

WRITINGS OF THEODORE BEZA

by Theodore Beza

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Theodore Beza, compiled for study and devotional reading.

18 Chapters

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01.01. Question 01

Question 1. Must Magistrates Always Be Obeyed As Unconditionally As God?

Inasmuch as only the will of almighty God is the eternal and immutable Rule of all Justice, we declare that it must be unconditionally obeyed. As regards however the obedience due to Princes, they too would doubtless have to be obeyed always and unconditionally if they ruled constantly in accordance with the utterance of God. Since however theirs is often the contrary case, such obedience must be made subject to the following condition, namely that they command nothing impious, nothing unjust. Impious or sinful I call those which God forbids in the First Table of His Law, or which forbid those which God there commands. Unjust behests, however, I call those by which the performance of that, which every man in accordance with his calling either public or private is in charity bound to render to his neighbor, is either prevented or forbidden. To prove this with rational arguments as well as clear examples will not be difficult. The Lord says by the prophet Isaiah, "I will not give my glory unto another". Although the Lord has not spoken so clearly, yet in fact it admits of no doubt that commands emanating from purely human authority cannot without sin be regarded as of equal weight with those which God Himself has given. But the authority of God and men would be equal and alike if it were required that men should always be unconditionally obeyed in like manner with God. I add further that whenever the behests of God are neglected in favor of the commands of men, (those) men are being exalted above the throne of God.

Let us now treat our examples.

Pharaoh's command to slay all the male offspring of the Jews was unjust and the midwives rightly refused to obey him, whose houses or families God therefore blessed. But Nebuchadnezzar's edict that the statue of gold be worshipped, was clearly impious and sinful. And therefore the companions of Daniel refusing to obey him found that God approved of their piety and steadfastness, which was an unmistakable miracle. The command of Jezebel, however, to slay the prophets of God was both impious and unjust; therefore Obadiah who not only refrained from slaying them but concealed them alive and nourished them, acted piously. Further when Antiochus commanded that sacrifices be offered to the Images, that hallowed ceremonies be desecrated and the inspired writings of the Prophets and the Law be consumed by fire, the faithful who remained acted justly in that they at length under the leadership of Mathathias set themselves against his madness. Also when the leaders of the priests and the supreme council of the scribes would by their threats prevent the preaching of the Gospel, so far from giving heed to them, Christ did often against their will publicly address the multitude in the temple and after him the Apostles openly answered that they would rather obey God than men. Their example, the holy Martyrs afterwards followed most steadfastly. Therefore again I infer that the authority of all magistrates (with however great power and sovereignty they be vested) is as it were hedged in by these two limits set by God himself, namely Piety and Charity. And if they themselves should chance to transgress these, it will be well to call to mind that saying of the Apostles: "It is better to obey God than men" lest we

be of the band of those whom the Lord cursed by the mouth of Micah because they obeyed the impious commands of their King, or lest we follow the perverse examples of those who worshipped even the most cruel tyrants as if they were gods, ascribing to them the titles and acts of God. Particularly concerning Domitian the notorious foul-mouthed poet Martial affirms this when he had the audacity to write "The Command of our lord and god". Would that in this our time men were not found who are not far removed from flattery of that kind. Question 1 notes.

Question 1. Must Magistrates Always Be Obeyed As Unconditionally As God?

1. Second Table of the Law.
2. Isaiah 48:11; also Isaiah 42:8
3. Exodus 1:21 4. Daniel 3:1-30 5. 1 Kings 18:4, 1 Kings 18:13
6. 1Ma 2:15-28
7. John 9:12
8. Acts 5:29 9. These are exemplified in the First and Second Tables of the Law, respectively.
10. Acts 5:29
11. Micah 6:16 12. Martial, Epigrammes, lib. V, 8, 1

01.01. Question 1

Concerning the Rights of Rulers Over Their Subjects and the Duty Of Subjects Towards Their Rulers. A brief and clear treatise particularly indispensable to either class in these troubled times.
By Theodore Beza

1572

Summary: This is a 10 chapter work that explores the relationship between the subjects and the ruler of a land from a biblical perspective.

Translation by Henry-Louis Gonin, edited by Patrick S. Poole

Notes from the critical French Edition translated by Patrick S. Poole. This edition and translation © 1995 Patrick S. Poole (pspoole@hiwaay.net) To Kings and Princes the Counsel of David: Psalms 2:1-12: Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath will soon be kindled. To the Subjects: 1 Peter 2:13: Be subjects to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.

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Endnotes

01.02. Question 02

Question 2. Is A Magistrate Held Responsible To Render Account Of All His Laws To His Subjects? And How Far Are They To Presume Such Laws To Be Just?

After this foundation has been laid we would also inquire into certain other questions which would appear to be germane to this discourse that the consciences of many may be satisfied. First the question is raised whether the magistrate is held to render account of all his laws to any man soever so as to offer proof that they be fair and in accordance with the precepts of religion. I answer that he is not so held; nay more, that it is fair that all virtuous subjects should regard their lords in the light of virtue and should not presume or suspect anything unjust concerning them; nay, that it is not becoming that men in private station should inquire over curiously even concerning doubtful matters beyond their comprehension or station in life. If, however, the conscience of some be at a loss, they can and are even under an obligation to examine (albeit discreetly and in a peaceful manner) what elements of reason and justice are to be found in the command by which they are bidden or forbidden to do something; for the word of the Apostle abides¹ : "whatsoever is not of faith (that is while the conscience is in doubt whether that is being done justly or not) is sin". But if what is commanded is openly sinful or unjust, then indeed that which has been said above applies.

Question 2. Is A Magistrate Held Responsible To Render Account Of All His Laws To His Subjects? And How Far Are They To Presume Such Laws To Be Just?

1. Romans 14:23

01.03. Question 03

Question 3. How Far Must Obedience Be Rendered Or Refused To Unjust Or Impious Commands? A further question is raised as to what limits this notion of disregarding sinful or unjust commands of Rulers should be extended. Here I reply: Each man must consider what his station and calling demands, be it general and public or private. Does the Ruler command what God forbids (as Pharaoh¹ did to the midwives of Egypt and Herod's² to his accomplices when bidding them to slay all that were two years old)? Then you will rightly perform your duty if you do not carry out a command of that kind, as we read concerning the illustrious jurisconsult Papinian who, though he was not a Christian, yet would rather be slain by the tyrant Caracalla than either to approve of the fratricide which he had committed, or justify it by his advocacy³. But if the tyrant forbids what God commands, you should not at all judge that you have performed your duty if you have merely refused to obey the tyrant, unless at the same time you obey the command of God as we declared that Obadiah did, who not merely refrained from slaying the prophets of God, but even protected and nourished them in defiance of the command of Ahab and Jezebel⁴, since the Lord bids us, each as far as his calling permits, to bring succor to his brethren in peril. Thus also the Apostles, as we have said above, not merely did not desist from preaching the Gospel⁵ that they might heed the priests, but on the contrary they steadfastly preached everywhere since they had expressly received this command⁶ from the Lord: "Go ye and preach the Gospel to every creature" etc. Therefore when today we see many Rulers so bewitched by the Roman Antichrist that they by the sternest commands compel their subjects to attend the execrable sacrifice of Mass, the duty of all pious men requires not merely that they should not carry out that command, but further that they should in accordance with the example of Elijah and Elisha, even of the entire pure and true Church of old, join in pious gatherings, there hear the word of God and have communion of the sacraments as Christ ordained that it should be done in the Church. The same principle must also be observed in the duties which men owe to their fellowmen both by the law of God and by the law of nature, for example children to their parents, a wife to her husband, the shepherd to his flock, and in fine one neighbor to another. For it is not fitting that we should be deterred or led astray from those duties by means of any commands or threats or even by the most unjust punishment; only let obedience (which we owe above all to God who is greater than all these) be not at all excluded from the performances of duties of this kind which we carry out.

Question 3. How Far Must Obedience Be Rendered Or Refused To Unjust Or Impious Commands?

1. Exodus 1:16

2. Matthew 2:17 3. A reference to Aemilius Papianianus (212 A.D.). See *Historia Augustae*, Caracalla, VIII, 5-6.

4. 1 Kings 18:4, 1 Kings 18:13

5. Acts 5:42 6. Matthew 28:19; Mark

01.04. Question 04

Question 4. How Can One Who Has Suffered Wrong At The Hands Of A Ruler Defend Himself Against Him?

Thereupon the further question is commonly asked: What is a virtuous man with a good conscience bound and able to do when the Ruler does not indeed make him the instrument of his injustice but is unjust towards him? Since this question consists of several parts we must distinguish. If therefore the Ruler who has wronged the subject is subordinate to a superior the sufferer of wrong will in accordance with the laws be entitled to have recourse to the supreme Ruler, as we read St. Paul did when he appealed¹ to Caesar from Festus the governor of Judea that he might ward off the injustice of the latter. But let those subjects whose station is private here observe two principles above all: firstly, let them not make any trial of strength except by way of the courts of justice. Secondly, let them have regard not merely to what is permissible but especially to what is expedient. For when that very St. Paul had at Philippi² through the folly of the magistrate been beaten with rods shamefully and unheard in violation of the right of Roman citizens, he judged that he would rather by patience enhance the glory of God and did not further assert his right but contented himself with rebuking the magistrate for the injustice committed in violation of the laws. But if it were to happen (as happens only too frequently in our times) that one lower magistrate should undertake some act of violence against another against the express will of their superior, then I should assuredly say that the magistrate who had been wronged is, when he has first exhausted all legitimate and peaceful means, entitled to equip himself with the armor of the laws and to oppose unjust violence with a just defence as was done by Nehemiah against Sanballat and his associates³.

What must however be done if it is the supreme Ruler from whom the injustice comes? The Lord Jesus and after Him all the Martyrs have by their example clearly shown that injustices should be patiently borne; and this is the highest glory of Christians, namely, to endure injury from all but to cause it to none. What then, will someone say, is there no remedy remaining against the supreme Ruler who abuses his authority and power in violation of all the precepts of divine and human rights? Nay, there doubtless is a remedy remaining derived from human institutions. But when I say this, let no one be of opinion that I wish to favor the fanatical Anabaptists or other factious and mutinous men whom I should rather esteem most worthy of the hatred of all their fellowmen, and even of the severest punishments. To be sure I must speak the truth because the matter rests on this argument: It must not be supposed that those who show in what ways evident tyranny may be opposed without violation to one's conscience are depriving good and legitimate rulers of that authority which God has granted them, or that they are paving the way for seditious risings. Nay rather, it is certain that neither can the authority of Rulers be rendered secure nor can the public peace be maintained (and yet this is the chief goal of all well established politics) unless careful precautions be taken that tyranny may not steal in or if it has already stolen in that it be either abolished or expelled. The question, therefore, is whether subjects can by some just means without offense to God check, or if need be even expel by armed force, the evident tyranny of the

supreme Ruler.Question 4 notes.

Question 4. How Can One Who Has Suffered Wrong At The Hands Of A Ruler Defend Himself Against Him?

1. Acts 25:10

2. Acts 16:22 3. Nehemiah 4:1-23

01.05. Question 05

Question 5. Whether Manifest Tyrants Can Lawfully Be Checked By Armed Force. To give a clearer answer to this question I must first lay down certain principles constituting as it were the foundations of the whole question. Assuredly, (it is clear) that peoples did not in the first instance originate from rulers, but whatever peoples desired to be ruled by a single monarch or by chief men elected by them were anterior to their rulers. Hence it follows that peoples were not created for the sake of rulers, but on the contrary the rulers for the sake of the people, even as the guardian is appointed for the ward, not the ward for the guardian, and the shepherd on account of the flock, not the flock on account of the shepherd. This proposition is not merely obvious in itself but may be corroborated by the history of nearly all nations, So much so that God Himself, although he had elected Saul to substitute him for Samuel in accordance with the desires of the people, yet willed¹ that he should be chosen and accepted as King by the suffrages of the people. Thus David² , although he had first been chosen as king by God Himself, yet would not undertake the administration of the Kingdom except he had first been confirmed by the suffrages and unfettered concord of the tribes of Israel. On similar grounds it happened even afterwards that though the kingship had by the will of God been granted to the family of David, yet in the last resort that one from the descendants of David should rule whom the people had approved and none other (unless perchance something irregular befell to prevent it as when now the Egyptian and then the Syrian kings ruled as tyrants over the people of God). So much so that this kingship was hereditary as far as the family was concerned, but elective as regards the individual incumbent, i.e. dependent upon the election of the people. This may be seen from the histories of Solomon³, Rehoboam⁴ , Joash⁵ , Ocias and Jehohaz⁶ . For this reason also Absalom⁷ grasped the occasion of usurping his father's throne. For thus Hushai the friend of David answered him⁸ : "Nay, but whom the LORD, and this people, and all the men of Israel have chosen, his will I be, and with him will I abide". In short, if we would investigate the histories of ancient times recorded by profane writers also, it will be established - as indeed Nature herself seems to proclaim with a loud voice - that rulers by whose authority their inferiors might be guided were elected for this reason that either the whole human race must needs perish or some intermediate class must be instituted so that by it one or more (rulers) might be able to command the others, (and) protect good men but restrain the wicked by means of punishments. And this is what not only Plato, Aristotle and the other natural philosophers - furnished with the light of human reason alone - have taught and proved, but God Himself by the utterance of St. Paul writing to the Romans 9:1-33, the rulers of almost the entire world, confirmed this with clear words. There the origin of all States and Powers is with the best of reasoning derived from God the author of all good. Thus Homer also recognized and freely testified when he called kings "the fosterlings of Zeus" and "the shepherds of the lost"¹⁰ . And therefore, since we are beginning a discussion concerning the power of Rulers, what shall prevent us from passing over to that prime origin from which they derived and from considering to what end they were instituted? For it is obvious that every discussion of things just or unjust must begin and end with the end (to which it exists). For we must judge that something has been rightly and duly done when it had attained that end to which it was designed.

When therefore the duty of the rulers is inquired into, all will admit that it is assuredly right to remind them of their duty and also to admonish them roundly whenever they stray from it. But when a case occurs of either restraining tyrants who are such beyond a trace of doubt or of punishing them in accordance with their deserts, the majority commend patience and prayers to God so earnestly that they consider and condemn as mutineers and pseudo-Christians all those who refuse to bow their necks to torture. Here we are doubtless on dangerous ground; I would therefore once again beseech my readers to bear in mind my remarks immediately preceding lest they draw inadmissible conclusions from what must be said in the sequel. I admit that I most strongly approve of Christian patience as laudable beyond all the other virtues and never sufficiently commended; I admit that men should be zealously exhorted to it because it contributes largely to the attainment of eternal bliss: rebellions and all disorder I detest as awful abominations; in affliction especially I am of opinion that we should depend upon God alone; prayer accompanied by a serious recognition of our error I recognize as the true and necessary remedies for the overthrow of tyranny since this evil is rightly counted among the scourges sent by God for the chastisement of the people. But I deny that all these considerations deprive nations crushed by manifest tyranny of their right to safeguard themselves against it by means of prayers and repentance as well as other just remedies; and this I corroborate whilst I reply on the following powerful arguments.

Since these principles which were demonstrated above concerning the origin of kings and other rulers have been established, it follows that they are not legitimate rulers who by force or deceit usurp that authority which by no right belongs to them. Of such tyrants there are two kinds: for some, in violation of the laws laid down and received, usurp tyranny over their fellow-citizens, as Julius Caesar under the feigned title of perpetual dictator took possession of the Roman commonwealth; and many other tyrants, particularly in Greece, crushed the liberty of their country. Others however, not content with that absolute power which they rightfully acquire over their own people, extend their dominions at the cost of their neighbors' liberty and increase them by means of fortified boundary-lines; for this reason have monarchies ever since the origin of the world achieved such wide dominions; of this the sacred writings offers us an example in Nimrod¹¹, as we also see that in this way the Israelites were generally oppressed by the neighboring peoples. Hence since those tyrants had no lawful right over the people of God, I maintain that the Israelites were free not merely to disobey the sinful commands of these peoples but even to set a just defense against their unjust violence, and that therefore the leaders of the tribes (of Israel) did a grievous wrong whenever they omitted to oppose the foreign foe with united courage and strength in defense of the liberty of their country, provided that the occasion for opposing him presented itself; for it admits of no doubt that even private individuals are bound by the law of both God and men to succor with all their power their country when oppressed and in distress, especially however when its religion and liberty are simultaneously endangered. For it was a true remark which the captive pirate dared to utter when he was dragged before Alexander; he declared that he differed in no way from (the king) but that the latter plundered the world with a multitude of ships whereas he did so with but a single vessel¹².

Objection. These remarks are not countered by objection which certain people are wont to make, namely that it is God by whom kingdoms and empires are transferred and exchanged and that therefore tyrants frequently gain the victory with the approval of God.

Answer. Far be it for me that I should on that account either support the view of Lucan¹³ who dared thus to write that "license had been granted to crime", or that I should condemn as unjust the cause of Demosthenes because he was overcome compelled to yield while defending the liberty of his country against the violence of Philip of Macedon whereas Philip came off victorious¹⁴. These examples I use not that the consciences of pious men may rest upon them as upon rules, but because they are famous and very well known to most people, and for the further reason that though these events occurred among heathen nations, yet they are not so far removed from the standard of justice that it may not justifiably be said that justice was on one side and injustice on the other. For I would not hold that we must judge by the favorable or adverse result alone whether an undertaking was just or unjust - as indeed Demosthenes answered his opponent Aeschines what was reproaching him with the unfortunate result of the battle of Charoneia. For, to speak as Christians rather, God is generally wont thus to punish the sins of men or so far make trial of his people that he assigns to their undertakings, however good and just in themselves, an outcome far other than they had themselves expected, as may best be seen in the war which the remaining tribes of Israel waged against the children of Benjamin¹⁵. But for all that God remains no less just, by whatever means He enforces His judgments; nor must it be held that the nations had a less lawful cause against their hostile tyrants because they were cast down by some just judgment of God and fell to ruin. Hence I could never approve of the view of those who without any distinction or exception at once and indiscriminately condemn all tyrannicides on whom the Greeks formerly bestowed such exceptional rewards¹⁶. As little does the view of those command itself to whom the majority of liberations recorded in the Book of Judges 17:1-13 seem so foreign and strange that they are of opinion that these can in no way be adduced as examples. For however true it may be that those Judges of the people of Israel were moved and stirred to the performance of those famous deeds by some divine and exceptional instinct, yet it does not immediately follow that the Israelites themselves, whether holding office or even as private citizens, could not in accordance with their ordinary right have expelled the tyranny of strangers who had been neither elected nor approved by the people. But that those liberations were effected by means of those men alone whom God summoned forth in a special way, does not go to disprove my contention, but rather demonstrates that the spirit of the Israelites had for their transgressions been stunned and broken by the just judgment of God. Therefore to follow those examples rightly and lawfully, I am of opinion that the following true means should be held fast, namely: if anyone strives to seize or has already usurped an unjust tyranny over others, whether he be a stranger or whether as a viper he leaps from the womb of his country that by his birth he may cause her death, then shall private citizens before all else approach their legitimate magistrates in order that it may be the public enemy he cast forth by the public authority and common consent of all. But if the magistrate connives (at the attempt) or in some way refuses to perform his duty, then let each private citizen bestir himself with all his power to defend the lawful constitution of his country, to whom after God he owes his entire existence, against him who cannot be deemed a lawful magistrate since he either has already usurped that rank in violation of the public laws or is endeavoring to usurp it.

