

# On Fryday the xii. of Aprill. 1555.

## *The fift Sermon upon the first Chapter.*

19 Then departed we from Horeb, and went through the wilderness which is great and terrible, as you have seene, along the way of the hil of the Amorrhites, as the Lord our God had commaunded us, and we came to Cades barne.

20 And I said unto you, come ye to the Hil of the Amorrhites which the Lord our God doth give us.

21 Behold, the Lord thy God setteth the Land before thee: Goe up and posse it as the Lord the God of thy fathers hath saide unto thee. Shrinke not, neither be afraide.



In this text Moses rehearseth, after what sort he had exhorted the people to take possession of the Lande that God had promised them, and by what meanes he would have encouraged them to it. And that is to the ende that the people shoulde knowe their owne unthankfulnessse and naughtinesse, in rejecting the benefite that was offered unto them, and in that they obeyed not God, but were given too much to their owne sensualitie. This then which Moses doth heere, is as it were an upbraiding of the Jewes, to the end they might knowe howe it was long of none but themselves, that they injoyed Gods blessing no sooner: and that they might afterwarde yeelde themselves more pliable, and not bee so wilfull any more in their owne frowardnesse, but simple submit themselves to God as soone as they shoulde heare him speake. That is in effect the intent of Moses.

Nevertheless he interlaceth also another matter therewithall: which is, that he telleth the people they be so much the lesse to be excused, because they had had experience of Gods goodnessse, in that he

had led them with his mightie hande. For, their passing through the horrible and dreadfull desert, was not without the assistance of a singular and unaccustomed power of God: where as they notwithstanding forgetting the goodnessse which they had felt, and which they ought to have borne in minde for ever, did grudge at God and became wilfull, and would not goe forwarde when he was redie to have led them to the end. And that is the cause why Moses saith expresly, *that they had seene*. As if hee should say, you wrought even against your naturall senses, when you went not on as your God commaunded you. The reason is this. So long as you suffered your selves to bee governed by his hand, and so long as you walked in the way that hee appointed you: did you not even see with your eyes, that hee made you to overcome all hardnesse? Was not the wilderness wherthrough you passed, a verie gulfe? And yet notwithstanding you scaped out of it. And how came that to passe, but by the wonderfull working of your God among you? Seeing that you heard his voyce, you were sure that hee was come among you. Then said I unto you, now is there no more for us to doe, but to injoy the lande which

our God hath assigned to us for our heritage. Goe, let us fight, our God hath promised it us, and hee will not disappoint us. Wee knowe he hath wrought mightily for us hitherto, and surely he will goe through with his worke. These and such other things did I alledge unto you: And yet you followed not them as you ought to have done. Wherefore acknowledge your unthankfulness in that you refused to enter into the inheritance which God had promised to your fathers, and which he hath prepared for you.

Nowe by the way, the first good lesson that wee have to gather here, is that forasmuch as God hath already uttered his goodnes towards us in making us to feele his blessing: wee be the more worthy to be blamed, if we rest not wholly upon him, or put not our whole trust in him to walk on boldly and without douting. For although God had never shewed himselfe to our experience: yet ought wee to give credite to his holie worde. And it is good reason that we shoulde do him the honour to beleve whatsoever he saith or speaketh unto us: for as much as he is faithfull, and his worde is better tryed than either gold or silver, as it is saide in the Psalme<sup>1</sup>. And therefore if there were no more but Gods uttering of his worde with his owne mouth: it were ynough to condemne the whole world for their disobeying thereof. But seeing that God hath confirmed his sayings by deeds, and thath shewed us as it were to our eyesight, that his making of his promises unto us is not in vaine, but hee hath made us to feele the thinges with our hands; so as we know in effect what his power is, and that it never faileth those which are his: if after all this teaching we fall to checking still, and be so stiffenecked as we will not bow to submit our selves to the thinges that hee speaketh, nor have any will to obey him: I pray you doth not the greater condemnation lye

