

On Thursday the xxv. Of Aprill. 1555.

The eleventh Sermon which is the first upon the second Chapter.

Then turned wee and drewe to the wilderness by the way of the red Sea, as the Lorde had sayd to mee: and wee compassed about mount Seir many a day.

2 And the Lord Spake unto me, saying:.

3 Yee have gone long enough about this mountaine: turne yee towards the North.

4 And warne thou the people, saying: yee shall shortly passe through the borders of your brethren the children of Esau which dwell in Seir, and they shall be afraid of you: but take yee good heede to your selves,

5 That yee provoke them not: for I will not give you so much as one foote of their land.

6 Yee shall buy vittels of them for mony, and eate: and likewise yee shall buy water of them for mony, and drinke.

7 For the Lorde thy God hath blessed thee in all the workes of thy handes. He knewe that thou shouldest journey through this great wilderness. The Lord thy God hath bin with thee now thewe fortie yeeres, and thou hast wanted nothing.



ere wee see more fully the prooffe of the matter that I treated of yesterday: that God in chastising men, doth teache them to obeye him, and by that meanes holdeth them in awe by force, because they would not submitte themselves to him willingly: And secondly that he tryeth their obedience, by reyning them backe, whereas wee of our owne nature are desirous to preace forward, and to pur-

chase our selves estimation. Moses then sayth, *that the people turned backe after they had bin so beaten by their enemies:* For before they could not bee tamed by no meanes. God had commaunded them what they should doe: but wee sawe they rebelled for all that. When he sayd, be ye still: they were in a heate and would needes be running upon their enemies: And when he sayde, goe not: they would needes runne faster than before. But were they once taught to their coste, and had God once performed his threatning, by making them to be overthrown by their enemies: then were they plyable enough: But it was all too late, as we commonly say in the proverb, a foole is never wise till he be well beaten.

Now hereby we be taught how greatly it is for our behoofe to bee so dealt with. For except God bring us home to him by correction: it would be impossible for us to bee such as we ought to be, so as we would harken to his voyce and followe him whithersoever hee commaundeth us. Therefore wee must be faine to be prepared with stripes of the rod.

Furthermore, let us learne well the thing that hath bin declared heretofore, according also as Moses sheweth it to the eye: that is to wit, that God will suffer us to languish: and that although he bee mercifull to us, and have forgiven the sinnes that we have committed: yet must wee be faine to suffer for a time. We shall sigh unto him, and yet will he let us alone in our miserable state and plight: but in the ende, all shall fall out to our benefite. For had God set open the gap to the children of Israell, and given them enterance into the promised land: within a day or two they woulde have forgotten that horrible cryme of theirs in murmuring against him, yea (and as much as is them lay) even in forsaking their heritage: they would never have thought upon their unthankfulnesse and disobedience. Therefore it behooved them to bee chastised a long season, so as they might never forget the offence that they had committed. Now then, whensoever wee have provoked God to anger by our disobedience: let us not thinke it strange though he doe not at the first dashe deliver us from the adversitie that he sendeth us for a chastisement. For our sinne would not bee printed so throughly in our remembraunce at the first day as is requisite. God therefore must be faine to worke after such sorte, and to make us to languish, as I have touched before. And in good faith, what else is all this present lyfe but such an exercise? Wherefore hath God made us subject to so many miseries? wee be no sooner scaped out of one mischiefe, but anon there commeth another in the necke of it, so as there is never any

ende. And all is to teach us this lesson, which wee cannot remember if wee be not inforced to it. Besides that, we would forget it by and by, if our Lord did not (as yee would say) incorporate it into us, so as wee may bee prepared and led of nature to say, see how our God exerciseth us with many miseries, and hee doth it because wee be wretched sinners. And yet for all this, can wee frame our selves to his lure, and not rather drawe cleane contrarie to his will? Therefore is he faine to teach us, that spyte of our teeth wee be in his hand, and he hath all soveraine dominion and Lordship over us.

