

Father. What is thy judgment of those rich men, which either defraud the poor men of their almose, or keep back the wages from the labourers? *Son.* These also are thieves and murderers. Against the one sort of these ungodly rich men speaketh the wise man on this manner: "The bread of the needy is the life of the poor: he that defraudeth him of it is a manslayer." Against the other speaketh St James thus: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl on your wretchedness that shall come upon you. Your riches is corrupt: your garments are moth-eaten: your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness unto you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together, even wrath to yourselves in your last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers which have reaped down your fields (which hire is of you kept back by fraud) crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of hosts." Against them both crieth out the word of God on this manner: "Wo to thee that spoilest or robbest; for thou also shalt be spoiled and robbed!" "Wo unto him that heapeth up other men's goods! How long will he load himself with thick clay? O how suddenly will they stand up that shall bite, and awake that shall tear thee in pieces! yea, thou shalt be their prey. Seeing thou hast spoiled many people, therefore shall the remnant of the people spoil thee, because of men's blood, and for the wrong done in the land, in the city, and to all them that dwell therein. Wo unto him that covetously gathereth evil-gotten goods into his house, that he may set his nest on high, to escape from the power of misfortune! Thou hast devised the shame of thine own house; for thou hast slain too much people, and hast wilfully offended; so that the very stones of the wall shall cry out of it, and the timber that lieth betwixt the joints of the building shall answer. Wo unto him that buildeth the town with blood, and maintaineth the city with unrighteousness!"

Ungodly rich men.

Eclus. xxxiv. James v.

Isai. xxxiii.

Hab. ii.

These ungodly and unmerciful rich men in praying this prayer do none other thing than mock God and abuse his holy name, seeing both their affects and deeds are contrary to their words. Of such it may right well be verified, that our Saviour Christ hath in the gospel, borrowing it out of the prophet: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; howbeit their heart is far from me. In vain verily do they serve me." For they desire of God "our bread," that is to say, things necessary not only for themselves, but also for other; and they themselves, contrary to their prayer, go about with all diligence to deprive the poor of that which is their living, being indeed before God thieves, robbers, murderers, manslayers, and blood-soupers. Therefore whatsoever they pray in this behalf, it is nothing else than a mocking of God, and to themselves sin and everlasting damnation.

Isai. xxix. Matt. xv.

Father. Many, I grant, are so worldly-minded, that, seeking their own commodity, they little esteem the profit of other. God amend that is amiss! But, my dear son, tell me what is meant by this word "daily," which followeth in order. For thus pray we: "Give us this day our daily bread." *Son.* This word "daily" putteth us in remembrance of two things. The first is, which I partly touched afore in speaking of this word "this day," that we should not be led with too much carefulness for living in time to come, but be content with the present blessing of God, nothing doubting but that that liberal God, our heavenly Father, which feedeth us this day, is both able and also will feed us to-morrow and the next day and so forth so long as we live, as Christ himself witnesseth, saying: "Be not careful for your life, what ye shall eat or drink, nor yet for your body, what raiment ye shall put on. Is not the life more worth than meat, and the body more of value than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor carry into the barns; and yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking careful thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why care ye for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They labour not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Salomon in all his royalty was not arrayed like unto one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which, though it stand to-day, is to-morrow cast into the furnace, shall he not much more do the same for you, O

Daily.

Matt. vi.

ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? After all these things do the heathen seek. For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But rather seek ye first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof; and all these things shall be ministered unto you. Care not then for the morrow; for the morrow-day shall care for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the travail thereof."

1 Tim. vi. "Godliness," saith St Paul, "is great riches, if a man be content with that he hath. For we brought nothing into the world, neither may we carry any thing out. But when we have food and raiment, we must therewith be content. They that will be rich fall into temptation and snares of the devil, and into many foolish and noisome lusts, which drown men into perdition and destruction. For covetousness of money is the root of all evil; which while some lusted after, they erred from the faith, and tangled themselves with many sorrows. But thou, man of God, fly such things."

Gen. xxviii.
Prov. xxx.
1 Kings xix.

Jacob desired of God only food and raiment. Salomon prayed unto God for no more, but for things necessary for his living. When the prophet Elias fled from the face of wicked Jesabel which sought his life, and was hungry in the wilderness, God by his angel sent him not great plenty of dainty dishes or costly wines, but only bread and a cup of water; to declare that we should not hunt after superfluous things, but be content with things present; and if we have necessaries, and so much as will suffice nature, which is content with little, we should desire no more; as St Paul saith: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have already. For he hath said, I will not fail thee, neither forsake thee."

Heb. xiii.
Josh. i.

Father. But come off, tell me, my son, is it not lawful for a christian man in any condition to provide aforehand, and to lay up in store necessaries for themselves, and for such as belong unto them, seeing it is written, "If any make not provision for his, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel"? *Son.* God forbid else! Godly, righteous, and necessary provision is not forbidden; but greedy carefulness and insatiable covetousness of worldly things, which riseth of mistrust toward the providence of God, and of unfaithfulness toward his promise, as though God would not satisfy his promise, but suffer us to perish for hunger if we did not provide for ourselves, is here reprov'd and condemned as a thing unworthy the children of God, which ought to look for all good things with a strong faith at the hands of their heavenly Father, nothing doubting but that he will abundantly perform whatsoever he hath mercifully promised.

Note well.
1 Tim. v.



2 Cor. xii. St Paul saith: "The children ought not to lay up for the fathers and mothers, but the fathers and mothers for the children." Here the holy apostle evidently declareth that it is the office and duty of parents to provide in the fear of God, and to lay up in store all things necessary for their children, and to aforessee that they want nothing. Joseph is greatly commended in the word of God, because in the time of plenty he provided and laid up in store abundance of corn against the time of dearth, which after certain years followed, by this means preserving the commonweal from famine. In the history of the gospel we read that, when Christ had fed certain thousands, and there remained part of the meat uneaten, he said unto his disciples: "Gather up the broken meat which remaineth, that nothing be lost. And they gathered it together," &c. Moreover, upon the sixth day God commanded the Israelites that they should gather and lay up in store so much of manna as should suffice them to eat on the sabbath day. And it is not to be doubted but that the seven deacons, whom the apostles and the congregation appointed to minister unto the poor, and to foresee that they lack nothing, had in store both money and victuals, and made provision aforehand for such things as the necessity of the poor required.

The duty of
parents.
Gen. xli.

Matt. xiv.
Mark vi.
Luke ix.
John vi.

Acts vi.

After this manner may every householder, or whosoever hath care over other, make provision aforehand, and lay up in store things necessary for them and theirs. And this carefulness is not wicked nor unrighteous, but godly and righteous; forasmuch as it riseth not of false faith or mistrust toward God, but of an honest care toward those over whom God hath appointed him ruler and overseer. The wise man saith:

“Go to the emmet, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and learn to be wise. She hath no guide, nor overseer, nor ruler; yet in the summer she provideth her meat, and gathereth her food together in the harvest.” Again: “Whoso gathereth in summer is wise; but he that is sluggish in harvest bringeth himself to confusion.” Prov. x.

Father. Thou hast both godly and learnedly answered to my question. Let me now hear the second cause why we use this word “daily” in our prayer: “Give us this day our daily bread.” *Son.* In so praying we are admonished that our life is not maintained and preserved by our own wisdom, forecast, counsel, labour, travail, &c. Neither that the things which be needful for the feeding and conservation of this our mortal body are gotten only by our own provision; but that all these things come unto us by the appointment, counsel, and determination of God, through whose blessing all good things chance unto us, as the wise man saith: “The blessing of the Lord maketh men rich: as for careful travail, it doth nothing thereto:” and that therefore, as we have need of our daily food, so ought we daily to crave and ask it at the hand of our heavenly Father, “from whom cometh every good and perfect gift;” which heavenly Father, when he openeth his hand, filleth all living creatures with plenteousness; but when he hideth his face, then are they troubled, and nothing availeth their labour; so truly is it said of our Saviour Christ: “No man’s life standeth in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” For “except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” Prov. x. Psal. civ. Psal. cxlv. Luke xii. Psal. cxxxvii.

Father. Daily therefore must we ask of our heavenly Father our daily bread. *Son.* Yea, verily.

Father. And he will give it us. *Son.* Nothing is more certain than that, if we pray in faith and according to his will. “The Lord will not let the soul of the righteous suffer hunger.” For the Son of God would never have taught us to call on God his Father for all good things, if he would not have granted us our requests. “If ye,” saith he, “when ye are evil, can give your children good gifts, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things, if ye ask of him?” Likewise saith St Paul: “The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in all prayer and supplication let your petitions be manifest unto God with giving of thanks.” And our heavenly Father himself saith: “I am the Lord thy God: open thy mouth wide, and I shall fill it.” Prov. x. Matt. vii. Phil. iv. Psal. lxxxix.

Father. Are there any examples in the holy scripture which may ascertain us of this liberality and lent¹ good will of God toward us, when we call upon him? *Son.* Very many; which all at this present to recite, were almost an infinite labour. But I will rehearse certain, and omit the residue.

God at the beginning, willing to shew his fatherly care in making provision for man, before he created and made man, prepared all things necessary for man, and then making man, he brought man into paradise, a place already garnished with all most pleasant fruits, and stuffed full of all things necessary for the conservation of man, and there placed him, so to have continued, if he had not been disobedient to the voice of God. But after that God for his disobedience had cast him out of paradise into this world, what lacked man here, that might in any point serve his necessary use? Of an earth flowing with the abundance of all good things made God man ruler and possessor, that we may learn God to be a careful God for man his creature, and that he will not suffer him to want any good thing. Gen. i. Gen. iii.

What shall I speak of Adam’s posterity, specially of the ancient patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, &c.? How did God provide for them, yea, and that in strange countries! How richly did he bless them, and give them favour in the eyes of unknown men! How liberally dealt he with the Israelites, after that he had brought them out of Egypt into the wilderness, where he fed them by the space of forty years with meat from heaven, and gave them most sweet and pleasant waters even out of the hard rock! How lovingly handled he their children, bringing them into a land that flowed with milk and honey! How miraculously did he increase the oil and meal of Helias’ Gen. xii. xlv. xx. xxiv. xxxi. xxxix. xii. Exod. xvi. xvii. Num. xi. Psal. lxxviii. Wisd. xvi. Josh. xiii. 1 Kings xvii.

[¹ Lent: if correct, perhaps it is used in the sense of *offered*.]

hostess, the widow of Sarepta! How mercifully provided he for Daniel, being in the den of lions! How bounteously fed he certain thousands with few loaves and fishes! How friendly did he turn water into wine at a certain marriage, when wine wanted!

These and divers histories do abundantly declare, that the Lord our God is plentifully "rich to so many as call on him in truth;" so that, if we daily ask of him our daily bread, we may be sure daily to be heard and daily to be fed, so that we shall lack no good thing, as David saith: "Fear the Lord, all ye his saints; for they that fear him shall have no scarceness." Again: "The rich have wanted and suffered hunger; but they that seek after the Lord shall want no good thing."

Father. God give us all grace to seek the Lord unfeignedly, that, our minds sequestered from the unrighteous and unnecessary cares of this world, we may wholly depend on the merciful providence of God, live according to our vocation, and do that which is righteous in the sight of God! *Son.* Amen.

Father. This petition beginneth to haste unto an end. Tell me therefore what thou understandest by this word "bread"? For thus pray we: "Give us this day our daily bread." *Son.* By "bread" I understand not only that which we commonly call bread, but also all other things necessary for the body and for this present life; as meat, drink, apparel, health, peace, tranquillity, strength to labour, wisdom to govern our things, a quiet household, a loving wife, obedient children, faithful servants, a flourishing commonweal, wholesomeness of air, seasonable weather, rain in due time, a fruitful year, abundance of all things, safeguard from enemies, long life, joyful days, house, land, cattle, good magistrates, righteous officers, painful teachers, diligent tutors, and whatsoever is necessary to the maintenance and conservation of our life. As bread, after the Hebrew phrase and manner of speaking, signifieth all these things aforesaid, so are we taught of our Saviour Christ in this petition to ask all these things of God alone, "from whom cometh every good and perfect gift;" which also is rich enough even unto the full to help so many as "in spirit and truth" call upon him; again, whose "eye is upon them that fear him, and upon them that put their trust in his mercy, to deliver their lives from death, and to feed them in the time of dearth."

Father. I have heard that this word "bread", in this petition, signifieth not only the nourishment of the body, but also the food of the soul; so that as man is made of two parts, that is to say, of body and soul, so likewise we ask here of God daily sustenance for them both. *Son.* By an allegory it may be used unto this end; but after the doctrine of our catechist the more simple, sincere, and right sense is, that "bread" in this place should only signify the food of the body, for the which we also here pray. Notwithstanding both our preacher and catechist have not so concealed this exposition also from us, but that they also have declared unto us the minds of certain writers in this behalf.

Father. What have they said? *Son.* This have they said, that some expositors understand by this word "bread" in this place Christ Jesus, our Lord and alone Saviour, which undoubtedly is the food of our soul and the bread of everlasting life, as he testifieth of himself, saying: "I am the bread of life. He that cometh to me shall not hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Again: "I am that living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever." St Paul also calleth the Lord Christ a "spiritual meat", which the fathers of the old testament through faith did eat, while they, through the word of God's promise, and through the outward figures and ceremonies which painted forth Christ, believed, saw, and laid hand on Christ, believing him to be their alone Saviour, and therefore the alone food and meat also of their souls. "Our fathers," saith he, "were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized under Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat of one spiritual meat, and drink all one manner of spiritual drink," &c. For look, what corporal sustenance is to the hungry body, the same is Christ Jesus the Lord to the hungry soul. And as the eating of material bread comforteth and maketh both strong and merry the body that was hungry; so likewise doth the Lord Christ through his holy Spirit, and through true faith in him, in his passion and death, in his merits and deserts,

B. & Dr.
Matt. xv.
Mark viii.
John vi.
John ii.

Rom. x.

Psal. xxxiv.

Bread.

What bread
signifieth in
the holy
scripture.

James i.
Rom. x.
John iv.

Psal. xxxiii.

Christ the
food of the
soul.

John vi.

1 Cor. x.

1 Cor. x.

comfort and make joyful that soul which cometh unto him hungering and thirsting after righteousness, as it is written: "He hath filled the hungry with good things; Luke i. but the rich he hath sent empty away." Again: "Blessed are they which hunger Matt. v. and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."

Some understand by "bread" in this petition the word of God, that is to say, the law and the gospel; affirming that this word of God is as necessary for the consolation and conservation of the soul, as the material bread is for the comfort and preservation of the body, alleging this text of the holy scripture: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh out of the mouth of God." The word of God. Deut. viii. Matt. iv.

Some say that "bread" in this place signifieth the mystical bread and cup of Christ's body and blood, which St Paul calleth "the Lord's supper." Thus this word "bread" is of divers diversely expounded. The supper of the Lord. 1 Cor. xi.

I will strive with no man, so that his exposition dissent not from the analogy and true proportion of the christian faith and doctrine, that this rule of St Peter may be observed: "If any man speak, let him so speak that it be agreeable to the words of God": again, that this commandment of the heavenly Father may be obeyed, *ipsam audite*: "hear him," that is to say, my Son Christ and his doctrine, in whose mouth I have put my words, that ye may hear and hearken unto them, lest, if any presume to do the contrary, I take vengeance on him, plague, punish, and condemn him. For as it is godly and our bounden duty to desire of God meat, drink, and all other necessaries for the conservation and maintenance of this our frail and needy life; so likewise is it most godly and our most bounden duty to crave at the hand of our Lord God that he will give us his Son Christ, which is the true food of the soul, to feed upon by strong faith, being perfectly persuaded that he alone is our Redeemer, Mediator, Advocate, Intercessor, Peace-maker, Law-fulfiller, Saviour, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, &c. For except the heavenly Father give us this faith and knowledge, whereby we may spiritually feed upon his Son Christ, we shall still in spirit and mind remain and continue miserably famished, and never be fed with that heavenly meat, and so at the last die the death everlasting, as Christ himself testifieth, saying: "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, They shall all be taught of God. Every one therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me: not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, the same hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that putteth his trust in me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day, &c. But I say unto you, That no man can come unto me, except it be given unto him of my Father." 1 Pet. iv. Matt. xvii. Deut. xviii. John vi. John vi. Psal. xlv. Jer. xxxi. Psal. liv. [Isai. liv?]

