

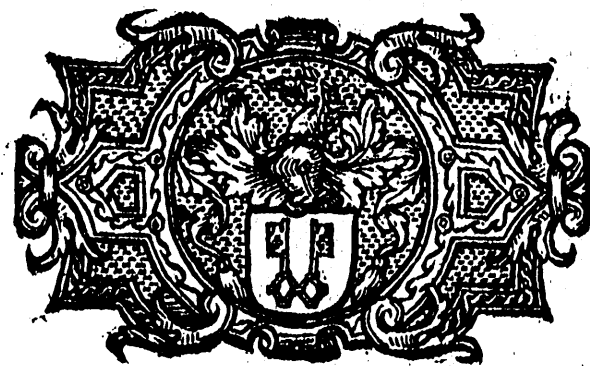
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MEDITATIONS
From
The CREATURES.

As it was preached in Alder-
manbury by *Thomas Taylor*
Dr. in Divinity.

The third Edition.

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MEDITATIONS
From
the CREATURES.

PSAL. 8.3.

*When I behold thine Heavens
even the workes of thy fin-
gers, the Moone and the
Starres which thou hast or-
dained: What is man (say I)
that thou art mindefull of
him? and the sonne of man
that thou visitest him? &c.*



Onsidering with my
selfe of the benefit
of Meditation, to-
gether with the
B difficulty

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difficulty of it, which hath almost worne it out of use amongst Christians; I thought fit to afford a little helpe, to lead up carefull Christians into this mount of Meditation: in which mount God will bee seene. And, who seeth the clogge of earth pressing downe his soule, and needeth not this pulley to fetch it up againe? And, who is sensible of legions of noysome lusts, that take up the heart as their proper habitation, and desireth not better guests? Who can discern the darkenesse of his minde, and not open his windowes, and hereby let in some light into his darke house? Now as the Lord himselfe, his Word and Decrees, are the principall object of ordinary Meditation: so are his workes, and execution of his decrees a fit object for extraordinary. Whereby wee have not onely a
sensuall

sensuall use of the Creatures, as the bruit beast: but a spirituall; and profit not onely our bodies, but our soules by them. Wherefore else did the Lord create them? not, as hee might, all in a moment, or in a day, but in sixe dayes: but that we might orderly meditate of them, even in particular, and gaine by them some sound knowledge, which might reflect upon the will and understanding. Wherefore hath his wisdome afforded such variety and plenty of them? but that we should be alwaies stored with matter of fruitfull Meditation, and never be without the object or matter of our owne good. And what else is the cause that many are so fruitlesse and barren in their course, and such wasters of precious time? but that they never intended to carry their mindes along in such profitable Meditations: which, where they
B 2 dwell,

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dwell, suffer not a man to be idle or unprofitable in the workes of the Lord. For, whereas a good man may bee cast into such circumstances, as hee cannot alway bee in good actions: yet were it hard, if he might not bee alwayes in some good Meditation, wherein to improve his time. But to the words.

This Psalme is inscribed to him that excelleth on Gittith: so also are 81. and 89. Psalmes. Some thinke

1. Because David compounded it in Gath, in his banishment.

2. Some, from a muscical instrument so called, because either invented or most used in Gath.

3. Some, from a kinde of melodious Verse, or Song.

4. But I thinke, it respecteth the time when this and those songs used to bee sung, namely,

at

at the time Haggittith, that is, of wine presses or vintage: Which feast was solemnly celebrated by the Israelites, in which feast, they especially prayed the name of God, for the great and manifold benefits conferred upon men. Which is the substance of this Psalme: wherein the Prophet extolleth the Majesty of God.

1. By contemplating the workes of nature, in the world, to the fifth verse.

2. By considering his worke of grace in gathering him a Church, from the miserable masse of mankinde. These two are the great workes, wherein the Lords greatnesse shineth out: The Creation and Redemption; the one written in the volume of the Creatures, the other in the volume of the Scriptures. In this Verse

1. Hee acknowledgeth himselfe

B 3

selfe

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selfe occupied in contemplation of the heavens & stars. Looketh on them not with the eyes of the body onely, but with the eye of faith.

2. That hee is led to God by them: For,

1. Hee saith not the heavens, but thine heavens: that is,

1. Of which thou art Maker.

2. Of which thou art the owner, possessor, and indweller. *Psalm 89. 12.* [Thine are the heavens, and thine is the earth.]

Gen. 14. 19. He is possessor of heaven and earth.

2. Hee addeth, the worke of thy fingers: hands and fingers are ascribed to God metaphorically. And here the heavens are called not the workes of his hands, but of his fingers: to note his singular industry, his exquisite workmanship and art, and also

also his speciall love & care over these workes.

3. The Moone & Starres thou hast established, that is, thou hast assigned every one their place, and confirmed them by a perpetuall law, written in their nature, & set them sure & firme bounds which they cannot passe.

3. In this contemplation hee casteth his eye upon himselfe, to cast himselfe low before God. When I consider both the greatness of the workman, & the largesse of the worke, and for whom they were framed; then in sense of my basenesse, thinke I, [Lord what is man, or the Son of man as thou visitest him? &c.] Not, what is Adam, which were no great matter of pride: but what is Enosh? fraile, mortall, infirme, and miserable man, now after his fall, that he should enjoy such a workmanship. From hence in generall observe.

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Obser. That the voice of the creatures is not to be banished out of the Church.

Reason 1. If all Scriptures bee profitable to teach and improve, then those that teach divine things from naturall.

Reas. 2. The Prophets and Apostles, and Christ himselfe were most in this kinde of instruction, by Parables and Similitudes: therefore Ministers and Pastors may doe the like.

Object. The Creatures onely convince; they convert not.

Sol. Must no doctrine of conviction be heard in the Church? the frivolous conceit of Antinomists is, Away with the Law, let it bee buried with Moses, and let no man know where, after men are once come to Christ. But though wee have a superiour doctrine and helpe in the Church, must we therefore refuse this?

Ob. The Heathens had this know-

knowledge, and it is fitter for them.

Sol. Must not wee know God in his workes, because the Heathens did? Nay, if they by his workes came to know the invisible things of God, may not wee much more, who by faith know, that the world was made by the Word of God? *Heb. 11. 2.*

2. Did not the Philosophers discourse of God, Justice, Vertue, the chiefe good, all moralitie, all civill and oeconomicall duties? must a Christian bee therefore locked up from them?

3. David was able to distinguish betweene things handled, and the manner of handling, betweene the same object, and differing considerations of them. So Christians consider the same heavens, earth, &c. but spiritually and supernaturally: as 1. to magnifie the Creator: 2. to excite our faith and confidence:

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3. to humble our selves.

Ob. Wee must desire to know and preach nothing but Christ, & him crucified: therefore away with all the Law, and all the preparatives to Christ; away with all rules and directions of the Law, when men are come to Christ.

Sol. Surely, these men must blot out a great deale of Scripture; as, all the creation, all the Law and explication of it, all the history, all the parables and similitudes, all that part of Scripture of the booke of Job, of Psalmes, of Prophets, wherein Gods Majesty is exalted in the creatures; or put in some more to it, to prohibit us the use, and shew us the exposition of them.

Use. As the Prophet here looketh fruitfully on the Heavens, the Sun, Moone and Starres: so must wee. So did hee also in *Psalme 19.* and, There is no language, tongue, or speech, where
them

their sound is not heard. Wee will not discourse of this voice, as if wee were in the Schoole of Plato, or Aristotle, or Tully *de natura deorum*; but as in the Schoole of Christ, taught by the Scriptures, and the spirit speaking in them. For,

1. Hath not the Lord in wisdom made them all?

2. Hath not hee furnished us with reason and discourse to draw out some straines of that excellent wisdom by them, and from them?

3. Shall Philosophers, Physicians, Naturalists, and Heathens learne many good lessons from them? and onely shall not Christians?

4. Have wee beene set to this Schoole ever since wee were of yeares of discretion, and have taken out no lessons of wisdom, out of this great Booke? Or shall wee still looke upon these
things

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things as on faire papers that have no letters? or as illiterated men looke upon written papers? but not able to reade a word?

Know then that we may learne somewhat

1. From all the Creatures in generall.
2. From every Creature in particular.

The voice of the creatures in generall.

I.

The voice of the Creatures in generall, is seene in these seven particulars.

All of them teach us to bewaile our rebellion against God, which all of them reprove. For they all stand in their kinde and station, in which God set them at first: The Sunne rejoyceth to runne his course; the Sea keepeth his bounds and bankes miraculously by the law of his Creation; the Earth stands upon his foundation; the Heavens keepe their motion; the Waters ebbe and flow; the very Cocke croweth

croweth and keepeth his appointed watch. Yea, all of them, further than mans sinne hath disordered them, keepe the Law of their Creation: But no man doth so; they have all strayed away from God. Man hath fallen from his station, hath stopped in all his supernaturall motion: Nay, a man regenerate, as great a Disciple as Peter, sleepeth and snorteth in grievous finnes, and cannot watch one houre with his Lord.

All of them teach us obedience and service unto God. Because,

1. All they serve the Lord by a perpetuall Law: the Heavens declare the glory of God, the Earth sheweth his handy worke: the Windes and Seas obey him; fire, snow, haile, vapours, stormy windes, fulfill his word. *Psal. 148. 8.* Frogs, grasshoppers, lice, come by armies at his

11.