Next it should here be noted that a defect which originally adhered to an usurpation may afterwards be rectified, so much so that he who originally was a tyrant may become a lawful and inviolable ruler, that is of course if afterwards the free and lawful consent is gained of those who have the power to elect and appoint a true and lawful ruler. For example: The war undertaken

against Caesar under the leadership of Pompey was just, though Caesar emerged victorious in it; but if it was true that Caesar afterwards by the free and voluntary assent of the Roman people obtained the supreme power under the pretense of a perpetual dictatorship, it would no longer be necessary to raise the question whether the conspiracy against him was just and lawful, unless it were shown forthwith that he had clearly abused those very dictatorial power. I venture to declare most positively that those leading citizens of Rome could have, and even should have, defended the Commonwealth against the Triumvirate; but I should not venture to maintain that Cinna and his associates could lawfully have conspired against the life of Augustus after the "Royal Law"¹⁸ as they call it had been promulgated and passed. But here too we must distinguish. It will, I think, readily be conceded to me that an agreement whether freely manifested by or extorted by means of violence or intimidation from the whole people or a majority of them should rather be annulled than observed if it were established beyond doubt that such agreement was clearly incompatible with fairness and honor. For who would persuade himself that some nation would freely, wittingly and unconstrained wish to subject itself to some ruler to this end that it might subsequently be murdered and utterly destroyed by him? But surely here again two (considerations) should be heeded, whenever those undertakings have to be annulled or set right to which agreement has been granted without due consideration: first nothing shall be attempted or done recklessly and, secondly, nothing by way of insurrection, but in due order and in a disciplined fashion as far as shall be possible. The present condition of the Christian Commonwealth furnishes us with two examples of this, both assuredly of the greatest importance. The first is that of the unjust and sinful submissiveness with which kings and nations have bound themselves by oath to the Roman Antichrist; I maintain that they are no more bound by that oath than if they had expressly and openly sworn to Satan that they would subvert all rights of God as well as men. The other example is that of the so-called temporal jurisdiction to which the ecclesiastic prelates have laid claim. Because this is diametrically opposed to the command of Christ as well as to the clearest examples of Him and of all Apostles - as particularly Saint Bernard has shown¹⁹ - it assuredly follows that of itself it is void since neither could the rulers divest and deprive themselves of that (jurisdiction), nor could the ecclesiastics receive it from kings or nations or acquire it at a price, much less should they have usurped it by force and cunning tricks as it is certain that they did in far the greater part of the world.

Let these remarks be made against tyrants who have unjustly grasped authority over their fellow-citizens or over foreign nations. Question 5 notes.

Question 5. Whether Manifest Tyrants Can Lawfully Be Checked By Armed Force.

1. 1 Samuel 10:1-27 & 1 Samuel 11:1-15 2. 2 Samuel 2:7; 2 Samuel 5:1-3 3. 1 Chronicles 29:22 4. 1 Kings 12:1-33 5. 2 Kings 11:12 6. 2 Chronicles 26:1; 2 Chronicles 36:1 7. 2 Samuel 15:1-13 8. 2 Samuel 16:18 9. Romans 13:1-5

10. For "Fosterlings of Zeus" see Homer passim, e.g. Iliad, XVII, 652; XXIV, 803, and Odyssey, IV, 391; XV, 155, 167. For "Shepherds of the lost" see ibid, e.g. Iliad, II, 85, 105; V, 566; XX, 110, and Odyssey, IV, 24, 532; XX, 106; XXIV, 368, 456.* 11. Genesis 10:8-18 12. Augustine, De civ. dei, IV, 4, 25. Cf Cicero, De repub., 3, 14, 24.

13. Lucan, De bello civili, 1, 2: "Iusque datum sceleri canimus". Cf. the latin text of Beza: "ius sceleri datum" (Ed. Sturm, p. 36.) 14. Demosthenes, De corona, 180 15. Judges 20:1-48 16.

Aristotle, Politics, V, VIII, 7 and also 9 17. Judges 3:15-25

18. An allusion to *lex regia*. See *Corpus Juris Civilis*, *Inst.*, I, 2, 6: "quod principi placuit, legis habet vigorem, cum lege regia, quae de imperio eius lata est, populus ei et in eum omne suum imperium et potestatem comcessit." Cf. *Dig.*, I, 4, 1.

19. St. Bernard of Clairvaux, *De consideratione...ad Eugenium tertium*, book 1, cap. 6. (Migne, P.L., 182, 735-36)

01.06. Question 06

Question 6. What is the duty of subjects towards their superiors who have fallen into tyranny?

It now remains for us to treat of the other question which has not without reason been debated by numerous people in these present times; that is, what may subjects of good conscience do whenever their supreme rulers, who are legitimate in other respects, degenerate into manifest tyrants? Must the authority of the supreme rulers who have become undisguised tyrants remain so sacred and inviolate that the subjects are obliged in all circumstances to endure it so that they can in no way offer resistance to it? Or if indeed resistance is in some way allowable, may they go so far as to seize arms?

Three kinds of subjects

I answer that there are three kinds of subjects in all, or that subjects are characterized by a threefold differentia. For some are private citizens performing no duty of public administration; others do indeed hold a magistracy, but these are subject to the supreme rulers (such as we call subaltern or inferior magistrates), the third class, though they do not indeed hold the highest authority nor yet wield supreme and regular power, yet are placed in such a station that they are as it were the bridles and reins to keep the supreme ruler to his duty. As however these kinds are different so must a different reply be given concerning each.

Private citizens may not offer resistance to their lawful ruler who is a tyrant

Whether therefore those who are of private station have freely and openly agreed to the rule of an unjust usurper (as the Roman people of their own free will submitted to Augustus¹ and his successors) or whether he who was their lawful ruler has become a manifest tyrants (as was Abimelech among the Israelites², the Thirty at Athens³ and the Decemvirs at Rome⁴, and others elsewhere), I then maintain that (apart from a special injunction from God which I do not here discuss) no private citizen is entitled on his own private authority to oppose the tyrant with violence against violence, but that it in every way behoves him either to depart from the realm of that (ruler) and change his domicile or to bear the yoke of the tyrant patiently by taking refuge with God in prayer, provided only (as we have remarked from the beginning) he be not constrained to become the instrument of that very tyranny against someone or to refrain from performing any of those acts which are due to God or to his neighbor.

Objection. But against this reply given me an objection may be urged namely the proposition which we established above concerning that twofold class of tyrants to whom we declared that even private citizens could and (indeed) should offer resistance with all their power. For whether a private citizen usurps power or whether some one not satisfied with his lawful supremacy exercises tyrannical rule, would at first sight appear to fall within the same category; hence it might seem to follow the same decision would apply in either case.

Answer. But as we look closely into these matters, it becomes clear that these two classes are entirely different though they seem very similar. For he who launches an attack upon those who are in no way subject to him, though his desire be to rule fairly and in accordance with goodness and justice (as we read concerning Peisistratos and Demetrios of Phaleron among the Athenians⁵), yet he may lawfully be prevented even by force of arms and by any (citizens) soever, even of the humblest station, to whom he desired to do violence, since they are by no obligation bound to him. But he who has once been approved and accepted by his people, though he abuse his right, yet retains the basis of his authority as against his own private subjects, since an obligation entered upon publicly and by mutual consent cannot be dissolved and broken by the will of any private citizen. For were this otherwise, endless disorders, worse even than tyranny itself, would ensue, and in the place of a single tyrant whom it might be our intention to cast down, a thousand would succeed. Furthermore, a single reason derived from the authority of the Word of God should here be of greater weight than anything else that could be adduced to the contrary. St. Paul in prescribing their duty to men in private station not merely forbids them to resist their rulers (supreme rulers as well as subordinate) but enjoins us to obey them also for conscience sake⁶. St. Peter⁷ also bids us to honor the king, being mindful probably of that reproof which he had heard from the Master when he had as a private citizen drawn the sword against the power of the state (even though that power was abusing its authority against the Lord)⁸. But everyone knows of what nature the Caesars then were, Tiberius, Nero and the other rulers over provinces. This example the holy Martyrs afterwards followed while the inhuman tyrants persecuted them most cruelly, not only under the emperors who raged against the Christians in accordance with the laws of the Romans, but also under those who treacherously violated the edicts issued in favor of the Christians, as happened under the emperor Julian the Apostate. In short, to conclude at length this part of the inquiry, I maintain that no one in private station is allowed to set himself in open violence against a tyrant to whose domination the people of its own free will previously consented; for if we must so far abide by private contracts, pacts, agreements and undertakings that we suffer damage rather than break our word, how much more should private citizens be on their guard lest they in any way refuse to honor an obligation entered upon by a solemn and public agreement?

Concerning subordinate magistrates

I now come to the lower magistrates who are as it were intermediaries, and as the common people call them, subalterns, between the supreme magistrate and the people. Under this title I do not understand the domestic officers of the King personally (that is those who perform some duty within the royal palace and serve his person rather than the kingdom) but rather those who perform public duties, that is duties pertaining to the condition of the kingdom either as regards its courts of justice or matters of war, and who therefore even in monarchies are styled servants not of the King but of the Crown or Kingdom (for between these there is a highly important difference). Of this kind used to be in Rome, the consuls, the praetors, the city prefect, and the governors of provinces (whose [election] used to be entrusted now to the people itself, and now, in the time of the Emperors, even to the Senate) and similar officials of the Republic or the Empire, who for that reason were called magistrates of the Roman people even under the last Emperors. Such also were among the Israelites the leaders of the several tribes, the leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, of tens and the elders of the people. These political functions, first regulated by Moses, were in no way afterwards abolished when that aristocratic constitution was transformed into that

of a monarchy, nay more, under Solomon they were carefully established and observed. Even today various classes of magistrates of the kind are to be found in most Christian kingdoms, and among them should be counted those who are styled dukes, marquises, counts, viscounts, barons and squires as having formerly been chosen in due order and lawfully to certain public duties and tasks that they might perform them. And though these subsequently became hereditary titles of honor, yet they have in no way lost their original right and authority. Among this class should further be included those who are elected with a view to a variety of duties in civic communities such as those who are generally called majors, vicars, consuls, capitolini (municipal judges), syndics, scabini (aldermen) and the like.

Subordinate magistrates are dependent not upon the person of the supreme magistrate but upon the supreme magistracy as such.

Further, although these are all subject to the supreme magistrate, receive their commands from him and are instituted and approved by him, yet they do not properly speaking depend upon him but so to speak upon the supremacy as such, that is upon that supreme power and authority of the empire or kingdom; hence upon the death of him who wielded the supreme power they each remain in their own station as before, just as the supreme power remains the same. As for the fact that he who succeeds to the place of him who has died confirms such subordinate magistrates as he also confirms the privileges of cities - Suetonius records in (his Life of Vespasian)⁹ that Tiberius Caesar first introduced this custom in the Roman Empire; and in earlier times it was not in use in Gaul¹⁰ except perchance when the kingship passed not from fathers to sons but to strangers - this confirmation I declare, does not bring about that the supreme magistrate should be regarded as their originator, that is, as the prime source of their being from whom they derive their origin, since the supreme magistrate himself also before he can be placed in possession of his highest administrative power, in turn takes the oath to the supreme power in accordance with the conditions expressed in the formula of the oath; just as he himself afterwards receives the oath from the officials severally also; so much so that such a confirmation bestows no new right - as little as the investiture of a vassal does so or that performed by a new lord - but it is merely a fresh recognition of an old right by reason of a change of person. The obligation subsisting between supreme and subordinate magistrates is mutual

It hence appears that the obligation between the king and the officials of the kingdom is mutual and that not the entire administration of the kingdom is entrusted to the king alone but only the highest rank, and that the subordinate officials severally hold part of it each in accordance with his own rank, and that on fixed conditions on either side. If those conditions are not kept by the subordinate magistrates the supreme magistrate is entitled to discharge them or to correct them, yet only after their case has been heard in accordance with the regular procedure which the laws of the kingdom prescribe, unless he himself also desires to break the oath by which he promised to rule in accordance with the laws. In the contrary case, however, if he who has received the royal dignity either by being elected thereto or by hereditary right openly departs from those conditions under which he was expressly recognized and approved as king, who would be inclined to doubt that the subordinate magistrates of the kingdom and further the very provinces also and the cities whose administration has been entrusted to them are automatically (*ipso iure*) free from their oath, in so far at all events that they have right to set themselves against the undisguised oppression of that kingdom whose defense and protection they undertook by oath each in accordance with his

own office. "What then?" will someone say, "shall he who but lately was regarded as the supreme ruler (whose authority should be inviolable) - shall he by the arbitrary will of every subordinate now be deemed as mere private citizen so that it shall be lawful to assail him as a public enemy?" Not at all, I answer, for this were to offer a loophole, as the saying is, to every kind of sinful sedition and conspiracy. But we are discussing open and manifest tyranny and tyrants of that type who cannot admit or endure any admonishments whatever. Furthermore, we are not treating the tyrant who must be utterly thrust and cast down from his throne, but we are inquiring whether no one can and should in accordance with his rank set himself against his open violence, since it was shown before that it was not right that any one should arbitrarily dishonor an obligation publicly contracted whoever he might be and however just cause of complaint he might have concerning the tyrant. The duty of subordinate magistrates But since on the other hand those subordinate instruments of the kingdom have received this office from the supreme power as such that they may be on their guard for the observance and protection of the laws among those who have been entrusted to their care, and since they have bound themselves by oath to perform that duty in all faith - an oath from which they cannot be absolved by any fault of him who from a king has become a tyrant and quite openly violates those conditions upon which he was appointed king and the observance of which he undertook upon oath - would it not be just according to all law, divine and human, that by reason of the oath taken by them to ensure the observance of the laws, somewhat greater (liberty of action) should be granted to these subordinate magistrates than to those (citizens) who are of entirely private station and without any public office? I therefore maintain that, if they are reduced to such unavoidable compulsion, they are certainly bound, even by means of armed force if they can, to protect against manifest tyranny the safety of those who have been entrusted to their care and honor, as long as their public interests have been better consulted and fittingly provided for in accordance with the collective counsel of the States-General or the Nomophylakes, that is, of those with whom all the legislative authority of the kingdom or empire in question rests. This moreover is not to be factious or a traitor towards your supreme ruler, but rather to be a most faithful keeper of your oath towards those whose direction you have undertaken, against perjury and against the oppressor of a kingdom whose protector he should have been. At Rome, Brutus and Lucretius lawfully exercised this right against Tarquin the Proud who was openly practicing tyranny - although this cause was theirs for private reasons also - when the latter as prefect of the city and the former as tribune of the knights summoned together the Roman people that by their authority the tyrant might be expelled from the kingdom and his possessions confiscated. And there can be no doubt but that had they been able to seize him, they would also have condemned him in accordance with the laws which he had violated (whereas he should have been their upholder); for it is an entirely false maxim of a detestable flatterer rather than of a subject loyal to his ruler that a supreme magistrate is subject to no laws¹¹ , since on the contrary there is not a single law in violation of which the man who has promised upon oath to be the defender and champion of all laws should administer his rule. Hence he should rather hold fast the splendid saying of the emperor Marcus Aurelius. It is a worthy maxim that an emperor should profess himself subject to the laws¹² . And Trajan, that mightiest of emperors who has never received praise according to his merits, also approved of it by his action, for when he was appointing Sura as military tribune and handing him the customary unsheathed dagger, he remarked¹³ : "Take this weapon which you shall draw on my behalf only if I have given a just command; but if you should learn that anything wrong is being done by me, I would have you use it for my destruction." But let

us know turn to sacred history which will supply us with many true and irrefutable examples by which the consciences of the pious may be strengthened. When David was being sought for execution by Saul, a most cruel and treacherous tyrant, he had no one from among the captains of the tribes or of the thousand or hundred or of the elders of the people to champion his cause against tyranny so unbridled and inclining towards the destruction not only of David himself but also of the entire kingdom (especially after the fearful slaughter of the high priests); he therefore wandered to and fro as a fugitive to balk the fury of the tyrant; but since he was no longer a private citizen (nay, he was one of the ministers of the kingdom, being a commander of the armies of Israel) and since furthermore the right of succession to the throne had been promised him by God (a fact not unknown¹⁴ to Saul), he safeguarded himself with arms and soldiers¹⁵ after first trying all other means; yet meanwhile he confined himself to his own territory and so far from contriving anything against the person of the king he even allowed him to depart alive and unharmed when he had captured him; and so far from invading¹⁶ the kingdom itself, even after the death of Saul¹⁷ whose successor he knew for certain he did now even stir a foot to seize the royal palace except in so far as God Himself caused him to advance and he was called by the unanimous consent of the people.

Yet it is quite certain¹⁸ that he had taken the resolve to defend himself by means of arms for the reasons mentioned above. For what else was the purpose of those military forces by which he had attended? That he so anxiously consulted God as to whether the citizens of Keilah would give him and his men into the hands of Saul clearly shows that he had quite decided if he learned that he would be safe there to resist Saul if he laid siege to the walls of that town. And this conduct cannot be condemned, unless David is to be charged with sedition and high treason - any yet of that we may not even suspect him - and the prudent Abigail¹⁹ is to be judged guilty of lying who declared openly that David was waging the wars of the Lord when he was availing himself of a just defense against an unjust persecutor. We have another very clear example²⁰ concerning the town of Libnah which was the dwelling place of the priests. For it revolted from Jehoram the sixth successor of David that it might no longer be subject to him; the reason for that revolt is given in the context of the history, namely that King Jehoram had forsaken the Lord God of his fathers. But since this town itself belonged to the priests, it is evident that this conduct of the people of Libnah was far different from the revolt of the people of Edom which occurred under the same king and at the same time. For it is not probable that the people of Edom withdrew themselves from their subjection to the Israelites to cleave to the true God whom they had never served in sincerity, but they did so only from hatred of the Israelites and a desire to regain their liberty. But the priests, or those at least - if we are to think that they first revolted - who after God held sway in Libnah, furnished remarkable proof of their piety when being unable simultaneously to obey God and the tyrant, they shook off the yoke of the latter that they might continue in devotion and obedience to God.

These two examples, apart from the considerations quoted above, are so reliable and authentic that in my judgment they alone should be adequate to strengthen the consciences of subordinate magistrates, as often as unavoidable necessity constrains them, after all those remedies have been put to the test, to have recourse to arms that they may protect their people against manifest tyranny and preserve them, not for the sake of stirring up rebellion but rather to avoid it, as in the time of our ancestors the tyranny of those who were oppressing the Swiss offered to the municipal

magistrates the occasion of asserting that independence which they at present enjoy. A RESTATEMENT OF THE SIXTH QUESTION The Orders or Estates, established to curb the supreme magistrates, can and should in every way offer resistance to them when they degenerate into tyrants

It still remains for us to speak of the third class of subjects who though they truly in one particular respect are subject to obedience to the supreme rulers, yet in another, especially in straightened and extreme circumstances, have been appointed as the defenders and champions of the rights of the supreme power as such, so that they must keep the supreme rulers to their duty and must if needs be constrain and punish them.