upon us? What is to be done then? Let every of us consider advisedly the good turnes that God hath done him, and let him marke them and note them that hee may beare them in minde. Verie well, God hath succored mee as such a pinch, I have felt his helpe in such a case, I have beene ayded at his hande, and he hath made me to perceiue his mightie power after such and such fashion. After this manner must wee make rehearsall of Gods benefites, and of his helping of us all the time of our life. And after as hee hath uttered himselfe unto us, so must we be the more confirmed to trust to his promises, and to rest wholly upon them. Herewithal let us be stablished in invincible constancie, to goe which way soever he leadeth us, without feare of any distresse. Why so? For my God which hath never forsaken me to this day, will not give me over now. As I have felt [hertofore] that he giveth strength to those that are his: so am I sure that hee will reach me his hande and succour me still. So then there is no more for me to doe, but to commit my selfe unto him. I see that this thing and that thing may cumber me, there are a number of temptations which may make me turne heade: but yet forasmuch as my God hath succored me hitherto at my neede: I doubt not but hee will doe the like unto the ende. Thus yee see that the way for us to eschewe the blame of unthankfulness, is to call Gods benefites oftentimes to our remembrance, thereby to strengthen our selves still in trust that he will never faile us unto the end. Also this wil serve to make us overcome al temptations: and although the diuel have never so many meanes and stoppes to turne us out of the right way, yet shall we not cease to goe on still. And why? Because the hope which wee shall have gathered, of Gods former making of us to feele his goodnesse, will serve to carie us over all tempestes in the middes of the sea: it will be as a boate, or as a shippe, or as a bridge to convey us safely over. To bee

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<sup>1</sup> Psalm 12:6

short, wee shall have wherewith to strengthen us continually, so wee shutte not our eyes at the assistance which God sheweth us dayly. Thus you see generally what wee have to gather uppon this saying of Moses. Anon the matters shall bee layde out more particularly by similitudes.

Let us proceede to the things that he addeth: namely, that being come to the hill of the Amorrhites, he saide, *Let us possesse the Lande which the Lord our God and the God of our fathers promised us. For it is here before us*, that is to saye, at our commaundement, as hee had saide afore, for this is but a repetition of that which wee have seene already. And heere Moses setteth forth the promise that God had made unto the people, to the end to assure them of the Land in such wise, as they shoulde bee out of all doubt that it was their owne. And why? Because it had bene promised them of God. Beholde (saith he), thy God ment not to lye to thee, not to beguile thee: and therefore thou maist assure thy selfe, that the thing which hee hath spoken shalbe performed. Marke that for one point.

Neverthesse, to the ende that the people may the better understande, that they were not to possesse the lande for their owne deserts sake: hee telleth them expresly, *It is the God of your fathers* that doth it. For the Lande was promised as well to Abraham as to Isaac and Jacob, before the Jewes which then lived, were borne. Thereby then are they put in minde, that they had not deserved such a benefite at Gods hande, but that it proceeded wholly of his free goodnesse. And so much the more were they to blame, in that they had felt such experience of Gods goodnesse, and their sinne also was so much the heinouser, in that they acknowledged not the mercie that he had used towards them. That then is the effect of Moseses meaning heere.

But we have to note herewithal that although the promise was then growen olde,

yet had it not lost his force: neither ceased it to live still, though Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were deade. True it is that the promise which had bene made, was not spoken to them that were presently alive at this time: [they to whome it was spoken] that is go wit, Abraham, and the Patriarks, were all deceased. But Gods promise and his truth die not with men, they have not the course of a transitoritie and flightfull live as wee have. Therefore let us marke well, that whereas God had promised the lande to Abraham, for him, his heires, and successors that shoulde descende of his race: although Abraham was rotten in the earth, and they that followed him together with all the Patriarks were consumed to powder and dust: yet the worde that GOD spake continued still, and forewent no whit at al of his force. This (I tell you) is a point which wee ought to marke well. For it is nowe long ago since the Lawe was given: so that if we have an eye to the oldenesse thereof, it will seeme to us to bee an outworne and deade thing. About a two thousand yeares after that, the Gospel was published to the worlde: and wee see that manie yeares, yea many hundred yeares are passed since. Then if wee shoulde measure Gods trueth by time: wee might thinke it to bee a thing as good as buried and quite and cleane forgotten.