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his Word: nay, they will runne from themselves, and cease to be themselves in obedience to him. The fire shall not burne if he say the word: the fluid Sea shall bee a solid wall and pavement: the River Jordan shall runne backe: nay, the Sun shall stand still, and goe backe ten degrees if hee will appoint him: Fire will descend, iron swimme, water ascend upward. Now, shall the senselesse creatures have yeares to heare their Creator, and man be deafe? Shall his Word binde them, and not us reasonable creatures to whom it is given?

2. They all serve us on condition that wee serve him; and willingly are ruled by us, no further than wee are ruled by him; and therefore are called the Lords hosts, souldiers, and armies, both to defend us in his service, and to force into ranke the rebellious and disobedient.

3. Their

3. Their service of us, is not a motive onely, but a measure of our service of him. For,

1. They serve us onely; so we ought him onely as our Lord.

2. Alwaies, night and day they never cease; so should wee serve the Lord.

3. They serve us freely without hope of reward; not forced, but most willingly by naturall instruction: so ought our obedience to our God, to bee free and chearefull.

4. They serve us with their best and sweetest gifts: the Sunne with comfort, influence of heate and light: the trees with their sweetest and ripest fruit: the beasts with their sweete, fat fleece, and sweetest life. So ought we the Lord with our best parts, affections, strength, indeavours, and whatsoever wee have, being his, of him, and from him.

5. They serve vs to the wa-
sting

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sting of themselves, and losse of their being. Wee ought also to serve our God, though to the losse of our selves, our dearest things and lives. Here are laymens books enough; every creature in his eye, hand, or use, readeth this lesson to him: I serve thee my Lord, serve thou thy Lord.

III.

All of them are the Lords professors, teaching us the invisible things of God, *Rom. 1. 20.*

1. His Eternity; for as they could not make themselves, so their maker must needs be before the things made; and consequently he must be eternall.

2. His Wisedome shineth in the exquisite, and artificiall cunning, in the frame of the smallest creature: As of the Bees or Ant. Consider the beauty, order of them all; and therein doth his wisdome shine: as also in the variety and distinction of them.

So

So in the excellent order and subordination of them one to the service of another. So that an heathen might say, In wisdome hee made them all: and shall be condemned, for not seeing the wisdome and art of the workeman.

3. His power: must not hee be Almighty, that makes all things of nothing; that hangeth the huge vastnesse of the earth as a ball without any pillar to support it; that can bound the sea with his word onely; that can sustaine such a masse of creatures?

4. His bountifulnesse and goodnesse. In his endowments of every creature in this kinde: In his large provision for them in their severall necessities: In making them all so good in themselves, and for our good and benefit. All of them call on us to taste & see how good God

is

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is in himselfe, who is so good in these: how good unto us hee will bee in his Pallace, who is so good to us in our prison. Here bee millions of Ministers and Apostles sent by GOD into the world, to preach unto men the inexhaust treasures of their Lords goodnesse, wisdom and power.

IV. All of them teach us to depend upon him, as they doe for their being and well-being, for their motion or station: *Psal. 145. 15.* [The eyes of all things waite on thee, and thou givest them food in due season:] and *Psal. 147. 9.* [The young Ravens cry to him for food, and hee feedeth them.] So should wee much more, not onely cast our care on him, and expect all our good from him; which is to knocke at the right doore, and to goe to the fountaine: but also receive all, as from his hand, not shifting for our selves

selves by unlawfull meanes, and taking our estate at the hand of the Divell, in lying, deceiving, usury, &c. and to returne all in a sober, moderate, and sanctified use unto him againe: for how unkindly did the Lord take it at Israels hands, that they should take his wooll, and flaxe, and oyle, and bestow it on Baals service? *Hos. 2. 8.* Thinke now with our selves how disdainfully wee should heare; The Oxe and Ass know their feeder, but wee doe not ours.

All of them teach us to love him, and returne all fruits of love to him; because

1. They are all fruits of his love, his love-tokens to us.

2. God loveth us better than all them, whom he made their Lords; and should not wee love him better than all creatures?

3. All threaten us failing in our love, for that turneth them against

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against us, and they become revengers of his quarrell: the sun will burne up our fruites, or deny his comfort and shine: the clouds will drown our fruits, the aire pinch them, and punish us.

4. Shall every creature, of which I am Lord, yeeld me fruit; my cattell, my trees, my grounds, and shall my love bee fruitlesse unto my Lord?

VI.

All of them teach us unitie, love and peace one with another: all of them doe conspire in unity, and harmony among themselves, for the good of the whole: they preferre the good of the universall before the particular good of themselves. Fire will descend, water will ascend, and all to hinder a rupture and *VACUUM* or emptinesse in nature.

They all have their severall contrary qualities and motions, but trouble not one another. The fire doth warme the aire; the
aire

aire preserveth the water; the water moysteneth, and maketh the earth fruitfull: one element is a good neighbour to another, though never so contrary in qualities. They have all their severall degrees and differences; some high, some low, some light, some darke. The sunne excelleth all the starres in splendour; the starres, one differ from another in glory: Gold excels amongst mettals. In the sensible creatures, the heart and vitals are most noble; yet nature hath so fowdred them together, as there is no disdain, no contention; but superiour creatures are bound to the inferiours, and communicate themselves in governing; the inferiour communicate in obeying. Nay, they all conspire to set forward mans happinesse and welfare. So ought we to preferre the publike, before the private good of our selves; and be helpfull

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full to one another in our severall wayes. Also in our severall degrees of superiority, and inferiority, bee beneficiall, and communicative of our gifts and services. All must conspire and consent to set forward the good of every man, and helpe up his happinesse, heavenly and earthly.

VII.

All of them teach us to grow weary of our present servitude of sinne, and waite for our promised deliverance, *Rom. 8. 22.* For if they shall sigh under our burthens, shall not wee our selves? shall wee bee more senselesse of our misery, than they bee of it? shall we goe on in sinne, which is so burthensome and dangerous? Aske the beasts, and they will tell thee, sinne is an intolerable burthen; and takest thou pleasure in sinne? Seest thou not the beasts wanting reason, saving themselves from danger, as they may? Balaams Ass will shun and
not

not goe forward against a drawn sword; and shall wee against the sword of the Lords hand drawne out against sinne?

Thus the creation of the world is a Scripture of God, and the voice of God in all the creatures, and by them all speaketh unto us alwayes, & every where.

The whole world is his booke: so many pages, as there are severall creatures; no page is empty, but full of lines; every quality of the creature, is a severall letter of these lines, and no letter without a part of Gods wisdom in it. Thus of the creatures voice in generall.

Now come wee to shew the voice of God in the particular creatures, which are so infinite in number, so divers in qualities, as this discourse would swell to an exceeding great volume: Therefore I will onely instance in some few particular creatures,

*Mundi
creatio,
Scriptu-
ra Dei
Clemens.*

*How to
meditate
of the crea-
tures.
Instance
shewed.*

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tures, which our Prophet here specifies in this Psalme, as the heavens, the sun, the moone, and starres, &c. Holding these instances sufficient samplers, whereby wee may patterne out our meditations; and as occasion shall serve, sucke out the sweet even out of every creature, as shall bee obvious: dealing as Geographers, who being to contract the great world in a little sheete, for great rivers, they draw small lines, and for great cities, onely a period.

1. In the heavens.

The first particular creature that the Prophet mentioneth as the subject of his meditation, is the heavens and firmament. In which, consider

- I. How the heavens and firmament have a voice to declare the glory of God, is plaine: Neither is there any speech or language where this voice is not heard, *Psal. 19. 3.* Let us see what lessons

lessons the Spirit will speake to us in them.

1. The height of the heavens above the earth, sheweth the infinite height and honour of him, whose standing house is above all aspectable heavens. How great is himselfe that thus stretcheth the heavens with his span? *Isay 40. 5.*

1. Their height.

2. This may put us in minde of the infinite mercy and goodnesse of God. So David in *Psal. 103. 3.* [How much higher the heavens are above the earth, so great is his goodnes to them that feare him.

3. This mindeth us of the majesty of God. Kings have their Palaces to shew their majesty and glory in: now heaven above is the pavillion of the Lord. *Psal. 104.* [His throne and seate is in heaven.]

2. The matter of them is so pure, subtile, and excellent, as

2. Their matter.

mans wit cannot reach: all this preacheth the purity and divinity of the workeman.

2. This may remember us how pure that heart and mansion must bee, wherein the Lord will dwell; our hearts are Gods heaven upon earth.

3. By this we may remember, *Revel. 21. 27.* No impure thing shall enter therein; nothing that worketh abominations or lyes. How ought we to study for purity and holinesse, to fit our selves for what God hath prepared for us?

3. Their forme.

3. The forme of the heavens being round and circular, this may minde us of,

1. The infinitenesse of the Maker: a circle is an infinite figure.

2. The perfection of God; a circle being the most perfect and capacious figure. Hence is said, [In my Fathers house are many mansions,]

mansions,] *John 14. 2.*

3. As the circle of the heavens is equally distant from the point and center of the earth: it may minde us that heaven is equally distant to all beleivers; and in every Nation, hee that feareth God, and worketh righteousnesse shall be accepted.

Acts 10.