Againe to come to particularities, whensoever God sendeth a man any affliction, let him bethinke himselfe, that besides the common miseries of this flightful lyfe, god intendeth to give him a particular instruction. And let us not say, why doth not this man or that man deserve to be chastised as well as I: according to the common maner, which is that every man woulde be priviledged above others? nay let every of us yelde to receive the rod patiently at Gods hand, assuring our selves that hee chastiseth us measureably, and as he knoweth to be for our profit. Thus much concerning the retyring that is treated of here.

Furthermore if our Lord plucke us backe, and wheras things were in good forwardnesse, and there was good lykelyhoode that all should have florished and bin in great prosperitie: if we see a suddeine confusion, and that the same continueth afterward, and things goe on from worse to worse: let us understand that it is for our sins sakes, and because wee have perverted the course of Gods goodnesse. For he [for his part] never fayleth to goe forward with the good that hee hath begunne to doe for us: but wee cannot abide that hee should continue it, wee hinder him as much as in us lyeth. And therefore is he faine to handle us as we deserve.

Besides this, let us assure our selves that when we obey God, then hath he made his corrections availeable in us. True it is that a great number doe harden when God goeth about to subdue them: yee shall see them growe wilfull and full of venim against him. But God worketh after such a sorte in his chosen, that when hee smiteth them with his hand, he doth also touch them inwardly with his holy spirit, so as their harts become soft that they may obey, by reason whereof the corrections doe them good. Although then that the miseries which we indure are hard and contrary to our nature: yet must wee thinke them good, because God maketh them to serve for our welfare offer that fashion.

Now Moses sayth expressely, *that after the people had set a winlasse and trayled about the mountaine Seir, they came to the north side, even as God had commaunded him.* Wherein wee see the thing more clearly which I have touched: that is to say, that there is a pliableness in the people which was not in them before: they bee now become tractable. And although they wandered a long time, so as they might have bin out of patience every day, and have taken occasion to murmure, and to have made sedition: yet notwithstanding they went still forward. And why? for the corrections which they had received, had wrought a change in them. Wee see then that Gods reforming of men by punishing them for their sinnes, is as a fornace to melt them¹ and cast them newe againe in. And therefore if God have let us alone here at our ease, and wee fall to kicking against him: let us assure our selves it is more for our behoofe to bee corrected by some chastisement. And therewithall let us beware that we profite our selves by it, and that wee become not worse than they were which are set forth to us as an example of disobedience and stubbornnesse. Harden

not your hartes as your fatheres did, wayth the Lord². And yet notwithstanding wee see that this people (how stubborne and froward soever they were) missed not to goe about the mountaine a long tyme, after God had so chastised them: that is to say, they were driven to knowe that it was in vaine for them to resist the hand of God. Howbeit we see yet some obedience, in that it is said, *that they waited to have a new commaundement,* so as they durst not remove one step, [till they had it.] It might seeme that God mocked them to goe round about after that fashion. They might have sayd, what shall become of this in the end? If God will have us to tary, why lets he us not alone? Or if he will have us to goe, why sheweth hee us not the way, to say, goe forewarde? He holdes us here lyke little children, so as wee doe nothing but fetch a circuit without departing out of one place, and when wee have tyred our legges never so much, wee are never the further onwarde on our way. The people might have descanted after that fashion. But what? They tary till God say to them, *Turne yee that way.* Wee see then yet still howe this chastisement had done them good in that behalfe. And heereupon let us marke what true repentaunce bringeth with it. Where as wee were deafe when God spake to us, and gave no eare to his voyce: wee must holde our selves in awe under him, and looke what hee sayth, that must wee doe, and no more. That is the chiefe fruite of repentance. And if it appeared unto us in this people which was so stubborne and untamable: what excuse will there be for us, if wee will not receive the thinges that are spoken to us in the name of God: but rather will be still replying, and have not the witte and discretion to suffer our selves to be guided by him who onely can leade us aright? So much the more then ought wee

¹ I Peter 1:7

² Psalm 95:8 and Hebrews 4:7

to restraints our selves from attempting any thing, unlesse God commaund it.