Moreover they that first caryed the Gospell abrode, are deade long agoe: but yet must we beare in minde, that Gods trueth is everlasting, and that although men be corruptible and passe and vanish away: yet the doctrine of salvation abydeth alwayes unappayred, so as the force thereof abateth not at all. That is it (say I) which we have to beare in minde. For although it was in olde time that GOD spake to Moses and the Prophetes, and although it bee nowe long agoe since the Gospel was delyvered to the Apostles: yet must we receive the doctrine thereof nowadayes, as being in full force still. And that so much the rather, in respect

of this saying of the Apostle<sup>2</sup>, that our Lorde Jesus Christe hath made the way fresh by his bloude. They that lived under the Lawe and the Prophetes ought not to have despised the trueth that had beene manifested to their fathers, though it was done long time before: and yet did not God discover it so openly to them as hee doth to us. It is not for nought then that the Apostle saieth, that the way which Jesus Christe make, is freshe. And why sayes hee so? His meaning is, that the bloude of our Lorde Jesus Christ cannot drye nor putrifie, but is alwayes freshe in remembrance before God, to the ende that wee shoulde bee assured of his trueth, which hee hath sealed with his death and passion. Seeing then that we have such a pledge, we ought to be so much the forwarder to receive Gods truth, forasmuch as wee perceive that the force and vertue thereof dureth for ever.

Nowe must wee marke further howe Moses saieth heere, *Thy God hath promised thee the lande. It is before thee, possesse it.* By these wordes he betokeneth, that wee must rest wholly uppon that which God saith, and not stande scanning after our owne fancies. For if men content not themselves with the thinges that God speaketh to them: where shall they seeke for greater certeintie? Or when they have sought it, where shall they finde it? But it is an offering of too greate wrong to our GOD, when wee bee not satisfied with his uttering of his will, and with his warranting of the same unto us. For if theruppon wee bee still wavering and doubtfull: what else is such unbeliefe, but a replying against Gods trueth as though hee were not faithful, or as though he went about to abuse us by alluring us with vaine hope? So then let us marke well, that all our life long wee must content our selves with Gods worde, and when we have it wee must followe it without seeking any further.

For looke howe many doubttes and mistrustes wee conceive, so many overthwart nippes and privie upbraydings doe wee give unto GOD, as who shoulde say there were no certaintie in his saying. But wee knowe that nothing is more peculiar to him than his trueth. And so (as much as in us lyeth) wee make it a thing of nothing. Therefore it is a verie profitable warning when hee saieth, *The Lorde thy God hath promised thee the Lande.* For hee speaketh still in generall, meaning that we must all our life long hold this rule of sticking simply to the word of God. Anon the things shalbe laide foorth particularly, as I saide afore.

But let us marke well, that Moses having alledged Gods promise, and having saide that the Lande was at the people commaundement, because GOD ment not to fayle in the perfourmance of the thing that hee had once promised: addeth afterwarde, *Enter into it and take possession of it.* Wherein hee sheweth us that although GOD performe in us al that hee hath saide: yet must not wee on our side bee idle, nor bee as blockes of wood, but wee must offer our selves to his service. For albeit that wee cannot stirre one finger to doe wel: yet hath GOD made us instrumentes whereby hee will worke.

Therefore wee must goe forwarde when hee commaundeth us, and wee must indever to apply all our members and wits to obey him. True it is (as I saide) that men are utterly unprofitable, yea and that their will goeth cleane backe from that which God commaundeth: but yet for all that, God ceaseth not to give us willingnesse, and when hee hath given us willingnesse, hee giveth us also performance, as Saint Paul avoucheth to the Philippians<sup>3</sup>: and therewithall hee maketh us to doe it with feare and carefulnesse. When as Saint Paul saith, *Doe ye*, and also, *It is God that doeth*: those two thinges seeme to bee contraries:

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<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 10:10

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<sup>3</sup> Philippians 2:13

but they bee not. For Gods working is in such wise, as hee imputeth to himselfe the thinges that hee doth in us: and yet for all that, hee will not have us to bee slothfull and to fall a sleepe, but that everye of us should indeavour himselfe. Let us learne then that whensoever God promiseth us any thing, it is his office to accomlishe the whole.