4. The firmnesse & constancie of it, preach the truth and unchangeablenesse of him, whose onely word is the pillars on which this great frame leaneth, and though the mountaines are called the pillars of heaven, *Job 26. 11.* and *2. Sam. 21. 8.* because they so appeare to be, yet indeed, his word, power, and truth, are the pillars. This may undershore the faith of the Saints. Doth his truth uphold the great frame of the heavens, and will hee not uphold thee?

4. Their firmnesse.

2. This assureth us, heaven is a safe place to treasure in, no

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theefe nor robber can spoile or deprive vs of what we lay there: therefore the Latins hence call it *firmamentum*. Christ exhorteth us to treasure up in heaven, *Mat. 6.*

5. Their
motion.

5. The admirable rapt and swift motion, and revolution in 24. houres, which our conceits cannot follow; leadeth us to the mighty power of the first mover, who is far more swift and ready to helpe us in our needes: It guideth us also to that hand that ordereth the falling and moving of the sparowes, of our haire; and in whom we live and move.

2. It teacheth us to be as ready and constant in our motions, and duties, as they who never stand still, but are in perpetuall swift motion and execution of his will.

6. Medi-
tations
from them
as they are
still in our
eye.

6. What a number of gracious meditations doe the heavens afford a heart that doth desire to be fruitfull? I see every where
the

the heavens, Oh that is the place whither Christ ascended, and where he is, which must containe him till his second comming. And shall not my desires bee there?

2. It is a place from whence I expect a Saviour, and shall not my conversation be there where Christ is? *Col. 3.*

3. It is my owne countrey: there is my fathers house, my kindred, my home and inheritance, my brothers and sisters, my elder brother: shall not I then esteeme my selfe a stranger here and hasten thither?

4. It is the most goodly creature, and yet reserved for the fire of the great day, for mans sinne: should not I herein behold Gods infinite hatred of sin, who will set his owne house on fire for it? should not I hate and tremble at sinne? And seeing all this goodly frame shall bee dissolved,

ved, What manner of men ought we to be in all manner of conversation? 2. Pet. 3. 11. How richly might wee furnish our mindes with matter of fruitfull meditations, should wee thus looke on the heavens? Thus cannot the Heathens, nor never did.

II.
The light.

In the Heavens, behold the light, the first creature that God made, his first word was, *fiat lux*: that is, let there bee light. As a man that builds a house, hee first considereth how hee may let light into it; without which it were but a dungeon, and cave of darkenesse; and so had the whole world bin a Chaos and confused heape without the light from heaven. As no quality of bodies doth more resemble Divinity, than the light; so nothing in the world of naturall things, more aptly preacheth unto us the nature of God, who pleaseth to call himselfe light: dwelling in light
in-

inaccessable, yea being himselfe that essentiall, infinite, uncreated light, wherein is no darkenesse at all.

1. Doe I see the light, the nature of which no man can perfectly attaine? Job 38. 19. Tell me (saith God) if thou knowest this; Where is the way where light dwelleth? Doth not this carry my mind to God himselfe, that eternall and infinite light, whose infinite nature none could ever comprehend?

2. Doe I see that God made not the light for himselfe; for he being light it selfe, needed it not; but for me amongst others: how can I but admire his care and goodnesse? how can I choose but gather what light and comfort is in himselfe, who hath put so much in the creature? and rise by it to his Divinity, who (as light) so communicateth himselfe, that no man the lesse,
C 4 because

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because another more?

3. Doe I see the light made so pure, faire, cleare, and perfect, as nothing can pollute it? if it looketh into all filthinesse, it contracts none. How can I but herein see an excellent resemblance of Gods infinite purity and perfection of his essence, in his eternall love, in whom is no darkenesse, to whom nothing is more contrary than darkenesse? and though hee behold all darkenesse and order all confusion, yet in his divine understanding, is not any obscurity or dimnesse.

4. Doe I see the light freely and perpetually communicating it selfe, and diffusing it selfe to all men. I cannot but see GOD himselfe, alwayes abundantly communicating himselfe with all men, either by the light of nature which is the chiefe ornament of a man, or by the light of grace, which is the chiefe beauty
of

of a Christian, or by the light of glory: which is the chiefe and highest pitch of an happy & glorified man. *Jahn. 1. 9.*

5. Doe I see the light alway like it selfe, never communicating with darkenesse, but fighting against darkenesse, and irreconcilably resisting it? Even so may I conceive God to bee one, and alwayes the same, and ever like himselfe, in his nature, words, and actions; never favouring, but fighting against darkenesse, and works of darknesse, sins and corruptions, which are as clouds, sometime getting betweene the light and us, and hindering the comforts of his beames from us.

6. Doe I see light driving away darkenesse, distinguishing things that were involved in darkenesse; producing things out of darkenesse and secrecy? How can I but contemplate, that God, that eternall light, will one
dav

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day discover all things that are in darkenesse, and bring all secret workes, words, or thoughts, and set them in a cleare light: Nothing is so secret which shall not bee revealed; and God and his truth shall at last prevaile against all errour, powers, and wicked opposites set against it. Besides, light leadeth mee to Christ the light of the world: But of that more conveniently in handling the great light, the Sun.

7. How can I behold so noble a Creature without some use concerning my selfe?

1. Doe I see a man cannot see light without light? and can I know God without Gods teaching?

2. I see the more light the Creature hath, the more excellent, profitable, and usefull it is: the starres more excellent than stones for their light, the Sunne than the starres: Of stones, the
more

more light and shining, the more price, and value, and vertue are they of. So should I thinke of my selfe, the more light of God and grace I can get, sure the more worthy I am; and of others, as they excell in knowledge and grace so should I thinke of them, as of stars which differ in glory according to the proportion of their light.

3. I see the greater light obscure the lesse: and it is absurd to light a candle to the Sunne. Why then should I sticke unto worldly wisedome, worldly comforts, earthly contentments, which are as candles to the Sun: the great light of the day, of heavenly wisedome, spirituall comforts, durable contentments?

4. I see the light bringeth comfort and refreshing, draweth all eyes unto it, all Creatures follow it; but hatefull Bats and
Owles.

Owles, &c. When I have slept all night, the light wakeneth mee, raiseth mee to the actions of the day. Oh what joy bringeth it to the soule, when God sheweth himselfe lightsome to it? Should not his glorious light be the sweetest object of the eye of my soule? Why should not this light awaken my soule and raise mee from the sleepe of sin and lusts?

If light goe away, darkenesse succeedeth, in darkenesse none can see the way before him. O therefore why should not I say fast hold of the Lord, who is my light, and walke in his light, by which alone I can hold the plaine and direct way to eternall life and light?

5. I see the light in an instant presenting it self, as the lightning is suddenly dispersed from one side of heaven to another. If I be in darkenesse and desertion, the Lord, my light, can and will suddenly

suddenly present himselfe with joy and comfort to my soule.

6. Was I darkenesse? now I am light in the Lord, that is, enlightened by the Word of truth.
2. Enlightening others by holy instruction and conversation. Thus we must be wary & walke as in the light.

In the Heavens consider wee all the light bodies,

as the { 1. Sunne,
2. Moone,
3. Starres.

These rightly considered will bring much light to the eyes of the minde; and though we have in the Church a superiour meanes by the voyce of the Scriptures; yet wee may not despise the day breake, because the noone is brighter.

Quest. But why doth the Prophet here not mention the Sun, but the Moone and Stars?

Ans. When a man beholdeth

the

III.
The light
bodies.

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the Moone and Stars, the Sun is absent, as in the night. It seemes it was his manner to walke forth in the night season, to behold and contemplate the Lords greatnesse and goodnesse, in these servants of the night: and wee should finde some times of the night not unfruitfully spent, if wee would take up his practice. But if the glory of God shine so much in these obscure lights: and if David could so teach, and admonish his heart by them: how much more by the brightnesse of the Sunne? And if David by day looke upon the Heavens, as *Psalme 19. 1.* hee can say, The Heavens declare the glory of God, because in them he hath set a Tabernacle for the Sunne, which commeth forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, arrayed with nuptiall and glorious garments, turning all eyes towards him; and as a Gyant strong

strong and speedy to make a swift and long course, such as even our thoughts want wings to follow.

1. When I behold the Sunne in his wonderfull magnitude, being an hundred sixty and sixe times (at least) bigger than all the vast body of the earth; how can I choose but bee ledde unto the Lord? and say, Great is the Lord, great is his power, and there is no end of his greatnesse. For, how much greater is the Creator of the Sun and Heavens, than the things created.

1. His
magnitude.

2. When I behold the pulchritude and brightnesse of the Sunne, which is such as blindeth and destroyeth my sight, as too weak to behold it; what infinite light and brightnesse must I conceive in the Father of lights; in that bright and eternall Sunne, who never setteth, in whom is no shadow of change? who can
but

2. His
brightnesse.

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but here admire at the majesty of the Creatour?

3. His motion.

3. When I behold the Sun ever in his motion, never standing still but by miracle, never slackening his motion, but alwayes keeping the same pace; should not I learne to bee constant in my motion, never to bee idle, or make stop in my course or duty?

2. When I see that God himselfe and his Word is as the soule and spring of the Suns motion; hee commandeth him to come forth as a Gyant to run his race; hee can stop him in his race, and by a word command him to stand still, or runne backe: I must learne hereby to bee sure, that Gods word, as a soule, giveth life to my actions, my motions, and courses: I must move where his word bids me, I must stand, and be every thing at his word.