Moreover it is sayd *that the people shall passe through the cuntrye of Edome, without provoking of the inhabitantes.* First of all it is sayd, *They bee your brethren, the children of Esau.* Wee knowe that Esau was the brother of Jacob, who was the Patriarke, and (as yee would say) the wellspring from whence this people descended. And for asmuch as Esau came of the line of Abraham: a part of the land of promise had belonged unto him, but that hee was cut off from the inheriting thereof, howbeit not by the pleasure of man, but by the heavenly ordinaunce uttered by God³ yea even while their mother Rebecca was with childe of them, inasmuch as hee sayd that the elder should serve the younger. But yet for all this, Esau ceased not to bee Jacobs brother still. And their children ought to have continued the same brotherhoode and kinred betwixt them afterwarde. Marke that for one poynt.

Another poynt is, *That God gave mount Seir in possession to Esau:* it was his lot. When he had excluded him out of the land of Chanaan, hee gave him the other cuntrye for himselfe and his successors. Forasmuch then as it was assigned him of God: it was not for men to attempt to deprive or bereave him thereof. Now as touching this brotherhood, God will have it to move us, and to be as a certein bond to knit us together, so as nature may perswade us to bee kindehearted one to another, and restreine us from doing wrong or harme to any man. True it is that there is not fleshly kinred betweene all men, to make them so neere of bloud as they might call one another cousins, and name themselves be any lineage whereof either other were descended: but yet is there a certain common kinred in generall, which is that all men ought to think how they be fashioned after Gods im-

age, and that there is one nature common among them al. Even the heathen men knew that very wel. So then whereas we have some discretion to maintaine peace and concorde, and to yeelde every man his right without taking away of any mans goods, and without committing of any extortion or outrage: and wee pervert the order of nature, and are worse than the wilde beastes which make countenance one to another when they be al of one kind. For the wolves are not at such variance among themselves as men are. And therefore let us learne, that although there be not any neere kinred among us, yet notwithstanding in asmuch as we be men, there ought to be some common bond betweene us, and a certain brotherly love. But there is yet another consideration among Christians: for God hath adopted them to bee of his household: and that ought to availe more than all the kinred on the earth. For seeing that God hath tolde us that he intendeth to take us to himselfe, because that being of his Church wee bee as it were his owne children, and call upon him as with one mouth, saying our father: if wee neverthesse agree as cattles and dogges among our selves: may it in any wise be borne withal, specially considering that wee cannot clayme him for our father, unlesse we be governed by hiw holy spirit? [No surely:] For either his spirit must cry in our hartes: or else we shall have our mouthes shut⁴. Againe on the other side, by what title can wee clayme so great a benefite and honor as to be the children of God: if we be not members of Jesus Christ? But wee be not of his body, but uppon condition aforesayd. Whosoever then hurteth his neighbor, whosoever is voyde of loving-kindnesse and pitie, whosoever layeth to catching and snatching on all sides: the same (as much as in him is) rendeth Jesus Christ in peeces. And therefore let us marke well, that when God alledgeth kinred: we be

³ Genesis 25:23; Malachi 1:2 and Romans 9:13

⁴ Romans 8:14;15:16

warned to consider in what degree God hath put us, and what union hee hath set among us, and every of us to discharge himselfe faithfully thereof, to the intent that whereas God hath set us together to maintaine us in good agreement and love: wee make not a confused disorder. Let that serve for one poynt.

But if wee consider the common trade of the worlde, how it should seeme that men have conspyred to doe cleane contrary to Gods commaundement: it is so farre of from neighbors to thinke that Gods placing of them neere together, is to the end that every man shoulde serve his neighbors turne, and all imploy themselves to the common profite, without hurting or greiving one another: that even brothers thinke it lawfull to shift every one for himselfe, and there is none other lyfe with them, but to drawe still to themselves without any pite or compassion. How then shal the neighbors be brethren, which have but some acquaintance a farre of: seeing that they wich were borne all in one belly, and are all one mans children, beare no more friendship one to another than wilde beastes, but rather buch lesse? Truely it should seeme that some will needes be brethren, even in spite of God. For if it be to doe some mischiefe, or to playe some divelish pranke to the overthrowe of all goodnesse: then they can skill to alledge, wee have this, and wee have that, wee be countrymen, wee be neighbors children borne all in one towne. Loe how the wicked can finde themselves to be cousins and brothers. And what to doe? To rise up against God, to put all thinges out of order, to make quarels and frayes, to maintaine themselves in all loosenesse, and to procure all manner of stumblingblockes, that Gods name may be blasphememd and all honestie perverted. These are the brotherhoods and cousiningships of the worlde, as is to bee seene too much. But when it commeth to the poynt that every man should helpe his neighbor, and ab-

