plainely vnto Iudah, the third sonne
Ger. 29. 10 of Iacob, who was the father and grandfather of this Pharez, that the Tribe shall not depart from Iudah, nor the law-giuer from betweene his feete,
Psa. 132. 11 vntill Shiloh come, and the people shall be gathered vnto him: and againe vnto Dauid he swore, that the fruit of his body should sitte vpon his Throne, both which promises or prophesies, respect the comming
1 and the raigne of Christ. By this then wee first of all gather the scope of the whole scripture, namely, that aboue all other it respecteth Iesus Christ the Sonne of God, and Sauiour of the world, the Prince of peace, the mightie King, and the great Counsellour. For this cause he himselfe speaketh to the Iewes, Search
Ioh. 5. 39. the scriptures, for in them you thinke to haue eternall life, and they are they that testifie of mee. A-
Ioh. 20. 31. gaine, Iohn speaketh in the end of the Gospel, that the Scripture was written that we might beleeue in
Act. 18. 28. Christ. And we reade that Apollos did mightily confound the Iewes, prooving by the scriptures that
Luc. 24. 27. to 46. Iesus was Christ. But most euident and plaine is that of the Disciples going to Emaus, and Iesus ouertaking them by the way, it is sayde, that he began at Moyses and all the prophets, shewing them, that Christ ought so to suffer, and that redemption and remission of sinnes, might be preached in his name to all the world. By the which it is most easie to be gathered, and doth necessarilie follow, that the summe, drift, and scope of the scripture, dependeth vpon Christ. First, because all the godly that are named therein, were either his Fathers, according to the flesh, or else the singular types prefiguring his person, such was Melchizedecke, Ioseph, Moyses, and all the iudges. Samuel, and the Prophets, which although they were not of his naturall linage, (Melchisedeck excepted) yet they did most liuely represent him, Moyses and the Iudges

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in this that as they deliuered the people from earthly captiuity, so should he redeeme them from euerlasting calamitie. Samuell and the Prophets in this, that as they instructed the Iews in the law of the Lord, which was giuen to Moyses, so Christ should put his lawe in the inward parts of the Church, and teach them the Gospel of truth, their redemption wrought by himselfe, the law of righteousnes, the wordes of eternall life; Aaron and his fellowes in this, that as they sacrificed for the sinnes of the people with bullocks & beasts, and sprinkled the bloud with hysop for their outward cleansing, so Christ sacrificeth his owne body, and cleanseth from sinne, through the sprinkling of his owne bloud. Dauid and the Kings in this, that as they ruled the people by their temporall lawes, conquering their enemies, and giuing them rest and worldly honour, so Christ doth raigne with the spirituall law of his word, triumphing ouer hell, death, and sathan, leading captiuitie captiue, ascending vp on high, receiuing gifts for men, deliuering his Church from their aduersarie the Diuell, bestowing vppon them spirituall peace and libertie, giuing them the honours of his Ministerie, Word, and Sacraments, in this life present, and Crownes of glorie in the life to come. Thus if we looke vpon the iudges, they shew vs our redemption. If wee looke vppon the Kings, they shew vs our saluation. If wee looke vppon the Prophets, they shew vs our instruction. If we looke vpon the Priests, they shew vs our reconciliation, and if we look vppon the very names of the fathers of Christ, which are described in the old Testament, they teach vs that our names are also described in heauen, & this is the profite we reape by the generation or genealogie of the faithfull, to confirme vnto vs the true humanitie of our Sauiour.

So that herein most liuely appeareth the dignitie of the Scriptures, and the maiestie of Christ, one mutually looking on another, as the Sunne doth

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the starres, and the starres the sunne, for as the excellency of the sunne appeareth by the glory of the stars, to whō it giueth light, so the maiestie of Christ is manifest by the scriptures, to whom hee giueth credite: On the other side, as the glory of the starre is magnified; because it is the light of the sunne, so the credit of the scriptures is exalted, because they concern the Son of God. If the doings of earthly mē be but painted in some pamphlets, tragedies, or books of chronicles, we account them famous; because their actions are commended to print, what shall we then say of the Son of God, whose works excell the worthiest enterprises of all the world togither, and are recorded by the holy Ghost, the eternall God of truth, throughout al the sacred books of his eternall word, farre aboue the credit of worldly commendations, is not his maiesty incomparable? Do we buy the books of earthly mens deuises, to reade the fained and doubtfull aduentures of Princes long since in their graues, & shal we suffer this booke of the heauenly stratagems of our Sauiour lie asleepe in the shops? Compare their worthines togither, you shal find the difference as great, as is between the light of the sun, & a little rotten wood glistering in the darke. They ouercame some worldly Princes, but he ouercame the Prince of the whole world: they through a multitude of earthly souldiers, but he through himself alone, an infinit nūber of infernal powers: they inuented politicke lawes for their peaceable gouernment, but he giueth spiritualll precepts, and ruleth by them the harts of men himself: they had the heads of many noble persons vncouered at their presence, but he hath the tongues & knees of all them in heauen, in earth, & vnder the earth, bowing vnto him, yea, the angels do him reuerence, for he is their head: they prepared names of ships to cut the seas, but hee could command the waters to beare him vp whē he walked vpon thē: they had their glory in gold, siluer, precious stones and soft apparrel, but he being on earth, had his countenance like the brightnes of the sun, & his garments as white as the light: they could digge in the earth to

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John Wilkins

On the appearance
All you that fear the
Lord give your ane to my
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