3. When I see the Sun in his motion keepe his bounds and zodiac,

diack, never going without his owne line, but precisely keeping his course, and not so much as slugging therein, must not I learne hence to containe my selfe within the bounds of my calling, and his command?

4. When I see the Sun in all his motions carry heate, light, comfort, and direction, and is the chiefe ornament of this inferiour world; and that he goeth nowhere but the world is better for him: should not I in all my course, strive to bee profitable? and by the light of my conversation bee comforting, directing, and shining to others in good workes? And when I see the Sun impart his light, and shine unpartially on good and bad, I must learne to doe good to all, good, bad, friends, enemies, envying my light to none, no more than the Sun doth his to any.

4. Doe I see the Sun set every

4. His setting.

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ry day, and rise every day? Salomon would have me see therein, my owne misery and vanity. *Eccles. i. 4.* Thus hath the sunne continued his course for many generations: But I rise but once, and have but one day of naturall life allotted mee: and if my selfe and others once set, and the night of my life bee come, there is no more returning to this life.

5. His e-
clipse.

5. I see this glorious sun sometime clouded, sometime eclipsed: and this calleth on mee to see the eclipse of heavenly light in my selfe: my sin hath reached unto heaven, and often inverteth even the order of nature in obscuring light bodies: for light bodies not to shine, is besides their nature: As in the death of Christ, God would let the world see her sinne, in crucifying the Sonne of God. Never see the sunne hide his comfortable presence,

sence, but confesse thou deservest never to see it any more.

6. I see sometime the sunne by his extreame heate, scorch and burne up the plants & fruits of the earth. Herein our Lord in the Parable, hath directed mans eye to behold the persecution and affliction of the Church, which often scorcheth the greenesse of grace, and maketh many professors wither and fall away. *Cant. i. 5.* I am blacke, for the sunne hath looked on me: and indeed,

6. His bur-
ning heate.

1. The sunne doth not more ordinarily or dayly arise, than persecution dayly waiteth on the Word.

2. As the sun-beames diffuse and disperse themselves into every place; and no man can hide himselfe from the heate of the sunne, *Psalme 19. 3.* So doe the beames of this sunne of persecution, dart into every place where
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the Sunne of grace shineth in the Church. No godly man can hide himselfe from the heate of this Sunne, but one time or other it will finde him out.

3. The Sunne hath not more beames to scorch, and dry up the moysture of the earth, than Sathan and the wicked world have to dry up the moysture of grace, where it is not found; sometimes by armies of inward and spirituall temptations, sometimes by open tyranny and hostility. That is not a true marke of a true Church, which Bellarmine designeth, outward splendor and prosperity, but the Crosse and Persecution.

7. But above all other, the sweetest use of the Sunne is to see in it Jesus Christ the Sunne of righteousness, *Mal. 4. 2. Rev. 1. 12.* For,

1. As there is but one Sunne in the heavens, so but one Sunne of

7. His resemblance to Christ the Sun of righteousness.

of righteousness, the onely begotten Son of God, *Joh. 1. 14.* and as this Sunne is not onely light, but the fountaine of light, and in it selfe a body of most surpassing and shining light: So Jesus Christ is light in his essence; an heavenly light as the Sunne, a light that none can reach or attaine, the light of the world; as the Sunne is a light in whom is no darknesse: so his face shineth as the brightest Sunne, *Rev. 1. 16.* and as in the midst of Planets, inlighteneth those that are about him.

2. I see of all creatures, the Sunne most admirable, all the world admireth it. A great part doe idolatrously adore it. And the whole Church must admire her Sunne; yea, let all the Angels of heaven adore him, as tenne thousand times passing the Sunne of the world. For,

1. That is but a meete creature,

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ture, though very glorious: but this is the mighty God, the maker of that.

2. That serveth the outward man in things of this life. But this the inward man in things spirituall and eternall.

3. That riseth and shineth on good and bad: but this onely on the good, onely on his Jerusalem, *Esay. 60. 1.*

4. That rising, obscureth the starres, but this inlighteneth all beleivers, who by his presence shine as lightes in the worlds darknesse.

5. That may bee eclipsed and darkened, and though it rise every day, it every day setteth: but this sunne of the Church beeing eternall, shall never lose or lessen his shine and glory; and once risen, shall never set more. *Esay. 60. 20.*

3. I admire the sunne for his purity and piercing nature; the sunne

sun is *πυρόφθαλμος*, of many eyes, who disperfeth from himselfe on all sides, infinite beames of light, as so many eyes on every creature: and none can hide it selfe from this great eye of the world; and so pure, that looking on all filthinesse, contracteth none. But how much more am I to admire the surpassing purity of Christ, whose most piercing eye none can avoide: for all things are naked to him, with whom we have to deale: and so pure is this sun, that though hee was borne of sinners, lived and conversed with sinners, yea, died with and for sinners, and as a sinner, yet no man could justly accuse him of sin, but hee remained in his nature and life purer than the sun in his strength. And must not the Saints imitate this their Sun, though they live amongst sinners, and see much foule behaviour amongst men? yet to keepe

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keepe themselves pure in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

4. I behold the sunne, a most powerfull creature; for though his body bee in heaven, yet his comfortable beames reach to the extreame parts of the earth. May I not now behold Jesus Christ beeing in heaven bodily, and ascended thither in that his flesh; yet by his spirit, grace, and power, present with his Church, in all parts of the world unto the end? *Mat. 28.20.* And as the Sun rising, commeth forth as a Gyant to run his course, and maketh such haste in his way, as no created force can hinder him: So this powerfull Sunne of his Church, maketh haste in his way to her; all created power of men and Angels, cannot hinder him. [He skippeth over mountaines & hils in his haste unto her.]

Cant. 2.8.

5. What comfort have we by
the

the sunne; and shall we not have the same in Christ?

1. Doth the sun drive away the darkenesse of the night? and doth not Christ the thicke mists of sinnes, the darkenesse of ignorance, errour, wrath, damnation, and of hell it selfe? But for the sun of the world, were a perpetuall night; much more by the absence of this sunne of righteousnesse, were it so in the Church.

2. Doth the sun by his beames give direction for this naturall life? &c. So doth Jesus Christ by his beames of wisdom and grace, directing us, worke in us spirituall and heavenly life. What can a man doe commendably without the sun? So what is that we can doe, that can be acceptable without Christ?

3. Is the sun under God, the life, quickner, and comforter of the world, otherwise dead? & see

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we

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we not Christ quickning all the elect, dead in sins and trespasses, warming them with beames of his love, which as sunne-beames, doe reflect backe on himselve?

4. Doth the sun make and preserve the seasons of the yeare, Summer, Winter, Spring, Autumne? See Jesus Christ, having all seasons in his hand; the seetime of grace here, that harvest of glory hereafter. Hee appointeth the summer and prosperity of his Church, and changeth it into a sharp winter of adversity. All vicissitudes and changes of the Church, are appointed by his wisdom, *Daniel 2. 21.* Whence wee may learne a number of duties. As;

1. Doe all creatures rejoyce in the sun, but hatefull Bats and Owles? doe they follow the sun, thrive and prosper in the sunne, turne after the sun, as Mari-gold, Dazy, Turnesole? &c. Should not

new

new creatures draw neere and follow this Sun to prosper in it? Doe we open our windowes and doores to take in the beams of the sun, and not open the doores of our hearts for the Word, that the beames from Christ may enlighten and warme us?

2. When the sun riseth, men goe forth to labour. When Christ our sun is risen, and present in his offers and ordinances, we must worke and walke before the night come.

3. Men in the sun walke uprightly: in a misty night to stumble and fall, is more hurt than shame; but to fall at noone, is headdinesse or distemper. So to sinne against such a light, in the sun-shine of the Gospell, is farre more shamefull, than in the night.

4. See we men in the Sun doe decent things? ashamed of things unseemely or unlawfull,

D 2

because

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because all eyes are on them, and themselves are in the light? Should not this teach Christians to walke in their sunne? Let the theefe cover himselfe with darknesse: the adulterer watch for the twilight: Papists, Atheists, &c. persevere to do shamefull things without blushing. Let our Sun make us ashamed of uncomely or unconscionable things. Let not men see us runne naked in the sun-shine.

5. Wee see the greater light drownes the lesse, and the sunne obscures all other lights: and if men have the sunne, they care but little for the moone. Let it teach the soule, cloathed with Jesus Christ the sun, to tread the moon under feete, *Revel. 12. 1.* that is, things earthly and mutable: shall not the sunne-shine darken the moone? Zacheus, so soone as he got Christ into his heart, presently giveth halfe his goods to
the

the poore, and with the other halfe makes restitution. But men that admire the moone, are surely in the night still. If the sunne appeareth, the moone dis-appeareth.

Now come we to consider the Moone, that other eye of the world, and Queene of heaven. Grace will draw much light to our soules out of this.

The consideration thereof will leade us to see our owne impurity; for though in it there bee brightnesse, clearenesse, &c. yet all is darknesse compared with the sunne. So whatsoever excellency there is in us, it is meere darknesse in respect of Christ, the fountaine of all excellencies. This use Job made thereof, *cap. 25. 4, 5.* The moone and stars are not pure in his sight, how much lesse man, a worme? &c.