Nevertheless he will have us to take paynes and to straine our selves, yea even us which are utterly unprofitable. And having given us his power, hee will have us indeavour to make the thing available which he hath bestowed uppon us, and to make it to bee profitable. That then is the thing which we have to note here.

Howbeit, there withall there is also the conclusion which Moses maketh: namely when as hee saith, *Feare not, bee not dismayed*. And hereby hee doth us to understande, that although we bee armed and fenced with Gods promises, so as wee ought to bee sufficiently resolved, that hee will guide us unto the ende: yet shall wee have manie occasions to make us grudge and repyne, so as we might swarve aside from the right way, or utterly forsake it, if we had not constancie to overcome all the stoppes and lettes that the divell thrusteth in our wayes: for of nature we be fearefull. True it is that in many things we be but too hardie. When any fond thing is to be attempted foolishly: in that case men neede not to be hartened, for they be but too bold already, to attempt this and that, and to mount above the cloudes as thee say. But when GOD shoulde be followed whithersoever hee calleth us: our eyes runne heere and there, up and downe, wee bee at our wittes ende, yea and if a flye doe but whiske before our eyes or a strawe stirre at our feete: by and by wee are at a stoppe. Nowe seeing wee have this vice in our nature, let us determine to fight on al sides against this fond fearefulness, to the ende wee bee not helde backe from following God

whithersoever hee commaundeth us, but that wee may overcome all the temptations of Satan, though he bee never so wylie in forging and framing of innumerable occasions in that behalfe, to turne us away from our calling. And therefore let us marke this warning given to the Jewes by Moses. For it is a warning to us as well as it was to them, that it is impossible for us to come thither as god calleth us, if wee overcome not this fearefullnesse and dismayednesse, that is to say, if wee fight not against all the incumberances that sathan can set before our eyes to make us afraide. Therefore it standeth us on hande to bee armed with strength from above. Thus you see howe wee ought to apply this streyne to our instruction.

Nowe the thinges will bee the plainer and better understooke, if we make a similitude betweene the lande that was promised to the children of Israel, and the kingdome of God whereunto wee bee called. For in good sooth, the land of Chanaan was but as a figure and earnestpenny of the kingdome of heaven. Had the auncient fathers setled their mindes uppon the lande which they sawe: they had had a verie poore rest and weake stay, for in verie deede they injoyed it not of all their life, they did but onely travell through it as straungers and wayfarers<sup>4</sup>. Wee see that Abraham had not one foote of it in possession, saving that hee purchased a little peece to burie his wife in, no hee had not so much as water to drinke. Jacob was banished out of it a great parte of his life. Isaac and all the Patriarks had but their walke in it, they never possessed one foote of the land which God had given for an heritage to them and their issue. Wee must needes conclude then that the auncient fathers did not passe through this visible land, and that their acknowledging of it for their inheritance was after such a sorte, as they tended alwayes towards

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<sup>4</sup> Hebrews 11:9 & 13

heaven, and that was the marke which they aimed at. Seeing it is so, wee must make a similitude betweene this lande, and the inheritance wherunto GOD calleth us, as it hath bene purchased for us by our Lorde Jesus Christ.

Whereas hee saith *That God made the people to passe through a horrible and dreadfull wilderness*: the same belongeth unto us also, if wee consider in what state God founde us, and whence hee hath drawen us. For are wee not all damned and forlorne by nature? Hath not the divell a tyrannous dominion over us, from whence no man can deliver himselfe by his owne power? Even so, if wee consider where GOD seeketh us when hee calleth us to him: [wee shall finde that] the wilderness wherethrough the Jewes passed is not so dreadfull and terrible, as is the damnation wherein wee were. For wee bee in bondage of sinne, wee bee under the thraldome of death, satan reigneth over us, and is king and prince of the whole worlde. Seeing then that GOD riddeth us out of so miserable slaverie, and setteth us a libertie by his holy spirite: is it not all one as if hee shoulde make us way through the gulfes of hell? Yes: for wee bee there in verie deede, and wee cannot come at Jesus Christ, except we be brought out of the dungeons of death. Nowe then, if there were no more but this, that God hath ridde us from the curse which was brought uppon us by Adam, and wherein wee are all of us fast shut and locked up untill hee have pitie uppon us: the experience of that one point ought to make us perceive his goodnesse. And if there were no more but that: it ought to give us courage to followe him, and to give our selves wholly unto him. For if wee bee slouthful, there is no excuse for us, because his goodnesse is sufficiently warranted unto us, and it is long of none but our selves that wee bee not fully resolved and perswaded that hee will goe through with the thing that hee hath befunne. And that it is so, if everie