Here however we must keep in mind the remarks made above, namely that the people existed before there was any magistrate and that the magistrates were made for the sake of the people and not vice versa, the people for the sake of the magistrates. For however much some people seem to derive their origin from their kings - as the Roman people is said to have been created by Romulus, because there had not been an original people before but a multitude scraped together from a variety of nations and peoples - yet this can in no way be applied to others so that a general rule may be established from it. Furthermore, even Romulus did not hold sway over this congress of people except by their consent. Hence it follows that the authority of all magistrates, however supreme and powerful they are, is dependent upon the public authority of those who have raised them to this degree of dignity, and not contrariwise. And let no one use the objection that such was indeed the first beginning of magistracies but that subsequently the people completely subjected themselves to the power and arbitrary will of those whom they had received as their supreme magistrates and that they gave up their liberty to them wholly and without any reserve whatever. In the first place I deny that there is any certain proof of this complete renunciation; nay on the contrary I maintain that as long as right and justice have prevailed no nation has either elected or approved kings without laying down specific conditions. And if those kings violate these the result is that those who had the power to confer this authority upon them have retained no less power again to divest them of that authority. That this may appear the more clearly, let us inquire whether this cannot be proved by the uninterrupted usage among the most famous and better known people throughout the ages.

I. Examples of the Romans in the time of kings

Let us begin with the kingdom and subsequently with the empire of the Romans though they were not more ancient (than other peoples). Titus Livius²¹ in describing the origins of the Roman kingship records that since the hundred so-called (interreges) who were set over the people in turn after the death of Romulus (this first ancestor of the people) did not find favor with the commons, it was decided by general consent that henceforth kings should be elected by the votes of the people and confirmed by the authority of the Senate²². The same (author) when speaking of Tarquin the Proud, the last Roman king, remarks: "For he had no other claim to royal power apart from force since he ruled neither at the command of the people nor with the authority of the Senators."²³ And he subsequently relates many deeds which were committed by him contrary to the customs of former generations. For according to tradition, he remarks, he was the first of the kings who broke the custom (handed down) by his predecessors of consulting the Senate about all (things), who administered the commonwealth according to his private counsels and who on his

own made and broke off war, peace, treaties and alliances with whomsoever he willed without orders from the people and the Senate²⁴ . From these words it is quite evident that the kings of the Romans were not appointed except on express conditions: and if they failed to fulfill these, the people summoned by way of the different classes of citizens had no less authority to dismiss them than to appoint them; and this they clearly proved by their conduct towards that very tyrant. But apart from what Seneca noted from the books of Cicero "Concerning the Commonwealth" namely that an appeal lay from the king to the people²⁵ - which was acted upon in the capital case of the slayer of his sister, Horatius, who was condemned by the judges appointed by King Tullus Hostilius²⁶ and afterwards acquitted by the people - apart from that, I say, Dionysius also testifies that while Romulus was taking counsel with his (friends) about establishing a constitution, he declared that the king was indeed the guardian of the laws, but that meanwhile the authority to elect magistrates, to pass laws and declare war has been left in the hands of the people²⁷ . This probably served as Archetype to the architects of the French Monarchy, as we shall point out below.

Furthermore, from the history of Collatinus, who was the first consul as colleague of Brutus, it is evident that the people - and under that name must be understood not only that plebeian class which today we call the third estate, but all three classes which simultaneously existed in Rome, that is, patrician, equestrian and plebeian - had the same authority as against the consuls²⁸ too, although the latter wielded the supreme power in the republic whenever there was no dictator in office. For this Livy also testifies in these words: "The consul fearing that afterwards these same misfortunes with the loss of his possessions might befall him as a private citizen and with further disgrace added thereto, laid down the consulship.²⁹ "Yet Collatinus was charged with no crime, but the mere name of the Tarquinii to whose family the consul Collatinus belonged, was suspect with the people. It is therefore easy to infer from this that the people would all the more have taken advantage of this right if any consul had been proved guilty of any crime, although according to the proviso of the laws there would have to be a delay so that, because they were holding a temporary office, they might complete the prescribed period before they could be arraigned.

I admit indeed that afterwards decemvirs were appointed from whom no appeal lay to another magistrate; but since they wielded authority alternately, it was allowable to appeal from the verdict of one to the other, so little did boundless and unlimited power of anyone ever commend itself to the Roman people; nay it at length even compelled the very decemvirs to lay down their office³⁰ . As regards the authority of a dictator, it is true indeed that it was not allowed to appeal from him to another; but this high office was not in use except when the Commonwealth was afflicted and all but overwhelmed by some extreme and unavoidable evil, and that indeed for a very brief period, namely six months. But if ever an appeal was laid from the supreme authority to the people - and this is of even greater importance - he agreed to it of his own free will, as may be seen from what occurred in Rome between the dictator Lucius Papirius and Quintus Fabius³¹ in the 42nd year after the founding of the city.

Examples in the time of Emperors

What if we should decide to proceed further and to come down to the (time of) the Emperors? Although Julius Caesar seized the Commonwealth by force rather than by the voluntary assent of the people, yet he wished to be regarded as having obtained from the people in accordance with

the ancient usage all the eminent offices and charges which he held, and by many people he is deemed to have been censured - and at length rightly murdered too - only because he accumulated too many high offices. His successor Augustus was indeed adopted by him, but was not left as heir to the Empire; he therefore strove to convince (men) that he had duly received from the people that which he had seized by violence. And Tiberius succeeded to him on no other ground. And after him Caligula was called Emperor by the unanimous consent of the Senate as well as the people. Claudius was indeed the first to secure the imperial power by means of military favor which he had bought, yet did not exercise it except with the consent of the people who then of its own free will rushed headlong into wretched slavery. Nero, however, succeeding to him when he had removed him by poison, seized the imperial power by undisguised violence. But his death furnishes us with a striking example of the authority which the Senate even then retained. For making use of its right, which had long lain hid as if lulled asleep, the Senate is said to have expressly condemned Nero to death after he had first been judged an enemy of the Roman people. Whence it appears that even the very Emperors who had become tyrants could be restrained and condemned by the organs of the law, and that although their authority, (derived) from the royal law, which was passed for Augustus and confirmed for Vespasian³², extended very widely, yet it was circumscribed within definite limits and was not approved without any restriction as long as there was room for law and justice. For what else is tyranny but authority setting itself against the laws? About its wide extent and propagation we do not propose to speak - for what limit can there be to the unbridled cupidity and spite of tyrants? - but only about kings' and other rulers' legitimate authority, limited by the laws; and so much concerning the Romans.

II. Examples from the Athenian Republic When the Athenians abolished their democracy and changed it into an aristocracy they first appointed thirty men and subsequently only ten for the government of the commonwealth as their historical writings record: but when these abused their authority they successively removed them from office and even visited them with well deserved punishment clearly availing themselves of the same right by which they had in the first instance elected them.

III. Examples taken from the Spartans

It is well known, too that the Spartans were accustomed to elect their kings by a free vote from the family of the Heraclidae. Plutarch³³ relates that Lysander wished to alter this, but without avail. But after the king had been elected upon definite conditions, they appointed the ephors to restrain the kings in their office and as it were to curb them with reins. These moreover now expelled some kings and then again inflicted capital punishment upon others until at length upon the treachery of Cleomenes the tyrants all were killed; thereupon Sparta lost her liberty at the same time as her absolute sway³⁴. Here I am reminded of that most beautiful passage in Xenophon where he treats of the Commonwealth of the Spartans and records that the king and the ephors were wont to bind themselves by a mutual oath every month, they in the name of all the citizens, and he in his own name. In this oath the king promised that he would rule in accordance with the terms of the laws laid down, but the ephors promised that they would guard the state for him if he carried out his oath³⁵.

IV. Examples from the Monarchy of the Israelites

Let us now proceed to the polity of Israel, the most perfect of all that ever were, if only the Israelites had been satisfied with it. The fact that the eternal God was from the beginning its sole monarch exalted that polity as it were beyond the stars, not merely because He Himself held supreme authority over all things, but (also) because He did so in a unique way; for through Moses He visibly drew up their laws for the Israelites; through Joshua as it were with arms thrust out He brought His people into the promised land; and finally He commanded and governed them, that it is in the person of those men whom He Himself had directly appointed to the government of that (polity and) who were called Judges³⁶. At that time therefore the Jewish polity was truly monarchical (although God employed the service of certain men in accordance with His will), and if all kingdoms had this Monarch, or at least if all monarchs always allowed themselves to be directed by this supreme Lord of the universe, this present inquiry would be no less redundant than it is now (universally) recognized to be indispensable. For that blessed state of this commonwealth (which never befell any other people but this) was changed in an amazing and unusual way. For the monarchical constitutions of other nations have degenerated into tyrannies by the fault of the monarchs themselves; but the Israelites³⁷, not recognizing such a great boon, as it were against His will compelled that true Monarch of theirs, who could never have become a tyrant, to appoint them a human king as for other people also. The Lord therefore at length granted their wishes but in anger and indignation, not that He desired by that act to disapprove of a monarchical constitution as such, but because this change had proceeded from a hot-headed and stubborn people.

Meanwhile the fact neither can nor should be disguised that since the origin of the world there has never been a king - even if you were to select the very best - who did not in some measure abuse his authority so that it must be indeed conceded, as the philosophers enlightened by natural reason alone have recognized also, that monarchical rule brings ruin and destruction upon the people rather than protection and welfare unless it is curbed by certain reins, so that by them it may come about that the greatest boon which can derive from it may be secured, and that the great evil which otherwise must of necessity result from it may be avoided and impeded.

I am giving this introduction while entering upon my discussion of the origins of the Israelite kingship since clear examples of all these things are to be found there; it would be worth the effort if both kings and nations paid careful attention to these that the one class might not so often come to be oppressed by the other but that rather the glory of God, from whom alone all tranquillity comes, might be such an object of care to both, that rulers and subjects alike might be content to maintain themselves peacefully. But to return to the point from where I digressed, the Lord being rightly incensed against His people, that He might clearly make known to them what they were to expect from that reckless disposition by which they were being disturbed, prophesied to them through Samuel in wondrous words indeed what that right would be which history calls the royal prerogative, namely, in short, that the king would arbitrarily seize the persons and possessions of his subjects and convert them to his own uses, (conduct) which is doubtless tyrannical rather than royal. For who would dare to doubt seriously that God alone is competent to thrust His arbitrary will in the place of reason since nothing can be called just but what God has first willed? For the will of God alone is the true and certain rule of all justice, as was maintained from the beginning. But the contrary happens in the case of men whose reason too should be subject to and guided by just and inviolable laws, particularly in the case of those who are placed in authority over others; so

that they are entirely mistaken who interpret Samuel's words as if he desired to be the authority over kings for the commission of any daring deed, or approved of whatever they did in blind willfulness; equally accursed is the saying of the notorious incestuous woman "Si liber, licet"³⁸ a standpoint which, alas, is excessively bandied about and acted upon in this present century. Nay rather the works of Samuel must be interpreted as if he spoke them to rebuke Israel: "it suffices not for you to have God Himself as your monarch as it has thus far been by some extraordinary favor; but you are demanding another and such as the other nations have; therefore shall such an one fall to your lot. But again listen what right he shall claim over you and with what fairness and justice he shall hold sway over you". That this was the purport of Samuel's words the subsequent course of history itself has shown. The Kings of Judah elected by the people

I therefore maintain that though God had expressly elected David, yet he had to be elected³⁹ by the people also and that they in electing him rightly, as they should, followed the will of God. The same thing occurred in the case of Solomon⁴⁰ also who after being first elected by God, was in the second instance made king by the people. And in general: although the royal crown in accordance with the command of God by hereditary right belonged to the House of David, yet as we have shown above the people ever elected from among the children of the late king that one whom it preferred to hold sway. And with this (election) went a twofold obligation, as appears from the history of Joash⁴¹. For both the king and the people first promised God under solemn oath to observe His laws both ecclesiastical and political. Afterwards another mutual oath too was taken between the king himself and the people. "But," someone will say, "did the people, that is the Estates of the people, for that reason have the right to punish their elected candidate when he failed to perform his duty?" They certainly had that right as can be particularly proved by four examples. For if David might defend himself against the tyranny of Saul, as appeared a while ago, and if the people of Libnah, who however were but subordinate magistrates, might revolt from their allegiance to Jehoram, shall I not rightly thence infer that the royal Estates per se (ipso iure) had many more rights? Relevant to this point is also the deed that was done by those very Estates upon the wise counsel of Jehoiada the priest against Athaliah, who had been appointed queen and had reigned over the kingdom for six whole years⁴². Lastly the example of Amaziah⁴³ is much clearer still; him the people of Jerusalem pursued even till they slew him. But if anyone were to think that this was done seditiously and not lawfully, I would have him attend carefully to the following arguments. It is nowhere declared that Amaziah was slain by the slaves of his household⁴⁴, as we read happened to his father Joash and to Amon the son of Manasseh⁴⁵, but rather by some common agreement of the people of Jerusalem; and this happened not secretly and as it were by way of ambush, as the end of tyrants has mostly been, but by undisguised violence and as it were upon the authority of the people; not yet as the result of some sudden uprising but after he had betaken himself in flight to the city of Lachish from where it is recorded that his body was returned and buried in the sepulcher of his fathers. In short, neither before nor after the death of Amaziah is anything to be found here offering any indication of revolt, but all the circumstances rather prove clearly that everything was attempted and carried into effect⁴⁶ in accordance with the resolution and studied deliberation of the people of Jerusalem, and also by the tacit treaty of those joined (in the undertaking), presumably a majority of the tribes although this befell in an exceptional and perfunctory, as it were, way; (it was) certainly (done) not from any private feeling of animosity, but as a result of his wickedness by which he had in great part violated his oath. For that reason we nowhere read that after his death any complaint of inquiry (occurred)

or that in short any punishment was secured or meted out against the perpetrators of the murder either by the people or by his children as happened after the deaths of Amon⁴⁷ and Joash⁴⁸ , for the conspirators who slew them though they were from their household, were visited with just punishments albeit that they had both been wicked. But on the other hand we read that the corpse of the latter was from reverence for both the royal dignity and his family carried back to Jerusalem on horseback, and that his son Azariah was by the entire people of Judah set as king in his stead. And this again clearly shows that what had been done by the stronger part of the Estates, that is, by the people of Jerusalem, was subsequently confirmed by general consent as concerning a just cause and as having been carried into effect by those who were competent to do so. Hence I conclude that the Orders or Estates of the people of Israel had authority to choose for themselves from the family of David whom they wished, and afterwards, when he had been elected, either to drive him out or even to execute sentence of death upon him as the occasion demanded.

V. An Example from the Kingdom of the Danes

Thus within our memory the Danes not merely divested Christiernus, a most cruel tyrant, of his royal dignity but imprisoned him until his death and transferred the royal power to his uncle, a most wise and just king, the grandfather of the present ruler⁴⁹ .

VI. Swedish Examples As regards the Swedes too, all men know how in our time Gustavus liberated himself and his people from their subjection to the Danes⁵⁰ ; and even today the Swedes keep their king captive for not having wisely ruled over the kingdom which had been transferred to his brother; may the Lord bless him⁵¹ .

VII. Scottish Examples The Scots also in former times removed their queen from office and condemned her to lifelong imprisonment because she was accused of a great number of foul adulteries and even of the most cruel murder of her husband⁵² , and I make bold to declare that if that accusation was justly proved, they would have acted more properly had they inflicted the deserved punishment upon her.

VII. Examples from the Kingdom of England As regards the kingdom of England, the most blessed of all, as many as may be seen today in the whole world - would that it may long continue in that blessedness - even if according to the right of succession it devolves upon him who is the nearer related in royal blood, yet it is apparent both from numerous noteworthy narratives and from the testimony of Polidorus in his Life of Henry, King of the English⁵³ and first of that name, that nearly all authority of government is dependent upon the consent of Parliament as it is called. And certainly, if we wish to compare that blessed tranquillity which they have been enjoying for many years now under the kindest and most peaceful reign of her most serene Majesty Elizabeth with the wretched and unhappy condition of so many other parts, we shall learn from experience as such how beneficial and blessed that moderation of royal power is, if only it be rightly employed and if the very kings, Godfearing men and lovers of their people, allowed themselves, not to be swayed by it as (if they were) wards (in need of guardians) - as flatterers at court who stuff themselves with bread kneaded with the tears of the wretched commons are wont to say - but to be directed and advised by it, yet with that respect and obedience which befits their majesty and is due to it.

IX. Examples taken from Polish Institutions

Furthermore, if anyone yet found himself in doubt about the people of Poland whether they, in electing a king upon certain conditions, reserved for themselves the right to break their oath if he did not abide by his promises, (such an one) shall have a clear understanding of it from that last election, by which they chose as their King Henry, the brother of the king of France. And in that matter I am in entire agreement with Bishop Valentine⁵⁴, the representative of his king in this election, who in an address to the people of Poland which has been issued in print⁵⁵, particularly commends them for having limited the authority of their kings by the wisest laws and for having as it were confined it within bounds.

X. Examples taken from the Republic of Venice

Upon the same principle the Venetians, whose Republic, judging from events, is, in the light of human wisdom, regarded as the most happily and wisely constituted leader (Doge) not as some idol or image - as certain writers too little versed in politics have made bold to say - but as their leader and monarch that they may derive from him all the advantages of monarchy without any danger or tyranny⁵⁶. For assuredly just as the so-called General Council has complete authority to elect the Doge, but with due observance of the ceremonies which have been introduced and have become customary with them for this purpose, in the same way that very Council has reserved for itself that power without which all else might easily come to naught, namely the power to depose the Doge himself and to punish him if he should attempt or have committed any act of tyranny, as has often been proved by examples and in fact. Let therefore the remaining peoples of Italy, who have been wont to speak and reason so nicely of human affairs and who have also published numerous treatises of civil government⁵⁷, here consider whether they have all in this matter conducted themselves as wisely as the citizens of Venice.