steine from doing him harme or anoyance: men be so farre of from absteyning, or from thinking that God united them together, or that God hath created them after his own image, or agayne, that they be bound yet with a straiter bond, inasmuch as he hath adopted them by his Gospel to be members of his sonne Jesus Christ, and heires of the kingdome of heaven: men (I say) are so farre off from thinking any such thing, that they pervert the whole order of nature, with worse than beastly furie. But yet is this text sufficient to condemne men if they walk not in all mildnesse, and be not more kind-hearted one to another than they be.

Now let us come to that which is added here in the second place: which is, *That God had given Mount Seir in possession to Esau.* True it is that when he compareth Esau and Jacob together, he sayth by his prophet⁵, Is not Esau Jacobs brother? And yet have I placed him in a hillie cuntrye, in a stonie and barrein cuntrye: and I have given you a fruitfull and fatte lande. Hereby the people of Israell are put in minde, that God had bestowed many mo benefites upon them, than upon those that went afore them. For Esau was the elder sonne, and yet did God disherit him of the land that he had promised to his graundfather Abraham, and to his father Isaak. And why did God so? wee see none other reason, but for that hee listed to utter his free goodnesse towards Jacob and his linage. The people of Israell coulde not say, wee were the more noble and excellent: for the byrthright belonged to Esau. They could not say, wee were better. No: for we see they were a people set altogether upon malice and unthankfulnesse. Now then, their inheriting of the promised land befel them not for any worthines of their owne, but through Gods meere mercy. And besides this, God had also provided for Ismael who was halfe a bastard. For the matching of

⁵ Malachi 1:2

Abraham with Agar was not a lawfull mariage. And although it was no aduowtrie: yet was not that mariage altogether allowed of God. But yet did God provide for Ismael, in asmuch as hee sayd, I have heard him. If the case stode so with Ismael, much more reason was it that Esau shoulde have some place, and that God should extend his blessing even to those that were of his linage. And for that cause did hee give him mount Seir. Now therefore, in this consideration the people of Israel ought not to trouble him, but to let him alone with the portion that was assigned him from heaven.

Here wee have a good lesson to gather, which belongeth to us all. Although mention be made here precisely of the linage of Esau, which were called Edomites and Idumæans : yet notwithstanding, as we shall see hereafter in the song⁶, God declareth that according as he made the partitions and stretched out his meeteline, so were the realmes and countries devided. Let us not thinke that the world is ruled by fortune, and that thinges are so intangled, but that God guideth all by his providence and power. Hee then hath stretched out his meeteline to appoint every people their countrey to dwel in. But yet for all that, wee see how men have transposed those boundes. They will not sticke to confesse that boundes are a very holy thing. And truely [the transgressing in that behalfe] shall be more punishable, than if a man had offended in any other deede. Lykewise mony because it is that thing whereby men intercommon among themselves, is a priviledge and (as yee would say) a sacred thing. In lyke case is it with the bounds [meeres and buttels] of fieldes: for without them, all woulde goe to havocke, so as men would eate up one another. Wee will well graunt this as in respect of a field or a medowe: but wee see that the pride, Ambition, and unsatiabie covetousnesse of men have

so caryed away their mindes, as they have not bin ashamed since to transpose the boundes that God had set. For as touching such as have enterprised warres against their neighbors, to increase themselves: have they not all broken the order which ought to have bin inviolable? yes: So then wee see how men are made to spyte God through their ambition and covetousnesse. And yet this mischiefe continueth still at this day, and is inflamed more than ever it was.