Again, forasmuch as man doth not consist of body only, but also of soul, and God hath appointed his holy word to be the nourishment and food of the soul, and this food of his blessed word can we not come by, but only through the benefit of our heavenly Father; therefore is it meet and convenient that we crave at his hand this spiritual and heavenly nourishment of the soul, which is the word of God, that it may be truly preached unto us, and that we again may earnestly hear it and faithfully believe it, yea, and plentifully bring forth the fruits of the same in patience, unto the glory of his holy name. For little doth the sound of the outward letter profit, whether it be by reading or hearing, as we may see in Jews and Turks, except God inwardly teach us by his holy Spirit, as the apostle saith: "Neither he that planteth nor he that watereth is any thing, but God which giveth the increase;" otherwise our heart shall still continue hardened, stony, and uncircumcised, and we hearing shall not hear, neither understand. When Lydia, a seller of purple, heard Paul preach, scripture saith that "the Lord opened her heart, that she attended unto the things which Paul spake." And God himself saith: "I will put my laws in their minds, and in their hearts I will write them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Deut. xiii. Matt. iv. Luke iv. Luke viii. 1 Cor. iii. Acts xvi. Heb. viii.

Now as touching the supper of the Lord, which is also a certain kind of spiritual The supper of the Lord is a

spiritual
nourishment.
2 Cor. iii.

Phil. ii.

1 Cor. xi.

Eph. i.

Col. i. ii.

nourishment for the soul, if it be received in faith and with a good conscience toward God; and this of ourselves we cannot do, except God give us the gift (for "of ourselves we are not able to think a good thought"; "it is God that worketh in us both the will and the deed"); and, otherwise receiving it, we do none other thing than eat and drink our own damnation: it is not unfitting, but convenient and necessary, that we desire of God his Spirit and grace, that whensoever we come unto that heavenly banquet, we may worthily eat that mystical bread and drink of that mystical cup, and so be made worthy partakers of Christ's blessed body and precious blood, and of all the merits of his death and passion, whereby he hath purchased to all sinners that repent in faith remission of sins, the favour of God, quietness of conscience, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and finally everlasting life. They therefore, which teach that in this petition we, asking of our heavenly Father bread, desire of him the food of his Son Christ, the nourishment of his holy word, and the worthy participation of the holy mysteries of Christ's body and blood, which all three are the meat of the soul, teach nothing contrary to the word of God; so that this their exposition may well be received of the faithful, although it seem to some enforced, and not agreeable to the mind of Christ in that place.

Father. I cannot disallow any thing that thou hast spoken, but commend it as godly and good. And forasmuch as we may seem abundantly to have spoken of this petition, let me hear what followeth. *Son.* The next that followeth in order is the fifth petition, and soundeth on this manner:

The fifth
petition.

"And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

Father. What crave we of our heavenly Father in this petition? *Son.* In the former petition we desired of our heavenly Father meat, drink, clothe, and whatsoever besides is necessary unto the conservation and maintenance of this our present life, without the which we cannot live, neither be able to do those things either unto God or unto our neighbour, which the law of God requireth of us. In this present petition we pray our heavenly Father to give us that which is the consolation and conservation of our souls, yea, of both our bodies and souls unto everlasting life.

What we ask
of God in the
fifth petition.

Father. What is that? *Son.* Forgiveness of our sins.

Of the for-
giveness of
sin.

Father. Is that so great a comfort to the soul? *Son.* Yea, verily. For where remission and forgiveness of sins is, there is the favour of God, the gift of the Holy Ghost, quietness of conscience, rest of spirit, joy of heart, and assurance of everlasting life. They that obtain this great and singular benefit at the hand of God are called in the holy scripture blessed and happy. For so is it written by that princelike prophet: "Blessed are they whose unrighteousnesses are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is that man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

Psal. xxxii.
Rom. iv.

Father. May we be so bold to ask of our heavenly Father forgiveness of our sins? *Son.* David saith: "I will knowledge my sin unto thee, and mine unrighteousness have I not hid. I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord; and so thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin. For this (that is to say, for the forgiveness of sins) shall every one that is godly make his prayer unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found." Likewise saith St John: "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And in this petition are we taught of our Saviour Christ to ask of our heavenly Father forgiveness of our sins.

Psal. xxxii.

1 John i.

Father. This is great comfort to a penitent sinner. *Son.* Nothing can be greater. For if we have our sins forgiven, we have also an assurance both of God's favour and also of everlasting life. But many things offer themselves to be spoken of in this petition.

Father. What are they? *Son.* First of all, that so many of us as are clad with this mortal flesh, and breathe upon the earth, are without exception sinners and offenders.

Father. How provest thou that? *Son.* It is soon proved. For who knoweth not that we all are begotten, conceived, born, nourished, and live in sin? We are "all the children of wrath by nature," saith St Paul, Christ Jesus only excepted, that

All are sin-
ners without
exception.
Psal. li.
Eph. ii.

blessed Seed of the woman, which was "the Lamb of God," "innocent, faultless, and without spot"; which "never committed sin, and in whose mouth no guile or deceit was found": all other that have lived, do live, or shall live unto the end of the world, may justly be counted in the number of sinners.

Father. Let me hear some testimonies of the holy scripture concerning this matter.

Son. The psalmograph saith: "They are corrupt and become abominable in their doings: there is not one that doth good, no, not one. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that would understand and seek after God. But they are all gone out of the way: they are all together become abominable: there is none that doth good, no, not one." The wise man saith: "There is not one just upon the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." The prophet saith: "We have gone all astray, like sheep: every one hath turned his own way." Salomon saith: "Who is able to say, My heart is clean, and I am free from sin?" St Paul saith: "There is no difference: all have sinned, and want the glory of God." St James saith: "In many things we offend all." St John saith: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have no sin, there is no truth in us."

Father. These sentences of the holy scripture do manifestly declare that all men are sinners. Are there also any histories contained in the holy bible, which make this thing evident? *Son.* Very many, both in the old and new testament.

Father. Rehearse me part of them. *Son.* Adam and Eve, of whom we had our beginning, sinned against God in paradise, by eating the forbidden fruit; and in them have all we sinned, and worthily deserved everlasting damnation. Noah, that noble and ancient patriarch, was drunken, so that he lay sleeping, his privities uncovered. Lot was not only drunken, but he also lay with his own daughters, and committed the vile sin of incest. Abraham, which in the scripture is called the father of the faithful, denied his wife twice, and put her in danger of defiling. Divers of the patriarchs, besides other sins, conspired to put Joseph their brother unto death. Moses committed manslaughter. David was both an adulterer and a murderer. Salomon his son was an idolater. Matthew the evangelist was a toll-gatherer. Peter both denied and forswore Christ. The apostles of Christ were ambitious, and contended which among them should be greatest. They were "foolish in heart, and slow to believe." They forsook their Master Christ in his chief trouble. Mary Magdalene was a famous sinner. The thief that was saved, hanging on the cross with Christ, was a seditious person and a murderer. Paul persecuted the congregation of God, consented to the death of the blessed martyr St Stephen, blasphemed Christ and his glorious gospel, &c.

These histories, with divers other contained in the holy bible, declare manifestly that all the children of men are sinners without exception; so truly is it said of our Saviour Christ, "There is none good but God alone." Again: "When ye have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants." It is not without a cause said of Job: "Behold, God found no truth in his servants, and in his angels there was folly: how much more in them that dwell in houses of clay, and whose foundation is but dust!" &c. Again: "If I will justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me. If I will put forth myself for a perfect man, God shall prove me a wicked doer." "If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean at the well, yet shalt thou, O God, dip me in the mire, and mine own clothes shall defile me." Also in another place: "What is man, that he should be clean? What hath he that is born of a woman, whereby he might be righteous? Behold, he doth not trust his saints; yea, the very heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more then an abominable and vile man, which drinketh wickedness like water!" Item: "How can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold, the moon shineth nothing in comparison to him, and the stars are unclean in his sight. How much more then man, that is but corruption; and the son of man, which is but a worm!" "All our righteousnesses," saith the prophet, "are as a cloth defiled."

Rom. vii.
Rom. xi.
Psal. cxliii.
Psal. cxxx.
Mary the mother of Christ.
Luke i.
Job xv.

St Paul likewise saith: "I know that in me, that is to say, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." Again: "God hath comprehended all under sin, that he might have mercy of all." The perfectest amongst the children of men may pray on this manner: "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord; for none that liveth shall be righteous in thy sight." Again: "If thou, O Lord, shouldest narrowly look upon our iniquities, O Lord, who were able to abide it? But there is mercy with thee in store; yea, with the Lord there is mercy, and plenteous redemption with him." The glorious virgin Mary, although of all creatures most holy, most pure, most innocent (Christ Jesus her Son only excepted), in her song, considering certain imperfections to remain and abide in her, which she received of old Adam from her father and mother, confesseth and granteth God, and not herself, to be her Saviour. "My soul," saith she, "magnifieth the Lord; and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." She calleth God her Saviour, to declare that there was somewhat in her, from the which she must be saved by the mercy and goodness of God. Now if so pure, godly, and virtuous a virgin would not justify herself before God, but humbly confessed God to be her Saviour, and magnified him; who is so far estranged from the knowledge both of God and of himself, that he will not humble himself before the majesty of God, and grant himself to be (as he is indeed) a sinner, but rather justify himself before God, in whose sight the very angels in heaven are not pure and clean?

The wicked opinion of the anabaptists.

Father. Seeing we be all sinners, and grievously offend the Lord our God, inso-much that through our dissolution of life we deserve the loss of everlasting life, tell me if there be any hope of the remission of our sins at the hand of God. For there lack not at this present day, which affirm that a man sinning after baptism shall never be forgiven. *Son.* This is an old heresy lately renewed by the wicked anabaptists. If those sins were unpardonable which be commit after baptism, then had Christ taught us in vain daily to pray for the daily remission of our daily sins. But Christ teacheth nothing in vain; therefore are sins also committed after baptism forgiven. If God could not as well forgive sins after baptism as afore, so were he not almighty: then is this article of our faith false, "I believe in God the Father Almighty." But God is almighty; therefore is he able at all times to forgive and to remit sin. And that he doth at all times forgive sin to such as repent in faith and call unto him for mercy, innumerable places of the holy scripture, both in the old and new testament, do evidently shew and declare.

Jer. iii. iv.
xviii. xxlii.
xxv.
Ezek. xviii.
xxxiii.
Hos. ii.
Joel ii.
Jonah iii. iv.
Zech. i.
Psal. lxxviii.
Isai. lix.

How oftentimes doth God call sinners unto him, and will them to convert and turn unto him, and promise that he will receive them, take them again into his favour, and forgive them their sins! How oftentimes doth he protest by the prophets, that at whatsoever hour a sinner turneth unto him, repenteth him of his former life, and intendeth to become a new man, he shall be safe, his sins shall be forgiven and forgotten, yea, so forgiven and forgotten that they shall never more be remembered nor laid to his charge! God is called "the God of saving health," and is his hand so shortened, and his power so abated, that he can only save and forgive sins before baptism, and not after baptism also? Is he not a "God of saving health" at all times and at all hours? The mercies of God are like and one at all seasons without exception. So often as a sinner with all his heart repenteth and turneth unto God, so often is he forgiven and pardoned of all his offences.

Joel ii.
Matt. xviii.
Luke xvii.
Matt. vi.
Luke vi.
Matt. xvi.
Matt. xxvi.
Gal. ii.

"Turn you unto the Lord your God," saith the prophet; "for he is gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and of great compassion, and ready to pardon wickedness." Our Saviour Christ commanded us in the gospel to forgive our neighbours that have offended us so often as they come unto us and grant their offence, offend they never so often; and promised again, that we shall find the like kindness at our heavenly Father's hand. How dare then the wicked anabaptists teach, that the sins committed after baptism are not pardonable? Who doubteth but that the apostles of Christ were baptized? And yet who knoweth not that after baptism they both offended and were forgiven? Did not Peter so offend his Master Christ, that he called him Satan? Did not Peter afterward forsake his Master and run away from him, yea, utterly deny and forswear him? Did not Peter after that also so halt in matters of

the gospel, that Paul openly reprov'd him? Were not all those sins forgiven Peter? James and John, the sons of Zebedeus, were so ambitious that they would have been in authority above all their fellow-apostles, insomuch that Christ reprov'd them sharply for this their ambition. The very same apostles also were so replenish'd with anger against the Samaritans, because they would not receive their Master Christ, that they wished fire to come down from heaven upon them and utterly to consume them. The other apostles of Christ had also their infirmities and imperfections; and yet were they all forgiven, and are now most glorious saints in the kingdom of God. Sins therefore are forgiven after baptism.

The incestuous Corinthian was baptized, and in profession a Christian, yet fell he afterward so grievously from the rule of christian doctrine, that by the apostle's commandment he was excommunicate; and yet notwithstanding afterward he was forgiven, when he repented, and was received into the fellowship of God's saints. Sinners then after baptism are forgiven.

To whom wrote St John those words? "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little babes, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. But if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, that righteous one. He it is that obtaineth mercy for our sins, not for our sins only, but also for the sins of all the world." Wrote not St John these words to the Christians that were baptized? See we not then here, that though the Christians do sin after baptism, if they confess their sins, God for his faithfulness and righteousness' sake will forgive them; yea, and that so much the more, because Jesus Christ is our advocate, which for his dignity and worthiness, for his perfection and righteousness, easily obtaineth of God the Father for us not only remission and forgiveness of our sins, but also all other good things, both bodily and ghostly?

Our Saviour Christ calleth unto him all that are grieved and laden with the burden of sin, and promiseth that he will refresh and ease them. He appointed no time, no age, before baptism, or after baptism. Only he biddeth them come, and whensoever they come, he promiseth to ease them of their burdens, be they never so grievous and many. Christ is that "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Note that he saith, "taketh away," and not have taken away, to declare, that the virtue of Christ's passion and death abideth still before God of such dignity and price, that it continually sufficeth at all times, and in all ages, to put away the sins of the world, whether they be committed before or after baptism. For as the apostle saith, "The blood of Christ speaketh better than the blood of Abel."

Christ in the holy scripture is called our Mediator and Advocate, and is reported to live with God to this end, that he may at all times make intercession for us unto the Father. And is it to be thought that this his intercession serveth only for the sins committed before baptism, and not rather generally for all sins, whensoever they be done? The apostle writeth that Christ Jesus, that most high and everlasting Bishop, is "able at the full and even unto the uttermost to save them that come unto God through him." But this could he not do, if he saved us only from the sins committed before baptism. Who seeth not now the fond and foolish, the vain and wicked doctrine of the anabaptists to be directly contrary to God's most holy and blessed word, while they teach that sins committed after baptism are unpardonable, when the truth of the holy scriptures plainly teacheth that, through faith in Christ, sins not only before, but also after baptism committed, are forgiven to the penitent sinner at all times?

Father. As the doctrine of the anabaptists is utterly uncomfortable, and leadeth unto desperation; so likewise is the doctrine of the holy scripture most comfortable to a penitent sinner, and openeth the way unto everlasting salvation. But tell me, my son, seeing we be all sinners, and notwithstanding there is hope of the forgiveness of our sins, who forgiveth these sins? *Son.* God our heavenly Father. For thus pray we: "And forgive us our trespasses."

God alone
forgiveth sin.

Father. But doth God alone, and none but God only, forgive sin? *Son.* Only God, and God alone, forgiveth sin.

Isai. xliii.

Father. Let me hear it proved by the word of God. *Son.* God himself by the prophet Esay speaketh on this manner: "I am, I am he which putteth away thy sins, yea, and that for mine own sake, and I will remember them no more." God in this aforesaid sentence, because he would not have us to doubt, but to be most certainly persuaded that he alone forgiveth sin, doubleth, and saith twice: "I am, I am he which putteth away thy sins."

Isai. xliiv.