XI. Examples from the Spanish Kings

But what shall we remark about the Spaniards? The condition of this kingdom was certainly for a long time greatly disturbed and extremely unsettled, for numerous barbarous nations both from the North and from Africa overflowed thither as it were in a deluge, a fact testified to by most reliable historical accounts and also by their very language. But it must readily be conceded that that nation has always been shrewd and cautious beyond all others. And though that remark of Aristotle is true that barbarians are by nature slaves rather than subjects⁵⁸, yet the Spaniards have thus far, whatever barbarism may have invaded their country, in their method of establishing their polity given numerous peoples occasion to blush and have deservedly put them to shame. To prove this I shall quote two pieces of evidence which are remarkable beyond all others and which deserve to be engraved in letters of gold on public tables that kings might be taught from them to rule justly and peoples in their turn to obey rightly. The first of these is taken from the 74th chapter of the Fourth Council of Toledo which was held in A.D. 1544 according to the reckoning of Sigebert⁵⁹. The words of the Synod consisting of both ecclesiastics and the other orders of the kingdom are as follows: Let no one among us in presumption seize the royal power, let no one stir up seditious risings of the citizens one against another, let no one devise a rule of destruction but after the ruler has died in peace, let the foremost men of the whole national with the priests by a common resolution of the kingdom appoint a successor to the Kingship so that while the harmony of unity is held fast by us he may attempt no disruption of the country and the people by means of violence and bribery. But if this admonition does not reform our spirits and in no way leads our hearts to the common welfare, hear then our decision. Whosoever then of us, even from the peoples of all Spain, shall by any

conspiracy or support violate his oath of allegiance, which he swore in defense of the constitution of his country and the nation of the Goths or for the preservation of the king's safety, or shall have committed murder against the king or have deprived him of his royal power or shall with the high-handedness of a tyrant have usurped the supreme dignity of kingly power, let him be accursed in the sight of God the Father and the angels; and let him be made an outcast from the Catholic Church which he has outraged by his perjury and a stranger to every gathering of Christian men along with all the accomplices of his impiety because it is fitting that one and the same penalty should apply to the guilty who have been found associated in the same error...And this we repeat again a second time declaring: Whoever shall from the manner etc. And therefore if it finds favor with all of you who are here present, ratify by the unanimity of your utterance the decision here for the third time repeated. By the entire clergy or people it was declared: Those who shall presume against this our definition, let them be anathema, maran-atha, that is perdition in the coming of the Lord, and may they have their portion with Judas Iscariot, and their associates also. Amen. And therefore we ourselves and all priests admonish the Holy Church of Christ and the people that this fearful and so often repeated decision may condemn no one of us by a temporal and eternal verdict, but that by keeping our promised word towards our most glorious Lord, King Sisenandus⁶⁰, and by serving him in sincere devotion, we may not only appeal to the mercy of God's fatherly love in our behalf, but may even deserve to gain the favor of the ruler aforementioned. You also the present king and the future rulers of subsequent ages we beseech with due humility that you may prove moderate and gentle towards your subjects, may rule with justice and goodness over the peoples entrusted to you by God and by reigning in humility of heart with a zeal for doing good may repay to Christ the giver the good interchange (of power) by which He has appointed you over us. And let no one of you as sole (judges) in a cause visit a captive or an accused with a sentence, but let the fault of wrongdoers be manifest by the agreement of the people with the leaders in accordance with a clear verdict. Let clemency be observed by you in the case of crimes that you may prevail in them not be severity rather than by indulgence, so that while with the authority of God all these things are observed by you with dutiful government, the kings may rejoice in their peoples and the people in their kings and God in both. Indeed about future kings we make known this verdict that if any one of them shall without respect for the laws in arrogant despotism and royal pride practice among the nations a most cruel tyranny in deeds of shame and in crime or covetousness, let him be condemned with a sentence of anathema by Christ the Lord and may he be divided from God and receive judgment for that he presumed to do wrong and to bring the kingdom to ruin. But concerning Simithilanis⁶¹ who, fearing (the consequences of) his misdeeds, deprived himself of royal power and laid aside the scythes of sovereignty, we have decided in consultation with the nation that for the evils which they have committed we shall never associate either him or his wife or their sons with out union, nor shall we at anytime advance them to those offices of honor from which they have been cast down for their iniquity⁶². This is indeed a remarkable example: I shall add to it another decree of the Sixth Synod of Toledo⁶³; in it the following words are added after the expulsion of the Jews from the kingdom was decided upon: "In vain is the good striven after unless provision be made for perseverance therein." "Therefore after he has duly promised and has taken over the reins of government, if he himself shall be revealed as the violator of this promise, let him be anathema, maran-atha in the sight of God eternal and may he be made to feed the fire everlasting and may with him be destroyed by a like condemnation whatever priest or whatever Christian shall have

been associated with his error"⁶⁴ . From this it may easily be inferred what authority the Estates of Spain possess against their kings if they commit any breach of their oath, since in accordance with feudal law (which is applicable also to kingdoms and empires) the vassal owes no service to a lord who has been excommunicated, and indeed is freed from his oath of allegiance (as is stated in Book 2 of the Feudal Law tit. 28 par. 1)⁶⁵ . The second testimony which I promised to adduce is the striking formula which the people of Aragon (unless it was altered quite recently) even today not only employ in the investiture of their kings but also repeat at those triennial gatherings at which the king is wont to present himself before his estates both to dispense justice to them and to receive justice at their hands. There, when many ceremonies have been performed between the man who is titled the "Justice of Aragon" (who represents the supreme power and to whom the kings are compelled to bind themselves by oath) and the king himself (whether he has [yet] to be, or has already been, elected) the following formula is publicly proclaimed in so many words, "NOS QUI VALEMOS TANTO COMME VOS Y POSENMOS MAS QUE VOS, VOS ELEGIMOS REY: CON ESTAS Y ESTAS CONDICIONES, INTRA VOS Y NOS, UN QUE MANDA MAS QUE VOS", that is: "We who are of like worth with you and who are stronger than you, elect you king on such and such conditions; between you and us (there is) One with greater authority than you"⁶⁶ . Behold how far the Spaniards have held their kings in honor as they were in duty bound.

XII. Examples from the Holy (Roman) Empire

Why (add) any further (examples)? Everyone knows what the authority of that most famous gathering of princes in the whole world (that is of the empire of the seven electors) is in regards to the election of an emperor as well as his discharge whenever necessary, as was experienced by the emperors Adolphus in the year 1296 and Wenceslaus in the year 1400⁶⁷ . The oath by which the kings or German emperors then bound themselves was such as is described in the treatise entitled *Speculum Saxonicum*⁶⁸ . For when a king is elected, he is compelled by means of a public oath to vouch for fidelity and hominium (or homage as the common people call it) to the empire, and to promise that he will promote the administration of justice by all in his power, furthermore that he will ward off all kinds of injustice and in short that he will with all zeal and exertion protect the rights of the empire.

XIII. Examples of the Kings of Gaul both before and after their Union with the Franks

I now come to the Franks. Julius Caesar⁶⁹ is our witness that with them before their arrival in Gaul the kings were responsible to the Estates of the people; in recounting the words of Ambiorix, the chieftain of the Eburones (or the people of Liege as their modern name is) in some speech, he says that his authority is of such a nature that the multitude (that is the lawfully assembled multitude) possesses no less rights as against him than he as against it⁷⁰ . The same is proved from the words of Vercingetorix, the king of the Averni pleading his cause in a gathering of the people as it is reproduced by the same Caesar⁷¹ . But afterwards the Gauls and the Franks united under the style of the Francogalli. And although their kingdom has by striking favor of God been continued and preserved for a very long time (yet) at the present time at least, wherever the blame might attach, it seems so to totter that its most certain and immediate destruction has to be feared; and yet that can hardly happen without a mighty revolution in the remaining parts of the world. But the remarks which I now have to make on that score will, I strongly suspect, be pleasing and acceptable to some, but to others most disagreeable and ill-omened. Yet if I maintain nothing that

is not the truth, I hope that God will grant me His favor against all misrepresentation.

Hence, although the Franco-Gauls elected their kings first from the house of the Nerovingians, then from the descendants of Charlemagne, and finally from the successors of Hugh Capet, yet I maintain that from the beginning they established their monarchy in such a way that their kings ruled, not by the sole right of succession⁷², but were elected at the same time by the agreement of the Estates of the Kingdom. After being thus elected Pharamundus was raised to the royal throne in the year of our Lord 41973; so (also) Pippin in the year 751 and his sons Charles and Carloman in the year 768. And at length in 771 Charles upon the authority of the Estates succeeded to his brother's portion. Following this authority he himself afterwards, that is in 812, appointed his son Louis heir to the empire and in his will he expressly provided, as Naucerus who has recorded it testifies⁷⁴, that the people, that is the Estates themselves, should elect as his successor to the kingship whomsoever of his children they preferred and he also charged his uncles who might survive him to agree to such an election; this occurrence is indeed most remarkable and most fit for the solution of this entire question⁷⁵. And such was the oath of the Franco-Gallic kings upon the testimony of Aymoinus who represents the said Charles the Bald as saying: "because, even as those venerable Bishops have by the voice of one of them declared and by trustworthy sign indicated in accordance with our unanimous decision, you (also) have (likewise) acclaimed that I have the choice of God come (to) this (office) for your salvation and profit and guidance and government, know ye that, the Lord helping me to preserve them, it is my will, in accordance with my knowledge and power, to honor and protect and to keep in honorable protection the dignity and cult of God and the holy churches and (so to protect) each of you in accordance with the dignity of his rank and his person, and to keep safe for each in his rank law and justice in accordance with both ecclesiastical and temporal (rights) due to him. In this may royal honor and power and due obedience and assistance for the preservation and defense of the kingdom granted me by God be shown to me by each one of you according to his rank and dignity and ability, and even as your predecessors showed (these) to my predecessors, justly, faithfully and reasonably.⁷⁶" This he (records) verbally.

Moreover, that those very Estates had the power of dismissing the kings whom they had elected if they committed any wrong is proved by countless examples. For his disgraceful crimes and deeds of lust Childeric was by public resolution in 361 thrust from the kingship and expelled and Gilo who was not of the Nerovingian dynasty was placed in his stead. And Chilperic was (dethroned) in 578 and Theodoric in 657. Nay more, in 890 the Estates passed over Charles, the son of Louis the Stutterer, and chose Eudes of Odoines as king⁷⁷. We also read that Hugh Capet deprived Charles, the brother of Lothar, of his kingdom since Charles was conducting the matter in a too negligent and as it were dilatory fashion and was bringing it before the Council, obviously hoping that the Estates of the Kingdom would according to the established custom settle their quarrel⁷⁸. And in short, if the Francogallic kingship was not bestowed by way of election, we should have to say that neither Pippin nor Capet possessed any right in it, since there was no lack of successors in the male line of Nerovingian heirs when Pippin grasped the royal power, nor any lack of heirs from the sons of Charlemagne when Capet claimed the royal diadem for himself.

Furthermore, as regards the power of those some Estates by which they either conferred the principal positions of dignity and high office in the Kingdom and took them away or at least carefully noted how the kings behaved both in conferring or taking them away and in exacting

taxes or in the other principal tasks of kingship in time of peace and war - for that power, I declare, there is evidence and to spare in the most ancient and entirely reliable records; these clearly prove the impudence of those flatterers who today do not cease by means of right and wrong to add to their power from the ruins of such a great kingdom so wisely established. And indeed that in our times the man who is the greatest in blood succeeds to the kingdom of France without summoning the Estates and introduces a new shape of things to suit the desire of those who have courted the favor and support of such a successor; that the meeting of the people is no longer convened at the appointed time, but only when that seems expedient to certain individuals who therein strive after personal advantages and safeguards from danger; that furthermore as often as the Estates are summoned, this happens not so much to the end that a serious decision concerning public affairs may be arrived at, but for the sake of talking, that is in order that after the fashion of the rhetoricians (or rather of the sophists) time and all action may be made vain by means of tedious and affected arguments; that those men there take their seats as judges against whom all the accusation and complaints are chiefly directed, and finally, that both wars and (questions of) peace or truce are decided upon, taxes and tribute imposed, laws upon public and private matters made and unmade, dignities and commands and likewise all public offices bestowed upon chosen men or taken from them according to the arbitrary will of a certain limited group of men or women, noble or baseborn, honest or abandoned, who enjoy greater authority or influence with the rulers of the state (since through their ears and eyes alone the latter hear and see) - all these circumstances, I declare, are completely at variance with the just customs and policy of our ancestors and clearly in direct opposition to the chief laws upon which the foundations of the French monarchy rest. But I now leave it to all lawyers who possess a good conscience together with knowledge of the law to discuss the question whether any prescription of however long a period of time can or should in accordance with any law divine or human find application here. For the fact that even to this day kings are anointed in solemn ritual and swear their oath - would that its words were publicly printed so that they might become known to all - and that they are further wont, after they have secured the kingship, to confirm their privileges to the communities severally and also their public charges to the officials of the kingdom (albeit many abuses occur here which are in no wise to be commended), and lastly the fact that if the kings are minors the orders and Estates of the kingdom decide by common resolution to whom its administration shall be entrusted, all these I say are the present survivals of that erstwhile authority which the Estates enjoyed and which is now gradually disappearing. Yet two centuries have not passed since the will of Charles V, nicknamed the Wise, was annulled by the Estates themselves, that is in 138079 . What more? When in 1567 Louis XI, who tried his utmost to transform the French monarchy into a tyranny (a procedure which the parasites of the palace call the emancipation of the sovereign of his release from slavery), was deservedly accused of the worst misgovernment of the kingdom, thirty (or thirty-six) men were given to him as guardians by the Estate gathered at Tours that he might allow himself to be directed and guided by them⁸⁰ . It is true indeed that he afterwards easily rid himself of them since, under pretext of the idol of Clery⁸¹ which he worshipped with the greatest superstition, all his oaths and promises were but sport and jest to him; yet (he did this) with so much harm to himself and such an unhappy result that apart from the disgrace with which he is branded even today, he could enjoy no rest or peace during his lifetime and even at death's door experienced what it meant to be feared rather than loved by his subjects. And since mention has been made of the violation of an oath, we would add another most remarkable example. While

Charles VII was yet Dauphin, he had John, the last Duke of Burgundy descended from the royal stock of France, miserably slain in his presence in violation of his word of honor and the peace and friendship but recently confirmed by oath near Melun⁸². Although that Duke fully deserved such a great ordeal, this perjury was in the end expiated by many thousands of souls in France and with the ruin of almost the entire kingdom. And King Charles himself was reduced to such misery, that he was first disinherited by his father, afterwards say his deadly enemy invested with the royal power in Paris and was subsequently himself styled King of Aquitaine rather than of France. At length however he was constrained with great dishonor to himself to purchase peace as appears from the treaty drawn up at Arras. Although the king himself negotiated with Duke Philip, the son of the murdered John, as with his subject, yet in that treaty this express clause is contained, "to which," it says, "the king himself shall agree and which he shall approve by his letter of authority. But if this agreement shall happen to be violated by him, his clients, vassals and subject, present and future, shall thereafter not be bound either to obey or to serve him, but shall show every obedience against him to the Duke of Burgundy rather and his successors; in short all those very clients, beneficiaries and subjects shall in this case be regarded as free, disengaged and entirely released from every engagement, oath and allegiance and from their promises, obligations and whatever duties by which they previously were bound to King Charles, so that in the sequel none of these may be counted to their detriment or burden or may any (compensation for) remissness be exacted from them. Nay more, let King Charles very soon bid them do this very thing and let him declare them freed and disengaged from all their oaths and obligations if any such thing should happen.⁸³" This to be sure was the end of a breach of royal faith committed with evil design. But because these covenants were faithfully kept in after time, the greatest peace and calm befell the kingdom. Further if it seemed fair then that his clause should be inserted into this fortuitous promise which strictly speaking did not bear upon the administration of the kingdom, shall then that promise or condition be deemed less fair or lawful which the people stipulates from the king either at his election or at his investiture since it is supported both by the greatest fairness and by common reasonableness, namely that the king shall direct his entire administration in accordance with the provisions of the laws, of which he himself is or should be the supreme guardian and defender?

Epilogue and Conclusion about the Authority of the Estates The purpose therefore of all that has been said above is as follows, namely that the highest authority rests with kings or other supreme rulers with this proviso that if they violate the noblest laws and sworn conditions and degenerate into unabashed tyranny nor give heed to sound counsels, it shall be lawful and permitted to the subordinate magistrates to take precautions for themselves and for those over whom they exercise guardianship, and to offer resistance to the tyrant of the people. But the Estates or Orders of the realm upon whom this authority has been conferred by the laws, can and must so far oppose the tyrant and even, if need be, inflict just and deserved punishment upon him until matters have been restored to their former condition. And if they do so, so far from deriving to be regarded as guilty of sedition or high treason, they should on the contrary only then be deemed to have carried out conscientiously their duty and their oath by which they were bound towards God and their country. And though by means of the clearest examples of kingdoms and empires both ancient and modern we have already above demonstrated the practice in these matters, yet to answer the objection that (the matter) should be judged by legal arguments rather than by examples, I shall add as many other grounds as possible to lend greater support to our point of

view.

I. Argument from natural law and equity For to begin with I maintain that there are two propositions which justice as such or that law of nature upon which alone the maintenance of all human society depends, does not allow to be called in question; the first of these is that in all compacts and covenants which are contracted by mutual and sole agreement between the parties, those by whom the obligations were entered into, can of themselves cancel and annul it, whenever reason so demands. Accordingly those who possess authority to elect a king, will also have the right to dethrone him. The second (proposition) is that if there is any just occasion for the annulment of a compact or covenant by reason of which the obligation would of itself disappear and be held as naught, it never arises but when the essential conditions, for which particularly the obligation was entered upon, are manifestly violated.

Therefore let those who so far exalt the authority of kings and supreme rulers as to dare maintain that they have no other Judge but God alone to whom they are held bound to render account of their deeds, furnish proof that there has been any nation anywhere which has consciously and without intimidation or compulsion of some kind subjected itself to the arbitrary rule of some supreme ruler without the express or tacit addition of the proviso that it be justly and fairly ruled and guided by him. But if someone were to furnish an example of peoples who upon being defeated in war surrendered at discretion and swore to the conditions dictated by the victors, it would not be enough for me to answer with the lawyers that (undertakings) extorted by violence or intimidation which is the rule of consciences does not easily permit oaths of that kind to be heedlessly violated⁸⁴ . But I shall further add that even if any people has consciously and of its free will granted assent to an undertaking which is as such evidently sinful and opposed to the law of nature, such obligation is null and void; so little ground is there for reasonable doubt whether that obligation which was contracted as a result of violence or intimidation or of open deceit and malpractice should be regarded as valid and binding. For this general rule of law and justice sustained by the common principles of nature, which still linger in man after the Fall however corrupt (he may be) is so firmly established and so lasting, that nothing which is openly opposed and repugnant to them should be regarded as just and valid between men. This moreover must be understood about matters utterly unjust and manifestly sinful which everyone not entirely destitute of human insight realizes cannot be exacted or performed by anyone with a good conscience. Such was the compact which as the story goes came about in the earliest times between Minos, King of the island of Crete, and the Athenians, namely that they should deliver to him every year seven youths and seven maidens that they might be devoured by the Minotaur⁸⁵ , as the tales record it, or that they might serve his lust and tyranny, as seems more credible. Of that kind was the condition offered by the Ammonites⁸⁶ to the inhabitants of Jabesh, namely that they would spare them and receive them into their custody, provided only they each put out an eye. Yet more intolerable was the condition offered to the citizens of Jerusalem by the detestable tyrant Antiochus⁸⁷ and accepted by the majority of them, namely that they should abjure the true faith for the sake of saving their lives. But if a condition offered by the victor and accepted by the vanquished is merely burdensome and distressing and comprises disadvantages of this (physical) life alone, in that case I grant that regard should be had to the oath rather than to any advantages or disadvantages. Therefore God most sternly rebuked and punished Zedekiah⁸⁸ the last king from the house of David, because he had revolted from the king of the Chaldaeans in violation of

his sworn oath. Assuredly the inhabitants of Gibeon, though they were reduced to the most distressing slavery by Joshua, yet nowhere complain about him⁸⁹. But particularly when it concerns religion the greatest care should be exercised that no one covet permission to abandon heedlessly the promises which he has made under oath to God. And yet in this matter too a limit of the following kind will have to be observed namely that just as in religion no one ought lightly to change anything, even so (since we cannot be misled therein without the gravest loss) no one may obstinately enforce those promises of which it is clear that they were wickedly and unlawfully made to God under the pretext of religion. And because this has not till now been sufficiently carefully noted, many serious and dangerous revolutions have occurred in the world. But let us grant that there was some nation which either from lack of foresight or as a result of blandishments or lastly because it once chanced upon a good ruler from a certain family and with excessive credulity assumed that all his descendants also would be like him always, submitted itself without any express condition to some (ruler); shall we on that account declare that all things that he may wish will be permissible to that ruler? Will not rather those things which by their nature are just and lawful have to be regarded as if they had been expressed? For what shall otherwise be the end of the matter? Or of what kind shall the life of men finally be, if a ruler of this description wantonly proceeds to such a pitch of license that he savagely slays the parents of his subjects, ravishes their wives and daughters, pillages their houses and possessions and finally murders them individually as the fancy takes him; because the people reposing their trust in his worth have from the outset admitted him as their ruler without any conditions?