of us bethought himselfe well, wee shoulde finde that God by infinite wayes made us to overcome the thinges that seemed impossible. But what? To set forth our owne valiant deedes, wee can well ynough alledge this and that, and our memorie is but too good. And though it bee but a thing of nothing that wee have done, yet wee can skill to magnifie it and to make great reportes of it. Loe howe men can bee quicke ynough to remember all that ever they have done in their life, that may set forth their owne glorie: but in the meane whyle wee doe wickedly forget the benefites of GOD. And yet worketh hee in such wise towards us, as ought to quicken us up to acknowledge his goodnesse, or else on the contrarie parte wee doe but thrust all under foote. Hee shall have delivered us from manie after delays, and hee shall have made us to have passed manie greate lettes, so as wee may have thought that wee had bene utterly shut out and fordone, and hee shall have reached us his hand: and yet for all that, wee never thinke of it againe. Nowe then, where as wee see men to bee rechlesse and slothfull in following GOD, it is because they forget his benefites which they have had proofe of, and become like the Jewes. And therefore it behoveth us all to acknowledge our fault in this behalfe, and to mourne before God, and to seeke redresse of it.

Thus yee see howe wee ought to put this text in ure by similitude: that is to wit, when the promises of the Gospell are set forth to bring us to the kingdome of heaven: let us consider whereat God hath begunne in us, by what meanes he hath brought us to him, and howe hee hath strengthened us, to the intent to bring us out of the damnation, whereof wee are founde worthy by too too apparant conviction. Nowe therefore if wee thinke there upon, and consider thus with ourselves, beholde, our God hath made us partakers of his power, we have had too apparent experience therof, he hath

delivered us out of the gulfe of hel, he hath ridde us out of the bonds of the divell and of death: let us not doubt but hee will alwayes continue like himselfe hereafter, and hold out to the end.

Furthermore let us also marke well this saying in this text: *The God of thy fathers hath promised thee the Lande. Beholde therefore, it is as thy commaundement, enter into it and take possession of it.* The meaning is that wee shoulde yeelde so much honour to Gods truth, as to bee fully and troughtly resolved in our selves, that inasmuch as hee hath adopted us to his children, our inheritance is certaine and infallible in heaven. For to what purpose is the Gospell preached unto us, but to make us knowe that GOD is our father, and that wee being become his children by his free adopting of us, shoulde bee assured that the kingdome of heaven belongeth unto us<sup>5</sup>? And in verie deede for the same cause is the Gospell called the kingdome of heaven forasmuch as it openeth the gate unto us, to the ende that wee nowadayes shoulde not doubt but that GOD avoweth us to bee his heires. But wee must have a further consideration of the inheritance that God giveth us, than of all the benefites that Moses speakes of. For it stode the Jewes on hande to have helde themselves still to the thing that had beene spoken to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But now is the Gospel another warrant unto us. For God is called the father, not onely of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but also of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our head in such wise, that being once unyted unto him, we become partakers of his own substance and life, and [therefore] we must not doubt but that the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven belongeth unto us. Nowe then, like as Moses said unto the Jewes, *The God of your fathers*: so must this voyce founde in our eares, The GOD and father of our Lorde