But yet for all that, this rule shall holde for ever: that is to wit, that looke what landes, what kingdome, what Lordship, what principallitie, what state, or what free citie soever there bee: wee may assure our selves, that the distributing of them after that sorte, is done by God: and that whosoever wagheth battell against them, doth as much as in him lyeth to breake the boundes which God hath set. I meane here such warres as are taken in hand through ambition, or covetousnesse, or pride. Otherwise, wee see here, that the children of Israell ought to make warre: for God avoweth their doing, because he had ordeyned them to be owners of the land, and will have the former inhabiteurs driven out as they deserved.

But are warres made nowadays by the authoritie of God? Have men an eye to the thing that is lawfull? Yea, or doe they tary till they have commandement from God? Nay, they go to it in despite of him, the divill drives them forward. True it is that if a man reason of Realmes and Principallities as they bee nowadays: it may be alledged, how hath this realme bin invaded, and how hath that country bin conquered? Yea, but yet for all that, it is not for men to remove boundes. Although they have bin confounded: yet is it not for us to enterprise any thing. For our Lorde hath not given us commission so to doe: hee hath reserved that to himselfe.

But let us marke lykewise, that when men have once altered the order that God

⁶ Deuteronomy 32:8

hath set, hee must needs overthrowe them. And that is the cause why there happen so many changes, and it is marvell that there are not seene yet a humdred times mo. Surely if God had not a speciall regard to the preservation of mankinde: no doubt but wee should see alterations of kingdomes every day, so that within two or three dayes, hee that is now a king should bee but as one that were drest in a platers apparell, to play an enterlude upon a stage. But yet for all that wee must marke well, that the alterations of kingdomes which happen, doe serve to punishe the chaunges that were made afore, when men removed their boundes at the beginning, and would needes pervert the order that God had set. Nevertheless, howsoever the case stands, let us beare this lesson in minde, that God hath limited realmes and countries: and that wheras it is his wil that there should be principalities stablished every where, forasmuch as the same commeth of his providence: it behooveth us to holde our sleeves contented and not to alter any thing, unlesse we have good warrant that he openeth us the gate and armeth us. As for example, if violence be offered unto us, then is it certein that if God give victorie to him that was wrongfully assayed, so as he ofercome his enemie and put him to flight: that is a chaunge that comneth of God. But as for to assaile [unprovoked:] that (as I sayd afore) is not to fight against creatures, but against the living God.

And let us wey well the wordes that are set downe here: *Thou shalt not provoke them* (sayth he) *and they shall be afraide of thee.* And hee addeth afterwarde, *Thou shalt but the bread that thou must eate, yea and even the water that thou shalt drinke,* so as thou must alwayes have thy purse open to pay and content them. Here wee see that when God intendeth to maintaine a people in their possession, he provoketh them not to make them misbehave themselves, for even therefore did he cast that

feare upon the Edomites, to the end that the children of Israell shoulde not have any occasion of warre. Wee shall see hereafter how God hardened the hart of Sehon, and inflamed the other inhabitants of the countrie, so as they armed themselves against the people of Israell⁷, because he was minded to drive them out. And so did he shewe the children of Israell by effect, that they had just cause of warre. But whereas he held the Edomites in awe, and inclined their hearts in such wise as they gave passage to the children of Israell, and bought and sould quietly with them: therein wee see (as I touched before) that when our Lorde purposeth to maintayne a people in their possession, hee will give them such a minde as they shall not provoke their neighbors, nor open them any gap by stryking up the drumme, or by sounding the trumpette first themselves. To be shorte, the warre shall not spring on their owne side. Therefore wee must conclude, that when a people doe put forth themselves, or when a prince will needes attempt foolish enterprises, and be meddling here and there: wee may perceive it is Gods doing, of purpose to overthrow him and to bereve him of the countrye that he had given him. So much the more then ought wee to pray God to maintaine us and to make us milde and peaseable, that we may not followe those whome we see to have their heads full of unquietnesse, so as they must needs be meddling with one thing or other. Let us absteyne from such thinges, that our Lord may mainteine us in peace: for that is the true meane, as I saide afore.