II. Arguments from Analogy

Furthermore it would be most unfair to refuse to an entire nation and people that which justice itself freely grants to private persons, such as minors, women, people of an unsound mind and those who complain that they have been defrauded beyond half the fair value (*laesio enormis*) particularly if there be proof of the bad faith of those towards whom such persons have bound themselves⁹⁰. But can anyone be found of worse faith than that tyrant who is so shameless that he wishes people to believe that he may do everything, lawful and unlawful, because he either so covenanted with the people or received such power from his ancestors? Meanwhile I for my part admit, as has been abundantly shown above, that in that case the authority of the Estates or Orders should be invoked and interposed that private citizens may not be free to undertake and attempt anything against the public order and that subordinate magistrates may not go beyond the limits of their calling. But I put the further question whether the obligation of subjects towards their kings is greater than that of children towards parents, of slaves towards their master or of freedmen towards their patron who set them free. Let us listen particularly what Cicero, guided by justice and reason, writes concerning the duty of a (dependent) son whose father strives by violence to seize control of his country: "If a father," he says "by open violence attempts to grasp tyrannical power or to betray his country, shall a son remain silent? No, not at all; but he shall as suppliant beseech his father not to do so; but if by his entreaties he does not avail at all, he shall reproach him and frighten him with threats; but if the matter has already gone so far that there is reason to apprehend that this country may at length be overwhelmed, he shall set greater store by the preservation of his country than by the life of his father."⁹¹ Listen what was the opinion of that man, not merely in agreement with reason but also carrying the greatest authority. As regards servants or slaves, there was a proviso in Roman law that a slave whom his master did not tend in

illness should be regarded as free⁹² . And what is even more important, a slave is by a provision of the written law free to accuse his master of high treason⁹³ . But who is more liable to this accusation than the tyrant who openly subverts all rights divine as well as human? But, you will rejoin, before whom shall he be accused? I answer, either before those who since they possessed the authority to elect him, also possess the authority to judge him, or before those who are the chief defenders of the supreme power and from whom there is no appeal.

Thus although freedmen owe every respect to their patrons, so much so that in ordinary law they can institute only civil actions against them, yet for special reasons, that is if they have suffered some terrible injustice at the hands of their patron or have caught him in adultery with their wives, they can in virtue of the civil law lay a capital charge against him⁹⁴ . My purpose with these arguments is not to tighten the conscience (of men) by means of the civil laws or the pronouncements of philosophers as if by most reliable rules, but only to show as clearly as may be how unjust is the opinion of those who would leave men no means at all by which they may avail to break the onset of imminent or openly aggressive tyranny, however cruel and unjust the matter might be.

Various Objections Answered a) Assuredly the usual objection that the king is not bound by the laws cannot and should not be accepted as a general proposition as the flatterers of kings and destroyers of kingdoms inauspiciously proclaim⁹⁵ ; for not to mention the example of so many, nay nearly all, nations which were adduced above, what is the purpose of so many weighty maxims of the jurists of old, derived from the law of nature? Such maxims are: the legislators are beholden to the laws; that each must observe the same right which he has decreed against another; that nothing is more profitable to imperial power than that the king should act according to the laws; and that it is a fitting saying that the ruler professes himself the subject of the laws⁹⁶ . Hence the proposition which would appear to be made elsewhere by the jurists that the ruler is above the laws or that the ruler is *legibus solutus* (not bound by the laws), must be understood only of the civil laws and about the individual right of the private citizens e.g. about wills, or about the deduction of the *Trebellianic*⁹⁷ or *Falcidian* fourth⁹⁸ , but not of public law and the so-called constitutional law; much less of natural or divine law, for since men collectively and individually are subjected to it in so far as they are born men, it clearly follows that either kings are not men or that they are bound by this law. b) If again someone were to raise the objection that public law referring to the constitution of the people or nation (for that is the kind we are discussing) differs widely from the law of nature common to all nations, I shall concede that this is true indeed in certain matters, but with this limitation that the entire distinction is connected with circumstances which cannot prevent general fairness and equity from so far remaining steadfast and invariable that every polity acting in violation of it - as for example if undisguised impieties, robberies and similar crimes both against God and against the law of nations and good morals were to meet with approval - should be utterly condemned and cast off. c) The further exception might be raised that the supreme ruler does indeed stand arraigned if he rules contrary to his undertaking, but that he has no other judge but God Himself, and this might be proved by the example of David, for though he was an adulterer and a wicked slayer of men, yet he was judged by no mortal man. But I answer first that it is apparent from what has been said above that the nations themselves and the Estates of the people generally reserved for themselves the right to curb their rulers and that no antiquity or prescription can be urged against this right; further that there is a great difference between him

who has on one occasion or even repeatedly committed some crime and the man who openly professes himself abandoned to every kind of crime, as also between the ruler of a dissolute way of life and the other who subverts every just method of rule in his kingdom; for I should not be inclined to think that the supreme ruler ought to be corrected in the same way as his subjects for private delicts which are personal in the strict sense of the word, but yet (I do think) that he can become so abandoned that he can and should deservedly be visited with penalties and punishments. How much more fair would it therefore be when the order of the state is at stake that those upon whom this duty rests should be free to take precautions and to strive lest the commonwealth suffer any harm? And if they neglect to do so, let them be regarded as traitors towards God and their country, to (both of) whom they have bound themselves by oath. When these distinctions are duly weighed and brought into relation with the general character of David as also with the public amends by which he did penance for his public crimes, no one will be surprised that nothing more severe was decreed or attempted against him. Moreover it is in principle an illogical conclusion of the argument to draw the inference that no punishment should have been inflicted for some wrong because none in fact was inflicted. d) But perhaps there will not be wanting those who will furnish the (example of) the authority of the Turkish emperor over his subjects. I should wish these to have their answer in a single word: an empire of that description does not deserve to be called either kingly or human, but wholly barbarous, tyrannical, uncivilized and detestable, especially because whereas the other monarchies and empires, to however many faults they may have been subject, were still instruments suitable for the preservation of human society, it is obvious that on the contrary this Turkish tyranny is an awful scourge of God by means of which God in accordance with his just judgment threatens this world with its final ruin and overthrow. Therefore, if there are men to be found today who are counselors to kings so that these may fashion an example and an image of their rule from that source, I proclaim with a clear and loud voice that those Turks should be deemed the public enemies of humankind and should be cast out in banishment. e) But to pursue the analogies concerning the right of one private citizen towards another upon which I set out above: will any obligation which is more stricti iuris than that of marriage arise between human beings⁹⁹ ? For in it God Himself intervenes as if He were the chief guarantor of this contract, and by it those who were two become one flesh. But even in marriage also, if one party deserts the other, the Apostle proclaims the deserted party relieved of every obligation¹⁰⁰ , because the deserter violates the principal condition of marriage. But let us imagine that someone declares himself willing to keep his wife with him and that he attempts to do so, yet if it becomes known that this man desires to have his wife in order to kill her or to remove her in some other way, will he not have to be regarded in the light of a manifest deserter (of his wife)? But assuredly the design of tyrants does not differ from his since they do not strive to have subjects in their power for any other reason but to persecute and crush them to their destruction while they indulge their own lusts; why therefore should the wielders of judicial authority not pronounce the same judgment over both? But if not even the canons of the Church consider that a wife who cannot safely live with her husband, should be compelled to live with him¹⁰¹ , why shall a subordinate magistrate not be allowed to take precautions on behalf of himself and his people and to have recourse to the Estates against a manifest tyrant? f) Furthermore, since kingdoms and empires themselves are deemed to be feudal authority, owing fealty or subordination or even servitude to the supreme power of man, let us inquire what the nature of the feudal law is. From Book 2 tit. 26 parag. Domino and tit. 47 then it

appears that the lord can commit the crime of treachery against the vassal or client no less than the vassal against the lord; in that case the feudal estate of the lord does not indeed devolve upon the vassal, but reverts to the immediate lord of the estate from whom in the first instance it derives, or to the agnatic descendants of the lord. Yet this remains fixed and certain that the lord upon being convicted of treachery forfeits every right he might have against the vassal. And the reason for this is to be found in that the lord is in duty bound in all respects to requite faithful vassal, otherwise he is deservedly deemed an evildoer, as it is stated in tit. 6 de forma fidelitatis, ad fin¹⁰². In the question under discussion I therefore declare that a king or even an emperor, whose rule is dependent upon the supreme power, if he is guilty of that crime of treachery towards his vassals, that is his subjects - would that it never happened! - forfeits his feudal estate, in the sense not that it is judicially awarded to his vassals, but that those who recover that supreme power may dispose of it. But that the strength of this argument may be recognized it should be noted that such mediate (or as they are commonly called, subaltern) lords swear no oath to their vassals then they make their grant to them, so that the rule which we mentioned as applying to those who commit treachery, is supported by no other consideration but that of natural justice, and although it has not been expressed yet it must always of itself be understood. What therefore, that the comparison may proceed from the lesser to the greater, will have to be decided about him who has committed that crime against his subjects towards whom he has bound himself by express oath? Furthermore, even if we were to concede the point that the lord can never incur the charge of treachery against his vassal so as to forfeit his feudal right, yet no one doubts but what the vassal, if guilty of this crime against his lord, is deservedly deprived of his right. Therefore, since the emperor himself, as has been pointed out above, owes obedience (or homage as the people say) to the imperial power as being himself its first and most exalted subject - and a fortiori or at least with equal reason kings in their kingdoms must be regarded as being in the same position - who would doubt but what emperors or kings forfeit their feudal power if they recklessly go to such lengths of treachery as to degenerate into undisguised and regrettable tyranny? For we have proved that that was everywhere approved of. g) Lastly, since it has upon reliable grounds and as the result of countless examples long since been the firm conviction of all men of sober judgment, even of those who call themselves Roman Catholics, that the Ecumenical or General Council is the superior of the Pope and possesses authority to depose him, for the crime of heresy at all events, it assuredly follows either that kings possess greater authority than pontiffs and that the crime of heresy is of less consequence than that of tyranny, or that the people possess as much power at all events against kings who have become tyrants as the Council possesses against an heretical Pontiff. This then is our opinion about this inquiry into the problem as to the right possessed by subjects, whatever their rank, against the supreme ruler who has become an undisguised tyrant. Question 6 notes.

Question 6. What is the duty of subjects towards their superiors who have fallen into tyranny?

1. Another allusion to *lex regia*, established by the Emperor Augustus. See Question 5, note 18.
2. Judges 9:1-57 3. The thirty tyrants of Athens, 404-403 B.C.
4. The decemviri, governors of Rome, 451-449 B.C.
5. Peisistratos was a ruler of Athens, 560-527 B.C.; Demetrios of Phaleron governed the state from 317-307 B.C.

6. Romans 13:5

7. 1 Peter 2:17 8. Matthew 26:51-54; John 18:10-11

9. It was not initiated by Vespasian, but by his son, Titus Flavius Vespasianus. See Seutonius, *De vita Caesarum*, book VIII, Divus Titus, 8, 1.

10. France

11. The flatterer of whom Beza speaks evidently cites the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, *Digeste*, I, 3, 31: "Princeps legibus solutus est."

12. Cf. the test of Theodosius and Valentianus in *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, *Codex*, I, 14, 4: "Digna vox maiestate regnantis legibus se principem profiteri." The combination of the two Roman principles of *lex regia* and *lex digna* are frequently found in the political treatises of the previous age and the modern age. See on the subject, Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: a study in mediaeval political theology* (Princeton University Press, 1957) pp. 104-107; also p. 95 and p. 135.

13. Dion Cassius, *The Life of Trajan*, book LXVIII, 16, 1.

14. 1 Samuel 24:21 15. 1 Samuel 22:2 16. 1 Samuel 24:7 17. 2 Samuel 2:1-4 18. 1 Samuel 23:9-13 19. 1 Samuel 25:28 20. 2 Chronicles 21:8-10 21. see inter alia, Titus Livius, *Ab urbe condita*, book I, xv, 6-8 22. *Ibid*, book I, xvii.

23. *Ibid*, book I, xlix, 3.

24. *Ibid*, book I, xlix, 7.

25. Seneca, *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, epist. CVIII, 31; Cicero, *De repub.* book II, xviii.

26. Titus Livius, *Ab urbe condita*, book I, XXVI, 3 and also 8.

27. Dionysius Halicarnesensis, *Antiquitatum Romanorum*, book II, 14.

28. Titus Livius, *Ab urbe condita*, book II, II.

29. *Ibid*, book II, II, 10.

30. *Ibid*, book III, XXXIII, XXXVI, LIV.

31. *Ibid*, book VIII, XXX-XXXVII.

32. Again, another allusion to the *lex regia*. See Question 5, note 18.

33. Plutarch, *Lysander*, XXIV 34. *Ibid*, *Cleomenes*, passim, VIII and XXXIX 35. Xenophon, *Lakedaimonion Politeia*, XV, 7

36. Judges 2:16 37. 1 Samuel 8:5-22 38. "What I want, I may". *Historia Augustae*, *Caracalla*, X, 2 39. 2 Samuel 5:1-4 40. 1 Chronicles 29:22 41. 2 Kings 11:4, 2 Kings 11:17 42. 2 Kings 11:1-21 43. 2 Kings 14:19-21; 2 Chronicles 25:27-28, and 2 Chronicles 26:1 44. 2 Chronicles 24:25 45. 2 Kings 21:23 46. 2 Chronicles 25:27 47. 2 Kings 21:24 48. 2 Kings 14:5

49. Christian II, ruler of Denmark in 1523, was replaced by his uncle Frederick the I, and the successor of that time was Frederick II, grandson of Frederick I, who ruled from 1559.

50. Gustavus I severed the union with Denmark and became the King of Sweden in 1523.
51. Eric XIV, became King of Sweden in 1560, and was replaced by his brother John III in 1568.
52. Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, was accused of complicity in the murder of her second husband, Lord Darnley, in 1567.
53. Polydore Vergile, *Anglica Historia*, book XI (Henricus primus).
54. John of Monluc, Bishop of Valentine during 1553, ambassador of the Crown of France after the Diet of Poland in 1573.
55. *Oratio...ad ordines...Poloniae...in electione novi Regis...1573, d. 10 apr., Krakow [1573]*
56. For the debate over the role of the Doge in the Venetian government, see William J. Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty* (University of California Press, 1968), p. 62-63, and the case he cites.
57. An allusion to the Florentine historians, especially Machiavelli and Guichardin. It is curious to note that the Latin edition of *The Right of Magistrates, with the Vindiciae contra tyrannos*, was printed along with *The Prince* of Machiavelli. See Sturm, p. 21-23, for the list of those editions.
58. Aristotle, *Politics*, III, IX, 3 59. Chron. D. Sigeberti, in M.G.H., *Scriptores*, VI, 324, 1 and 25.
60. Sisenand, King of the Visigoths in Spain, 631-636.
61. Suintila, King from 621-631
62. For the text of the decree, see Mansi, X, 638C-640D, can. 75 (and not 74). See the commentary of the Council, held in 633 (and not in 644), in Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles*, III/1 (Paris, 1909), 266-277.
63. Chapter 5
64. Mansi, X, 664B, Song of Solomon 3:1-11, "De custodia fidei Judaeorum." Cf. Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles*, III/1, 279.
65. *Corpus Iuris Civilis, Consuetudines Feudorum*, II, 28, 1. Cf. Francois Hotman, *De feudis commentatio tripertita* (Lyon, 1573), p. 258-262
66. See Ralph E. Giesey, *If Not, Not: the oath of the Aragonese and the legendary laws of Sobrarbe* (Princeton University Press, 1968) 67. The emperor Adolphus was deposed in the year 1298, not 1296; the emperor Wenceslaus in 1400.
68. *Sachsenspiegel, Landrecht*, book III, 54, 2 69. Julius Caesar, *De bello gallico*, book V, 8 70. *Ibid*, book V, 27: "ut non minus habaret iuris in se multitudo, quam ipse in multitudinem."
71. *Ibid*, book VII, 4
72. The mention of the right of succession is further developed in Chapter VI of Francois Hotman's, *Francogallia*. A useful analysis on this point can be found in Ralph E. Giesey, "The Juristic Basis of Dynastic Right to the French Throne", *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, n.s., 51/5 (1961), p. 30-37.

73. Aimoin De Fleuri, *Hist. Francorum*, book I, cap. 4 (Migne, *Patrol. Lat.*, 139, 640B) 74. Johannes Nauclerus, *Chronica...res memorabiles*, vol. II, generatio 28 75. A precise and documented account can be found in Hotman, *Francogallia*, chapter VI, p. 48 of the Geneva, 1573 ed.
76. Aimoin De Fleuri, *Hist. Francorum*, book V, cap. 21, p. 640 of the Paris, 1567 ed.
77. Again the text is detailed and documented in Hotman, *Francogallia*, chapter VI, p. 54-58 of the Geneva, 1573 ed.
78. Cf. *Ibid*, chapter XVI
79. Here Beza is reciting the many details and documentation found in Hotman, *Francogallia*, chapter XVII, p. 137-38 of the Geneva, 1573 ed.
80. For Louis XI and the Estates General of 1468 (not 1467), see the study by J. Russell Major, *Representative Institutions in Renaissance France, 1421-1559* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1960), chapter III. Cf. Hotman, *Francogallia*, Chapter XVIII (p. 140-140 of the Geneva 1573 ed.)
81. Allusion to Notre Dame of Clery, which was the favorite chapel of Louis XI. See Pierre Champion, *Louis XI* (Paris, 1927), II, 211-213.
82. The peace was concluded in Pouilli, close to Melun, July 11, 1419.
83. Article 29 of the Treaty of Arras, September 21, 1435. Cf. Isambert, et al., *Recueil general des anciennes lois francaises*, VIII, 826-827.
84. Ulpian in *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, *Digeste*, 4, 2, 1: "Ait praetor, 'Quod metus causa gestum erit, ratum non habebit.' olim ita edicebatur 'quod vi metusve causa.'..."
85. see, inter alia, Plutarch, *Thesus*, 15, 1 86. 1 Samuel 11:2
87. 1Ma 1:43-55 88. Ezekiel 17:16 89. Joshua 9:22-27 90. See *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, *Codex*, 4, 44, 2 and 8
91. Cicero, *De officiis*, III, 90: "Quid? si tyrannidem occupare, si patriam prodere conabitur pater, silebitne filius?' Immo vero obsecrabit patrem, ne id faciat. Si nihil proficiet, accusabit, minabitur etiam, ad extremum, si ad perniciem patriae res spectabit, patriae salutem anteponet saluti patris."
92. *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, *Codex*, VII, 6, 3; *Digeste*, 40, 8, 2 93. *Ibid*, *Digeste*, 48, 4, 7
94. *Ibid*, *Digeste*, 48, 5, 39: "...Liberto patroni famam lacerare non facile conceditur: sed si jure mariti velit adulterii accusare, permittendum est, quomodo si atrocem injuriam passus esset..."
95. *Ibid*, *Digeste*, I, 3, 31: "Princeps legibus solutus est."
96. *Ibid*, *Codex*, I, 14, 4, the *lex digna* 97. *Ibid*, *Digeste*, 36, 1 98. *Ibid*, *Digeste*, 35, 2 99. Matthew 19:5 100. 1 Corinthians 7:15
101. *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, *Decretal.*, Greg. IX, IV, tit. 19 ("De Divortis"), cap. 1: "Homicidium necessarium non spe conjugit, sed machinatio in mortem conjugis sic."