In beholding the moone, I am taught to consider the image,
of

The Moon.

I.

II.

*The Moone
resembleth
the Church*

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of the Church on earth. *Cant.*
6.10. [Who is faire as the moon.]

1. As the moone borroweth all her light from the sun, whereby shee shineth: so doth the Church receive all her endowments from Christ the sonne of righteousness, and fountaine of light, in whom they are originally. Hence Christ is called the light, *John 1.* that is, that very light and true light; the Church being onely a witnessse of this light in him, as the moone is of the sun. This consideration may teach us two things.

1. It may humble us, in that all the light wee have, it is but borrowed: wee of our selves are but darkenesse. What have wee which we have not received?

2. It teacheth us to depend so farre on the light of the Church, as wee are sure shee borroweth her light of Christ. Therefore to give the Church authority

authority over the Scriptures, is as if one should send the sunne to the moone for light; therefore the voice of the Church is not the formall object of faith.

2. The moone somewhat doth resemble the sunne in her light, motion, figure, and influence, and vertue over hearbes and plants, &c. The moone also is led by the sunne, shee followeth his circle. So every member of Christ should stand in conformity to the Sonne of God; wee should be fruitfull and profitable in our motions, and follow the example of Christ, who is gone before us.

3. As there is in the moone many changes, eclipfes, sometime darke, sometime light; never looking on inferiour bodies, with one face: Constant in nothing, but inconstancy. So the Church on earth is oft changed, sometime seeming more glorious,

Gal. 1. 4.

*Ecclesi
sua habet
tempora,
viz. perse-
cutionis,
pacis, &c.
Amb. Hex.
lib. 4. cap. 2.*

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ous, sometimes lesse : as the sun of rightcousnesse, Jesus Christ is farther or nearer unto it in his gracious presence and spirit. This meditation, Saint Ambrose did much ruminare.

Ecclesia videtur ut luna deficere, sed non deficit: obumbrari potest, deficere non potest. Orbis lune integer manet cum totus non fulget, &c.

4. As the moone when shee appeareth not unto us, but is in darkenesse, hath both light in her selfe, and light and beauty from the sunne: So the Church may be obscured, and disappear to our sight; but at the same time it hath not onely a beeing, but a communion, and enlightening from Christ her sun: Christ is as a faithfull and skilfull Pilote, the Church as a ship, the world as the Sea; and Christ hath promised not to leave his Church in this dangerous Sea, but to bring her to the haven safe. Saint Ambrose followeth this meditation thus. The moone may have a diminution of her light, but not of her body: the Orbe of the moone

moone is whole, though the shine be but in one quarter: So it is also with the Church.

In the moone I am taught to set a resemblance of this world and earthly things, *Revelat. 12. 1.* there the moone is taken for earthly, wordly things.

1. In respect of inferiority, the moone is the lowest of all celestiall bodies. So the world, and externall blessings of it, are the least and lowest of all; and there is no comparison betweene heavenly and earthly things: So ought wee to esteeme of the things of this world, and give them the lowest place in our affections. Hence the woman, that is, the Church, *Revel. 12. 1.* when shee was cloathed with the sunne, that is, when she had Christ his righteousnesse applyed unto her by faith; shee trod the moone under her feete; that is, shee held all sublunary things, worldly.

III. *The Moone resembleth this world in.*

x. *Inferioritie.*

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worldly, earthly things, base and low in her affections.

2. Mutability.

2. In respect of mutability and change: if shee increase now, straight shee doth decrease as fast: if she be now in the full, she is presently in the waine, shee is never seene two nights with one face: even so is the fraile estate and inconstant condition of all sublunary things. Now, to day full and increased in wealth, honour, pleasure; to morrow in the waine, and no appearance of it: to day flourishing in health, strength, to morrow faded and fallen. Are not all worldly things of as round a figure as the moone, unstable and unconstant? 1. *John* 2. 17. [The world passeth away and the lust of it:] so doth the lustre of it, and whatsoever is desirable in it.

3. Obscuritie.

3. In respect of her obscurity and spots: for the moone in her chiefe brightnesse is clouded and

and speckled with blacke spots, a darkenesse within her selfe obscureth her: So are all worldly things: the greatest wealth in the world is spotted with many wants, cares, feares; the highest glory with sadde aduersity, and some sense of misery. The most choice and delicate pleasures are but bitter-sweete, moth-eaten, and very alluring baites, covering mortall hookes: here is no light without some darkenesse.

4. Use.

4. In respect of her end and use. For by Gods ordinance the Moone is set to governe the night, as the Sun to rule the day: So the profits, and pleasures, and earthly comforts, serve onely for our use and benefit while we are in the night of this world, and vaile of darkenesse; compassed and clouded with vailles of sinne and calamities, the fruits thereof.

5. The

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5. Disap-
pearing.

5. The Sunne rising, I see the Moone disappare, and there is no neede of her shine: so when the blessed Sun of righteousness shall rise in his glory upon us, and wee shall walke in that blessed and celestially light, there is no more need of earthly comforts, that blessed Sunne shall drowne and swallow up all the lights of these candles, and of the Moone it selfe. As that holy woman and martyr going to her death said, I am now going to a place where money beareth no mastery. *Rev. 21. 23.* that City hath no need of the worlds Sun nor Moone; for the glory of God and the Lambe are the light of it.

Of the
starres.

Now wee proceed to the Starres of the firmament, the handmaidens of the Queens of heaven, who in their nature call us all to the knowledge of God. And by the teaching of grace, they

they all may be as the starre that led the wise men to Christ. In them let us consider,

The unconceivable magnitude of them, the swiftnesse of their motion, their secret, but admirable efficacie and influence; and all this to be put forth or restrained at the Lords pleasure, must needs argue him to be wise of heart, and strong of power, *Job 9. Verses 4. 7. 9, 10.* to order so great things, and unsearchable, yea, marvelous things without number. Adde hereunto the multitude of them, which thou canst not number: the force and power of them, as mighty armies, for the execution of the Lords justice and mercy, which thou canst not reach. All this leadeth us into the sense of our owne imperfection in knowledge to apprehend his perfections, that calleth them all by their names. And hence wee are called,

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Ps. 136. 8.

called both to acknowledge the power of him that made Pleiades and Orion, *Amos* 5. 8. as also to praise his goodnesse, that made the great lights; the Sun to governe the day, the Moone and Starres to rule the night.

This might stirre up our faith concerning the multitudes of beleivers in the Kingdome of Christ, which shall bee as the starres of the firmament, *Genes.* 22. 17.

This consideration the Lord useth as an argument to confirm the faith of his Church, *Jerem.* 33. 22. Therefore is the Lord worthy of praise, *Psal.* 136. 7.

II. The stars keepe their courses, and motions, and orbes constantly, and unweariably: they suffer no eclipses in themselves as the greater lights doe: they never deny their light unto others. By which both our faith may be strengthened, and our duty

duty directed. The former the Lord urgeth to confirme our faith in the stability, and truth of his promises. *Jer.* 31. 35. If the courses of the moone and starres can be broken, then may the seed of Israel cease. The latter directeth us,

I. To stand in our owne orbes with constancy, doing our owne duty as fixed starres. *Jude* 13. not as the shooting or wandring starres, that is, unconstant and unstable men, carried about with every winde of temptation, doctrine, lust: But we must hold on unweariably in doing our dutie.

2. To shine in grace without eclipses, so farre as is possible.

3. To deny to none our helpe and light that stand in need.

We see one starre differ from another in magnitude, claritie, glory and motion: yet one hindereth not another, one envieth not

III.

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not at another. Which noteth

1. The divers degrees of grace here. For the Saints have diversity of gifts, which maketh them as stars, divers in their use and shining, site and magnitude: yet must not bee adverse, not envious, not in pride advance our selves above others; the stars doe not so. The stars have each one their glory: but none of them from themselves. And what hast thou which thou hast not received?

2. The divers degrees of glory hereafter, proved by the Apostle, 1. Cor. 15. 41. What a sweet elevation of the soule were it, in beholding the starres, to put our selves in minde of that heavenly glory, wherewith wee shall bee clothed? as the Scripture doth. *Dan. 12. 3.* They that turne many to righteousnes shall shine as the starres.

IV.

Wee see the stars shine brightest

test in darkest nights, to teach and excite us in darkest nights of triall, afflictions, and dangers, most to manifest our light of faith, patience, fortitude, and graces. Where should fortitude demonstrate it selfe, but in the field and combate? Where doe spices send forth their odoriferous smells, but in the mortar under the pestle?

In every starre we must labour to see Jesus Christ, who calleth himselfe

1. The morning starre, *Revel. 2. 28.* And the bright morning starre, *Rev. 21. 16.* He that overcommeth, I will give him the morning starre, that is, I will communicate my selfe wholly unto him, and make him conformable unto mee in my glory: Alwayes the proportion of head and members observed.

The morning star is the most bright and shining of all the starres

V.

Christ the
morning
starre.

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starres in heaven: see in it the most excellent light, and celestial glory of Christ, wherein the Lord Jesus excelleth all men and Angels, as farre as the morning starre, all the starres of heaven.

The morning starre communicateth all his light to the world. In this see Christ communicating to the world of beleevers all light of Grace and Glory.