By the same prophet he saith also: "O Israel, forget me not. As for thine offences, I have driven them away like the clouds, and thy sins as the mist: turn thee again unto me."

Jer. xxxiii.

By the prophet Jeremy God also saith: "From all misdeeds wherein they have offended against me I will cleanse them, and all their blasphemies which they have done against me, when they regarded me not, I will forgive them."

Hos. xiii.

By the prophet Osee God also saith: "Thy destruction, O Israel, cometh of thyself: only of me cometh thy salvation." The prophet Micheas speaketh unto God on this manner: "Where is there such a God as thou, that pardonest wickedness, and forgivest the offences of the remnant of thine heritage?"

Mic. vii.

He keepeth not his wrath for ever; and why? His delight is to have compassion: he shall turn again, and be merciful to us: he shall put down our wickednesses, and cast all our sins into the bottom of the sea."

Psal. ciii.

The psalmograph also saith: "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; which forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thine infirmities; which saveth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness," &c. "The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, long-suffering and of great goodness. He will not alway be chiding, neither keepeth he his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickedness. For look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth; so great is his mercy also toward them that fear him. Look how wide also the east is from the west; so far hath he set our sins from us. Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him. For he knoweth whereof we be made: he remembereth that we are but dust."

Matt. ix.
Mark ii.
Luke v.

As I may at the last come unto the new testament, we read in the gospel that our Saviour Christ said to a certain man sick of the palsy: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee. And behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth: who can forgive sins, but God alone?"

To forgive sin
is proper to
God alone.

The scribes judged Christ to be only man, and not God. Now, if he had been man only, and not God also, so had he spoken blasphemies; forasmuch as he challenged that to him which is alone due to God, that is to say, forgiveness of sins. But forasmuch as Christ is not only man, but also very God, therefore not Christ but the Jews blasphemed. Here is it evident, even by the testimony of Christ's enemies, that God alone forgiveth sin.

Job xiv.

Neither read we, in any part either of the old or new testament, that any other forgiveth sin but God alone. For "who can be made clean of him that is unclean?" who can make him clean which is conceived of unclean seed, but God alone? All the saints of the old and new law did always fly unto God for the remission of sins, as it is

Psal. xxxii.

written: "For this," that is to say, for the remission of sins, "shall every saint pray unto thee in time convenient." He therefore doth nothing else, whatsoever he be, than blaspheme God, which taketh upon him to forgive sin; seeing that he only must forgive the sin against whom the sin is committed. Now is the sin committed against God, whose commandment is transgressed and broken: God therefore must forgive the sin, and none other.

The bishop of
Rome.

Father. The bishop of Rome hath taken upon him by his bulls and pardons to forgive sin. *Son.* Unjustly hath he this done. For not only the holy scriptures, but also the ancient fathers of Christ's church, affirm plainly that God alone forgiveth sin.

In serm. de
Lapsis.

"The Lord alone," saith St Cyprian, "may shew mercy, and forgive the sins which are committed against him: he alone can grant pardon, which bare our sins,

which sorrowed for us, whom God delivered unto the death for us. Man cannot be greater than God, neither can he forgive and pardon the servants of that which through grievous sin is committed against the Lord¹.”

St Ambrose saith: “To forgive sin, and to give the Holy Ghost, is only in the power of God².” Again: “He alone forgiveth the sins, which alone died for our sins³.” In 2 Cor. cap. xii.

St Austin saith: “No man taketh away the sins of the world, but Christ alone, which is the Lamb that taketh the sins of the world. He taketh away, both in forgiving those sins that are done, and in helping that they may be no more done, and in bringing unto life, when they can by no means be any more done⁴.” Contra Julianum, lib. ii.

Cyril, the Greek doctor, saith: “Inwardly to quicken a sinner, it is the gift of him alone which saith by the prophet, ‘I am he which putteth away thine iniquities’⁵.” In Joan. cap. xi.

Chrysostom saith: “To deliver from the filthiness of sin, it is without doubt the mighty power of Christ.” Again: “The bondage of sin is most grievous, from the which God alone is able to deliver. No man hath power to forgive sin but God⁶.” In Matt. cap. viii. Hom. 53.

Theophylact saith: “It belongeth to God alone to forgive sin. Therefore he saith, ‘Every one that doth sin is the servant of sin’; and ye therefore are servants, because ye are sinners. Moreover, forasmuch as it was like that they would say, Although we be bound to such thralldom, yet have we sacrifices, we have also priests, which shall purge and make us clean from sin; he saith, that they also are sinners. ‘For all have sinned and want the glory of God.’ And your priests, forasmuch as they are also servants, have no power to forgive other men their sins; which thing St Paul declareth manifestly, saying, ‘The priest hath as much need to offer for himself as for the people, seeing that he also is compassed about with infirmities and diseases’⁷.” In Joan. cap. viii.
 Again he saith: “Christ could not otherwise have been known to be God, except he had forgiven the people their sins. For it belongeth to God to forgive sins⁸.” Rom. iii. Heb. v. In Lucam, cap. i.

The bishop of Rome in taking upon him to forgive sin sheweth himself to be “that sinful man, that son of perdition, that adversary, which exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he doth sit in the temple of God, boasting himself to be God.” 2 Thess. ii.

[¹ Solus Dominus misereri potest. Veniam peccatis, quæ in ipsum commissa sunt, solus potest ille largiri, qui peccata nostra portavit, qui pro nobis doluit, quem Deus tradidit pro peccatis nostris. Homo Deo esse non potest major: nec remittere aut donare indulgentia sua servus potest, quod in Dominum delicto graviore commissum est.—Cypr. Op. Oxon. 1682. De Lapsis. p. 129.]

[² This passage will be given more fully afterwards. See the Index.]

[³ See below, page 174, note 1.]

[⁴ Ac per hoc, nemo tollit peccatum, quod nec lex, quamvis sancta et justa et bona, potuit auferre, nisi ille de quo dictum est, Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi. Tollit autem et dimittendo quæ facta sunt, ubi et originale comprehenditur, et adjuvando ne fiant, et perducendo ad vitam ubi fieri omnino non possunt.—August. Op. Par. 1679—1700. Op. Imperf. cont. Julian. Lib. xi. lxxxiv. Tom. X. col. 986.]

[⁵ Vivificare autem interius peccatorem solius Dei munus est, qui per prophetam dicit: Ego sum qui deleo iniquitates vestras.—Cyril. Alex. Op. Lat. Par. 1604—5. In Joan. Evang. Lib. vii. cap. xxiii. Tom. I. p. 591. These are not the genuine words of Cyril. Only fragments of the 7th and 8th books of that father’s commentary on St John have been discovered; and these, with the 5th and 6th books, were first printed after Becon’s time. In their place four books had been previously inserted by Judocus Clichtoveus.

See Cave’s Script. Eccles. Hist. Lit. Oxon. 1740—3. Vol. I. pp. 391, 2.]

[⁶ There appears to be an error in the reference, as above given. The latter passage is found elsewhere: ‘ΑΛΛ’ οὐ τοῦτο ἐσπούδαζε δεῖξαι, δούλους ἀνθρώπων γενομένους: ἀλλὰ τῆς ἀμαρτίας, ἥπερ ἐστὶ καὶ χαλεπωτάτη δουλεία, ἧς θεὸς μόνος ἀπαλλάξαι δύναται. τὸ γὰρ ἀφείναι ἀμαρτίας οὐδεὸς ἑτέρου ἐστὶ.—Chrysost. Op. Par. 1718—38. In Joan. Hom. liv. Tom. VIII. p. 316.]

[⁷ Τὸ γὰρ ἀφείναι ἀμαρτίας, Θεοῦ μόνου. διὸ φησι, πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἀμαρτίαν, δούλος ἐστὶ τῆς ἀμαρτίας, καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν δούλοι ἐστε, καθὼ ἀμαρτωλοί. εἶτα ἐπεὶ εἰκὸς ἦν ἐκείνους εἰπεῖν, ὅτι εἰ καὶ τοιαύτη δουλεία ὑποκείμεθα, ἀλλὰ θυσίας ἔχομεν, ἀλλ’ ἱερεῖς, οἱ καθαρῖσουσιν ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν, φησὶν, ὅτι καὶ ἐκεῖνοι δούλοι εἰσι. πάντες γὰρ ἡμαρτον, καὶ ὑστεροῦνται τῆς δόξης τοῦ Θεοῦ. καὶ λοιπὸν δούλοι κἀκεῖνοι δυντὲς οἱ ἱερεῖς ἡμῶν, οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἐξουσίαν ἀφείναι ἄλλοις ἀμαρτίας. ὁ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Παῦλος σαφέστερόν φησιν, ὅτι ὀφείλει ὁ ἱερεὺς ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ προσφέρειν, καθὰ καὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ, ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτὸς περικείται ἀσθενείαις.—Theophyl. Op. Venet. 1754—63. In Joan. Comm. cap. viii. Tom. I. p. 623.]

[⁸ Οὐκ ἂν γὰρ ἄλλως ἐπεγγνώσθη Θεὸς εἶναι ὁ Κύριος, εἰ μὴ ἀφήκε τὰς ἀμαρτίας τῷ λαῷ Θεοῦ γὰρ τὸ ἀφείναι ἀμαρτίας.—Id. In Luc. Comm. cap. i. Tom. I. p. 284.]

Priests.

Father. Priests also in their private absolutions challenged to themselves authority and power to forgive sin. *Son.* St Ambrose saith: "The word of God forgiveth the sins: the priest is the judge"; that is to say, declareth and sheweth that sins are forgiven to such as repent by the mighty power of God; and contrariwise, that their sins are retained and not forgiven, which do not repent. St Augustine also saith, that "the priests do not forgive sin, but the Holy Ghost through them, as it is said, 'Ye are not they that speak, but the Holy Ghost which is in you.'"² Theophylact

Matt. x.

In Joan. cap. viii.

likewise said: "Your priests, forasmuch as they are servants, have no power to forgive sins." The priest executeth his commission, that is to say, he preacheth the word of God, and declareth that whatsoever sinner repenteth him of his sin, and believeth the promise of God made to all penitent sinners in Christ's blood, the same hath all his sins forgiven him: but whosoever will not receive the word, nor believe it, neither repent him of his former life: as the priest declareth to the other that is penitent and faithful remission of his sins, so likewise doth he pronounce to him that is impenitent and unfaithful, that his sins are not forgiven him, but that the wrath and vengeance of God abideth upon him. God alone forgiveth the sin.

John iii.

Father. Doth God forgive all the sins together, or but part of them, and reserve the residue still unforgiven? *Son.* God is no botcher. He either forgiveth all or none, according to this old saying:



Summa Dei pietas veniam non dimidiabit:
Aut nihil, aut totum, te pœnitente dabit.

That is,

God unto goodness so greatly is bent,
That he forgiveth not unperfectly:
For rather all or none, when thou repent,
Shall thy sins be forgiven through God's mercy.

Father. Doth God also forgive the pain with the fault? *Son.* Why ask you that question?

God forgiveth both the fault and the pain together.

Father. I have heard some say that God, forgiving the fault, reserveth the pain, and punisheth it afterward, sometime in this world, and sometime in the world to come. *Son.* That is a wicked doctrine and unworthy the majesty of God. To remit the sin and to retain the pain or punishment due for the sin is nothing else than to make God of a most merciful Father a merciless tyrant. The teachers of this doctrine make God inferior to the pope in goodness and mercy. For the pope in his pardons maketh men clean, and granteth them remission of all their sins, a *pœna et culpa, toties quoties*. The pope for a little money delivereth men from all their sins, both from the fault, and from the pain due for the fault, yea, and that so often as they buy his pardons; and shall not God, that Father of mercy, and God of all consolation and comfort, for the most dear and precious blood of his Son Christ, shew the like favour to his creatures when they repent, believe, and amend?

Proud anti-christ.

Isai. xliiii.

Mic. vii.

Luke xxiii.

God saith by the prophet that he will so forgive us our sins that he will "never remember them more": when then will he punish them? He saith also that he will "cast all our sins into the bottom of the sea": how shall then the remembrance of them so come before the presence of God's majesty, that he will punish them? The thief that did hang on Christ's right hand was forgiven both the fault and the pain;

[¹ It is probable that the author cited this passage and the one referred to before (see above, page 173, note 3.) from the Liber Sententiarum, where we read: Item Ambrosius: Verbum Dei dimittit peccata, sacerdos est iudex. Sacerdos quidem officium suum exhibet, nullius potestatis jura exercet. Idem, Ille solus peccata dimittit, qui solus pro peccatis nostris mortuus est.—Pet. Lomb. Lib. Sentent. Lib. iv. Dist. xviii. The first passage here quoted appears to be the following: Remittuntur peccata per Dei verbum, cujus Levites interpres et quidem executor est.—Ambros. Op. Par. 1686—90. De Cain et Abel. Lib. ii. cap. iv. 15. Tom. I. col. 212. The Benedictine editors remark on it in a

note: Gratianus, De Pœn. Dist. i. c. Verbum Dei, et Magister Sent. in 4. Dist. 18. in hoc loco citando nec verba nec sensum Ambrosii exhibent. The second passage does not occur in the place indicated.]

[² Cum vero interpositum est, Hoc cum dixisset, insufflavit, et ait illis, Accipite Spiritum sanctum, et deinde illatum, per eos vel remissionem vel retentionem fieri peccatorum; satis ostenditur, non ipsos id agere, sed per eos utique Spiritum sanctum, sicut alio loco dicit, Non enim vos estis qui loquimini, sed Spiritus sanctus qui in vobis est.—August. Op. Par. 1679—1700. Cont. Epist. Parmen. Lib. ii. 24. Tom. IX. col. 41.]

and shall God deal less mercifully with us? The sheep that went astray, and the wasteful child, being forgiven and received into favour, were not afterward punished, as we read; except this be to punish, namely, to bring the wandering sheep home upon shoulders most tenderly, and to have compassion of the lost child, to kiss him, to clothe him with the best garment, to put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet, to make a banquet for the joy of his return, to call the neighbours together, to be merry, to have minstrelsy and dancing, &c. Luke xv.

The psalmograph saith: "With the Lord there is mercy in store, yea, with him there is plenteous redemption." But what singular mercy is this, or what plenteous redemption and deliverance is this, to have the sin forgiven, and the pain reserved? Far be this from God! God, I grant, in this world many times sendeth to the godly and faithful people afflictions; but these are none other thing than exercises and trials of their faith and patience, that through them they may be the more provoked to call upon God, to mortify the old man, and to be renewed in the spirit of their mind. But as for the life to come, the faithful shall there taste no more sorrow, labour, pain, trouble, torment, weeping, mourning, lamenting, &c. but rather all joy, all comfort, all glory, all pleasure, all felicity, &c. as it is written: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst, neither shall the sun light on them, neither any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the seat shall feed them, and lead them unto fountains of living waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Again: "I heard a voice from heaven," saith St John, "saying unto me, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. For even out of hand, saith the Spirit, they rest from their labours, pains, or travails." The wise man saith, that "the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and the pain of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise," saith he, "they appear to die, and their end is taken for very destruction; but they are in peace." Psal. cxxx.
Afflictions.
Rev. vii.
Rev. xiv.
Wisd. iii.

Father. It is to be thought that the inventors of this doctrine had no true judgment of God's mercy, and that they never thoroughly tasted of the sweetness of God's tender goodness. *Son.* It is to be thought that the authors of this doctrine were of the number of them "whose god their belly is." Phil. iii.

Father. Whom meanest thou? *Son.* Purgatory-rakers and soul-carriers, which for the maintenance of their idle bellies devised first of all this wicked doctrine, contrary to the word of God, unto the great discomfort, yea, almost desperation of the simple Christians, by this means procuring to themselves one kingdom more than God himself hath. Purgatory-rakers.

Father. What is that? *Son.* Purgatory. Purgatory.