Jesus Christ, hath not onely promised us the kingdome of heaven, but also given us wherewith to assure our selves the better of it. For we have the performance and effect thereof, in that our Lord Jesus Christ suffered death, to recover us the inheritance, whereof wee were bereft and dipossessed in the person of our father Adam. Nowe then wee see after what sort we ought to looke upon this doctrine: that is to wit, that although wee bee unhappie wretches, although wee deserve to be rejected of our GOD, although there bee nothing but cursednesse in us, and although that by nature wee bee plunged in the gulfe of hell: yet notwithstanding, seeing that God hath adopted us in our Lorde Jesus Christ, and made us all one with him by faith: wee neede not doubt but we be heires of the kingdom of heaven. And why? For GOD cannot lye, and forasmuch as hee is unchangeable, wee have sufficient warrant that wee shall not bee disappointed by putting our trust in him. Againe, wee have our Lorde Jesus Christe, who is the mediatour betweene God and men, and hee hath not onely taken solemne recognisances as a publike notarie: but also accomplished the thinges that were promised on the behalfe of GOD his father. He hath signed the evidence in such wise with his owne bloude, as wee see he hath payed that which hee owed not, and that which he was not to bee chared withall so then let us have this stedfast assurednesse with us, that GOD avoweth us for his children, and consequently that wee bee heires of eternall life. Howbeit, let us alwayes take that assurednesse out of the Gospell, accordingly as we see that Moses leadeth the Jewes thither.

True it is that wee must not forget the heavenly power that was uttered everie where in the rying againe of our Lorde Jesus Christe. But howe might we applie such a benefite to our selves, or how could we enjoy it, if it were not by faith? Therefore

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<sup>5</sup> Matthew 13:24 and 31

like as our Lorde Jesus Christ hath purchaced us the kingdome of heaven by his death and passion: so is it his will that comfort shoulde bee given us nowadayes by his Gospell, where hee witnesseth unto us that all that ever hee did was for our sakes and for our welfare: so that having that once, and being assured thereof, we may enjoy the benefite that was purchased for us.

But yet in the meane while, we must doe so much honour to the Gospell, as to beholde that thing by faith, which is hidden from our eyes. It is saide *that the Lande is at thy commandement*. Nowe if wee beleve our senses, wee cannot perceive that the kingdome of heaven is ours, or in our hande: it will seeme to bee too farre off from us, and that wee had neede of wings to flie above the skyes. But what? Wee must so honour Gods worde (as I saide) as wee must not doubt but that the thing which is spoken there, is possible to be done, although wee conceive not howe by our fleshly understanding: faith must surmount all capacitie of man. And if wee finde any hardnesse therein, let us fight against our selves, and dayly indeavour to recover unto God. For the way whereby hee will be glorified at our hands, is (as I saide at the beginning) that if there were no more but his bare worde, yet ought the same to content and suffice us. But seeing he hath vouchsafed to deliver us this pledge which he hath given us in the death and passion of our Lorde Jesus Christ: wee shalbe the lesse excusable, if wee have not a full and whole contentation. Seeing then that we have such an assurance of the kindome of heaven, let us go and take possession of the lande. For (as I said afore) God will not have us idle.

True it is, that hee sheweth us by the holy scripture, that there is not one drop of power in us that tendeth unto good, but that wee be wholly given to evill. And yet notwithstanding it is his will also that when he hath put his gracious gifts into us, we shoulde make them avaylable, without

challenging any thing at all to our selves. For in this case it is not for us to glorie in our selves, nor to trust in our owne legges, according whereunto it is saide in the Psalme<sup>6</sup> to such as are given to the worlde, that they must not trust in their owne strength, nor in the strength of their horses. If this bee saide of the thinges that pertaine to this flightfull life: what is to bee saide of the spirituall life which is much more excellent? So then without attributing any thing to our selves, let us indeavour neverthelesse seeing that God commandeth us, and let us goe on to enter into the possession of the spirituall kingdome whereunto he calleth us. And that is the cause why I said that wee must evermore come backe to our Lorde Jesus Christ, and there seeke the thing that is wanting in our selves. For wee knowe that his suffering of his death and passion, was to exalt us above the heavens: and although we doe but creepe uppon the earth, or rather bee so loppeheavie that wee sinke still downward, to plundge our selves in the bottomlesse gulfes: yet will our Lorde Jesus lift us up, according as he himself was exalted, to the same end and intent as is declared in the third Chapter of the Godpel of S. John<sup>7</sup>.