The morning starre dispelleth the nights darkenesse. Hence conceive Christ that day starre rising in our hearts, *2. Pet. 1. 19.* who by the light of his Prophecticall and Apostolicall Word, his Spirit accompanying the same, dispelleth the darkenesse of ignorance and errors, wherein wee were wrapped in the night of sinne, and unregenerate estate.

The morning starre is *anteambul, Solis*, and fitly said to be the Suns harbenger, and fore-runner of

of perfect day: Conceive Christ our morning Star, not onely dispelling and dispersing with the beames of his light, the darkenesse of this present life, which is a night in comparison: But is a pledge of our perfect day, and future glory, who in the morning of our common resurrection will shew himselfe to all his Saints in surpassing Glory and Majesty, above the perfect light of a thousand Sunnes. Thus wee see the use of the Starres in their naturall use excellent and usefull: but in spirituall and supernaturall farre more to the Christian and Beleever.

2. Behold Christ termed the starre of Jacob, *Num. 24. 17.* Here observe,

1. The originall of a starre is from heaven, not earth: I must conceive of Christ otherwise than of other men, which have their originall on earth. But he is

*Christ the
starre of
Iacob.*

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is the Lord from heaven, as God he is from heaven.

2. Yet a starre of Jacob. As a man of the posterity of Jacob: so I must conceive him both God and man.

3. This starre first riseth in the horizon of Judea and Jerusalem, see *Psal.* 60. 1. and carrieth his light round about to all nations, as the starres.

4. The use of this starre, is to be a load-starre to helpe us to our haven, that as Marriners on the Sea behold the Pole-star to saile safely, and avoid rockes and shelves: So must wee on the Sea of this world looke at this starre, and feare no shipwracke.

Now come we to consider the inferiour heavens, and in these

consider the } Clouds,
 } Aire,
 } Windes.

The Clouds have a voice to teach us, not onely that mighty voice

Of the clouds.

voice of thunder, which made proud Pharaoh confesse his owne wickednesse, and begge prayers, as *Exodus* 9. 21. but also a silent voice, every of them being as that pillar of the cloud, which was a signe of Gods presence amongst his people, as *Exod.* 13. 21. yea, every cloud herein like the cloud of the Tabernacle, whereof is said, the glory of God appeared in the cloud, *Exodus* 16. 10. I may say as *Job* 37. 14. Harken and give heede to these wondrous workes of God.

Who is the Father of raine, *Job* 38. 28. that is, besides the Lord? what power is there that bindes the waters in the thicke clouds, so that the cloud breaketh not? *Job* 26. 29. And if thou dost know who it is that maketh the clouds to labour to water the earth, and who it is that turneth them about by his government,

Cloudes lead us to God.

I.

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vernment to doe whatsoever hee commands them on the world for punishment or mercy? yet dost thou know how God disposeth them? the variety of them, the wondrous workes of him that is perfect in knowledge? *Job 37. from 11. to 17.*

Canst thou tell how the bottles of heaven are filled? how they being of infinite weight and magnitude, are hung as in a balance in the soft ayre, without any other stay than his Word? How the windowes of Heaven bee open to raine downe fatnesse and plenty? *Psal. 65. 12.* Surely, in these things the Lord left not himselfe without witness amongst the Gentiles in giving them rain & fruitful seasons, *Act. 14. 17.* and much lesse among us in the Church, to whom by the teaching of grace, they proclaim his wisdom, power, justice, mercy, as also his glory and majesty,

jesty, who rideth on the clouds as on a horse, and turneth them what way soever he pleaseth.

As they leade us to God, so they serve to afford us many excellent meditations.

I I.

1. Doe I see the raine fall from the clouds to water the earth, & returneth not in vaine? *Isa. 55. 10.* I must see the worke of the word preached upon my earthly heart, for the moystening, softening, and changing of my heart; for preparing it to fruitfulness, and preserving it in fruitfulness: for it shall never bee in vaine, but doth the worke for which it is sent. Never was a greater plague in Israel, than when for three yeares and a halfe it rained not on the earth in Ahabs time: a greater plague cannot bee in this life, than when this raine falleth not to the moystening the furrowes of our hearts.

2. Doe I see the clouds to bee
as

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as a shadow, and cover against the heate, parching and burning of the sun: I must herein behold the Lords protection, as a covering cloud, or shadow, saving his Saints from the sunne of affliction and persecution; which will burne up those that are not defended. *Psal. 91. 1.* They shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Here is another manner of shadow than Jonah's gourd. I will run under this shadow, (saith David, *Psal. 121. 6.*) and the sunne shall not smite me by day.

3. Doe I see the raine-bow in the clouds? I must meditate of Gods faithfulness, who hath set it as a signe of mercy and patience: yea, I may carry my mind beyond the temporall; and conceive of Gods everlasting mercy in Christ, in whom I come to the throne of grace, which is described to have a raine-bow round

round about it, *Rev. 4. 3.*

4. When I see the cloud disperse it selfe upon all grounds, and raines fall on good and bad; I must learne to distill my goodness to all in generall; good and bad, friends and enemies. And so show my selfe a childe of my heavenly Father, who letteth his raine fall on the just and unjust, *Mat. 5. 45.*

5. When I see the dewes of small raines, which is the joy and life of flowers; I must in them behold Jesus Christ, who compareth himselfe unto dew. *Hosea 14. 5.* I will be as a dew to Israel: the dew presenteth it selfe in faire weather: so Christ is neare, when Gods face and favour is calme and pacified.

The dew refresheth and reviveth withering medowes: so Christ by his grace, refresheth and quickeneth drie and dead hearts, remitting sinnes, and infu-

Dewes resemble
Christ.

1

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sing

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ing moysture of grace and holinesse, to make them fruitfull in all good workes.

3

The dewes temper and allay great heate and parching of the sunne: so doth Christ coole the burning heate of his Fathers wrath; and quencheth the fiery darts of the divell, cooleth the heate of persecution; and all, that wee may become and continue fruitfull. Without these dewes from heaven, is no expectation of fruits in earth. And without Christ and his grace, we can doe nothing at all.

4

6. I see a morning dew and suddaine raine soone dryed up: I must looke to the soundnesse of my grace, faith, and comfort, that it bee not as an hasty raine, or an heritage hastily gotten: that it bee not as the righteousnesse of Ephraim; *Hos. 6. 4.* as a morning dew, by sun-rising suddenly vanished and gone, when

is

is most need of it. Hence learne to strive against hypocrisie.

7. In beholding the clouds, what a prophetable meditation were it to consider them as the glorious charriot of Christ, wherein hee ascended to heaven, and was taken up in the cloude from the sight of his Disciples, *Acts 1. 9.* And wherein hee shall descend in great glory and majesty to judge the quicke and dead, *Matth. 26. 64.* As also how serviceable the cloudes shall bee unto us, as unto our head; when in the last day we shall bee taken up into the cloudes to meete the Lord in the ayre, and so shall bee ever with him, *1 Thes. 4. 17.*

Now come wee to the ayre, which is not in vaine, but may also leade us to God; for it hath expresse impressions of his fingers. For,

It truely and really subsisteth, though it bee not seene: so hath

E 2

also

Of the ayre.

I.
Leading to
God many
wayes.

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also the Lord the maker thereof,
a reall but invisible exiltence.

II.

It leadeth us by the hand, to
the ubiquitous of GOD; for it is
every where, and in every open
place and secret, in townes and
fields, and widest deserts; it is in
the bowels of the earth, in the
bottome of the Sea, within us,
without us. Even so must I con-
ceive God present, at and in all
places, immediately compas-
sing me every where as the ayre.
Nay, hath place in my heart and
minde, that as surely as I con-
tinually draw the ayre into my
body, heart, and braines: so is
the Lord much more present
within mee. This will not let me
shut him up in heaven, whose
essence is not more there, than
in this inferiour world; though
his glory & majesty shine clearer
there. Neither to thinke him far
absent, nor by walls, doores, win-
dowes, closets or chambers, kept
from

from seeing or knowing my
wayes; no more than ayre: but
I shall continually stand in awe,
and feare to offend him.

I see the ayre, the preserver
of my life, that without it, I can-
not continue any whie, but pre-
sently perish; so as wee may say
of it truely, as the Apostle of God
himselſe: In it under God wee
live, move, and have our being,
Acts 17. 28.

The ayre of it selfe is darke,
but yet admitteth the sun-beames
to penetrate it, and lighten it. So
must I, a Chaos of darkensse in
my selfe by nature, become a re-
ceptacle of light, and receive the
beames of grace, from the sunne
of grace and righteousnesse.

As no creature wanteth a
voyce to teach man; so no man
ought to be ashamed to learne, by
whatsoever God will teach him:
Amongst the rest, there is not
almost any naturall thing which

III.

IV.

Of the
windes.

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poynteth us out to more spirituall use, nor affordeth more sweet matter of divine Meditation, than the wordes, which both leade us unto God, and into our selves, both for humiliation and direction.

I. It hath an apt resemblance and image of God in it.

windes resemble God.

1. In the subtilenesse and invisibilitie of the nature of it. No man ever saw the winde: thou canst not see it, saith Christ; the way of the winde is not knowne: so no man saw God at any time, and his wayes are unsearchable, and past finding out. The swiftnesse of the windes may note Gods omni-presence, who is said to ride on the wings of the winde.