Father. Away with purgatory and with all the purgatory-rakers, and tell thou me what moved God to be so beneficial and merciful to mankind that he is ready at all times to forgive us our sins, whensoever we turn unto him. *Son.* His alone free goodness and mere mercy is the only and alone cause of this his benefit, and of all other toward mankind, for his Son Christ Jesus' sake, and not our works, merits, and deserts, as the apostle saith: "Not by the works of righteousness which we wrought, but according to his mercy hath he saved us, by the fountain of the new birth and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that we justified by his grace should be made heirs according to hope of everlasting life." God himself saith by the prophet: "I am, I am he only which put away thy wickednesses, yea, and that for mine own sake, and will remember them no more. Put me now in remembrance (for we will reason together), and tell me if thou hast any thing wherewith thou mayest be justified." Again: "For my name's sake I will withdraw my wrath, and it shall be for mine honour's sake if I patiently bear thee, and root thee not out," &c. "Even for mine own sake I will do this." The psalmograph saith: "He saved me because he would have me." Again: "For nothing, O Lord, shalt thou save them." Why God is so merciful to us.
Tit. iiii.
Isai. xliiii.
Isai. xlviii.
Psal. xviii.
Psal. lxxvi.

Now that God saveth us only of his mere mercy for his Son Christ's sake, the scriptures show plentifully in every place. God from the high heavens testified with an open voice that his Son Christ is the alone cause that he is so merciful and bounteous unto us. "This is my well-beloved Son," saith he, "for whose sake I am well pleased with man. St Paul saith that Christ is "our peace," because he hath made an atone- Christ.
Matt. iiii.
xvii.
2 Pet. i.
Eph. ii.

ment between God and us; forasmuch as "it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and by him to reconcile all thing to himself, and to set at peace by him through the blood of his cross both things in heaven and things in earth." Again :
 Eph. i. "By Christ we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of grace. For by Christ hath he set up all things perfectly, both the things which are in heaven, and the things which are in earth: yea, by Christ are we made heirs of everlasting life according to the purpose of his own will."
 Rom. v. Once again: "God setteth out his love toward us, seeing that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then now, we that are justified by his blood shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, seeing we are reconciled, we shall be preserved by his life."

Father. What is the mean whereby we obtain of God, for Christ's sake, this benefit of the remission and forgiveness of sins? *Son.* Faith only, whereby alone we be justified and saved. For so saith our Saviour Christ: "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Again: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; but he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

St Paul saith: "We being justified by faith are at peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also it chanced unto us to be brought in through faith unto this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."
 Eph. ii. Also in another place he saith: "By grace are ye made safe through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, and cometh not of works, lest any man should boast himself." And in the Acts of the Apostles we read these words: "To Christ give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Again: "Be it known unto you, that through this man (Christ) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and that by him all that believe are justified from all things, from the which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Thus see you, that God of his own mere mercy and free goodness, for Christ's sake, through faith, forgiveth us our sins without all our good works, merits, and deserts; again, that no one neither in heaven nor in earth forgiveth sin, but God alone.

Father. Thou hast fortified and confirmed all these things so strongly with the authorities of the holy scriptures, my most dear son, that he can none otherwise be than a plain antichrist that shall deny this doctrine. But as we may proceed with this our petition, why do we rather say, "Forgive us," than forgive me, seeing one alone many times saith this prayer privately by himself? *Son.* As in the former petition we desired of God all things necessary for this our present life, not only for ourselves, but also for other (christian charity binding us so to do); even in like manner in this present prayer we crave of God our heavenly Father not only for ourselves, but also for the whole company of the Christians, remission of sins, the favour of God, the gift of the Holy Ghost, quietness of conscience, and everlasting life, according to this commandment of God: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Father. Are we then bound to seek the salvation of our christian brethren?
 ☞ *Son.* If we be bound to care for the health and prosperity of our neighbour's body, much more are we bound to be careful for the salvation of his soul; seeing the one is but earth, dust, and ashes, the other is made like unto the image of God. And the wise man saith that "God hath given every man charge of his neighbour." And is not this the saying of God by the prophet? "If I say unto thee concerning the ungodly man, that without doubt he must die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest unto him, that he may turn from his evil way, and so to live; then shall the same ungodly man die in his own unrighteousness, but his blood will I require at thy hand."

Every godly and charitable person ought to be no less careful for the health and

salvation of other than for his own, seeing we are "members one of another's body," Rom. xii. Matt. xxiii. 1 Tim. ii. Eph. iv. 1 Cor. x. and have one heavenly Father, one Saviour, one Redeemer, one Mediator, one Lord; and be baptized with one baptism, profess one gospel, eat and drink of one mystical food, have one faith, one hope, and look for one inheritance of God's most glorious kingdom. Rom. viii.

The holy scripture setteth forth unto us divers godly persons which were thus affected toward other. To whom is it unknown that, when God was determined utterly to consume and to destroy the people of Israel for making and worshipping the golden calf, Moses sought all means possible to appease the wrath of God, and wished himself not to live, yea, to be wiped out of the book of life, except those people which had so greatly offended might also live and be saved with him? Are not these his words? "O, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. And now, I pray thee, either forgive them their sin, or if thou wilt not, wipe me out of thy book which thou hast written." Here was fervent love even toward the enemies both of God and of himself. Here is a spectacle, wherein we may see that a Christian hath no less care for other, yea, though they be his enemies, than he hath for himself, and prayeth no less unto God for the remission of their sins than for his own. In like manner, when the Lord God sent a great plague throughout all the coasts of Israel, insomuch that there died of it seventy thousand men, David, being sore troubled in his heart for the death of such a multitude, and greatly wishing that the wrath of God might be appeased and the plague cease, fell straightways unto prayer, and said: "It is I that have sinned and done evil indeed; and what have these sheep done? Let thine hand, O Lord my God, be on me and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be punished." David brenned with so fervent love toward his people, that he had rather die himself and all that were his kinsfolk, than his subjects should so miserably be slain with plague. Examples of love toward other. Exod. xxxii. Moses. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 Chron. xxi. David. Paul. Rom. ix.

What shall I speak of the holy apostle St Paul, which did not only continually pray unto God for the forgiveness of the sins of the Israelites, but he also even from the very heart wished to be accursed and utterly banished from Christ, so that they might be saved?

Of these histories and such like we may easily learn, how one of us ought to be affected toward another both in bodily and ghostly things; and that we ought to pray one for another, that not only abundance of all worldly things may be given us, but also that we may have remission of sins, the favour of God, quietness of conscience, and in fine, everlasting life, as St James saith: "Pray one for another, that ye may be saved." In consideration whereof our Saviour Christ taught us to say, "Forgive us our trespasses," and not, Forgive me my trespasses. James v.

Father. Is it not therefore lawful for a man privately to lament his miserable state unto God, and to desire a redress of the same? *Son.* It is most lawful, as we have divers examples in the holy scripture. David prayed for the remission of his own sins only, when he said: "Have mercy on me, O Lord, according to thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of thy tender compassions, put away my wickedness. O, wash me yet more, O Lord, from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." So likewise read we of king Manasses and of divers other. Question. Answer. Psal. li. 2 Chron. xxxiii.

In the new testament we have manifest examples likewise. Mary Magdalene secretly in her heart lamented her most miserable state, her most wicked and sinful life, yea, and that not without tears brasting out from the sorrow of the heart; and she heard at the mouth of Christ these most comfortable words: "Thy sins are forgiven thee. Thy faith hath saved thee. Go in peace." The lost son, coming home again to his father, prayed on this manner for a redress of his most miserable state: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." What shall I here recite the thief, which did hang on the cross with Christ? Prayed not he for himself on this wise, speaking to the Lord Christ? "O Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Christ answered him: "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." I pass over the apostles of our Saviour and many other godly persons, which prayed unto God for their own private causes, and were most graciously heard. Luke vii. Luke xv. Luke xxiii.

Psal. i. "Call on me," saith God, "in the time of thy trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt honour me."

Debts. *Father.* What be these trespasses, or rather debts, which we desire to be forgiven of our heavenly Father in this petition? *Son.* God in his holy law hath given us ten commandments, which we are bound to observe and keep. Now, forasmuch as none of us all fulfilleth them all, no, not one of them all with such perfection as the law requireth, being indeed spiritual, and we carnal, as our Saviour Christ said unto the Jews, "Did not Moses give you a law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?" therefore are we all debtors unto God; so that in this petition we desire him to forgive us these debts, yea, the pain and punishment also, which is due to us for not paying our debts, and not to lay unto our charge those our sins which we daily commit in thought, word, and deed; but rather most graciously both to forgive and to forget them.

We all are debtors to God.
Matt. xviii. *Father.* We therefore are all debtors unto God? *Son.* Every one of us is that indebted servant, of whom we read in the gospel, which, when his master called him unto accompts, was found to owe him ten thousand talents: neither was he able to pay so great a debt, though both wife, children, household, and all that ever he had should be sold. After this sort are we all. We owe unto God a most certain and sure debt, even the fulfilling of his ten commandments. But this debt are we not able to pay; therefore owe we also unto our Lord and Master ten thousand talents, neither are we able to pay them; no, not the most richest, the most holiest, the most perfectest of us all: albeit there want not, which so pride themselves by the reason of their good works and merits, that they shame not to boast that they have good works enough, not only to save themselves, but other also. And these works they call *Opera supererogationis*: they might more justly call them *Opera superarrogantiae*. For too much and too great pride is this, vile, corruptible, and stinking flesh so to lift up his horns in the presence of God's majesty, that by his own righteousnesses and good works, which before God are more unpure, unclean, and filthy, than a cloth polluted¹, he will take upon him both to justify himself and other also. Is not this to "sit in the temple of God, and to boast himself as God"? Is not this to say with that most arrogant and proud king of Babylon, "I will climb up into heaven, and exalt my throne above besides the stars of God; I will climb up above the clouds, and will be like the Highest of all"? But, O thou vile, stinking, and unrighteous flesh, thou shalt be brought down to the deep of hell.

Isai. lxiv. God is an enemy to the proud; but to the humble and lowly-spirited he is a most dear and loving friend. "He putteth down the mighty from their seat; but he exalteth the humble and meek." The holiest and perfectest company of God's saints that ever lived in this world may justly say, as it is written: "We have sinned with our forefathers, we have dealt unrighteously, and committed wickedness." "Therefore to the Lord our God be righteousness; but to us confusion and shame." "If thou, O Lord, shouldst narrowly look upon our wickednesses, O Lord, who were able to abide it?" saith the psalmograph. Every one of us, when we be most holy and perfect, may right well pray on this manner: "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord; for no man that liveth is righteous in thy sight." "If we say we have no sin," saith St John, "we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." For, as St James saith: "All sort of us offend in many things." Who seeth not now, that we all be debtors unto God, and have grievously offended him?

Father. What is then to be done, that we may be delivered from this debt? *Son.* As our Saviour Christ, which is the wisdom of the Father, teacheth us here.

How we may obtain forgiveness of our sins.
Father. What is that? *Son.* Humbly to knowledge ourselves God's debtors, transgressors and breakers of God's most holy law, and therefore worthy, if we should be handled according to our merits and deserts, not only of temporal punishment, but also of everlasting damnation. Again, forasmuch as we of ourselves, with all our good works, merits, and righteousnesses, are not able to pay so great a debt, to desire our heavenly Father, for his Son Christ Jesus' sake, (in whom he is well pleased

Matt. iii. xvii.

[¹ Two words are omitted.]

with man, and for whose sake he gladly giveth and granteth whatsoever is asked in his name, as it is written, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he shall give it you; ask, and ye shall have,") to remit and forgive us whatsoever we owe him, and to deliver us out of that servitude and bondage whereunto we are most miserably cast through sin; that we, being set at liberty from that debt, may frankly and freely and with a good courage "serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life."

Father. If we thus humble ourselves before God, and with all submission of heart crave the forgiveness of our debts, will God be merciful unto us, and forgive us our debts, and set us free from all our sins, and from all the pains due unto us for those sins? *Son.* Yea, most certainly. For he delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but is at all times most ready to pardon and forgive whatsoever is done against him, if with humble hearts we fly unto the throne of his majesty, and desire mercy and favour; as we have an example in that servant which ought his lord and master ten thousand talents. So soon as that servant humbled himself before his master, and desired favour at his hand, his master forgave him all the debt so clearly as though he had never ought him one farthing, as it appeareth by the words of the master: "I forgave thee all that debt, when thou desiredst me." So likewise will our heavenly Father do with us, if we confess the debt, and desire forgiveness of the same.

Father. Well said, my son. God grant us of his grace! And blessed be the Lord our God for his clemency and goodness toward us his miserable and sinful creatures. But what is meant by this that followeth in our petition? "As we forgive them that trespass against us," or, "as we forgive our debtors." *Son.* Whosoever will obtain at the hand of God grace, favour, and remission of his sins, he must also forgive them that have offended him. And verily of this nature are the sons of God, which are regenerate and born anew by the Holy Ghost, "not of mortal seed, but of immortal, by the word of God, which liveth and lasteth for ever," that they wish in all things to resemble the manners of their heavenly Father, and to be the same unto other that God is unto them, according to this commandment of our Saviour Christ: "Be ye merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful." St Paul also saith: "Be ye the followers of God, and walk in love, as Christ hath loved us."

Of this affection and mind were divers godly persons which are mentioned in the holy scripture. King David unjustly was persecuted of Saul, and his life very narrowly sought; yet the Spirit of God was so strong in David that he did not only not seek to be revenged, but he also forgave his enemy Saul, and never either did or procured any evil against him; insomuch that when he might have slain him, he would not once touch him; yea, when Abisai said to David, "God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day; now therefore let me smite him once with my spear to the earth, and I will not smite him the second time," David answered, "Destroy him not. For who can lay his hand on the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?"

St Stephen in like manner did so little malign his enemies, that he did not only freely forgive them, but he also prayed unto God for them, saying: "Lord, lay not this sin unto their charge."

But wherefore do I cease to rehearse him, and his unoutspeakable love, which is the mirror of all goodness, and of whom we are named, I mean Christ? This precious pearl of perfect patience shewed so great charity even unto his most cruel and bloody enemies, that he himself did not only most frankly and freely forgive them, but he also, hanging on the cross, and even in the midst of his torments, prayed unto his heavenly Father, that he would forgive them.

After this manner ought all Christians to be affected, not to revenge, but ready to forgive; not to curse, but to bless; not to render evil for evil, but to overcome evil with goodness, leaving all vengeance to God, which saith: "Vengeance is mine: I will reward." Whosoever is otherwise minded, let him look for no favour at the hand of God.

Father. Let me hear it proved by the word of God, that I ought to forgive them that have offended me, and that doing otherwise I shall find no favour at the hand of

God, but rather displeasure, wrath, vengeance, plagues, and everlasting damnation. *Son.* Jesus the son of Sirach writeth on this manner: "He that seeketh vengeance shall find vengeance at the Lord's hand, which shall surely keep him his sins. Forgive thy neighbour the hurt that he hath done to thee; and so shall thy sins be forgiven thee also, when thou prayest. A man that beareth hatred against another, how dare he desire forgiveness of God? He that sheweth no mercy to a man which is like himself, how dare he¹ ask forgiveness of his sins? If he that is but flesh beareth hatred, and keep it, who will entreat for his sins? Remember the end, and let enmity pass, which seeketh death and destruction; and abide thou in the commandments. Remember the commandments; so shalt thou not be rigorous over thy neighbour. Think upon the covenant of the Highest, and forgive thy neighbour's ignorance."

Eclus.
xxviii.

Luke vi.
Matt. vi.

Our Saviour Christ saith also: "Forgive, and it shall be forgiven to you. If ye will not forgive men their trespasses, no more shall your Father forgive you your trespasses." Again: "When ye stand and pray, forgive, if ye have ought against any man, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."


Matt. xviii.

And unto what other end did Christ put forth the similitude and parable of the servant that ought his lord ten thousand talents, which were all forgiven him, and notwithstanding afterward the whole debt required of him again, because he so cruelly handled his fellow-servant, so that he was cast into prison till he should pay all that was due unto his lord; but only to shew, that as we handle our neighbours and such as are debtors unto us, even so will God handle us again? This evidently appeareth by the conclusion of the parable, where Christ speaketh on this wise: "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Hereto belongeth the saying of St Paul: "As the chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against another; as Christ forgave you, even so do ye."

Col. iii.