Furthermore, to the ende wee may bee discharged of all selftrust, let us looke uppon the notable example that was given us at the death of our Lorde Jesus Christ. For if wee will goe the right way to heaven, wee must followe the poore theeve to whom he saide, This day shalt thou bee with mee in Paradise. Howe can wee bee sure that GOD will bring us to the kingdome of heaven, seeing that wee seeke hell, and all our affections, all our thoughtes, all our desires, all our powers, and all our workes, tend wholly thither, even to separate us from God, and to alienate us from his kingdome, and to drive us away from life

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<sup>6</sup> Psalm 33:18

<sup>7</sup> John 3:14

and salvation? How may wee (say I) be sure that God will take us uppe into his heavenly kingdome? We must have recourse to this word that was spoken to the poore theefe: This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. Seeing it is so that our Lord died, and that he entred into such gulfes of sorrowe, that he was pinched so farre as to abide the tormentes that were due unto us, and not only abode the reproch and grieffe of bodily death, but also felt the Justice of God, and became as a wretched offender to beare all the sinnes of the world: let us not doubt but he hath delivered us from the paines and anguish which wee should have felt, and will lifte us up himselfe, and therefore nowe let us not bee afraide of death. but first of all it behoveth us to followe the poore theefe. What had he in him to bring him to the kingdome of heaven? He was fastened to a crosse, he had his armes and legges broken, he seemed to bee but a wretched carkasse, there was nothing but reproche in him. Thus then you see howe he was an owgly myrroure to looke upon: and yet neverthesse, Jesus Christe promiseth him to make him his partaker and companion of his heavenly glorie. And what had hee beene all the time of his lyfe? So lewde and wicked both before God and man, that he was worse than condemned and accursed. Will we then be the heires of God? Wee must follow this theefe who had the preheminance to goe before us into the heritage of heaven. And how [must wee follow him?] We must acknowledge that naturally there is nothing in us but utter wickednesse, and that GOD might justly holde us accursed. Also wee must thinke our selves to bee as folke that have their armes and legges broken, yea and as men utterly dismembred, so as we have not one whit of strength in us, at leastwise as in respect of our selves. And yet for all that therewithall we must not doubt but that God accepteth us to him, when wee linke in with our Lorde Jesus Christ by right faith

and pure affection, acknowledging him to be our king, and having our eyes fastened upon the invisible kingdome, as I saide afore. For if the wretched theefe which sawe death before his eyes, which was in as great tormentes as was possible, and sawe himselfe as it were behated of all the world, did put his trust in Jesus Christe: what ought wee to doe? Againe, in what state was our Lord Jesus Christ at the same time? He hung upon a crosse full of reproche and shame, all men did spit at him, all men did spite him. And yet, notwithstanding that reprochfull state, the poore wretch ceased not to behold life in death, and to say, Lorde remember me when thou comest into thy kingdome. But now wee knowe that Jesus Christ is exalted to the right hand of GOD his father, and hath sovereigne power over all creatures: so that if wee yeeld him not his due honour now that he is entered into his glorie, wee shall have no excuse at all. True it is that he was once hanged upon a gibbet ful of reproch and shame: but yet wee see therewithall that the same was turned into glorie and triumph, so as the victorie which he obtained was more royall than all the triumphes of all the Princes in the worlde. Seeing then that wee doe see that Jesus Christ hath ridde away all the slaunder of his crosse by the power of his resurrection: ought wee not at leastwise to looke up to the kingdome where he dwelleth, whereunto he calleth us, and which he hath purchased so dearely? Thus you see after what maner wee must put in ure this text *of the possessing of the land which he hath promised us and purchased for us.*

Besides this, when wee heare this saying, *that it is at our commandement:* let us understand that it were a disanulling of the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, if wee should not be fully resolved of this inheritaunce, according also as Saint