102. Corpus Iuris Civilis, Consueudines feudorum, 2, 26, art. 24. Cf. Hotman, De feudis commentatio tripertita (Lyon, 1573), p. 246 and 300.

01.07. Question 07

Question 7. What must be done when the Orders or Estates cannot be summoned to impede or to check tyranny?

Yet there still remains a considerable difficulty in this discussion. The question is what should be done when tyranny has attained to such influence that the meeting of the Estates, (which we have declared to be the lawful remedy against such tyranny) is in a word so hampered by connivance, or intimidation or malice on the part of the majority that it can in no way be assembled. I answer that private citizens, unless they have authority from a subordinate magistrate or the saner part of the Estates, concerning which more is discussed shortly, here have no other just remedy but reflection combined with patience and prayers which God will assuredly not always reject and without which all other remedies however legitimate will be subject to His curse. But there is no reason why subjects in private station should not betake themselves to the intermediate magistrates and take them to task concerning their duty; and if all of them or the saner part of them are prepared to make use of such help from private citizens, I have above shown sufficiently what they are bound to render to God and their country.

It is assuredly the duty of the subordinate magistrates at once unanimously to insist on an assembly of the Estates and meanwhile as far as they can and may to defend and protect themselves against undisguised tyranny; lastly, this duty rests upon the several Estates also earnestly to secure a lawful and general assembly of all the Estates, that the wicked may not check and obstruct the good, nor the slothful the diligent, nor the vulgar herd the more sober section. Nay more, in a crisis of that description all private citizens are under an obligation to attach themselves to their subordinate magistrates and perform the duty of subjects, and if the occasion demands it, the saner section upon being oppressed will even have the right to procure support from abroad especially from the allies and friends of the kingdom.

Examples. In support of this opinion I shall quote some excellent examples. a) Behold¹ two whole tribes, those of Reuben and Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh, when suspected of having fallen into idolatry, were attacked with armed force by all the remaining tribes. And yet no tribe had any right and authority against another since all twelve constituted but one collective whole. Hence it appears that the better part can reprove the other without awaiting the unanimous agreement of all if all cannot simultaneously assemble. b) The same may also² be seen in the war most justly undertaken by the eleven tribes against the tribe of Benjamin when the latter defended a horrible crime committed in Gibeah. What then if those two tribes with half the tribe of Manasseh or if the tribe of Benjamin itself had tried to seize tyrannical power against their brethren and kinsmen? c) So the Romans too invoked the help of Constantine against Maxentius when he ruled over the Empire of the West and undisguisedly acted the most cruel tyrant. And this war was waged not only with the favor of God who heard their prayers, but it also receives testimony of approval from all the historians³. Yet Constantine did not wield supreme power over Maxentius since the latter possessed the highest imperial authority in the East no less than the other in the West. d) But what

right or by what title did Charlemagne obtain the empire of the West? By what right but that as a result of the cowardice of the emperors of the East who were taking cover in Greece, he was summoned against the tyranny of the Lombards by the more powerful part of Italy and particularly by the patricians of Rome who had not yet then, nor for many years afterwards even, passed into the power of the Pontiffs?

I therefore consider that my point of view has so far been abundantly established and proved provided only that the following three axioms steadily kept in view in all these definitions, namely:

- 1) That the tyranny must be undisguised and notorious;
- 2) That the recourse should not be had to arms before all other remedies have been tried;
- 3) Nor yet before the question has been thoroughly examined, not only as to what is permissible, but also as to what is expedient, lest the remedies prove more hazardous than the very disease.

Answers to certain objections

It remains for me, I think, by way of conclusion to this treatise, to answer the chief arguments which are commonly adduced to support the contrary point of view, except those upon which we have already touched incidentally and as occasion arose. a) Now the following argument especially is commonly bandied about, namely that it is the characteristic of magistrates, particularly supreme magistrates, to issue commands and to exercise authority. I myself also agree with that, but I add (the proviso) that this power is limited by laws both divine and human. b) They add further: if kings degenerate into tyrants, nobody ought indeed to be or to become the servant of their unjust commands, but it is the part of subjects to suffer and patiently to endure the vagaries of the supreme ruler, not by means of any violence to offer resistance to them. I should not be inclined readily to concede that point without applying the above distinctions. The gist of these is that, unless they can defend themselves upon the authority of some lawful subordinate magistrate or of the Estates of that nation, private persons must assuredly either go away until such time as a better light shall shine upon them, or bow their necks to the yoke while urgently asking God in constant prayer for patience and meantime proceeding under His chastisements. But it is the part of the subordinate magistrates (to protect against all) strenuously the good laws to whose defense they personally have sworn, each in accordance with the station he has obtained in the constitution of the community, and in general all should strive to prevent the laws and conditions upon which that constitution rests, from being undermined by any violence from without or from within. Finally, emperors, kings or other supreme rulers acquire the highest authority on the understanding that, if it should meanwhile become notorious that they rather plunder the territory of which they have undertaken the government, that cunningly and without self-control they set themselves against law and reason and wantonly break their sworn promises, they can and should be forced, compelled and brought to their duty even by armed force, if it cannot be otherwise, by those who upon special conditions have raised them to this high office. c) Further they seek support in the example of David, for though the succession to the kingship had been promised to him and held the office of chief commander in war, yet while⁴ he was being tyrannically attacked by Saul, he gave proof that the Lord's anointed bore so much authority with him, that when he had caught him he refused to do him any harm or to have him hurt by others, but immediately ordered⁵ the man to be executed who boasted of his death at his hand, and finally

both alive and dead signally honored him, though a most unjust tyrant. All this I recognize and I even readily grant that the faithfulness, patience and goodness of David were incomparable and most commendable qualities which it would be seemly for all Christians to imitate as far as they may and to set before themselves as a pattern of conduct; I even add that all without distinction whether superiors, equals or men of lower station must requite evil with good. But at the same time I deny that the patience and gentleness which we require in Christians prevent a man from employing lawful remedies to repel an injury which is being done to him.

It is certainly permissible to claim one's property from an unjust possessor in court, and to lodge complaints with the supreme magistrate concerning the injustice of an inferior; why therefore by the same reasoning should it not be permissible to go to laws against a tyrant before the Estates? But if as a result of tyranny there is no way leading to justice, the example of David, so far from tending to refute our arguments, clearly even supports us. For David did not yield to the madness of Saul without meanwhile gathering about him not inconsiderable military forces; and he would doubtless have employed them more freely to defend his own life and those of his followers, if he had been reduced by God to such dire necessity that he would not have been able to ward off the violence offered him without joining battle. That he spared the tyrant's life when he had fallen into his power, was certainly a just and dutiful act, for Saul still occupied the royal throne and neither David nor anyone else had the right to deprive him of his royal power or his life, but (that was the part) of God alone or of the Estates, as has been pointed out above. But it is a very different thing on the one hand to defend oneself against a tyrant either in court or by force of arms and on the other avowedly to engage in some conspiracy against the life of the tyrant or against his authority.

d) Subsequently they declare that Zedekiah⁶, the King of Judah, was severely rebuked and punished because he had in violation of his oath revolted from the King of the Chaldeans, and yet this king was not⁷ the lawful Lord of Judah but the most unabashed usurper of the authority of another. How then shall greater license be allowed to subjects against a lawful king who has turned tyrant? I answer that Zedekiah at the express command of God and even by swearing an oath had subjected himself with his people to the King of the Chaldeans who had offered him every occasion to pay tribute. And these circumstances entirely convict Zedekiah and the men of his nation both of revolt and of perjury. Next I also admit that subjects are not free to break their oath, nor do I approve of the sentiment expressed in the trite maxim, "Let faith be broken with the breaker of faith"⁸, for I, on the contrary hold, that it is never permissible to break an oath justly sworn; but I deny that an oath is broken or violated by subjects towards a tyrant whenever individuals among them, confining themselves to the limits each of his own vocation, attempt to check the course of tyranny. For there is the general rule that an agreement concluded subject to a condition either express or tacitly implied is canceled by the party who acts in violation of the condition, but not by that party, who since he had been bound only subject to the condition, has been freed from his obligation, not by his own act (for [then] he would be a perjurer) but by the act of that party himself who first broke the tie of the obligation, that is, the condition added to it. When therefore the supreme ruler has become a tyrant, he must be deemed by his own perjury to have freed the people from their oath, and not to the contrary, when the people justly assert their rights against him.

e) Furthermore they use as a pretext the command of God who expressly bids the Israelites⁹ to utter prayers for the peace and happy reign of Nebuchadnezzar, a most cruel tyrant: much less (therefore) were the Jews allowed to steal away from his rule and from obedience to him. This too I admit, but I answer, in the first place, that the Jews were not merely subjects and in

a private station, but that the majority were slaves under the rule of the Chaldeans. Now we have laid down above (the principle) that citizens of private rank are not free to rise against their rulers or to set themselves against them in open violence; much less are slaves (free to rise) against their masters however harsh or unjust, since the latter hold their bodies and their goods in their power. This precept (of God) therefore in no way detracts from the principles which were laid down by us above. Furthermore I repeat once again that the Jews - and this should be most carefully noted in this entire account - had passed into the power of the Chaldeans during the captivity, they could not even before have set themselves against them with a good conscience or have defended the city of Jerusalem against their attack since God had expressly bidden them by the mouth of Jeremiah 10:1-25 to surrender their city into the hands of the Chaldeans and to subject themselves to them spontaneously. f) Here some people also vainly rejoin that this same will of God finds no application in every (case of) tyranny, since no tyranny obtains either without or in spite of the will of God. (Vainly, I say), for I could turn this very argument against the tyrants: for it is no less dependent upon the will of God that the tyrants are expelled by their subjects and fellow countrymen, as has happened to many, than that tyrants frequently oppress their peoples. But the following will be a truer reply, that is, if we say that the will of God must be heeded to the extent that He Himself has deigned to reveal it to us; otherwise there would be no crime so heinous but what it could be imputed to the Divine will, since not even those events which are regarded as in the highest degree fortuitous occur by chance or accidentally. Hence it comes about that the man who meets with highway robbers, by whom no one is murdered without the consent of the will of God, has the power in accordance with the authority of the laws to resist them in just self-defense which incurs no blame because no one forsooth has (received) a special command from God that he meekly allow himself to be slain by robbers. Our conviction is entirely the same about that regular defense against tyrants which we are discussing. Yet this then at length ceases to find application when clear proof emerges of the contrary will of God, as happened in the case of that deed of Zedekiah about which we spoke but recently, and before that also in the case of his predecessor Rehoboam¹¹ ; for he would otherwise justly have attacked the other ten tribes revolting from him had not God expressly forbidden this to be done. But on the other hand Mattathias¹² and his children are celebrated as deserving of the highest praise because they so courageously resisted the most cruel tyrant Antiochus when God did not by any decree forbid it, although without His just judgment Antiochus would not have attacked the people of God and even have been acceptable to many and found favor with them. g) The further objection is raised that the revolt of the Israelites from Rehoboam, even though he was an unjust oppressor, deserves the strongest condemnation. I myself too answer that the Israelites did double wrong by him. (They did so) firstly because with summoning the Estates of the people of Israel with the purpose of compelling Rehoboam to his duty either willingly or unwillingly, they elected¹³ a new king and thereby rent asunder that kingdom which God desired to be one; and secondly, because in (their choice) they went beyond the House of David which they knew had been set aside by God Himself for the kingship. But these circumstances do not in the least invalidate our proposition. Nor will it avail at all to use as argument the calling of Jeroboam¹⁴ made known to him by the prophet Ahijah, since the entire account clearly proves that the people had no regard to it when they revolted from the House of David and slew Adoram who was over the levy¹⁵ , but that the road which they took was manifest revolt whereas they could and should rather have opposed tyranny with the lawful and just use of arms. Thus often something is done unjustly which yet nothing

prevents from being just in itself. h) Furthermore (our opponents) urge that it is an argument in their favor that Saints Peter¹⁶ and Paul¹⁷ bid prayers to be openly said for kings and other rulers who yet in their own times were not merely heathen but the most cruel tyrants too. I grant that, by all means; but apart from the fact that those exhortations are directed to private citizens who, we have consistently maintained, have no other remedy but prayers and patience left to them, it should be borne in mind here too that when we declare that the subordinate magistrates or Estates of some kingdom can, nay more even should, offer resistance to tyranny, that does not in any way detract from the duty of the faithful of Christ in private station by which they are forbidden to requite evil with evil, but (are bidden) to overcome evil in good and even to pray for their enemies; and that such defense by the magistrates does not prevent them from being suppliants before God for the conversion of that very tyrant whom they are resisting and from manifesting towards him truly and sincerely as much respect as possible while they resist him. And yet it should be noted that a tyrant can sink to such depths of sinfulness and can perform such abominable acts of hostility towards God that it may not only be allowable (but may on occasion even be worth the effort) expressly to formulate public prayers and imprecations against him; the ancient and primitive church once plainly proved this by its example when it not merely publicly imprecated the emperor Julian surnamed the Apostate but was heard (by God)¹⁸. i) Finally (my opponents) quote the example of Christ Himself who paid tribute¹⁹ to Tiberius Caesar although he was the unjust usurper of Judah and a monster rather than a man, whereas on the other hand it admits of no doubt that however many (Jews) offered resistance to the Roman emperors by means of revolt perished miserably, those especially mentioned being the well-known Judas Calonites²⁰, Theudas and other revolutionaries and finally the whole Jewish nation, who revolted that they might not be compelled to embrace the false religion of the heathens. To these I answer that there is a great difference between the right of kings and tyranny; therefore, although Jesus Christ was the Lord of heaven and earth and the kingdom of the Jews belonged of right to Him as the descendant of David rather than to the Romans or Herod, yet because He had not come into the world to that end that He might rule in human fashion, but that He might as a private citizen in these parts, and with the renunciation of the prerogative of the House of David, here pass His life, therefore by that example²¹ of His He wished to prove that tributes and other contributions are rightly owed and rendered to kings and other rulers. For although the Roman emperors initially seized the kingdom of the Jews unjustly, yet in the end they became its lawful lords, partly by the just judgment of God, partly by the consent and approval, if not of all, yet certainly of the more powerful majority of Jews, as they indicated quite clearly, when they nearly all acclaimed: We have no king but Caesar²². Question 7 notes.

Question 7. What must be done when the Orders or Estates cannot be summoned to impede or to check tyranny?

1. Joshua 22:10-12 2. Judges 20:1-48.

3. Eusebius, Hist. eccl., book IX, cap. 9, 1; Socrates in Hist. eccl. trip., book I, cap. 4 4. 1 Samuel 24:5-7; 1 Samuel 26:9 5. 2 Samuel 1:1-16 6. 2 Chronicles 36:13 7. Ezekiel 17:12-14, Ezekiel 41:1-26

8. "Frangenti fidem, fides fangatur eidem" See Hans Walther, ed., Carmina Medii Aevi Posteriores Latina (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2 vol. in 6 tomes, 1959-1967), II/2, 182, for a list of

authors who employ the proverb, both ancient and medieval.

9. Jeremiah 29:7 10. Jeremiah 38:17-18 11. 2 Chronicles 11:4 12. 1Ma 1:1-64 & 1Ma 1:1-70 13. 1 Kings 12:18-20 14. 1 Kings 11:31-39 15. 1 Kings 12:18 16. 1 Peter 2:17 17. 1 Timothy 2:1-2 18. See Rufinus, Hist. eccl., book I, cap. 35; Artemius, Comm. hist., cap. 56 19. Matthew 17:27 20. Acts 5:36-37

21. Romans 13:7

22. John 19:15

01.08. Question 08

Question 8. What may be done against unjust oppressors? But what, will someone say, if the ruler crushes the people with excessive taxes? When he has been properly warned, those who wield the chief and highest authority in accordance with the laws of the kingdom assuredly can and even should consult the common weal. But here it should also be noted that a ruler who exceeds the due measure in such matters because he is wasteful or avaricious or addicted to other vices, should not forthwith be regarded as a tyrant; for the mark of tyranny and as it were its peculiar concomitant is a persistent malice which strives with might and main to subvert the constitution and the laws upon which the kingdom rests as upon foundations. I add the following remark also that however just an occasion of offering resistance to manifest tyranny may at one time or another present itself, yet the excellent maxim expressed by a heathen should be continually considered and followed if possible: Its befits a wise man to make trial of all things by deliberation before armed force¹. Therefore when Petronius attempted to introduce the image of the emperor into the Temple, the Jews did indeed seem to have just cause for seizing arms, as the zeal of Mattathias urged (them to do), rather than allow the Temple of God to be desecrated by means of an idol; but they adopted a much more prudent counsel which also received the blessing of God when they boldly gave Petronius to understand that they had indeed no desire of fighting against him, but that as long as there were any survivors they would never allow that idol to be placed in the Temple.² But though the exaction of Albinus and Florus supplied them afresh with the justest of cause for complaints³ and though religious matters also were then in some degree concerned, yet all the acts of the Jews clearly indicated that they were striving after nothing but rebellion and revolt pure and simple, and these have nothing in common with the lawful remedies which we have discussed. Question 8 notes.

1. Terence, *Eunuchus*, 789: "omnia prius experiri quam armis sapientem decet." (Loeb Classical Library ed., I, 316.)

2. An allusion to the Jewish resistance, although passive, to the order of the governor Petronius introduced statues of the emperor Gaius in the Temple, 40-41 C.E. See Josephus, *The Jewish War*, II. 3. For the Roman procurators in 62-64 and 64-66 C.E., see *ibid*, II.

01.09. Question 09

Question 9. Whether subjects can contract with their rulers? An answer must now be given to those who are of opinion that it is not proper for subjects to contract with their superiors. I therefore begin by asking upon what foundations they rest. For if we are to proceed by means of arguments, what sufficiently convincing arguments, I ask, will they adduce it is characteristic of subjects, they declare, to depend upon the authority and commands of their rulers, not contrariwise. It follows therefore that subjects can indeed lay their complaints before their rulers in a modest and respectful way and frankly offer then their advice if they are asked for it, but that they can in no way go beyond that. I answer that subjects may not at all approach their magistrates whether subordinate or supreme, except with the greatest respect, and this not merely for fear of their indignation, but also for conscience sake, as the Apostle teaches¹, since this authority has been instituted by God. But I refuse to admit that such a conclusion may be drawn from that premise, namely that as often as it concerns political affairs and, as the saying goes, affairs touching the constitution of the kingdom, the subjects, when they have discreetly and respectfully brought to the notice of the ruler what they regard as just and fair and in accordance with the laws under which he was elected and appointed, should forthwith of necessity completely subject themselves to his will and should utterly and without any reserve whatever obey what to him has been subjected to limitations. May indeed, on the contrary, I boldly maintain that he suffers no injustice if he is constrained to his duty and if, when no further room is left for (an appeal to his) reason, an even more drastic procedure against him is followed, for since the administration (of the kingdom) has been entrusted to him only upon specified condition, we should not in the least judge that the new covenants are being concluded with him whenever he is called upon either to ratify previous condition and to observe them in the sequel or to leave room to another who seems more likely to be concerned about their observance. And if this must needs be established by means of example, I think that a sufficient number has been adduced by me above by which it has been abundantly established that the proposition of those who dare maintain that the mere will as such of their king should suffice for all subjects, cannot rest upon or be defended by means of any rational argument, or any practice or any experience of a well-ordered monarchy. Question 9 notes.