Luke xxiii.
Acts vii.

How we ought to behave ourselves toward them that have offended us, the examples of our Saviour Christ, and of the most blessed martyr St Stephen, do plainly declare.

Father. What if any man presume to pray unto God, or to do any other good work, not being in love and charity, but bearing malice against his christian brother, so that he by no means will forgive him, but seek all means possible to be revenged; is that his prayer, or any other good work that he doth, acceptable to God? *Son.* So acceptable as though he offered swine's blood unto him, or committed manslaughter. What pleasure God hath in the prayers, gifts, and sacrifices of the wicked, the history of Cain sheweth openly. Therefore our Saviour Christ giveth this commandment to all his people, saying: "If thou offerest thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thine offering before the altar, and go thy way first, and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come, and offer thy gift." Whosoever saith either  the Lord's prayer or any other for the remission of his sins, not being in love and charity, doth nothing else than ask vengeance of himself, and hasteth the wrath of God to fall upon him. For such as we are to them that have offended us, even such shall we find God to us again. If the merciful shall receive mercy, then shall the unmerciful receive no mercy, as St James saith: "The judgment shall be without mercy to him that hath shewed no mercy."

Isai. lxvi.

Gen. iv.

Matt. v.

Matt. v.

James ii.

The parable of the indebted servant, whereof we spake before, declareth openly what they may look for at the hand of God, which are unmerciful to their neighbours. His lord and master had forgiven that servant all the debt. "And he, straightways going out, found one of his fellows, which ought him an hundred pence, and laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay that thou owest. And his fellow fell down, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not, but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt."

Matt. xviii.

[¹ The folio reads *ye.*]

“His lord, understanding this, called that malicious and cruel servant unto him, and said, O thou ungracious servant, I forgave thee all that debt, when thou desiredst me. Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the jailors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.”

St John saith: “Whosoever hateth his brother is a manslayer. And ye know 1 John iii. that no manslayer hath everlasting life abiding in him.” Here may we see that, if we desire to have forgiveness at the hand of God, it is necessarily required of us, that we also forgive them that have offended us: otherwise our desire is in vain, yea, so much in vain, that we shall not only not obtain remission of our sins, but we shall also after this life have our “portion in that lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.” Our Rev. xxi. Saviour Christ saith of that evil servant which ungently and churlishly entreateth his fellow servants: “The same servant’s lord shall come in a day when he looketh Matt. xxiv. not for him, and in an hour that he is not ware of, and shall hew him in pieces, and give him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Father. Seeing it is so necessarily required unto the forgiveness of our sins at the hand of God, that we also must forgive them that offend us, or else we shall never be forgiven; it followeth, as methinketh, that the cause why God forgiveth us our sins is because we have first forgiven them that have sinned against us. *Son.* Nothing The forgiving of our neighbour is not the cause why God forgiveth us. less, my dear father. For so should it follow, that the remission of our sins should not come of the free favour and mere mercy of God, but rather of our deserts. But that were contrary to the wholesome doctrine of the holy scripture, which teacheth that we are “saved by grace through faith, and that it is the gift of God, and cometh Eph. ii. not of works, lest any man should boast himself.” “Not by the deeds of righteousness, Tit. iii. which we wrought,” saith St Paul, “but according to his mercy hath he saved us, by the fountain of the new birth, and renewing of the Holy Ghost which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that we, being justified by his grace, should be made heirs, according to the hope of everlasting life.” God himself saith by the prophet: “Thy destruction, O Israel, cometh of thyself; but thy salvation cometh Hos. xiii. of me only.” Our Saviour Christ saith: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” And St John saith: “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved 1 John iv. us, and sent his Son to be the satisfaction for our sins.”

Likewise saith St Paul: “God setteth out his hand toward us, seeing that while we Rom. v. were yet sinners, Christ died for us: much more then now, we that are justified by his blood shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, seeing we are reconciled, we shall be preserved by his life.”

All these and many such like sentences of the holy scripture should be found false and untrue, yea, the order of God’s doctrine should not only be perverted, but also subverted, if that your supposition might be found true. For God forgiveth not us our sins because we forgive them that have offended us, so that, through our benefit Note. first shewed unto our neighbour, we should provoke him to be beneficial again to us, and forgive us our debts and trespasses; but he forgiveth us frankly and freely, without respect either of our former or latter good works, of his own free favour, gracious good- James i. ness, and mere mercy, for his Son Christ Jesus’ sake, in whom, or for whose sake, he is well pleased with man; as he saith by the prophet: “I am, yea I am he which putteth Isal. xliii. away thy sins, yea, and that for mine own sake, and I will remember thy faults no more. Tell me, if thou have any thing, wherewith thou mayest be made righteous, &c.”

In consideration whereof David prayeth for the forgiveness of his sins on this manner: “For thy name’s sake, O Lord, forgive me my sin, for it is much.” Again: Psal. xxv. “Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy; and according to the Psal. li. multitude of thy tender compassions do away my wickedness.” David desireth not forgiveness of his sins at the hand of God, because he had first of all forgiven such as 50 had offended him; but for God’s own name’s sake, and for his great mercy and tender compassions’ sake, he craveth to be forgiven. For what thing can we work, although

never so good and godly, that may worthily deserve the least of all God's benefits, when "all our righteousnesses are like to a polluted and defiled cloth"? As Jacob said to God in his prayer: "O Lord, I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant." The prophet Daniel prayeth also on this manner: "O my God, incline thine ear, and hearken: at the least for thine own sake open thine eyes. Behold, how we be desolate; yea, and the city also, which is called after thy name; for we do not cast our prayers before thee in our own righteousness, but only in thy great mercies. O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive. O Lord, consider: tarry not overlong, but for thine own sake do it."

That God doth not forgive us our sins, because we have first forgiven our offenders, but rather that we ought to forgive such as have offended us, because God hath first of all forgiven us our offences, the order of the parable of the indebted servant shew most evidently. For in that we read, that when the servant was not able with all that he had to discharge the debt, and his lord and master, moved with mercy, pity, and compassion toward him, frankly and freely forgave it him, is plainly declared, that God first of all forgiveth our sins, debts, and trespasses. Again, whereas we read that the lord was angry with his servant, whom he had forgiven so great a debt, because he so cruelly handled his fellow-servant for so little and slender a debt, and shewed him no favour at all, and therefore most worthily for his unmercifulness he was cast into the prison at his lord's commandment; it is plainly set forth unto us, that it is our duty, which have received so great a benefit of God, even remission of all our sins, to be beneficial again to our fellow-servants, and according to our Lord's commandment to forgive them, as he hath already forgiven us; yea, and that so much the more, because the debt which we forgive our debtors is but little and almost of no valor, whereas the debt which we owe unto our Lord and Master is great and infinite. "O thou ungracious servant," said the lord, "I forgave thee all that debt, when thou desiredst me; shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow, even as I had pity on thee?"

The obedience and love, which we owe unto God and unto his holy law, ought to move us to be the same to our neighbour that God is to us. Hath God dealt mercifully with us, and forgiven us our debts? Even so ought we lovingly to deal with our debtors, and not to be cruel against them; yea, and that so much the more, because God, our most merciful, gentle, loving, bounteous, and liberal Father, hath in his holy word commanded us so to do. When "Simon Peter came unto Christ, and said unto him, Lord, how oft shall I forgive my brother, if he sin against me? till seven times? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times, but seventy times seven times." Again he saith: "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And though he sin against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, It repenteth me; thou shalt forgive him."

Thus see we, that we are bound by the commandment of God to forgive them that sin against us, not to this end, that through our forgiving we should deserve at the hand of God to be forgiven, (for that were nothing else than to disannul the free grace of God, and to make the merits of Christ vain and of none effect;) but to declare our obedient love and loving obedience toward the blessed will and holy commandment of our most merciful Father, which hath commanded us to forgive such as trespass against us, even as he of his great goodness hath already pardoned and forgiven us all our sins: again, that it should be a sure certificate and an undoubted testimony unto our consciences, that our sins are forgiven us of our heavenly Father, that we are at peace with him, that he loveth us, and in fine, that he hath chosen us to be his sons and heirs, yea, and fellow-heirs of his glorious kingdom with his Son Christ Jesus.

Father. I perceive now by thy words, that remission of our sins cometh unto us from God freely, and without all merits and works on our behalf, for Christ Jesus' sake through faith; and that our forgiving of such as offend us is not the cause why God forgiveth us our sins, but his own mere mercy, gracious goodness, and free favour: again, that we, which have already received forgiveness of all our debts at the hand of

Isai. lxiiv.

Gen. xxxii.

Dan. ix.

Matt. xviii.

Every man ought to be that to his neighbour that God is to him.

Matt. xviii.

Luke xvii.

Why we ought to forgive our neighbour.

Rom. viii.

A short rehearsal of the things entreated of in this petition.

our heavenly Father, should forgive likewise our offenders their debts and trespasses for two causes: the first is, because God hath commanded us so to do, whose commandment to disobey is more than double wickedness: the second is, that we in forgiving our neighbour should be perfectly assured and certified in our conscience, without all doubting, that our heavenly Father hath also forgiven us all our debts, sins, and wickednesses; which will always be the same to us that we are to our neighbour; so that, if we gladly and freely forgive them that trespass against us, it is a most manifest argument and undoubted assurance, that we are forgiven of God; but contrariwise, if we be unmerciful, cruel, and vengeance-thirsty against our neighbour, so that we will not forgive him, but seek to be revenged, and to reward evil for evil, by this means neglecting and nothing regarding the blessed will of God, which hath commanded us to forgive our offenders; then it is a most sure sign, that our sins are not forgiven, but that the hot wrath and fierce vengeance of God abideth still upon us, and that we remain in a most damnable state; seeing that the property of such as be in the favour of God, and have obtained remission of their sins, is to be the very same to their neighbour that they feel in their conscience God is unto them. *Son.* You say truth. For, as St John saith: "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God¹. But he that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. If any man say, I love God, and hate his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we of him, that he which loveth God should also love his brother."

And verily, if we did consider the great goodness of God in forgiving us our debts, being indeed great, many, yea, and innumerable, we should easily be moved to forgive those small and slender debts which other owe unto us. For look how much ten thousand talents are in number and weight being compared with an hundred pence; even so far do our debts, which we owe unto God, surmount and pass the debts which our neighbour owe unto us. And who will not gladly forgive an hundred pence, to be discharged of the debt of ten thousand talents?

Father. Well said, my son. We have sufficiently conferred of this petition. Let me now hear what followeth. *Son.* The next petition is the sixth in number, and this is it:

"And lead us not into temptation."

The sixth
petition.

Father. Wherefore hath our Saviour Christ taught us thus to pray? *Son.* You remember that in the last petition we heard that we are all sinners and debtors unto the Lord our God, and owe his divine majesty so much, that we neither are, nor never shall be, with all our good deeds and merits, able to satisfy him; insomuch that of necessity we are enforced to fly unto God's mercy for the release of this our so great debt, which he freely forgiveth us for his dear Son Christ Jesus' sake through faith.

Now, lest we should lose so great a benefit, I mean remission of our sins, and fall again into the old captivity and misery, wherein we were most miserably detained of Satan before we received and tasted so great kindness at the hand of God, and so become worse than we were afore; (for "of whom a man is overcome," saith St Peter, "unto the same he is brought in bondage: For if they, after they have escaped from the filthiness of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesu Christ, are yet tangled again therein, and yet overcome, then is the latter end worse with them than the beginning: For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment that was given unto them: But the same is happened to them that is used to be spoken by the true proverb: The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed is turned again to her wallowing in the mire;") we are taught in this petition to pray unto our heavenly Father, that he will most graciously assist and aid us with the power of his holy Spirit against all our enemies, and preserve us in that most blessed state, wherein he hath set us by forgiving us our debts, that from henceforth we

Prov. xxvi.

[¹ The folio reads *not*.]

may live with free consciences, glad minds, and cheerful hearts, and serve the Lord our God "in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life."

Father. What enemies are these, of whom thou speakest? *Son.* Do you ask what enemies? As though a christian man in this world wanted enemies, which continually assault him, and seek his destruction. The life of a Christian in this world is called of holy Job a "kighthood" or "warfare." And not without a cause. For as they that are worldly warriors have enemies, that come against them, fight with them, and seek all means possible to vanquish them, and to make them their captives and slaves, or else to make havoc of them, and utterly to destroy them; so likewise is it with the true Christians in this world.

Think you that Satan, whom the holy scripture termeth the "prince" and "god of this world," is a slender enemy, and of small force? Never was there wolf that so greedily sought the destruction of any beast, as Satan seeketh our damnation. Are not these the words of St Peter? "Be ye sober, and watch. For your adversary the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." Did not Satan assault our first parents Adam and Heva in paradise, yea, and also overcome them, unto the great dismaying not only of themselves, but also of all their posterity? Provoked not he David to number the people of Israel, whereby he displeased God? What mischief hath there been done since the beginning of the world, whereof he hath not been the author? How many hath he moved unto idolatry, unto perjury, unto disobedience, unto murder, unto whoredom, unto theft, unto false witness-bearing, unto the transgression and breaking of all the commandments of God, unto desperation, and by this means have brought them also unto everlasting damnation? And what marvel, seeing he feared nothing at all to enter battle with our most puissant and mighty Captain, the Lord Christ? If he made this enterprise against our most valiant, victorious, and triumphant Emperor, which is the Lord of glory, and "mighty in battle;" shall we think that he will be afraid of us, and leave us unassaulted? So little, yea, rather so none are our strengths, if we be left unto ourselves, that in comparison of him, I mean Satan, we are most weak, most feeble, most miserable, most easy to be overcome.

Another of our enemies is the flesh, which is an adversary so much the more to be feared, because she is domestical and one of household, yea, nourished and brought up even in our own breast. This enemy ceaseth neither night nor day to allure us into her nets, yea, and that not tyrant-like, but friend-like, while she with her honey-like, yet hell-like and poisonous pleasures go about to infect us, and to allure us from godliness to beastliness, from virtue to sin, as St Paul saith: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: these are always contrary one to the other. But they that belong unto Christ have crucified the flesh with the affects and lusts thereof." This grievous enemy, the flesh, hath deceived many good and godly men in times past, as Sampson, David, Salomon, &c., and still doth at this present; so that she reigneth now not as a vice, but as a lady, queen, and empress.

The third enemy is the world, which both with his pleasures and riches doth so entangle men in this our age, that he seemeth to reign alone like a god. All follow the world, even from the highest to the lowest, from the king to the subject, and from the bishop to the deacon. They are all mammonists and worldlings. They all embrace the frail and transitory things of this world, and utterly neglect the constant and immortal treasures of the world to come. They "all seek those things that appertain unto themselves, but not that belong unto Jesus Christ." They are "lovers rather of pleasure than of God." They follow covetousness, and by this means they have "made shipwreck of all godliness," whom notwithstanding the Holy Ghost calleth us away from the love of the world and worldly things. St John saith: "Love not the world, nor those things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, as the concupiscence of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of the life, is not of the Father, but of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. But he that doth the will of God abideth for ever." Likewise saith St Paul: "The time is short: it remaineth that they which have wives be as though they had none; and that they which weep be as though they wept not; and that they also which rejoice be as though they rejoiced not; and that they which buy be as though they

Luke i.

Job vii.
[marg.]Satan.
John xiv.
2 Cor. iv.

1 Pet. v.

Gen. iii.
Rom. v.

1 Chron. xxi.

Matt. iv.
Luke iv.

Psal. xxiv.

Of the flesh.

Gal. v.

Of the world

Phil. ii.

2 Tim. iii.

1 John ii.

1 Cor. vii.

possess not; and that they which use this world be as though they used it not. For the fashion of this world passeth away."

I pass over all the other infernal army, malicious devils, wicked spirits, damned souls, cruel tyrants, bloody antichrists, &c., which daily do nothing else than seek our destruction. These, these go about to bring us unto villany¹. These with their wicked and deceitful temptations labour unto the uttermost of all their powers to bring us again into the pestiferous puddle of sin, and to defile ourselves with those most ungodly abominations, from the which God of his great mercy hath purged and cleansed us by the blood of his Son through faith.