2. In powerfull motion and efficacy of it; which no man can hinder or resist. For this invisible creature, hath a mighty force in, tearing, rending, driving
afore

afore it whatsoever standeth in the way; trees, houses, nay, the raging seas, the ponderous cloudes, yea, the rockes and mountaines, and is able to shake the very foundations of the earth: And who seeth not here a lively resemblance of the omnipotent power of God, whose mighty arme worketh so irresistably in all the things of nature, yea, of grace, rending the hard rockes of our hearts, and casting downe loftie mountaines, exalted against grace? Who art thou that canst resist the Spirit in man?

3. In the freedome of his motion, the winde bloweth where it listeth, *Job. 3. 7.* No man can make the winde blow, nor leave blowing, but it mooveth it selfe, and resteth freely. And herein should wee cast our eyes on the Lords free working, as in all the workes of nature, so of
E 4 grace.

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grace. He will have mercy where he will; and harden whom hee will. He will send the windes of his grace, and they shall heare the sound of it in this region, not in that; in this congregation, not in another; yea, this heart in the same congregation shall have the sound, and not another. Hee will blow a stronger gale, a fuller blast, a greater measure of grace on some, than on another. Hee may doe with his owne as hee will. And all things workes the same spirit to every one severally, as hee will, 1. Cor. 12. 11.

4. In the secrecy of his working of mighty works: the winds are invisible, but worke wonders in every place open and secret; but in a most still and silent manner: for thou knowest not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. Whereby the Lord leadeth us to the secret worke of the spirit in
our

our conversion. As the subtile winde pierceth by the tenuitie of his substance into every cranny, and no man can keepe it out: so doth the Spirit of God blow into the very secrets of thy very conscience. The woman at the Well wondered how this winde could so pierce her, which brought a sound of all that ever thee did. Who is acquainted with the worke of grace in himselfe; and hath not wondred after how unspeakeable a manner this winde hath blowne upon him?

1. What a still voice he heard behinde him, directing him, and perswading him to the good way. But stronger than all power of men or Angels; and still followed with inward motion, to provoke him further.

2. How after a secret and unknowne manner, these gracious windes have dissolved the clouds

E 5 of

*Motum sci-
mus, mo-
tum nesci-
mus.*

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of iniquitie, and watered the earth of his heart with raines of repentance, & godly sorrow; and ever since have kept his heart softened and humble.

3. He knoweth not how; but these blessed windes have dispersed the noysome vapours and corruptions of his heart: scattered the cloudes of ignorance, error, infidelity, doubts, feares, and cleared the heavens to him; that now hee chearefully beholdeth the sun-shine of Gods favour in Christ, and walketh in the light and comfort of it; and seeth nothing. Why? but hee heareth a still voyce and sound of this winde, the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing the pardon of his sinnes, and his assurance of acceptance and reconciliati-on.

4. Hee findeth a secret voyce and sound of the winde, making requests in him, with sighes which

which cannot be expressed. This secret breath and inspiration of the Spirit, giveth him breath, and maketh him frequent and fervent in prayers; to which hee was as heavie as a Beare to the stake.

5. He findeth the sound of this winde, not onely as the voyce behinde him, but feeleth the power of it as a strong blast behinde him, to drive him forward in the wayes of God. And whereas before hee was as the shippe that lay wind-bound: now having a faire gayle of winde, he is as a shippe under saile, that goeth as swift as an arrow: Hee can comfortably pray, reade, heare, meditate, admonish, watch as an active man in godlinesse: As a bird flying with the winde, flyeth swifter. In all these things wee may and must admire the greatnesse of God, who hath laid up the windes in his treasury, and

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II.
Winds
lead us in-
to our
selves.

and rideth upon the wings of the wind, *Psal.* 104. 3. and made them the wheels of his charriot.

The consideration of the winds, leads us into our selves; and that,

1. For humiliation: For who knoweth the nature of the wind, the place of the winde, the way of the winde? He would have us humble, not onely by the ignorance of minde in divine things, but even in naturall.

2. See in the winde our owne vanity. Lord what is man? *Job* 7. 7. Remember that my life is but a winde.

1. Inconstant as the winde, a short puffe which none can lay faster hold on, than on the winde: all humane things are as light as the winde.

2. Suddenly past away from us; even sometime so soone as it commeth.

3. It

3. It returneth not againe; no more than the winde. *Psal.* 78. 39. He remembered, they were as winde passed, not returning againe.

2. For instruction: shall so fierce a creature bee at a becke, and shall not I?

1. I see this mighty creature obedient and subject to GOD. *Mat.* 8. 26. Who is this to whom winds and seas obey? Doe they testifie to Christ that hee is the Sonne of God, and shall not I heare his Word, and acknowledge him my Lord and my God?

2. When I see a boysterous winde, and tempest arise, and carry away light things; as feathers, straw, chaffe: I must take notice of the miserable estate of wicked men, on whom destruction and feare shall come as a whirle-winde, *Prov.* 1. 27. They shall

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shall be driven away as chaffe & feathers in the winde, *Psal. 1. Job 21. 18.* The wicked shall bee as stubble before the winde, and as chaffe which the storme carrieth away. This was Jeremies meditation, *Cap. 18. 17.*

3. When I see or heare great windes doe great harmes, to blow downe houses over mens heads, unroote oakes, and strong trees: I must now looke to my foundation and rooting in grace, be sure I bee founded on a rocke, that when raines fall, windes blow, and stormes beate against my house, it may stand, *Matth. 7. 27.* If wee builde our walls with untempered mortar, it shall fall; a great shower shall come, and hailestones shall cause it to fall; and a stormie winde shall breake it, *Ezek. 13. 11, 12.*

4. When I see reedes and rushes tossed and shaken with every winde, I must looke to my sta-

stablishing in the doctrine and profession of godlinesse, that I bee not carried about with every winde of libertine doctrine, every puffe of temptation, every frivolous humane invention, every frowne of superiours, every threatning of the times, every crosse occasion, as a man unstable in the grounds of received truth. John Baptist was not as a reede shaken with the winde; as many unsettled heads, carried into all novelties, conceits, and opinions, that no giddie conceit can bee broached, but shall finde favourers and admirers of things in true judgement to bee explored: but labour for soundnesse within. We have seene many faire Apples and Peares hanging on a tree lovely in sun-shine, which in the next whistling winde quite fall off, because they were rotten or unsound at the core. Wee are yet in some calme, but the storme riseth

riseth suddenly, wee know not how soone wee shall bee shaken, many prognosticks of foule and stormie weather are upon us. Let us bee wise and fettle our selves in sinceritie of heart, and sound love of the truth, which shall hold us on our foundation, when others shall be overturned.

Thus the Prophet, having sufficiently by the eyes of his minde, drawne much matter of meditation from the heavens: he casteth downe his eyes on the earth; in the last verse of this Psalme, and with admiration, saith, O Lord, how wonderfull is thy name in all the earth! Nothing, that not onely the heavens, but also the earth, being rightly considered, may offer unto us abundant matter of divine meditation. Seeing then the whole hosts of heaven and earth are before thee, cōplaine not thou wantest

test matter wheron to meditate.

Come then, and see what great works the Lord hath done in the earth, and hearken what a loud voyce it hath to lead us unto God and our selves. See *Job 12. 7.*

Consider what barres, or engines, what mighty foundations uphold the massie substance of the whole earth and sea, that the infinite weight should not fall through the soft, thin, and compassing ayre, where no man can make a feather hang without some stay. This was Jobs meditation, which ledde him to the infinite power of GOD, who hangeth the earth upon nothing, *Job 26. 7.* The whole frame of the heavens hath no other collumes than the ayre, the ayre leaneth on the earth, the earth hangeth on nothing but the mightie and powerfull Word of God.

From the unmoveable strength
and

The Earth.

I.

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and stability of the earth, whose foundation cannot be shaken: we may fruitfully meditate of the stable and undoubted truth, and certainty of the Word of the Lord, both in his promises, and menaces: *Isay 48. 13.* My hand hath laid the foundation of the earth: Therefore heare, O Jacob, he will doe his will in thee, O Babel, &c. *Psalme 125. 1, 2.* They that trust in the Lord shall bee as Mount Sion, and stand for ever. As the hills compasse Jerusalem, so doth the Lord his people.

III.

From the earth which is full of the goodnesse of the Lord, *Psalme 33.*

1. Wee behold the riches of God, whose footstoolle it is.

2. The bountifulnesse of God, who hath given it to the sons of men, *Psalme 115. 16.* and made it our table, prepared and furnished with all dainty foode; our house in which wee dwell, and a kinde

kinde and liberall mother, affording us all her riches and store at all times.

3. The providence of God, who cloatheth the grasse, and decketh the earth: and will hee not much more them that feare him? *Mat. 6.*

4. The justice of God in the barrenesse of the earth; A fruit of our fall and sin, and a just curse of the barrenesse of our owne hearts: A fruitfull land hee turneth to barrenesse for the sinnes of the inhabitants.

From the earth wee may raise sundry instructions concerning our selves:

IV.

1. Matter of humility: It being our common Mother whence we come, and whither wee must returne. Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt returne.

The same in the fading of flowers, withering of grasse, and the mowing it downe, put
David

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David in minde of the fading prosperitie, and unavoydable mortalitie of men, *Psalme 90. 6, 7.* Our matter is not iron, steele, &c. but grasse. All flesh is grasse. This sense of our mortality should quicken the care of immortality.