Herewithall also wee be taught, how men should behave themselves in their warres (provided alwayes that the warre be rightfull and holy, and such as God alloweth of:) that is to witte, in such sort as no man be vexed, and that there be no pillage, no saccage, nor no extortion committed. For it

⁷ Deuteronomy 2:24,32

is sayd, *ye shall buy the bread that ye eate, yea and ye shall pay ready mony for the water that yee drinke.* If God commaund the people of Israell to buy water to drinke: howe much rather should they that make warre, pay for wine and victuals, and such other things as cost ready mony, to those that are not their enemies? For the thing that is sayd here, is spoken of the Edomites. But how is this observed nowadayes, I pray? In deede there are Edictes and proclamations inow made: but the world sees how they be kept.

Yea and who bee most troubled with the warres, but such as beare the burthen of it? And that is even the countrie. When a king or a prince is about to make war, it seemeth to be for the common weal: and so are men made to beleve. But in the meane while, when the poore subjectes have payed a sorte of tallages, taxes, and impostes for the maintenance thereof: yet must they be still bitten to the bone, so as the enemies shall not be more vexed, than they under whose name and title the warre is made. They can well enough make markets for men to sel their wares in, and beare them in hand they shall have ready mony. But what? the thing that is woorth three shillings, shall be esteemed at one. And most commonly they take up vittels and pay for them as they list. And so wee see in effect, that all the warres which are made nowadayes, are but robberies: and that the crueltie and unnaturallnesse is so excessive, as tendeth to utter confusion: so as it should seeme that men are bent to banishe all equitie, and that warre cannot bee made without the forgetting of all uprightnesse, that there may be no more lawe, but that men may become woodbeastes. Loe to what poynt the world is come.

But yet for all that, lyke as this doctrine cannot be wiped out of the holy scripture, so can it nor also be blotted out of gods booke of records, that he should not judge the worlde according as he hath pro-

nounced thereof already: that is to wit, that the men of warre which will needes enrich themselves with other mens goodes, are condemned at his hand, whatsoever they alledge for themselves, notwithstanding that thy have taken it up of custome to spoyle and rob, because they have not sufficient wages, or whatsoever color else they can pretend. They may well appeale to kings and princes for to bee their warrant: for they shall leade the daunce, and be driven to answeere as capteines of theeves: and all their souldiers shall followe after them, as parteners of their wickednesse. Now forasmuch as wee see such disorders in the worlde, wee be warned thereby to pray unto God, that hee suffer us not to be wrapped in the same. And when we aske him our dayly bread, let us have consideration to thinke thus: Ah good Lord, graunt us the grace that every of us may live of his own labor, and be in peace: and that when the drum is striken up, wee may not play the madde bedlems, nor give our selves to spoyling and robbing, but holde our selves in quiet, so as we may take paynes and yelde the thankes for thy susteyning of us, and suffer every man to enjoy his owne, without offering of violence to any man.

Besides this, if they that make warre bee expressly commaunded to pay for their bread and water: I pray you what ought wee to doe in peace? For many misorders mny seeme halfe excusable when there is open warre, and it may so fall out, that they which would faine bee gentle, sometimes cannot, but are inforced to doe thinges which they be loath to doe, yea even to their enemies. And yet for all that, it is apparant, that if a man take any thing without paying for it, so as the owner or partie bee grieved, GOD condemneth it utterly, and giveth sentence here against it, yea even though thinges bee never so farre out of order, whereby some colour might bee given to justifie their dooinges. Nowe then I praye you what will he doe in peace, when wee

have no cause to grieve one another, but that they which can skill of husbandrie may finde themselves thereby, the shoppes are open for marchauntes and handicraftes men, and there is common policie [for men to be ordered by?] Seeing that God induceth us [by such meanes] to withhold our selves from all outrage and extortion: if we then goe about to robbe other men of their goods, if everie man seeke to spoile his neighbour to inriche himselfe with his goods, if we be so spiteful as to eate up one another without any cause: must we not bee condemned dubble? Yes certainly. Now then, seeing that men of warre are commaunded to passe without making spoile, and without offering any trouble or extortion: let us learne that we are much more commaunded to walke uprightly and justly, without doing any outrage or any pilling and polling, seeing that God giveth us greater meanes to avoide it. Thus ye see the effect of that which wee have to beare in remembrance.