Now, forasmuch as we have so many and so grievous enemies, which, seeking our destruction, daily tempt and move us unto wickedness, that by this means we may fall from the favour of God into the dreadful pit of everlasting damnation, and lose that most gracious benefit which was for Christ's sake given us of our heavenly Father, I mean remission of sins; our Saviour Christ teacheth us in this petition to flee unto our heavenly Father with fervent and faithful prayer, and humbly to crave of him aid and help against these our most grievous enemies, that we be not overcome with their temptations, and so become their miserable captives and slaves; but rather that we, overcoming them through strong faith in the power of our Captain Christ, may become valiant, victorious, and triumphant conquerors, unto the glory and praise of God's most blessed name.

Father. Doth not God also tempt us? *Son.* I grant; but yet far otherwise than Satan tempteth us.

Father. What difference is there? *Son.* Very much and great. Satan tempteth unto this end, that he may accuse, condemn, and destroy; and therefore he is called "the tempter," "the calumniator or quarrel-picker," and "the accuser of the brethren." He tempted Adam and Heva unto disobedience, Cain unto manslaughter, the people of the old world unto oppression and lewd living, the Sodomites unto unnatural lusts, the Israelites unto idolatry, David unto whoredom and murder, Salomon unto the worshipping of false gods, Manasses unto the shedding of innocent blood, Judas to the betraying of his Master Christ, Simon Magus unto counterfeit religion, Ananias and Saphira unto dissimulation, with innumerable thousands more; so that the temptation of Satan tendeth only unto evil, and the end thereof, if it be obeyed and followed, is everlasting damnation. But it is far otherwise with that temptation wherewith God assaileth us. For it tendeth not unto evil, but unto good; not unto desperation, but unto consolation; not unto damnation, but unto salvation; as St James saith: "Let no man say when he is tempted (unto evil), that he is tempted of God. For as God cannot be tempted with evil, so neither he himself tempteth any man (unto evil). But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away and enticed of his own concupiscence. Then when lust hath conceived, she bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

And forasmuch as this temptation of God bringeth rather good than evil, light than darkness, life than death, it may not unjustly be called a probation or trial of the faithful, seeing that by it the wheat is known from the tares, the sons of the kingdom from the children of that evil, the true Christians from the dissembling hypocrites, the vessels of mercy from the vessels of wrath. This temptation bringeth to the faithful rather gladness than sadness. Therefore saith St James: "Brethren, count it for an exceeding joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trial of your faith bringeth forth patience; but let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and sound, lacking nothing." Again: "Blessed is he that endureth temptation; for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

Of this temptation speaketh David also on this manner: "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me: try out my reins and my heart. For thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes; and I will walk in thy truth." Again: "Try me, O God, and seek the ground of mine heart: prove me, and examine my thoughts." Once again: "With fire hast thou tried me; and yet was there none unrighteousness found in me." St Peter also saith: "Dearly beloved, marvel not that ye are proved by fire, which thing is to try you, as though some

[¹ Villany: servitude.]

strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye be partakers of Christ's passions; that when his glory appeareth, ye may be merry and glad."



Whosoever determineth to profess Christ aright, and to be a true Christian, he must determine with himself to suffer temptation, and not to look to live in wealth, joy, and pleasure, as the wise man saith: "My son, if thou wilt come into the service of God, stand fast in righteousness, and fear, and prepare thy soul unto temptation." For in this exercise hath God from the beginning trained up his people, whom he hath loved, that he might prove and try their faith, love, hope, constancy, obedience, &c., as the virtuous matron Judith saith: "Call to remembrance how our fathers in times past were tempted, that they might be proved, if they worshipped their God aright. They ought to remember how our father Abraham, being tempted and tried through many tribulations, was found a lover and friend of God. So was Isaac, so was Jacob, so was Moses; and all they that pleased God, being tried through many troubles, were found stedfast in faith. Again, they that received not their temptations with the fear of God, but put themselves forth with unpatience and murmuring against God, perished of the destroyer, and were slain of serpents." The author of the book of Wisdom saith: "God proveth them, and findeth them meet for himself; yea, as the gold in the furnace doth he try them, and receiveth them as a burnt-offering, and when the time cometh they shall be looked upon."

Eccles. ii.

Judith viii.
[Vulgate.]

Wisd. iii.

Job xxiii.

Psal. lxvi.

Tob. ii.
[Vulgate.]Eccles.
xxxiv.
Isai. xxviii.

Job saith of himself thus: "He tried me as the gold in the furnace." The psalmograph likewise, speaking of himself and of all the other faithful, saith: "Thou, O God, hast proved us: thou also hast tried us, like as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the snare, and laid trouble upon our loins. Thou sufferedst men to ride over our heads: we went through fire and water, and thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place." In the history of Toby we read that God suffered the temptation of blindness to fall upon him, that he should be an example of patience to his posterity. Again, in that same book it is written: "Remember how our fathers were tempted, that they might be proved." For, as the wise man saith: "What knoweth he that is not tempted?" "Vexation giveth understanding," saith the prophet.

Thus see we how God in all ages, even from the beginning, hath sent temptations to all good and godly men, not to destroy them, as Satan goeth about with his temptations, but to prove, try, and examine them, whether they be constant in faith, love, hope, patience, obedience, &c., that by this means they might be found the more perfect and glorious, as St Peter saith: "Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, which is prepared all ready to be shewed in the last time; in the which ye rejoice, though now for a season, if need require, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of the faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, glory, and honour at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

1 Pet. i.

Father. How doth God tempt us? *Son.* Sometime by prosperity, and sometime by adversity.

God tempteth us two manner of ways.

The temptation of prosperity.

Father. How by prosperity? *Son.* God many times blessed his people with the abundance both of corporal and worldly things, to tempt, prove, and try them, whether they will continue still in that humbleness of mind that becometh true Christians, knowledge the liberality of God, live worthy his kindness, use these gifts unto the glory of his name, and at all times be thankful for his benefits.

Gen. viii.

Father. Should we not thus do? *Son.* We should do it indeed; but who doth it? So corrupt is our nature, so wicked is our disposition, so bent unto evil are all our senses even from our very cradles, that, as experience teacheth, the most part of the world greatly abuseth the benefit of God, insomuch that they forget God, so far is it off that they walk worthy of his great kindness and liberality; yea, to say the truth, the temptation of prosperity hath plucked more from God, and allured them unto wickedness, than the temptation of adversity; as both the writings of God and men, besides daily experience, abundantly declare.



Deut. xxxii.

Are not these the words of Moses concerning the people of Israel? "He that should have been upright, when he waxed fat, spurned with his heel. Thou art well fed: thou art grown thick: thou art even laden with fatness. And he forsook God his Maker, and regarded not the God of his salvation. They provoked him to anger with

strange gods; even with abominations provoked they him. They offered unto devils, and not to God; even to gods whom they knew not; to new gods, that came newly up, whom their fathers feared not." The prophet Jeremy also saith, in the person of God: "I have fed them to the full; and they have fallen to whoring, and played Jer. v. the ruffians in harlots' houses. In the desire of uncleanly lust, they are become like the stoned horse: every man neigheth at his neighbour's wife. Should I not correct this, saith the Lord? Should I not be avenged of every people that is like unto this?" Again: "They are waxen fat and wealthy, and they have utterly set at nought my words."

The histories of the holy bible shew plainly, that, so long as the people of Israel were assaulted with the temptation of adversity, and were kept low, and nurtured under the cross, they called upon God, and walked in the obedience of his holy word; but when they had peace and quietness, health and wealth, riches and abundance of all things, then ran they on whoring after strange gods, fell to banquetting, to dancing, to adultery, to idleness, to oppression of the poor, and most wickedly lived without the fear of God, in all carnal security and fleshly quietness; so great an adversary unto true godliness is the too much abundance of worldly things, except it be thoroughly tempered with the love and fear of God: which thing we read also of other. What was the destruction of the Sodomites, of the Gomorrians, and of other that dwelt about them, but wealth and plenty of all things, as the prophet Ezek. xvi. saith? Saul at the beginning, when he was made king, was good, and pleased God; 1 Sam. xiii. but after that he grew to wealth, he waxed proud, and lost the Spirit of God. David, so long as he was under the cross, walked in the ways of the Lord; but 2 Sam. xi. when he came once unto prosperity, and to live wealthily and idly and without care, he straightways forgot God, and became both an adulterer and a manslayer. What brought Salomon unto such dissolution of life, that he had seven hundred queens and 1 Kings xi. three hundred concubines, as I may speak nothing of his idolatry and worshipping of false gods? Was it not too much prosperity and abundance of all things? Hieroboam, 1 Kings xii. before he was exalted to be a king, was well commended and favoured; but, coming once unto the crown of Israel, he straightways wrought abomination in the sight of the Lord.

I let pass Roboam, Amasias, Ozias, Manasses, Nabuchodonozor, Aman, Ptolomeus, Antiochus, Herod, the rich glutton, with divers other mentioned in the holy scripture, which through the too much wealth and abundance of things fell into intolerable pride, and afterward into many great absurdities and inconveniences.

It is truly said of St Paul: "They that have a desire to be rich fall into temptation and snares (of the devil), and into many foolish and noisome lusts, which drown men into perdition and destruction. For the desire of money is the root of all evil; which while some lusted after, they erred from the faith, and tangled themselves with many sorrows. But thou, man of God, fly such things. Follow righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." "Godliness is great riches, if a man be content with that he hath. For we brought nothing into the world, neither may we carry any thing out. But when we have food and raiment, we must therewith be content." King Salomon therefore, wishing to be overcome neither with the temptation of prosperity or adversity, prayed to God on this manner: "Two things have I re- Prov. xxx. quired of thee, O Lord, that thou wilt not deny me before I die. Remove from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches: only grant me a necessary living: lest if I be too full, I deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? and lest I, being constrained through poverty, fall unto stealing, and take the name of my God in vain."

Father. What and how great a let wealth is unto true godliness, the history of the young man of whom we read in the gospel, maketh plain and evident. For when Christ said unto him, "Go thy way, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me, and take up my cross upon thy shoulders; he was discomfited," saith the evangelist, "because of that saying, and went away mourning; for he had great possessions." *Son.* It is not, therefore, without cause that Christ compared riches to thorns, and saith that Matt. xiii. they smother up the word of God; and that "no man can serve both God and Matt. vi.

Prosperity more dangerous than adversity.

Ezek. xvi.

1 Sam. xiii.

2 Sam. xi.

1 Kings xi.

1 Kings xii.

1 Tim. vi.

Prov. xxx.

Matt. xix.

Mark x.

Luke xviii.

Matt. xiii.

Matt. vi.

mammon; but either he shall hate the one, and love the other; or else lean to the one, and despise the other."

How worldly things are to be used.

Father. But forasmuch as health of body, riches, public peace, tranquillity, victory over the enemies, wealth, abundance of all things, and such like gifts appertaining unto this mortal life, are the benefits of God, and his good blessings; tell me how we ought to use them, that we do not abuse them, nor be overcome of them. *Son.* Among all the bodily and worldly gifts wherewith God blesseth many, I will take riches for an example. Is any man endued with riches? Let him consider, that God hath not only enriched him with the goods of this world, that he should be the lord and owner of them, but also to tempt, try, and prove him, whether he will use them rightly and truly, according to his holy will, or rather suffer himself to be overcome with the inordinate and unlawful desire and detaining of them. Now if this man do so use, yea, rather abuse, his goods, that he either spend them away wastefully, prodigally, and riotously, in banqueting, in superfluous building, in costly clothing, in vain playing, in wicked company-keeping, (as we read in the gospel of the wasteful son,) or else in oppressing his poor and needy neighbour; then is he overcome of his riches, and become a miserable money-slave, and shall be damned. But contrariwise, if he use his substance and riches aright, and unto that end for the which God gave them unto him, that is to say, unto the nourishing of God's ministers, which preach and set forth his holy word, and unto the relief and succour of the poor and needy Christians, which are of the household of faith, and unto the doing of such good, godly, and charitable acts, and in fine, knowledgeth God to be the giver of them, and therefore is thankful to him for them, and in all points study to dispose them according to his blessed pleasure and holy commandment; then is he not overcome of his riches, neither are they to him any temptation unto evil, but rather an allurements unto all goodness and godliness. And so likewise of all the other gifts and benefits wherewith God blesseth men in this world.

Of riches.

Luke xv.

Experience in our time.

But forasmuch as many are not only tempted, but also overcome with the temptation of prosperity, as we have also at this present day (alas, for pity!) too many for an example, yea, and that among them which in the time of the cross were so zealous for the Lord's cause, that their very life was not dear unto them, much less the pelf of this world, and now contrariwise are so drowned with the pleasures and riches of this world, that they may justly seem to be very worldlings and epicures; therefore, lest they should so go forth and perish, God assayeth them another way, and assaileth them with another kind of temptation.

The temptation of adversity.

Father. What is that? *Son.* The temptation of adversity, as sickness of body, poverty, infamy, war, pestilence, famine, persecution, imprisonment, torments, &c.

Father. Why doth God send these evils unto us? *Son.* Not [to] destroy us, but either to admonish us of our sin, or to try our faith, love, obedience, patience, &c., or for certain other causes, whereof we will speak hereafter. And with this kind of temptation God doth offer try and prove his people than with the temptation of prosperity. For as our grand Captain Christ in this world was tempted with many and divers kinds of temptation, and yet not with the temptation of prosperity, but of adversity, according as it is written, "The Son of man must first suffer, and afterward enter into glory"; so likewise is it convenient, that his soldiers follow their Master Christ, take the cross upon them, and so strive to enter into the glory of their Lord and Master. For, as St Paul saith: "By many tribulations must we enter into the kingdom of God."

Luke xxiv.

Acts xiv.

And verily this kind of temptation is more profitable to them that be of the household of faith than the temptation of prosperity. For prosperity maketh not only the reprobate, but also the very elect and chosen people of God many times, to forget God and to commit these things which be most unworthy their profession, as we tofore heard of David and Salomon, and of such like. But adversity keepeth the godly in order, and suffereth them not to run astray; and as for such as wander abroad, and keep no rule, it bringeth them home again, as we read in the gospel of the lost son, and in the histories of Manasses, of Nabuchodonozor, and of such like.

Luke xv.
2 Chron.
xxxiii.
Dan. iv.

God, by the prophet Osee, saith : " In their adversity they shall early seek me, Hos. vi. and say, Come, let us turn again to the Lord ; for he hath smitten us, and he shall heal us : he hath wounded us, and he shall bind us up again, &c., so that we shall live in his sight. Then shall we have understanding, and endeavour ourselves to know the Lord." The psalmograph saith : " When he slew them, they sought him, and Psal. lxxviii. turned them early, and sought after God. And they remembered that God was their strength, and that the high God was their redeemer." The prophet Esay, in his prayer unto God, saith on this manner : " Lord, in trouble have they visited thee : Isai. xxvi. they poured out their prayer when thy chastening was upon them." Likewise saith the prophet Jeremy : " Thou hast chastened me, O Lord, and I was nurtured as an Jer. xxxi. untamed calf. Convert thou me, and I shall be converted ; for thou art my Lord God. Yea, as soon as thou turnest me, I shall reform myself ; and when I understand, I shall smite upon my thigh. For verily I have committed shameful things." And St Paul saith, that " when we are judged of the Lord, we are chastened, 1 Cor. xi. that we should not be damned with the world."