Paule sheweth<sup>8</sup>. If thou say, who is he that shall goe downe into the deepe, it is all one as if thou shouldest fetch up Christ againe from death. Then if wee imagine with our selves, alas wee bee wretched creatures, there is nothing but utter weakenesse in us, evill doeth so evermaister that wee wote not what to do, the divell tormenteth us, on the one side, and on the other side wee bee so fraile as is pitifull to see, and wee bee in trouble and unquietnesse: if wee stande hereupon as quite out of heart and discouraged: Saint Paule sayeth it is all one as if we beleved not that Jesus Christ dyed for us. For why? The death and Passion that he suffered are no trifling thing, but a thing of verie great price. Nowe then wee must take it to bee of power as it is, so that although we see our selves in the mids of bottomlesse pits, yea and that very often and commonly, insomuch that when wee bee out of one gulfe, by and by wee enter into another, and therewithall Satan hath such power against us and wee on the other side are so feeble, that we can scarcely stirre one finger: yet let us not forbear to assure our selves, that the inheritaunce belongeth to us still: for that is the honour which wee must yeeld to our Lord Jesus Christ. But therewithall let us go foreward still. After what maner? Let us call to minde howe the Apostle saieth, that like as our Lord Jesus Christ went out of the Citie as rejected out of the companie of men: so we must not disdain to become like him<sup>9</sup>, and to beare the shame and reproche of his crosse: for it becommeth the members to be fashioned like to their body. And therefore let us determine to goe after him. For those are the true markes whereby he knoweth us to bee his. And for performance thereof, let us understand that wee must forsake the world in general, yea and our selves too. For the matter standeth not alonely upon going out

of the world. True it is that so long as it pleaseth God to have us lodge here, here wee must abide: but yet howsoever we fare, we must ever have one foote up, readie to goe hence whensoever it shall please God to take us to him: so that if wee will be heires of the heavenly kingdome, wee must be but pilgrims and straungers in this world. Yea and (which more is) wee must go out of our selves, that is to say, we must not leane to our owne will and wit, but wee must ridde our selves of all selfweening, and covet nothing but to goe unto God. And if the world shake us off and make a mocking stocke of us, (as we see nowadayes how the poore Christians are lightly esteemed, so that they bee taken to bee as the ofscouring of the world, or rather as myre and dung, as saieth S. Paul:) I say if wee bee so rejected of the whole world: let us beare it patiently<sup>10</sup>. For why? Jesus Christ went out of the Citie Jerusalem, bearing the reproch and curse of the whole world upon him: and therefore let us bee readie to bee fashioned like unto him. Also therewithal let us determine to separate our selves from all the uncleannesse that reigneth everie where now adayes in the world. And forasmuch as we can not possesse the heavenly heritage, unlesse wee overcome this doubting and fearefulnesse which plucke us backe: insomuch that if our mindes runne still upon our owne feeblenesse, truely wee shall not neede any other thing to shake us downe: whereas on the other side if we have our eye uppon our captaine Jesus Christ, who alonely hath vanquished all feare, yea and even death, and the divell, and all his power: then may wee boldly goe on still, to overcome all lets that may hinder us or turne us aside from following God whichersoever he calleth us: Let us shut our eyes against all that ever may turne us out of the right way, and let us not doubt but that God wil alwayes be our guide, and

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<sup>8</sup> Romans 10:7

<sup>9</sup> hebrews 13:12

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<sup>10</sup> I Corinthians 4:13

worke in such wise, as he will outgoe all our desires, yea and all the hope that we can conceive of him.

Nowe therefore let us kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledtement of our sinnes, praying him to make us so to feele them, that being cast down in our selves, wee may resort wolly unto him, and acknowledging our selves to bee wretched offenders that have deserved his wrath and vengeance, (yea even without ever being able to recover out of endlesse death and cursednes) flee for refuge to the redemption that is purchased for us by the bloudshed of his onely sonne. And that seeing our Lord Jesus Christ hath payed all our debtes, to discharhe us of them, and to beare the condemnation that was due unto us, and forasmuch as he offereth us daily the fruite and effect of his death and passion: we may not doubt but that he will accomplish the thing that he hath begunne in us, and by his holy spirit make the power of his resurrection availeable in us, to the end that we may leade a new life, and bee stablished in him more and more, till we be quite rid of all the corruptions of our flesh, to bee taken up into his kingdome. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely, etc.