Question 9. Whether subjects can contract with their rulers?

1. Romans 13:5

01.10. Question 10

Question 10. Whether those who suffer persecution for the sake of their religion can defend themselves against tyrants without hurt to their consciences.

It finally remains for me to solve a question of the greatest moment, namely, whether it is allowable, in accordance with the condition and distinctions laid down above, to offer resistance by armed force to tyranny assailing the true religion and even stamping it out as far as may be, and to contend against persecution. The following may be the principal reasons for entertaining doubts (on this score): firstly, since religion touches the consciences (of people) which can in no way be subjected to violence, it would appear that it should not be rendered secure or be defended by means of any armed force; for that reason we perceive that it has thus far been propagated by the preaching of the Word of God, by prayers and by patience. There are besides many passages to be found in the Scriptures from which the difference between the kingdoms of this world and the spiritual kingdom of Christ appears. To these may finally be added the example of the holy Prophets and in the last instance that of Christ Himself, our Lord, for although all authority, power and virtue dwelt in Him, yet He Himself never adopted this method of defense, just as the Apostles themselves and all the martyrs after them refrained from doing so; so much so that not even entire legions of the faithful of Christ, abundantly furnished with arms, declined to meet death rather than defend themselves by drawing the sword and assailing the very enemies of truth² .

I answer first that it is an absurd, nay even a false opinion that the means by which the objects and affairs of this world are defended, such as both courts of law and armed force, not merely differ from the means by which things spiritual can be defended, but are as it were diametrically opposed to them and are so incompatible with them that they neither can nor ought to find any application in a matter of religion. But on the contrary I declare that it is the principal duty of a most excellent and pious ruler that there should apply whatever means, authority and power has been granted him by God to this end entirely that God may truly be recognized among his subjects and may, being recognized, be worshipped and adored as the supreme king of all kings. Therefore the man of that description will not merely put forth all the power of his jurisdiction and the authority of the laws against the despisers or disturbers of the true religion who have shown themselves not the least amenable to ecclesiastical words of rebuke and admonition, but will even punish with armed force those who cannot otherwise be restrained from impiety. In support of this view the Scriptures themselves furnish us with innumerable reasons and examples. The reasons are of the following kind: a) Since the purpose of all well-ordered polities is not simply peace and quiet in this life, as some heathen philosophers have imagined, but the glory of God, towards which the whole present life of men should be directed, it therefore follows that those who are set over nations, ought to bring to bear all their zeal and all the faculties they have received from God to this end that the pure worship of God upon which His glory depends should in the highest degree be maintained and increased among the people over whom they hold sway. b) Finally, even if we were to concede that the ultimate purpose of polities was the undisturbed preservation of this life, yet we should have to admit that this was the sole reason for obtaining and preserving it, (namely)

if God, both the author and the director of our life, be piously and rightly worshipped.

Proofs or example (of this) are quite innumerable in the Scriptures: a) For it is particularly clear that those patriarchs of old were simultaneously the highest priests and the supreme rulers among their people; this is expressly recorded concerning Melchizedek² and Eli³ and although these two offices were afterward separated by the Lord, this did not happen because they were incompatible with each other but because one man could scarcely be equal to the performance of both. b) Furthermore, when the king is bidden to have with him a book of law⁴ that he may practice himself in the reading of it day and night, that is demanded of him not as of a private citizen but as of a king and a public magistrate. c) And among the laws of which the execution is entrusted to the rulers, those⁵ are deemed the principal which condemn to death the despisers of the true religion. The application of these laws we remark in the case of David⁶ who by means of fixed laws rendered inviolable the entire worship of God, and in the case of Solomon who supplemented the decree of his father against transgressors⁷; likewise in the edicts of the Kings Asa, Jesohaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah⁸, nay even of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius⁹ when they were persuaded by the prophet Daniel to worship God. d) Lastly, when the Apostle¹⁰ declares that kings and princes have been appointed by God to this end not merely that we may pass life honorably, but also piously, that is, not merely that we may live as it befits honest and respectable men, and in accordance with piety towards God, it admits of no doubt but that he has stated this whole question most succinctly. Hence we observe that the earliest Councils against heretics were summoned not upon the authority of the Roman Pontiffs who had not yet appeared in the character in which they came to light much later but by the decree of the emperors, (in order that) by means of this remedy they might hear the case in accordance with the persuasive arguments of the pious bishops. There are also extant innumerable constitutions (i.e. laws) and canons of the Church enacted by the Emperor Justinian as well as by his successors and even by Charlemagne and others approving of the same course. But to what end are monarchs even today being so furiously incited by that whore of Rome to persecute with fire and sword and to banish those whom they themselves style heretics, unless it holds that this duty falls within their province? And in this matter it does indeed rest upon the best and surest foundation, but abuses it no less than innumerable other testimonies of truth to support forsooth and to defend its own impieties and blasphemies. But, you will say, why such a longwinded digression? For the question is not whether kings or rulers ought to defend and promote piety, but whether subjects can defend themselves by force or arms against persecutors. I therefore reply to the earlier of the two questions proposed above: It is one thing now for the first time to introduce religion into some part and another to preserve it when it has already been received somewhere or to wish to restore it when it has gone to ruin and has been buried as a result of the connivance or ignorance or malice of men. For I grant that initially it should be introduced and spread by the influence of the Spirit of God alone, and that by the Word of God (which is) suited to teaching, conviction and exhortation. For this is the particular task of the Holy Spirit which employs spiritual instruments.

It will therefore be the part of a pious ruler who wishes to entice his people away from idolatry and false superstitions to the true religion, to see to it in the first instance that they are instructed in piety by means of true and reliable argument, just as on the other hand it is in the part of the subjects to give their assent to truth and reason and readily to submit. Finally the ruler will be fully occupied in rendering the true religion secure by means of good and noble decrees against those

who assail and resist it out of pure obstinacy, as we have seen done in our times in England, Denmark, Sweden, Scotland, and the greater part of Germany and Switzerland against the Papists, the Anabaptists and other heretics. If the other nations preferred following their example rather than trusting and obeying that bloodstained whore of Rome, could greater tranquillity indeed be seen in the whole world in the sphere of religion as well as of politics?

What therefore will subjects have to do if on the other hand they are compelled by their ruler to worship idols? Assuredly reason does not permit them to force their ruler to a complete change in their condition; nay rather, they will consider it needful patiently to bear with him even to persecution, while they worship God purely in the meantime, or altogether to go into exile and seek new abodes. But if the free exercise of the true religion has once been granted by means of decrees lawfully passed and settled and confirmed by public authority, then I declare that the ruler is so much the more bound to have them observed as a matter of religion is of greater moment compared with all others, so much so that he has no right to repeal them upon his own arbitrary decision, and without having heard the case, but only with the intervention of that same authority by which they were in the first instance enacted. If he acts otherwise I declare that he is practicing manifest tyranny; and with due allowance for the observations made above, (his subjects) will be all the more free to oppose him as we are bound to set greater store and value by the salvation of our souls and the freedom of our conscience than by any other matters however desirable. It should therefore now be no cause of surprise to anyone that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prophets and the Apostles, too, or the other martyrs, since they were men in private station, confined themselves within the limits of their calling. And as regards those who held public office or those legions which in the midst of battle suffered martyrdom with their commanders without offering any resistance even though their attackers were acting in violation of the decrees previously passed in favor of Christians, as happened especially under the Emperors Diocletian and Julian, there is, I say, a twofold answer. First, although certain emperors before Diocletian had made the persecution somewhat less severe, as it is certain that Hadrian, Antonius and Alexander did, yet none of them had ever permitted the public exercise of the Christian religion. Next, I also repeat the well-known saying that whatever is lawful, is not always expedient as well. For I should not be inclined to assert that a religion made lawful by public decrees must needs always be defended and held fast by means of arms against manifest tyranny, but that even so that is the right and lawful course especially for those upon whom this burden rests and to whom God has granted the opportunity, as the example of the people of Libnah against Jehoram and of the people of Jerusalem against Amaziah and the war of Constantine against Maxentius undertaken at the request of the citizens of Rome as described above abundantly prove. Hence I conclude that among the martyrs should be counted not only those who have defeated the tyranny of the enemies of the truth by no other defense than patience, but those also who, duly supported by the authority of laws or of those whose right it is to defend the laws, devoted their strength to God in defense of the true religion. And these arguments so far I decided to urge in reply to the last objection that I might satisfy those who raise it so as not to violate their consciences because they are genuinely afraid of sinning against God if they attempt anything of that kind. But as regards that class of men who confer no other benefit upon the world but that they fill it with innocent blood while they abuse the authority of rulers that from their ruin they may pursue and advance their own interests and who meantime are characterized by such shamelessness that they dare to attack and assail with these objections those who do not spontaneously present themselves to them for

slaughter, thus of course cloaking their cruelty and unbridled license under the false pretext of religion and zeal - this class of men, I say, would merit no other reply than that which would deservedly be given to robbers who summoned merchants and other travelers before the court for not undertaking a journey without girding on the sword for their defense, declaring that they had no right to do so, though they themselves adopted every kind of weapon to murder them.

Nay, they put me in mind of that abominable Roman Fimbria, whose like of hired assassins may be seen in large numbers at the present time; for so insolent was his daring, or rather so shameless his effrontery that when at the time of the Sullan proscription he had had a wound dealt to Scaevola, a man famous among the citizens of Rome for his extraordinary virtue and honesty, and the latter did not succumb to it as he was wishing, he was bold enough to complain and to threaten Scaevola that he would have him before court as if he had been most outrageously wronged because the other had not unresistingly admitted the dagger to enter his very heart¹¹. But because all discussion with men of that kind would be otiose and to no purpose, they should all of them be referred by me not so much to their own personal conscience (in which the majority are entire lacking) as to the tribunal of Him whose supreme authority and judgment - as by unmistakable evidence time and reality at length have proved - they themselves have not been able to escape. Question 10 notes.

Question 10. Whether those who suffer persecution for the sake of their religion can defend themselves against tyrants without hurt to their consciences.

1. A probable allusion to the legend of the massacre of the Thebian legion, commanded by Saint Maurice.

2. Genesis 14:19 3. 1 Samuel 1:9; Cf. 1 Samuel 2:27-28 4. Deuteronomy 17:19 5. Deuteronomy 13:1-18 6. 1 Chronicles 28:1-21 7. 2 Chronicles 1:9 8. 2 Chronicles 15:13; 2 Chronicles 20:21; 2 Chronicles 31:2; 2 Chronicles 34:31

9. Daniel 3:28-29; Daniel 6:26-28 Daniel 10:1-21. 1 Timothy 2:2 1 Timothy 2:11. Cicero, Orationes, Pro Sex. Roscio Amerino Oratio, 12, art. 33

S. A BRIEFE DECLARATION OF THE TABLE OF PREDESTINATION

A BRIEFE DECLARATION OF THE TABLE OF PREDESTINATION by

Theodore Beza

1519-1605

¶A BRIEFE declaration of the chiefe poyntes of Christian Religion, set fourth in a Table.

Made by Theodore Beza.

Galatians 3:1-29.d. The Scripture hath shut up all under sinne, to the intent that the promise by the faith in Jesus Christ should

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¶A BRIEFE declaration of

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AUGUSTINE in his book of the profit of Perseverance [De bono perseverantiæ], chapter 14, saith, that they which were against him as adversaries in this question, did allege that this doctrine of Predestination did hinder the preaching of God's word, and caused that it could not profit. As if (saith he) this doctrine had hindered the Apostle Paul to do his duty: who so oftentimes doth commend unto us, and teach Predestination, and yet never ceaseth to preach the word of God. Also saith moreover: As he that hath received the gift, can better exhort and preach: so he that hath received this gift, doth hear the Preacher more obediently, & with greater reverence, &c. We do therefore exhort and preach, but they only which have ears to hear do hear us quietly, & to their comfort: and in those that have them not, this sentence is fulfilled, that hearing with their ears they do not hear, for they hear with the outward sense, but not with the inward consent. Now why some men have these ears, and others not, it is, because it is given to some to come, and to others not. Who knew God's counsel? must that be denied which is plain and evident, because that cannot be known which is hid and secret? Again in the 15th chapter, I pray you (saith he) if some under the shadow of predestination give themselves to slothful negligence, and as they are bent to flatter their flesh, so follow their own lusts, must we therefore judge, that this which is written of the foreknowledge of God is false? Now surely this is very handsome, and to the purpose, that we shall not speak that which by the Scripture is lawful to speak. Oh we fear (say you) lest he should be offended, which is not able to understand, and take it. And shall we not fear (say I) lest whiles we hold our tongue, he that is able to take the truth, be taken and snared with falsehood & error? Also in the 20th chapter of the same book he writeth in this sort, If the Apostles, & Doctors of the church which came after them, did the one and the other, both teaching the eternal Election of

God purely and truly, and also retaining the faithful in godly life and manners: What moveth these our adversaries (Seeing they are overcome with the manifest and invincible truth) to think they speak well, saying, although this doctrine of predestination be true, yet it ought not to be preached to the people? Nay, so much the rather it is good to be thoroughly preached, that he that hath ears to hear, may hear. And who hath them, but he that hath received them of God, who promiseth to give them? And as for him that doth receive it, let him refuse it if he will: so that he that doth receive it, may take it, drink it, be sufficed, and have life. For as we must preach the fear of God to the end that God may be truly served: so must we preach Predestination that he which hath ears to hear may hear, and rejoice in God, not in himself, for the grace of God towards him. This is the mind of that excellent Doctor as touching this point, which notwithstanding bindeth us to two conditions: the one is, that we speak no farther herein than God's word doth limit us: the other, that we set forth the same thing which the Scripture teacheth, accordingly, and to edification. Wherefore we will briefly speak of both these parts: first of the doctrine itself, and next of the use and applying of the same. Of the eternal counsell of God hidde in himself, the vvhiche afterwards is knowven by the effects thereof. GOD, whose judgments no man can comprehend, whose ways can not be found out, and whose will (1) ought to stop all men's mouths (2), according to the determinate and unchangeable purpose of his will, by the virtue whereof all things are made (3), yea even those things which are evil and execrable (not in that they be wrought by his Divine counsel, but forasmuch as they proceed of the prince of the air, and that spirit which worketh in the children (4) of disobedience) hath determined (5) from before all beginning with himself, to create all things in their time, for his glory, and (6) namely men: whom he hath made after two sorts, clean contrary one to the other. Whereof he maketh the one sort (which it pleased him to choose by his secret will and purpose) partakers of his glory through his mercy (7), and these we call according to the word of God, the vessels of honor, the elect, the children of promise, and predestinate to salvation (8): and the others, whom likewise it pleased him to ordain to damnation (that he might shew forth his wrath and power, to be glorified also in them) we do call the vessels of dishonor and wrath, the Reprobate & cast off from all good works (9). This Election or Predestination to everlasting life, being considered in the will of God (that is to say) this selfsame determination, or purpose to Elect, is the first fountain and chief original of the salvation of God's children: neither is it thereon grounded, as some say, because God did foresee their faith, or good works: but only of his own good will (10,) from whence afterwards the Election, the faith, and the good works spring forth. Therefore, when the scripture will confirm the children of God in full and perfect hope, it doth not stay in alleging the testimonies of the second causes, that is to say, in the fruits of faith, nor in the second causes themselves, as faith, and calling by the Gospel, neither yet sometimes in Christ himself, in whom notwithstanding we are, as in our head Elected & adopted, but ascendeth higher, even unto that eternal purpose which God hath determined only in himself (11.)

Likewise, when mention is made of the damnation of the Reprobate, although the whole fault thereof be in themselves (12): yet notwithstanding, sometimes when need requireth, the Scripture to make more manifest by this comparison the great power of God's patience, and the riches of his glory towards the vessels of mercy (13), leadeth us unto this high secret, which by order is the first cause of their damnation, of the which secret, no other cause is known to men, but only his just will, which we must with all reverence obey, as coming from him, who is only just, and can not by any means, nor of any man, in any sort be comprehended (14). For we must put difference betwixt the purpose or ordinance of reprobation, & reprobation itself. Because God would that the secret

of this his purpose should be kept close from us: & again we have the causes or Reprobation, & damnation, which dependeth thereof, expressed in God's word, that is to say, corruption, lack of faith, & iniquity, which as they be necessary, so are they also voluntary in the vessels made to dishonour (15): like as on the other part when we describe orderly the causes of the salvation of the elect, we put difference betwixt the purpose of electing, which God hath determined in himself, and the election which is appointed in Christ in such sort, that this his purpose or ordinance, doth not only go before election in the degree of causes, but also before all other things that follow the same. (16.) The place & testimonies of the Scriptures, which are alleged in this Treatise, & marked by numbers, it seemed good to place apart at the end of every Chapter, partly that being separate they might be better weighed and understood: and partly because they could not for the multitude thereof be contained in the margin of the book. And here we have compassed every number within these two lines () to the intent they might the more easily be found out.

Notes of the second chapter.

(1) Romans 11:33. (2) Job 9:10 - Job 9:12; Romans 9:20. (3) Ephesians 1:9, Ephesians 1:11; Genesis 27:20; Exodus 21:13; John 22:13; Proverbs 16:33; Proverbs 20:24; Proverbs 21:1; Isaiah 14:27; Isaiah 46:4, Isaiah 46:10; Jeremiah 10:23; Daniel 4:32; Matthew 10:29; Galatians 1:4. (4) Ephesians 2:2. (5) Genesis 45:8; Genesis 50:19, Genesis 50:20; Exodus 4:21; Exodus 7:3; & Exodus 9:12; & 10:1, 20, 27; & 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17; Deuteronomy 2:30; Joshua 11:19, Joshua 11:20; 1 Samuel 2:25; 2 Samuel 12:11; 2 Samuel 16:11; & 2 Samuel 24:1; 1 Kings 12:15; 1 Kings 22:22, 1 Kings 22:23; 2 Kings 18:25; 2 Chronicles 10:15; 2 Chronicles 11:4; 2 Chronicles 22:7; 2 Chronicles 25:20; Nehemiah 9:36, Nehemiah 9:37; Job 1:12, Job 1:21; Job 23:14; Job 34:30; Job 37:13; Psalms 105:25; Isaiah 10:15; Isaiah 54:16; Isaiah 63:17; John 12:40; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:28; Romans 9:18, Romans 9:19; Romans 11:32 with Galatians 3:22; 1 Thessalonians 3:3 (6) Proverbs 16:4. (7) Isaiah 43:7; Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 1:6; Romans 9:23; (8) Romans 8:29, Romans 8:30; Romans 9:8, Romans 9:21; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2. (9) Exodus 9:16; Proverbs 16:4; Romans 3:5; Romans 9:22; Isaiah 54:16. (10) Deuteronomy 4:37; Deuteronomy 7:7, Deuteronomy 7:8; Joshua 24:2; Psalms 44:3; Ezekiel 16:6, Ezekiel 16:60; John 15:16, John 15:19; Acts 13:48; Acts 22:14; Romans 5:6; Romans 9:11 - Romans 9:16, Romans 9:18, Romans 9:23; Romans 11:7, Romans 11:35; 1 Corinthians 4:7; Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 1:11; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 1:12; 2 Timothy 1:9. (11) Matthew 25:34; John 6:40, John 6:45; Acts 13:48; Romans 8:29, Romans 8:30; Romans 9:8, Romans 9:11, Romans 9:12, Romans 9:16, Romans 9:23; Romans 11:7; Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 1:9, Ephesians 1:11; 2 Timothy 2:19; 1 Corinthians 2:7, 1 Corinthians 2:10. (12) Hosea 13:9; John 3:19. (13) Romans 9:23. (14) Exodus 9:16; Psalms 33:15; Proverbs 16:4; Romans 9:11, Romans 9:12, Romans 9:13, where he saith not only that Esau was ordained to be hated before he did any evil (for in so saying he should not seem to exclude any thing but actual sin and incredulity) but saith expressly, before he was born, whereby he excludeth the original sin, & all that which might be considered in the person of Esau by his birth, from the cause of the hate. Therefore anon after, when he sheweth how the Reprobate murmur, and reply, he doth not say, that they speak in this sort: Why doth not God hate others alike, seeing they are also born in the same corruption that we be? The Apostle speaketh no such words, but he saith their reason is in this sort: who can resist his will? For hereof man's reason gathereth, that they are unjustly condemned. And yet Paul doth not answer, that God would so, because he saw that they would be corrupt, and so consequently

that the cause of his decree should be grounded on their corruption (the which answer had been clear and resolute, if it had been true) but forasmuch as he saith plainly, it so pleased God, and it was not in their power to change this his good pleasure, he bridleth man's wisdom, that it might reverence and wonder at God's mysteries, as it is most just to do. And also encourageth the Elect to honor the grace of God, which is declared and made famous by such a corruption. In this sort then the other places of the Scripture which conduct and lift us up to behold the sovereign will of God, which is the only rule of justice ought to be expounded. Isaiah 54:16; 1 Samuel 2:25; John 6:44, John 6:45, John 6:64, John 6:65; John 10:26; John 12:39, John 12:40; 1 Peter 2:8; and in divers other places. (15) 2 Thessalonians 2:10 - 2 Thessalonians 2:12; Romans 11:20; 2 Corinthians 4:3, 2 Corinthians 4:4; Hebrews 12:17. (16) Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 1:5. The thirde chapter.