Father. When God thus trieth sinners with the temptation of adversity, and they turn unto him, will he receive them, and accept their conversion and amendment? *Son.* Unto this end doth God lay his cross upon sinners, not to destroy Why God layeth his cross upon us. them, and to make havoc of them, but to call them home again, which have run astray like wandering and lost sheep ; and in that he layeth upon them his cross, adversity, trouble, &c., it declareth evidently that God loveth them, wisheth their salvation, and willet by no means that they should perish, as he himself saith : " As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." God delighteth not in the death Rev. iii. Ezek. xviii. 1 Tim. ii. Ezek. xviii. and destruction of sinners : his desire is, that " all men should be saved, and come unto knowledge of the truth." At whatsoever hour a sinner repenteth Ezek. xviii. him of his wickedness, God putteth all his sins out of his remembrance, as he saith by the prophet : " Turn ye unto me, and I will turn me unto you." How Zech. i. greatly had Manasses, of whom we spake afore, sinned against the Lord his God ! 2 Kings xxi. Did he not evil in the sight of the Lord, even after the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel ? Built not he up the hill-altars, which Hezekiah his father had destroyed ? Reared he not up altars for Baal, and made idol-groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them ? Offered he not his sons in fire unto idols, and gave heed unto witchcraft and sorcery, and maintained workers with spirits, and tellers of fortunes ? Shed he not innocent blood exceeding much, till he replenished Hierusalem from corner to corner ? He wrought exceeding much wickedness in the sight of the Lord ; not only he himself, but he led the people also out of the way, to do more wickedly than did the heathen people, whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel. The Lord therefore brought him to great misery, so that he was taken prisoner, 2 Chron. xxxiii. bound with chains, and carried away to Babylon. Now doth God prove and try this king Manasses with the temptation of adversity, which worketh so fruitfully in him, that he falleth unto repentance, humbleth himself exceedingly before the God of his fathers, beseecheth the Lord his God, and maketh intercession unto him ; insomuch that " the Lord was entreated of him, and heard his prayer, and brought him again to Hierusalem, into his kingdom."

Father. This is a comfortable history, and a good hearing. *Son.* Yea, of this history may we learn not only the great goodness and unoutspeakable mercies of the Lord our God toward sinners, but also what our duty is again toward God, when he most justly assaileth us for our sins with the temptation of adversity. What we ought to do in adversity.

Father. What is that ? *Son.* Not to murmur or grudge against God, not to think God unrighteous, not impatiently to bear the visitation of God, not to go forth to sin of malice and obstinacy, not to defy God ; but humbly and even from the very heart to submit ourselves to the blessed will of God, to grant our sins, to confess that we have not only deserved those afflictions and troubles which God hath laid upon us, but also innumerable more, yea, the very pains of hell, and to desire God, for his mercies' sake, to give us grace patiently, quietly, and thankfully to bear that his cross, and when his good pleasure is, either to take it away, or else so to mitigate and ease it, that we may with

patient and thankful hearts suffer it, and alway do that thing that may be pleasant and acceptable in his godly sight.

Father. God give us all grace so to do! For such as murmur and grudge against
 ☞ God shall not escape unpunished. The patient and thankful sufferer shall obtain all good
 Isai. xxx. things at the hand of God, as God saith by the prophet: "If ye will return and be
 quiet, ye shall be safe: for in silence and hope shall that strength be;" or as the
 Lam. iii. common English translation hath: "In repentance and in rest shall ye be safe: in quiet-
 ness and sure confidence shall be your strength." The prophet Jeremy also saith: "The
 Job xliii. Lord is good to them that trust in him, and to the soul that seeketh after him. It is
 good with silence and patience to tarry for the saving health of the Lord." Hereto agreeth
 the saying of Job: "Behold, though God slay me, yet will I put my trust in him." *Son.*
 This can we not do of ourselves, except it be given us from above. For of ourselves
 in all our afflictions we can none otherwise do, than with impatiency murmur and grudge
 against the Lord God, yea, and blaspheme his holy name. And this is nothing else than
 to be overcome with the temptation of adversity, from the which we desire God in this
 1 Cor. x. our petition to be delivered. But "God is faithful, which will not suffer us to be tempted
 above our strength; but will in the midst of the temptation make a way that he may be
 able to keep it."

Father. Well said, my son. But doth God assail sinners only with this temptation
 of adversity? *Son.* Before God the holiest and most perfect of all men are sinners;
 Prov. xx. neither can any man say, "My heart is clean, and I am pure from sin;" and, to say
 Note. the truth, sin is the principal and chief cause of all the plagues and punishments that
 God layeth upon us, as the holy scriptures testify in many places: notwithstanding, God
 many times assaileth his dear people and well-beloved servants, (without any respect
 had to sin,) with this kind of temptation unto this end, that he may prove and try their
 faith, love, and obedience toward him, and that they may be an example of patience
 and of long-suffering to other.

Father. Whom did God so handle? *Son.* The word of God remembering¹ divers.
 But as I may let pass Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, with many other, which were all the
 Job i. true and faithful servants of God, let us consider Job, that most precious pearl of perfect
 patience. The holy scripture describeth him to be "a perfect and just man, such one as
 feared God, and eschewed evil." Now mark how God dealt with him, that he might
 prove his faith and patience. All that ever Job had, both in goods and cattle, was
 Job ii. destroyed with fire from heaven, or carried away by enemies. His children also, as
 they were making merry together, were slain, the house through a mighty great wind
 falling down upon them. Moreover, Job was smitten with marvellous sore boils, from
 the sole of his foot unto his crown, so that he sat upon the ground in the ashes, and
 scraped off the filth of his sores with a potsherd. Who, beholding this most miserable
 state of Job, will not think him to be thus stricken of God for his sins? Notwith-
 standing, even by the report of God's own mouth, there was none like Job in the land.
 For he was "a perfect and a just man, such a one as feared God, eschewed evil, and
 continued still in his godliness;" yea, and that not only in prosperity, but also in
 adversity. Wherefore then did God thus plague him?

Verily, first of all, to prove and try his faith and love to God-ward, which remaineth
 perfect and constant, even in the midst of his plagues.

Secondly, to make him an example of patience to his posterity. For Job in all his
 troubles offended not God, neither in word nor in deed; no, he did not once murmur
 against God, but quietly and patiently brasted out into these and such like words:
 Job i. "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I turn thither again. The
 Job ii. Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: even as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it
 come to pass: blessed be the name of the Lord." Again: "If we have received prosperity
 at the hand of God, ought we not also to receive adversity?"

Thirdly, to declare how merciful, gentle, loving, kind, bounteous, and liberal God
 is to them that patiently abide his good pleasure in temptations and troubles. For the
 Job xliii. scripture declareth, that when God had tried the faith and patience of Job, he afterward

[¹ Perhaps a misprint for *remembereth*, meaning makes mention of.]

Why God
layeth his
cross upon
the faithful.

made him richer than ever he was before, both in goods, cattle, and children, and he lived after his trouble an hundred and forty years, so that he saw his children, and his children's children into the fourth generation. Of this Job St James speaketh thus: "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have known what end the Lord made. James v. For the Lord is very pitiful and merciful." And of the holy prophets he speaketh on this manner likewise: "Take the prophets for an ensample of suffering adversity, and of patience, which spake in the name of the Lord. Behold, we count them happy which endure."

Thus see we, that God doth not only tempt the sinners with adversity, to call them unto repentance and amendment of life; but he also with the same temptation proveth the godly and righteous, that by this means they, being tried as gold in the furnace with many and divers temptations and troubles, may the more gloriously set forth their faith and love, which they have to God; submit their will to God's good will and pleasure; bear patiently, thankfully, and obediently, whatsoever cross God layeth upon them; confess the name and truth of God boldly and stoutly, come life, come death; not murmur or grudge against God; not think that that temptation, trouble, or adversity chanceth to them any otherwise than by the determinate counsel and singular providence of God; not suffer their hearts to depart from God and from his holy word for the loss of any worldly thing, although never so precious and dear; but both in prosperity and adversity at all times unto the uttermost of their power advance and set forth the glory of God and of his true religion.

How we ought to behave ourselves in adversity.

Father. Come these things to the faithful to their profit, or rather for their disprofit? *Son.* For their most high profit and singular advantage, as the psalmograph saith: "It is for my great commodity, that thou hast brought me low, that by this means I may learn thine ordinances." For hereof cometh it to pass, as we have heard, that the faith, love, constancy, obedience, &c. of the godly is tried, even as gold is in the furnace, and made much more glorious, not only in the sight of God, but also before men, unto the glory and praise of our heavenly Father.

Psal. cxix.

Father. This trial then of the faithful which is here called "temptation," although it be never so grievous to the old man, and contrary to his fleshly lusts and filthy desires, is no token of God's anger toward such as be thus tempted. *Son.* It is rather a most certain argument and sure token of God's dear favour and singular good will toward them. "For whom the Lord loveth, him he chasteneth; yea, he scourgeth every son that he receiveth," as God himself saith: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." "By many tribulations must we enter into the kingdom of God." "All that will live godly in Christ Jesu shall suffer persecution." "Many are the troubles of the righteous; but the Lord shall deliver them from them all. For the Lord keepeth all their bones, so that not one of them shall be bruised." "If ye endure chastening," saith St Paul, "God offereth himself unto you as unto sons. What son is he, whom the father chasteneth not? If ye be not under correction, whereof all are partakers, then ye are bastards, and not sons, &c. God nurtureth us for our profit, to the intent that he may minister of his holiness unto us. No manner chastising for the present time seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it bringeth the quiet fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Therefore saith the wise man: "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint thou when thou art rebuked of him." Jesus, the son of Sirach, also saith: "My son, if thou wilt come into the service of God, stand fast in righteousness, and fear, and arm thy soul to temptation."

Prov. iiii.
Heb. xii.
Rev. iii.

Acts xiv.
2 Tim. iii.
Psal. xxxiv.

Heb. xii.

Prov. iiii.

Eccles. ii.

Father. How may I persuade myself that this temptation from God cometh of a love and good will toward me? *Son.* If you do consider the end thereof, you shall easily persuade yourself that the temptation wherewith God proveth you proceedeth from God's hearty good will toward you.

Father. Declare unto me how. *Son.* First, forasmuch as the remnants of sin do yet abide in us, and still rage in our flesh, continually labouring to reign and rule in us as lords and emperors, and to subdue the Spirit, with all the godly motions thereof, and so at the last utterly to pluck us from the favour of God, and to throw us headlong into the whorle-pit of everlasting damnation; God, tendering our salvation,

Why God tempted us.

tempteth us with some adversity, and layeth his cross upon us, that by this means the old man, with all his affects and lusts, may be mortified and slain in us; and contrariwise, the new man with his motions increase, grow, prosper, flourish, reign, and triumph, as the apostle saith: "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our tribulation, which is short and light, prepareth an exceeding and everlasting weight of glory unto us, while we look not on things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal; but things which are not seen are eternal."

Now he that is thus tempted of God, and beareth this temptation obediently, quietly, patiently, and thankfully, without any murmuring or grudging against God, ever submitting his will to the good pleasure of God, and hereof take an occasion to amend his manners and to better his life, can none otherwise do than confess, that this temptation came unto him from the singular good will of God, yea, and that unto his great commodity and unoutspeakable profit, as the psalmograph saith: "It is for my great commodity that thou hast brought me low, that by this means I may learn thine ordinances." "Vexation giveth understanding," saith the prophet. And the wise man saith: "What knowledge hath he that is not tempted?"

Secondly, God tempteth us, that he may prove and try by some outward adversity, whether we be truly his or not; whether our faith, love, fear, obedience, &c. toward him be constant and stedfast, or otherwise. And with this temptation he hath proved all good men from the beginning, as that noble matron Judith said in her oration unto the citizens of Bethulia: "Call to your remembrance how our fathers in times past were tempted, that they might be proved, if they worshipped their God aright. Call to remembrance how our father Abraham, being tempted and tried through many tribulations, was found a lover and friend of God. So was Isaac, so was Jacob, so was Moses; and all they that pleased God, being tried through many troubles, were found stedfast in faith. Again, they that received not their temptations with the fear of God, but put themselves forth with unpatience and murmuring against God, perished of the destroyer, and were slain with serpents."

He, which in this temptation is not driven back from God and from his holy word, but abideth constant and stedfast in his profession, is greatly blessed; and this temptation hath chanced to him for his great commodity and profit. For by it he is now found the faithful servant of God, and well assured in his conscience that he is inheritor of everlasting glory, as St James saith: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

Thirdly, God tempteth us, that we, patiently and thankfully abiding his loving visitation, should be an example to other, how they ought to behave themselves toward God, when the like thing chance to them, as it is written of Tobias: "This temptation did God suffer to chance unto him, that they which came after might have an example of his patience, like as of holy Job. For insomuch as he ever feared God from his youth up, and kept his commandments, he grudged not against God that the plague of blindness chanced unto him, but remained stedfast in the fear of God, praising God all the days of his life." So likewise read we of the Thessalonians, which, although tempted and proved with many and divers afflictions for the word's sake, yet remained "constant and stedfast in the faith of the Lord, with joy of the Holy Ghost; so that they became an ensample to all that believed in Macedonia and Achaia." Hereto belongeth the saying of St James: "Take, my brethren, the prophets for an ensample of suffering adversity and of patience, which spake in the name of the Lord. Behold, we count them blessed that endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have known what end the Lord made. For the Lord is very pitiful and merciful."

Fourthly, God tempteth us, that we, feeling the merciful hand of God and his present help in our temptation, may be made the more able through the help of the Holy Ghost to succour, help, and comfort such as fall into temptation, as St Paul writeth of our Saviour Christ: "In that," saith he, "that it fortuneth Christ himself to be tempted, he is able to succour them also that are tempted." Likewise saith St Paul

2 Cor. iv.

Psal. cxix.

Isai. xxviii.

Eccles.
xxxiv.

Judith viii.

Num. xi.
xxi.
1 Cor. x.

James i.

Tob. ii.
[Vulgate.]

1 Thess. i.

James v.


Heb. ii.

himself: "Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is the Father 2 Cor. i. of mercy, and the God of all comfort, which comforteth us in all our tribulation, inso-much that we are able to comfort them which are in any manner of trouble, with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the afflictions of Christ are plenteous in us, even so is our consolation plenteous by Christ."

Fifthly and finally, God tempteth us, that we may be made like unto his own Son, which first suffered before he entered into glory, with this perfect persuasion and Luke xxiv. assured hope, that "if we suffer with Christ, we shall reign with Christ; if we die 2 Tim. ii. with Christ, we shall live with Christ;" although "the afflictions of this life are not Rom. viii. worthy of the glory which shall be shewed upon us."

Whosoever diligently considereth these things, he shall easily perceive that the temptations wherewith God proveth and trieth us are most certain arguments and sure tokens of God's good will toward us; so that we may well and justly persuade ourselves, that we are in the favour of God when we are thus tempted, and not in the hatred and displeasure of God, as the wicked world most wickedly judgeth.

Father. It pleaseth me right well, whatsoever thou hast said in this behalf. But it is too heavy a burden for us to bear such temptations, except God aid us with his holy Spirit, and strengthen us with power from above. *Son.* It is truth. But "God is faithful," saith St Paul, "which will not suffer you to be tempted above 1 Cor. x. your strength, but shall in the midst of the temptation make a way that ye may be able to bear it." God "knoweth whereof we are made: he remembereth that we Psal. ciii. are but dust." And therefore mercifully will he deal with us.

Father. But the temptations of the devil, the world, and the flesh are grievous and intolerable. *Son.* Although they be never so grievous and intolerable, yet God is both able, and also will make them easy and light, if we earnestly call upon him for help and succour, according to this his promise: "Call on me in the time of thy Psal. l. trouble, and I will deliver thee." Again: "Forasmuch as he hath put his trust in Psal. xci. me, I will deliver him: I will defend him, because he hath known my name. He hath cried unto me, and I will graciously hear him: I am with him in his trouble: I will deliver him, and glorify him." For unto this end hath God commanded us to pray  in this petition for aid and succour unto him against our adversaries, that in our conflict with the devil, or with the world, or with the flesh, we should not doubt of the victory, nor despair of the triumph over our enemies; but with strong faith in Christ, and with fervent prayer unto our heavenly Father, buckle and strive with them manfully and stoutly, ever setting before the eyes of our mind, that our grand captain Christ hath subdued all our enemies, the devil, the world, the flesh, &c. and hath most victoriously and gloriously triumphed over them; and his victory, glory, and triumph is our victory, our glory, and our triumph.