2. Heavenly-mindednes. Seeing the earth is but a pricke or a point in comparison of heaven, and so should it bee unto us: who would lose an infinite for a finite, a thing of nothing? See wee not the earth hiding the wealth of it within the bowels, all the rich mettals, minerals, and costly stones? And why conceive not we hence their nature? Her selfe would cover these from our eyes, that we should not set our hearts on them, nor they hinder us from better things.

3. Love and labour after Gods Word. I see what paines men will take to digge and fetch out mettals,

metals, as silver, gold, &c. why should not I digge deepe for wisdom, and esteeme Gods Word as gold tryed by the fire, worth much paines and labour? *Prov. 2. 4.*

4. I see the earth receiving seed, returne abundant fruit, according to the cost and paines of him that manureth it. Oh where is the thankfull returne of fruits of grace, which I should bring unto God for his cost, and manuring of mee? Every good heart and good ground must doe so, *Matth. 13. 8.* Every faithfull soule, as a fat soyle, must bee in some proportion answerable to the meanes, lest beeing often watered, and remaining fruitlesse, we bee neere a curse, &c. *Heb. 6. 7.*

We come now to particulars. Looke upon the Plants and Trees.

1. And put thy selfe in mind, to

*Of trees
and plants.*

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to become a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.

2. Thou seest the tree stand firme upon his rootes against windes and tempests: see thou bee firmly rooted on Christ, lest the blast of persecution shake thee.

3. Thou seest the Tree well planted not onely greene, but fruitfull. Art not thou as a tree planted by the rivers of waters, in Gods garden and orchard of grace? Hath not hee warmed thy heart with his Sunne of grace? and watered thy soyle with fruitfull showers? Doest thou now, not onely become truely regenerate, moystened with the Spirit of grace, to make thee flourish and looke greene; but also bringest pleasant fruits unto the Lord? else looke for the axe to hew thee downe, and cast thee into the fire.

4. I

4. I see a good Tree bringeth not fruits onely, but good fruits, and an evill Tree bringeth forth no good fruit: No man gathereth grapes on thistles. By my fruits must I bee knowne. A good and a bad Tree may bring forth leaves, and armes, and greenenesse alike: so good and bad have many externall things alike in common, as wealth, name, beauty; yea, hearing, speaking, profession. But good fruits from good juyce and sap, are proper to good and living rootes: I must examine the goodnesse of my fruites.

5. I see fruitfull Trees the more laden, the more they encline and bow themselves downe neare the ground, offering their fruites to every gatherer: So must I, the more fruitfull in grace, bee the more humble, and free, and beneficiall to every one

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one that can gather any thing from me.

6. What particular can I behold, and not gather some spirituall fruit? See I a Palme Tree? It is an image of a just man thriving by afflictions. The more weight the more growing, *Psalme 92. 13.* Looke I upon a Vine? Christ compareth himselfe to a Vine, *John 15.* and the faithfull to the Branches set into him. How many Meditations may one draw hence? Nay, the very Thornes and Briars teach us to beware of earthly and choaking cares, *Luke 8. 14.* and pleasures which choake the Word, that the seede of God cannot thrive in their hearts; besides the sight of our sinne, in the abundance of them.

Aske the Beasts, and every one of thē will teach thee something. *Job 12. 7.* All the beasts on a thousand

Of the
Beasts.

and hills are the Lords, *Mal. 50.*

In the Lyon, behold the Lyon of the tribe of Judah, who foyleth the roaring Lyon.

In a Lambe, see the Lambe of God that taketh away the sinnes of the world.

In a Sheepe, note the wandering disposition, *Isay 53. 6.* And the dutie to heare the voyce of Christ the shepheard, and follow him, *Job. 10.*

In a Goate, a stinking creature, see the image of a reprobate, who shall bee set on the left hand, *Mat. 25. 33.*

In the Oxe and Ass, to know our Master that feedeth us, *Isay. 1.*

In the Horse and Mule, indocible creatures, who cannot bee taught by rules, but by over-fulling & bridling; see our untaught and refractarie nature: therefore let us not bee like them, *Psal. 32. 9.*

F

In

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In the little Emmet, see what providence and diligence thou art to use; while time lasteth to lay up for time to come. Avoide lazinesse, and idlenesse, and know thy season, *Prov. 6. 6.*

In the contemptible Worme, trodden under foote: Consider the humility of Christ, who was as a worme and no man, *Psal. 22.* Let the same minde bee in you. Thus shall wee use them as their Lords, when we see the Lord in them. And while wee cannot be beyond them in strength of body, quicknesse of senses, and swiftnesse of foote, wee shall be beyond them in discourse of minde, and in divine and spirituall contemplation.

Of the
Birds.

Looke on the Birds upon and about the earth, and consider from them all;

1. The providence of GOD they reape not, nor spin, and yet are fed: a Sparrow falleth not to

the ground, without his will, *Mat. 6. 26.* [Are not we better than they?]

2. In the Dove, we have a lesson of patience, meeknesse, innocency, simplicity, without wrath or revenge, *Matth. 10. 16.* David mourned for sinne, like a Dove.

3. The Turtle, Crane, and Swallow, teach us wisdom to know our seasons, *Jer. 8. 7.* Let us learne to know the day of our visitation.

4. The Eagle, to flie unto Christ where ever he be, in earth or heaven, *Mat. 24. 28.*

5. The Henne brooding her chickens, puts us in minde of Gods mercy, in gathering us, and stretching the wing of his mercy over us, *Matthew 23. 27.* Wee have no safety but under him; wee lye open to prey and spoyle without him.

6. The Raven of the valley

must put children in minde of their dutie towards their Parents, lest they picke out their eyes, *Prov. 30. 17.*

7. The nests of birds must put us in minde of our Saviours poverty, *Matth. 8. 20.* If we want such conveniences, wee must be content as he was.

8. The taking of silly birds in a net or snare, must put us in minde, to beware of halving to sinne, which is as if a bird should hasten unto the snare, *Prov. 7. 23.*

Of the Sea and Fishes.

1. Looke upon the sea and fishes, and behold the wonders of God in the deepe.

Who is it, who calmeth the sea by his power, and by his understanding smiteth the pride of it? who measureth the face of the waters with a compasse? *Job 26. 10, 11.* and keepeth it from flowing over the earth?

2. The sea is like unto God, an inexhaust fountaine; for when

so many fouds and rivers are run out, as so many thousand millions of creatures enjoy; it is not diminished, but remaineth in the same fulnesse; for this is the river of God that is full of waters, *Psal. 65.* So the Lord is a sea of grace; the more hee giveth, himselfe hath never the lesse.

3. I see all rivers runne into the sea, and pay a tribute to that whence they doe receive: So, as all is from God, all must returne to him by way of thankfulness.

4. I see the sea obey his maker, keepe his bounds and banks; I must feare God, shew my obedience, stand in my vocation, *Jer. 5. 22.*

5. I see in the sea a mappe of the misery of mans life; it floweth and ebbeth; seldome in the sea quiet, but after a little calme, a tempest riseth suddenly. So I must looke for stormes upon this sea of so troublesome a world.

F 3 6. In

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6. In the Sea are innumerable creatures, small and great: there walke the Shippes, there play the Leviathans; some of which have beene found six hundred foote long, and three hundred and sixtie foote broad: all which sheweth the power, wisdom, and providence of GOD: for all these doe waite on thee O Lord, *Psal. 104. 25.*

7. In the Fishes, it will not bee fruitlesse to consider what miracles God hath wrought by them. Jonah saved by a fish: two fishes multiplied by Christ, to feede five thousand men, besides women and children: how Christ made himselfe knowne by a great draught of fishes, *Matth. 17. 27.*

8. When I see fishes caught in a net, or hooke unawares; Consider the folly of men taken by baites of pleasure; and thinke no more of their time, but are taken

taken, as fishes, in an evill net, *Eccles. 9. 12.*

9. When I see a Fisher cast in his nets to catch fish, I may enter into a large field of the net of the Gospel, cast into the sea, *Matth. 13. 47.* and of Ministers: the fishers of men, *Matth. 4. 19.* and of the pulling men out of the sea of the world, by the power and preaching of the Gospel; as is shewed in that Prophetical vision of *Ezekiel. 17. 9, 10.*

Thus have wee shewed how all earthly things may minister heavenly meditations to heavenly mindes. How a good man will & may easily fall out of earthly talke into heavenly: for when hee mindeth heaven, and the carnall man earth; both are in their elements. The fire of the one, namely the spirituall man, heaveth him upward, and the earth of the other presseth him downe, and burieth him alive.

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*Vox Dei
est in om-
nibus, per
omnia, de
omnibus, &
ad omnia,
loquens no-
biscum
semper &
ubique.*

We have seene by the former discourse, that no man wanteth Preachers to helpe him towards GOD. Every Creature may bee a Preacher to him, in whom the spirit first inwardly preacheth: and wee may take notice how barren and fruitlesse our mindes are, and how frochte our speeches by our owne defect. God is not wanting to us neither in his Word, nor in his Workes, neither in the Scriptures, nor in the Creatures; but is still teaching, counselling, admonishing, and justly condemning those that in both remaine untaught. Wee will conclude the Treatise with the words of Job; Behold these are a part of his wayes, but how little a portion heare wee of him? and who can understand his fearefull power?

Job 26.14.

FINIS.

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