And nowe for a conclusion here is made a rehearsall what GOD had done for this people. *The Lorde thy God* (saieth Moses) *hath led thee in the wilderness: he hath fedde thee with Manna: thou hadst not any natural water to drinke, but God gave it thee out of the drie rock: thou neededst not any money to buy thee clothes withall, or to paye for thy charges as thou wentest: and is it not reason now that this goodnesse and just dealing should cause thee to deale resonably with those by whom thou passest? For the people might have replied, Yes marrie, but wee have not wherewith, wee have bene a long time in the wilderness, there were no mines of golde or silver there, we earned not a penny there, neither have wee had any trade of marchandise whereby to get any thing. But Moses answereth hereunto, Consider howe the Lorde thy God hath governed thee. As if he should say, ye have none excuse at all : for ye have wherewith to pay and content every man.*

And why? For in the wilderness ye spent not any whit of the spoile that ye brought with you out of Egypt: ye were not driven to buie bread, vittelles, apparell, or any otherthing. So then, nowe that you are at the point to possesse the land that God hath promised you, ye shoulde bee too unthankfull towards God, and too churlish towards men if ye should refuse to content those by whom ye passe. And of a trueth, although yee had not wherewith, yet should it not bee lawfull for you to rob them. For our Lord chaungeth not the order that he hath set, for any povertie that is in men. But if a man that hath no neede, doe rob or fleece his neighbour of his goods: therein appeareth so much the lewder and outrageous naughtinesse. And therefore let us marke well that Gods alledging of this reason to the people, was to the end they should bee the better perswaded and disposed to do the thing that was commaunded them.

And herein wee see first of all howe God beareth with us: for as a father flattereth his child, and useth great gentlenesse towards him, and although he might command him at one word, saying, doe this or that, without alledging any reason at all: yet he dealeth so gently with him as to say, my childe, marke, this is the reson why I would have thee to doe such a thing, insomuch that he falleth even to flattering of him: even after the same maner doth God of his infinite goodnes beare with us. So much the more then are wee to blame on our part, if wee suffer not our selves to be overruled by him, seeing he sheweth himselfe so gentle and amiable towards us.

And for the second point let us marke, that although no necessitie can excuse our sinnes: yet notwithstanding these are the more to bee condemned, which offend unconstrained by any extremitie. As howe? If a poore man deale unconscionably when he hath not wherewith to live, ne knoweth where to become: yet shall he bee con-

demned: (and if a theefe be punishable before men, much more reason is it that he should be so before God:) And what shal the man bee to shom God hath given wherwith to maintaine himselfe, if he fall to pilling and polling, and be never satisfied, but is catching and snatching on all sides, and hath no regard of Gods blessing, but is alwaies theeving, filching, and deceiving? Such a man is the more to be abhorred, and wee must conclude that a horrible vengeance is prepared for such as have offended so wilfully. Nowe then let us marke, that when God giveth us wherwith to sustaine and maintaine our selves, his wil is to lead us therby to be the lovinge to our neighbours, and to do no man any harme or wrong. And so ye see that Gods blessinges ought to be instructions to us, to make us live uprightly, without attempting any thing against our dutie, or without troubling of any bodie. This is it that we have to remember in the second place. The rest cannot bee dispatched as now, and therefore it shalbe reserved till to morrowe.

Now let us kneele downe in the presence of our good God with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make us so to feele them, as wee may returne to him with true repentance. And againe forasmuch as he vouchsafeth to maintein us nowe in peace, let us praye him to continue the same favour towards us, and not suffer us to bee assayled, least wee doe wrong or harme to any bodie, and so open a gap to such as seeke to swallowe us up, by provoking them against us: but rather that our mildnesse may make them to sit still though they were willing to bee dooing with us. And therewithall, our good God graunt us also the grace to fight in such wise against our spirituall enemies, as wee may get the upper hand of them by his power. Let us then bee given wholly that way, and therewithal let us seeke to serve men to the uttermost of our power, seeking peace and friendship with all men, till our good God have rid us from

all battels of this world, to take us into the endlesse rest which he hath promised us. That it may please him to graunt this grace, not onely to us, but also, etc.