Furthermore, this thing ought also greatly to comfort us, yea, and to encourage us to encounter with our enemies; I mean, to consider that these enemies, which are left only to try our faith, are of no puissance or strength, but miserable captives and bond- Note well. slaves, and can do no more unto us, that be God's elect and chosen people, than God doth both suffer and appoint: but as a hunter hath his greyhounds in a leash, so that they cannot run when they will, but when the hunter lusteth; so likewise the devil, the world, the flesh, &c. cannot rage so fiercely against us, nor take their scope so far abroad as they would, but so much shall they do, and so far shall they rage, as God's good will and pleasure shall be, and no further. For God hath them in leash. Yea, God is their Lord, and they are his slaves. The devil could do no more to Job Job i. ii. than God both suffered and appointed. The legion of devils, which Christ cast out Matt. viii. of a certain man, had no power to enter into the herd of swine, till Christ gave them licence. If so great company of devils could do nothing to a sort of filthy swine, till they had obtained licence of Christ; what shall they be able to do unto us, which Note. are the elect and chosen people of God, enarmed with the Spirit of God, with faith, and with prayer? Only let us "be sober, and watch": only let us not give place, 1 Pet. v. but manfully fight with faith, with prayer, and with "the sword of the Spirit, which Eph. vi. is the word of God"; and we shall surely obtain a glorious victory, and put them to flight like miserable cowards, as St James saith: "Resist the devil, and he will James iv.

flee from you." Therefore, whensoever the enemy assail us, let us not fear, but boldly in the name of our alone Mediator Jesus Christ cry unto our heavenly Father, and say: "O thou Father, which art in heaven, lead us not into temptation."

Mark well.

Father. Well said, my son. But methink the words of this petition so sound as though God led us into temptation, and that he is the cause that our enemies, the devil, the world, and the flesh tempt us; so that, if God were not, we should be free from temptation, and so in fine from damnation. And hereof then should it follow, that God is the author both of our temptation and also of our damnation. *Son.* God forbid! God forbid that we should so unreverently think of the majesty of God, which "will the death of no sinner; but rather that he should turn and live": which "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." The Lord our God can abide no wickedness: he hateth all them that work ungodliness; neither shall such abide in his sight.

Ezek. xviii.

1 Tim. ii.

Psal. v.

James i.

James i.

Now, that God tempteth no man unto evil, neither is the occasion thereof, ye heard before out of the testimony of St James. That we are tempted unto evil, we ourselves, whose nature is always prone unto evil, and the devil, which naturally is bent to seek our destruction, is the cause thereof, and not God; as St James saith: "Let no man say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God. For as God cannot be tempted with evil, so neither he himself tempteth any man (unto evil). But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away and enticed of his own concupiscence: then when lust is conceived, she bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

✂

Now, that God should be the author of our damnation, that is so far from the truth that nothing can be more false, as these his words by the prophet do most manifestly declare: "Thy destruction, O Israel, cometh of thyself: only of me cometh thy health and salvation." And St Peter saith: "Be ye sober, and watch; for your adversary the devil like a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom he may devour." Of these testimonies of the holy scripture it plainly appeareth, that not God, but we ourselves and the devil are the occasion of our damnation; so that, if we perish and be damned, we ourselves and the devil are the alone authors of our destruction.

Hos. xiii.

1 Pet. v.

Note.

Rev. xxi.

Matt. xxii.

Isai. lxvi.

Father. How then are the words of this petition to be understand? *Son.* Forasmuch as the devil, the world, and the flesh, are the sworn and immortal enemies of mankind, daily sweating and swinking to destroy us and to make us fellow-inheritors with him of everlasting damnation in "that lake that burneth with fire and brimstone," in "that darkness, where weeping and gnashing of teeth shall be," in those torments, "where the worm" that shall gnaw their conscience "shall never die, and the fire shall never be quenched"; and we of ourselves are so feeble, weak, lame, impotent, and without all strength, that we are able to do nothing against so puissant, strong, mighty, prudent, active, expert, exercised, and practised adversaries in all kind of mischief; we, knowing our imbecility and weakness, our little, yea, our no strengths, most humbly and from the very heart pray and beseech our most dear and loving heavenly Father, that he of his great mercy and tender goodness will vouchsafe to aid and preserve us against such and so great enemies, to send us strength from his high tower, to endue us with virtue and power from above, to enrich us with the graces and gifts of his holy Spirit, that we never give place neither to the flattering enticements nor to the menacing terrors of our enemies; but being clad with the armour of God, manfully resist them, stoutly defend our quarrel, courageously maintain our title and right, that by this means we being made noble and triumphant conquerors through the puissance of our most noble and triumphant captain, Christ Jesus the Lord, may at the last receive the incorruptible crown and the immortal laurel of eternal glory.

Father. But tell me, my sweet son, what if in this temptation we, being negligent and uncircumspect in our affairs, and making very slender provision against our enemies, their crafts and policies, should chance to be circumvented and overcome? what is then to be done? *Son.* In this petition we do not only desire of our heavenly Father that he will so aid us with his holy Spirit against the assaults of our enemies, that we be not overcome of them; but also our prayer is, that if we at any time chance to give place to our adversaries, and to lose the victory, it may please his majesty through his mighty and strong power to deliver and set us at liberty again from the

bondage of our enemies, and to strengthen us with power from above, that we, once again being lifted up and delivered from their hands, may from henceforth become the more circumspect in our affairs, and so for ever after courageously fight with our adversaries, that at the last we may obtain the glorious crown of immortality in heaven.

Father. There is then hope of recovering God's favour, though sometime we be overcome with the grievous temptations of our enemies. *Son.* Yea, verily, so we return, ask mercy for our fault, crave help from above, and continually afterward labour not only valiantly to fight with our enemies, but also through the mighty power of God gloriously to triumph over them.

Father. Blessed be God for his inestimable goodness toward man! And God give us grace to walk worthy of this his kindness! But let me now hear the seventh petition.

Son. This is it:

“But deliver us from the evil.”

The seventh
petition.

Father. What desire we of our heavenly Father in this petition? *Son.* As in the last petition we sued unto God, that he will rule, govern, and strengthen us by his holy Spirit, that we may be able to fight against sin, and to withstand all the perilous temptations of the devil, the world, and the flesh, and to overcome them, that we may be found valiant soldiers in the camp of Christ; so likewise in this seventh and last petition we desire of our heavenly Father that he will deliver us from that wicked evil, which is the original and only cause of all evils that chance unto us, whether we respect the body or the soul.

Father. What is this evil? *Son.* Our arch-enemy the devil, author of all evil, which, as St Peter saith, “walketh about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” 1 Pet. v.

Father. Where is he termed “the evil,” in any other place of the holy scripture?

Son. St Paul so calleth him in his epistle to the Ephesians, where he hath these words: “Above all things take to you the shield of faith, wherewith ye may be able to quench the fiery darts of the evil,” or wicked. And this Satan may justly be termed “the evil;” for as there is nothing in him but evil, so likewise is he the only occasion of all evil, that from the fall of Adam (whereof he also was the author) unto this day have reigned in this wicked world, or shall reign unto the end of the same. For “through the envy of the devil death, and with it all kind of evils, entered into the world.” And as he first of all sought the destruction of man, which through his subtle persuasions he craftily brought to pass; so likewise goeth he forth continually to bring us out of God's favour, that we may lose the benefit of our redemption, which we obtained by Christ: therefore we desire our heavenly Father in this petition, that he will deliver us from this evil, that is to say, the devil. Eph. vi. Gen. iii. Wisd. ii.

Father. Why do we rather desire to be delivered from the devil than from the world or from the flesh? Are not they also grievous enemies of mankind? Have not we also need to crave God's help against them? *Son.* I grant. Notwithstanding, forasmuch as the devil is our arch-enemy, and above all other seeketh our destruction, and without him all our other enemies are able to do nothing, as receiving all their power of him (for he is “the god” and “prince of this world,” “the power of darkness,” “the ruler of the flesh,” &c.); therefore in this petition we principally direct our prayers unto God against him, as against the chief captain of all evil, and the most extreme foe of our health and salvation, whom once vanquished, all the other our enemies straightways fly away like cowards and heartless monsters. John xii. Eph. vi.

Father. Do we not also in this petition desire to be delivered from the world and the flesh? *Son.* Not only from the world and the flesh, but also from all other evils both of body and soul, wherewith Satan goeth about daily to molest, trouble, disquiet, hurt, grieve, punish, plague, and destroy us.

Father. Give me examples of these evils. Name some of them unto me. *Son.* The evils of the soul, wherewith Satan laboureth continually to plague us, that by this means he may wrest us out of the favour of God, and make us fellow-inheritors with him of everlasting damnation, are incredulity, misbelief, doubting, desperation, The evils of
the soul.

idolatry, superstition, false worshipping of God, invocation of creatures, confidence in good works, trust in other men's merits, hypocrisy, strange religion, counterfeit holiness, blind zeals, good intents, ignorance, contempt of God, hate of Christ's gospel, blindness of heart, unrepentance, rejoicing in sin, glorying in wickedness, presumption, impatience, grudging against the will of God, uncircumcision of heart, corruption of judgment, error, heresy, schisms, controversies in religion, sects, pride of the mind, obstinacy in wickedness, fleshly lusts, and whatsoever besides can be reckoned that defileth the soul of man. Now, that we may be delivered from these such and so great evils, plagues, and pestilences, whereby the salvation of our soul is greatly endangered, yea, and also perisheth, if we persevere in them without repentance and faith unto the last end, we most humbly pray unto our heavenly Father in this petition, which alone is able to deliver us from these evils; and as he is able, so likewise will he do it for his mercies' sake.

Father. Which are the evils of the body, wherewith Satan laboureth to plague us, and from the which we desire of our heavenly Father to be delivered? *Son.* Sudden death, plague, pestilence, unwholesome weather, too much abundance of waters, famine, hunger, battle, dearth, beggary, loss of goods, infamy, shame, confusion, madness, insurrections, tumults, commotions, tyranny of princes, disobedience of subjects, dissolution of commonwealths, discord between realms, private lucre, singular commodities, raising of rents, enhancement of farms, joining of houses together, havoc-making of villages, towns, cities, &c., destruction of hospitality, desolation of countries, and whatsoever can be rehearsed besides that is hurtful to the body, or to the things that appertain unto the body. From these evils also we desire our heavenly Father that he will deliver us, that we, through his mighty defence, being safe and sound both in body and in soul, may live in his fear, and glorify his holy name.

Father. As we desire in this petition of our heavenly Father, that he will deliver us from the aforesaid evils both of the body and of the soul, are not we here also humble suitors unto him for the good treasures, gifts, and benefits both of the soul and of the body? *Son.* Yes, verily. For in that we pray our heavenly Father to take from us all evils, we crave at his hand all good things, and that it will please him to enrich us with the treasures both of the soul and the body; that we, being free from all evil, and furnished with all good, may be the more able to resist our enemies, and to "serve the Lord our God in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life."

Father. Which are the treasures of the mind, that we desire of our heavenly Father? *Son.* The fruits of the Holy Ghost, as faith, hope, charity, repentance, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperancy, righteousness, holiness, truth, mercy, humility, kindness, patience in adversity, thankfulness in prosperity, knowledge of God, pureness of life, liberality to the poor, mortification of the old man, vivification of the new man, &c.

Father. Which are the gifts or benefits of the body, that we require here of our heavenly Father? *Son.* Health, long life, prosperity, joy, quietness, reasonable weather, abundance of all necessary things, a quiet and prosperous commonwealth, righteous magistrates, good officers, learned schoolmasters, studious scholars, loving parents, obedient children, faithful servants, &c. And, finally, we pray here our heavenly Father that he will give us a joyful and prosperous departure out of this miserable world at the hour of death; that we may with strong faith commend our souls into his merciful hands, and so, through his grace, come unto that heavenly kingdom, where we shall not only be delivered from all evil, but also enjoy for ever all good things, yea, the glorious sight of the most glorious majesty of God, and there remain with him in joy and glory, worlds with[out] end.

Father. God grant it us! *Son.* Amen.

Father. But what are those words which follow the end of these seven petitions, and are the conclusion of the Lord's prayer? *Son.* The words are these:

"For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

Father. Why are these words added to the petitions that go before? *Son.* To our great comfort, and to the confirmation of our faith. For in that we ascribe unto

The evils of
the body.

Luke i.

Gal. v.

our heavenly Father the kingdom and the power, we are well ascertained that, as he is a most mighty and most glorious king, so is he sufficiently able even to the uttermost both to vanquish our enemies, the devil, the world, and the flesh, &c., and also to grant us all that we ask, yea, and more than we dare be bold to ask, as St Paul saith: "God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Eph. iii.

Father. How provest thou that the kingdom and the power is God's? *Son.* Thus is it written in the holy scripture: "Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is greatness and power, glory, victory, and praise; for all that is in heaven and in earth is thine, and thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou excellest above all, even as the head of all. And riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and strength, and in thy hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all. And now, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name." The psalmograph also saith: "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all ages." Again: "The kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the governor among the people." Also in another place: "The Lord hath prepared his seat in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all." 1 Chron. xxix. Psal. cxlv. Psal. xxii. Psal. ciii.

Father. Why do we not only ascribe unto God the kingdom and the power, but also the glory? *Son.* As of our heavenly Father we receive all good things both for the body and for the soul, so likewise is the glory, praise, and honour for those benefits due to him alone. Therefore, as we grant that whatsoever good thing we have, we receive it at the most excellent, mighty, and powerful hand of God, from whom "cometh every good and perfect gift," which also "giveth abundantly to them that ask of him in faith, and casteth no man in the teeth;" so, in like manner, we freely confess that all the glory, all the praise, all the honour is due to none, neither in heaven, nor in earth, but to this our heavenly Father alone; which as he is able, so likewise he will, and as he will, so likewise he doth both mercifully and plentifully enrich us daily with his both spiritual and corporal gifts. 1 Cor. iv. James i.

Father. How provest thou that all glory, praise, and honour is due to God alone? *Son.* The apostle saith: "To the alone wise God be honour and praise, through Jesus Christ, for ever and ever." Again: "Unto God, King everlasting, immortal, invisible, wise only, be honour and praise for ever and ever." In the Revelation of St John we read that "the twenty-four elders fell down before him that sat on the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy will's sake they are, and were created." Again: "Blessing, honour, glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the seat, and unto the Lamb for evermore." Item: "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanks, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God for evermore." Rom. xvi. 1 Tim. i. Rev. iv. Rev. v. Rev. vii.

Father. Wherefore dost thou say, "for ever and ever"? *Son.* By these words I plainly declare and signify that the kingdom and power of our heavenly Father is not like the kingdom and power of earthly princes, which endureth a short time; but his kingdom and his power, his dominion and his might, abideth for ever and ever; that is to say, everlastingly, and worlds without end, as the psalmograph saith: "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all ages." Again, that the glory, praise, honour, and worship of our heavenly Father is not like the glory, praise, honour, and worship of worldly kings and rulers, which soon vanish away, with all their glory and renown; but it is everlasting, and never shall have end, as David witnesseth: "Blessed," saith he, "are they which dwell in thy house; for they shall praise thee worlds without end." Psal. cxlv. Psal. lxxxiv.

Father. Wherefore dost thou close up the Lord's prayer with this word, "Amen"? *Son.* By saying "Amen", I plainly and manifestly declare that I most certainly do believe, and am most assuredly persuaded, that my heavenly Father, for Christ's sake, in whose name I have offered these my humble supplications unto him, hath both graciously heard me, accepted my prayers, and also as he is able, so likewise he will grant me these my petitions and requests; yea, that he hath already given and Amen.

granted me my desires, and at all times will do, whensoever I call upon him in the name of his dearly-beloved Son Christ Jesu our Lord and alone Saviour, according to this his Son's promise: "Whatsoever ye ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified by the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." Again: "Verily, verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

John xiv.

John xvi.

Father. God give us his holy Spirit, that he may lighten our dark senses, and teach us so to pray, that we may at all times pray with fruit, even unto the glory of his holy name, and unto the salvation of our souls! *Son.* Lord, let it so come so to pass!

Father. Now have we examined, my dear son, the four first parts of the Catechism. It remaineth that we go in hand with the fifth part of the same. Whereof doth that entreat? *Son.* Of the sacraments: for so were we taught of our catechist.

Father. Let us then now begin with that, in the name of God. *Son.* Let it so be, my most loving father.