Hovv God putteth in execution his eternall counsell, as vvell tovwards the Electe, as the Reprobate. THE Lord God, that he might put in execution this eternal counsel, to his glory, prepared a way according to his infinite wisdom, indifferent both to those that he would choose, and those also which he would refuse. For when he determined to shew his infinite mercy in the salvation of the elect, and also his just judgment in the Condemnation of the Reprobate: it was necessary that he should shut up both under disobedience & sin, to shew his mercy to all (1) those that believe (2): that is to say, to the Elect: because faith is a gift of God which properly belongeth unto them (3): and contrariwise to have just cause to condemn them, to whom it is not given to believe (4), nor to know God's mysteries (5). Therefore God did this in such sort, & with such wisdom, that the whole fault of the Reprobates damnation lieth in themselves: and on the other side, all the glory and praise of the Elects salvation belongeth wholly in his only mercy. For he did not create man a sinner, for then he should have been (with reverent fear be it spoken, the author of sin, which afterwards he could not justly have punished) but rather he made him after his own image (6): to wit, in innocency, purity, and holiness (7): who notwithstanding without constraint of any, neither yet forced by any necessity of concupiscence as touching his will (which as yet was not made servant to sin) (8), willingly and of his own accord rebelled against God: binding by this means the whole nature of man to sin, & so consequently to the death of body & soul (9). Yet we must confess that this fall came not by chance or fortune, seeing his providence doth stretch forth itself even to the smallest things (10), neither can we say, that any thing doth happen, that God knoweth not, or careth not for, except we would fall into the opinion of the Epicures, from the which God preserve us, neither yet by any bare or idle permission or sufferance, which is separate from his will and sure determination. For seeing he hath appointed the end, it is necessary also that he should appoint the causes which lead us to the same end, unless we affirm with the wicked Manichees that this end happeneth at all adventures, or by means of causes ordained by some other God. Furthermore we cannot think that any thing happeneth contrary to God's will, except we deny blasphemously that he is omnipotent & almighty, As Augustine noteth plainly in his book De correptione & gratia. Cap. 104. We conclude therefore that this fall of Adam did so proceed of the motion of his will that notwithstanding it happened not without the will of God: whom it pleaseth by a marvelous and incomprehensible mean, that the thing which he doth not allow (for as much as it is sin) should not happen without his will. And this is done, as we said before, that he might shew the riches of his glory towards the vessels of mercy: and his wrath and power upon those vessels, which he hath made to set forth his glory by their shame and confusion (12). For the final end of God's counsel is neither the salvation of the elect, nor the damnation of the reprobate: but the

setting forth of his own glory, in saving the one by his mercy, and condemning the other by his just judgment. Then to avoid all these blasphemies, unto the which the infirmity of our wits doth draw us, let us confess that the corruption of the principal work that God hath made (which is man) is not happened by chance, nor without the will of him, who according to his incomprehensible wisdom, doth make and govern all things to his glory. Albeit we must confess (in despite of man's judgment, which was limited in the beginning within a certain compass, and after was miserably corrupted) that the whole fault of his damnation lieth in man: forasmuch as betwixt the secret and incomprehensible will of God, and that corruption of man's nature, which is the very first occasion of the reprobates damnation, the will of the first man is a mean, which being created good, hath willingly corrupted itself, and thereby opened the door to the just judgment of God, to condemn all those, to whom it doth not please him to shew mercy. And if they would yet object and cavil, saying, that they cannot resist the will of God (13), let us suffer them to their own destruction to plead against him, who will be able enough to defend his justice against their quarreling. Let us rather reverence that which passeth the reach & compass of our wits, & turn our minds wholly to praise his mercy, who by his only grace hath saved us, when we deserved the like punishment & damnation, & were no less sinners & wicked than they.

Notes of the thirde chapter.

(1) Romans 11:32. (2) Galatians 3:22. (3) Acts 13:48; Ephesians 2:8; 2 Thessalonians 3:2; Titus 1:1, Titus 1:2; Php 1:29; Galatians 5:22. (4) Matthew 13:11. (5) John 12:38, John 12:39. (6) Genesis 3:1-24. (7) Ephesians 4:24. (8) Romans 5:12; Romans 7:20. (9) Romans 5:12 &c. (10) Matthew 10:29, Matthew 10:30; Proverbs 16:33. (11) Romans 9:21, Romans 9:22; 1 Peter 2:8; Exodus 9:16; Proverbs 16:4. (12) Exodus 9:16; Proverbs 16:4; Isaiah 54:16; Romans 9:11, Romans 9:12, Romans 9:13, Romans 9:17, Romans 9:18, &c. (13) Romans 9:13, Romans 9:19. The fourth Chapter. By vvhhat order God proceedeth to declare and after a sorte to execute his Election. WHEN God had determined with himself the things before mentioned, he, by a more manifest order of causes, which notwithstanding was eternal (as all things are present to him) disposed orderly all the degrees, whereby he would bring his elect unto his kingdom. Forasmuch therefore as he is merciful, and yet could not forget his justice, before all other things it was necessary that a mediator should be appointed: by whom man might be perfectly restored, and that this should be done by the free mercy & grace which doth appear in the salvation of his elect. But man, besides that he is so weak, that it is not possible for him to sustain the weight of God's wrath, doth also so much flatter himself in that his most miserable blindness, that he cannot perceive it (1): because he is wholly in bondage to sin (2): so that the law of God is to him as death (3), so far is he unable of himself to recover his liberty, or to satisfy the law of God in the very least jot. God therefore the most merciful father of the Elect, moderating in such sort his justice, with his infinite mercy, appointed his only son, who was the very same substance, and God eternal with him, that at the time determined, he should by the power of the holy (4) Ghost be made very man (5), to the end that both the natures being joined in Jesus Christ alone (6), first, all the corruption of man should be fully healed in one man (7), who should also accomplish all justice (8), and moreover should be able enough to sustain the judgment of God, and be a Priest sufficient and worthy of himself to appease the wrath of God his father, in dying as a just and innocent for them that were unjust and sinners, covering our disobedience, and purging all our sins which were laid upon him (9). And finally with one only offering and sacrifice of himself should sanctify all the elect,

mortifying & burying sin in them by the partaking of his death and burial: and quickening them into newness of life by his resurrection (10): so that they should find more in him than they had lost in Adam (11). And to the intent this remedy should not be found and ordained in vain, the Lord God determined to give this his son with all things appertaining to salvation (12), to them whom he had determined in himself to choose: and on the other side, to give them unto his son, that they being in him, and he in them (13), might be consummate & made perfect in one, by these degrees that follow after, according as it pleased him to bring forth every one of his elect into this world. For first, when it pleaseth him to disclose that secret which he had purposed from before all beginning (14), at such time as men least look for it (15), as men are blinded and yet think they see most clear (16), when as in very deed death and damnation hangeth over their head (17), he cometh suddenly, and setteth before their eyes, the great danger wherein they are, & that they might be touched more sharply and lively, he addeth to the witness of their own conscience, being as it were asleep and dead, the preaching of his law (18), and the examples of his judgments, to strike them with the horror of their sins: nor that they should remain in that fear, but rather that beholding the great danger thereof, should fly to that only mediator Jesus Christ (19): in whom after the sharp preaching of the law, he setteth forth the sweet grace of the Gospel, but yet with this condition, that they believe in him (20), who only can deliver them from condemnation (21) and give them right and title to the heavenly inheritance (22). Yet all these things were but vain if he should only set before men's eyes these secrets by the external preaching of his word written & published in the church of God, which notwithstanding is the ordinary means whereby Jesus Christ is communicate unto us (23): therefore as touching his Elect (24), unto the external preaching of his word, he joineth the inward working of his holy spirit, the which doth not restore (as the Papists imagine) the remnants or residue of free will (for what power soever of free will remaineth in us, serveth to no other use but willingly to sin (25), to fly from God (26), to hate him (27), and so not to hear him (28), nor to believe in him (29), neither yet to acknowledge his gift (30), no not so much as to think a good thought (31): & finally to be children of wrath and malediction,) but contrariwise changeth their hard hearts of stone into soft hearts of flesh (32), draweth them (33), teacheth them (34), lighteneth their eyes (35), & openeth their sense (36), their heart, their ears, and understanding: first to make them to know (as we have said before) their own misery: and next, to plant in them the gift of faith, whereby they may perform that condition, which is joined to the preaching of the Gospel. And that standeth in two points, the one, whereby we know Christ, in general, believing the story of Christ, and the Prophecies which are writ of him (37), the which part of faith, as we shall declare in due place, is sometimes given to the reprobate. The other, which is proper, and only belongeth to the elect, consisteth in applying Christ (who is universally and indifferently preached to all men) to ourselves, as ours: & that every man make himself sure of his Election, which hath been hid before all time in God's secret (38), and afterwards revealed unto us, partly by inward testimony of our conscience through the holy ghost, joined to the external preaching of God's word (39): and partly also by the virtue and power of the same spirit, who delivering the Elect from the servitude of sin (40), persuadeth and conducteth them to will and work the things which please God. These then be the degrees, whereby it pleaseth God to create & form by his especial grace, that precious & peculiar gift of faith in his elect, to the intent that they may embrace their salvation in Jesus Christ. But because this faith in us is yet weak & only begun, to the end that we may not only persevere in it, but also profit (which thing is most necessary for all men to do) first according to the time that our adoption is revealed unto us, this faith is sealed in

our hearts by the Sacrament of Baptism: and after every day more and more is confirmed and sealed in us by the sacrament of the Lord's Supper: of the which two Sacraments, the principal end is, that they be sure and effectual signs and pledges of the communion of the faithful with Christ (41) who is their wisdom, justice, sanctification, and redemption (42). For this occasion it is so oftentimes mentioned with Paul, that we being justified by faith, have peace with God (43): For whosoever hath obtained the gift of true faith, hath also by the same grace and liberality of God obtained the gift of perseverance (44). So that in all manner of temptations and afflictions, he doubteth not to call upon God, with sure confidence to obtain his request (as far as it is expedient for him) knowing that he is of the number of God's children, who can not fail him (45). Moreover he never swerveth so from the right way, but at length by the benefit of God's grace, he returneth again: for although faith sometime seem in the Elect (as it were for a time) hid and buried, so that a man would think it were utterly quenched (46) (which God suffereth, that men might know their own weakness) yet it doth never so far leave them, that the love of God and their neighbour, is altogether plucked out of their hearts. For no man is justified in Christ, who also is not sanctified in him (47), and framed to good works, which God prepared that we should walk therein (48). This is then the way whereby God by his mercy doth prepare (to the full execution of his eternal counsel) them amongst his Elect, whom it pleaseth him to reserve, till they come to ripe age and discretion. As touching the other whom he calleth into his kingdom so soon as they are born, or in their tender years, he useth a more short way. For seeing he doth comprehend in that his free covenant, whereof Jesus Christ is the mediator (49), not only the faithful, but also their posterity (50), into a thousand generations (51), calling the same by express words, holy (52): there is no doubt but the children of the Saints, which appertain to election, (whom he only knoweth) he hath given to his son, who will not cast them out (53).

Notes of the fourth chapter.

(1) John 9:41. (2) Romans 1:18; Romans 7:14; Romans 8:7; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 3:5; Ephesians 2:3. (3) Romans 7:10 (4) Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35. (5) John 1:14; 1 John 1:1 - 1 John 1:3. (6) Romans 1:3,Romans 1:4; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 2:9. (7) Romans 8:3. (8) Matthew 3:15; Matthew 5:17,Matthew 5:18; 1 Corinthians 1:30. (9) Isaiah 53:4,Isaiah 53:5,Isaiah 53:7,Isaiah 53:11; Romans 3:25; Acts 20:28; Colossians 1:20; Romans 5:19; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21. (10) Romans 6:3,Romans 6:4,Romans 6:5. &c. Colossians 3:1; Colossians 2:12; John 17:19; Hebrews 9:13; Hebrews 10:14. (11) Romans 5:15,Romans 5:16,Romans 5:17,Romans 5:20. (12) Romans 8:32; John 3:16. (13) John 17:2,John 17:6,John 17:9,John 17:11,John 17:12,John 17:23. (14) Genesis 3:15; Genesis 22:18; Romans 3:25. & 16:25; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Galatians 4:4; Ephesians 1:9,Ephesians 1:10; Colossians 1:26; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2; 1 Peter 1:20. (15) Joshua 24:2; Ezekiel 16:8,Ezekiel 16:9; Isaiah 65:1; Ephesians 2:3,Ephesians 2:4,Ephesians 2:5,Ephesians 2:12; Romans 5:10; 1 Peter 2:10. (16) John 9:41; John 3:19. (17) Romans 1:18,Romans 1:19; Romans 2:15; Acts 14:17. (18) Romans 1:18,Romans 1:19; Romans 2:15; Acts 14:17. (19) Romans 7:7; 1 Timothy 2:5; 2 Timothy 2:25,2 Timothy 2:26; Acts 2:37,Acts 2:38; 1 John 2:1. (20) John 1:12; John 3:16; Romans 1:16, and almost in every page of the whole Scripture. (21) Romans 8:1; 1 John 2:1. (22) John 1:12, and John 3:16; Romans 1:16, and Romans 5:1. (23) Romans 10:8,Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 5:18,2 Corinthians 5:19; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:25. (24) Ephesians 1:5,Ephesians 1:9; Colossians 1:27. (25) Romans 6:19,Romans 6:20. (26) Genesis 3:8; John 6:44,John 6:65. (27) Romans 5:10;

Romans 8:7. (28) John 8:47. (29) Isaiah 53:1; John 12:39. (30) Matthew 13:11; John 4:10; John 3:3; 1 Corinthians 2:14. (31) 2 Corinthians 3:5. (32) Ezekiel 11:19; Ezekiel 36:26; Psalms 51:12. (33) John 6:44. (34) John 6:45; John 16:13; Psalms 119:33. (35) Psalms 119:130; Ephesians 1:17. (36) Isaiah 50:5; Psalms 10:17; Psalms 119:18,Psalms 119:73,Psalms 119:130; Colossians 1:9. Jeremiah 31:18,Jeremiah 31:19; 2 Timothy 2:25. (37) Luke 24:45, Acts 16:14. (38) 1 Corinthians 2:10,1 Corinthians 2:11,1 Corinthians 2:12,1 Corinthians 2:16; Colossians 1:26,Colossians 1:27; Ephesians 1:17 - Ephesians 1:19; 1 John 3:24; 1 John 5:20. (39) Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6. (40) Romans 8:14; 1 John 3:10,1 John 3:14; 1 John 4:14; Php 2:13; John 8:36; Romans 6:18. (41) Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3,Romans 6:4; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; Ephesians 5:26; 1 Peter 3:21; 1 Corinthians 10:16; Romans 4:11. (42) 1 Corinthians 1:30. (43) Romans 3:20 - Romans 3:22; Romans 4:2,Romans 4:5; Romans 5:1; and in divers other places. (44) & (45) Numbers 23:19; Psalms 23:6; Psalms 27:1 - Psalms 27:3; Psalms 91:1-16 at large; Matthew 24:24; John 6:37; John 17:15; John 10:28,John 10:29; Romans 5:2 - Romans 5:5; Romans 8:15,Romans 8:16,Romans 8:38,Romans 8:39; 1 Corinthians 2:12,1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Ephesians 1:9; Php 1:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; 2 Corinthians 1:21; James 1:6; Hebrews 4:16; Hebrews 10:22; 1 John 4:17. (46) So Moses, Aaron, David, Peter fell. 1 John 1:8. (47) Romans 6:1,Romans 6:2; & 1 John 3:9,1 John 3:10; 1 John 4:20; 2 Peter 1:9. (48) Ephesians 2:10; Ephesians 1:4. (49) 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:15. (50) Genesis 17:7. (51) Exodus 20:6. (52) 1 Corinthians 7:14. (53) John 6:37. The fifth Chapter.

After vvhhat sorte almightie God dothe execute and effectuallie declare his counsell touching Reprobation. BY these things whereof we have now spoken, it may easily appear how God maketh them to go to their own place: (1) whom he created to that end that he might be glorified in their just condemnation. For as Christ the second heavenly Adam, is the foundation and very substance and effect of the Elect's salvation: so also the first earthly Adam, because he fell, is the first author of the hate, and so consequently of the damnation of the reprov'd (2). For when God, moved with those causes which he only knoweth, had determined to create them to this end, to shew forth in them his just wrath and power (3), likewise he did orderly dispose the causes and means, whereby it might come to pass that the whole cause of their damnation might be of themselves, as hath been declared before in the third chapter. When man then was fallen willingly into that miserable estate whereof we have spoken in the chapter before, God who hateth justly the Reprobate, because they are corrupt, in part of them he doth execute his just wrath so soon as they are born (4): and towards the rest that be of age, whom he reserveth to a more sharp judgment, he observeth two ways clean contrary one to the other. For as concerning some, he sheweth them not so much favour, as once to hear of Jesus Christ, in whom only is salvation (5), but suffereth them to walk in their own ways (6), and run headlong to their perdition. And as for the testimonies that God hath left to them of his divinity (7), serve them to no other use but to make them without all excuse (8), and yet through their own default, seeing their ignorance and lack of capacity, is the just punishment of that corruption wherein they are born. And surely as touching that that they can attain unto in knowing God, by their light, or rather natural darkness (albeit they never failed in the way, but so continued) (9), yet were it not in no wise sufficient for their salvation. For it is necessary for us that shall be saved, that we know God, not only as God, but as our father in Christ (10): the which mystery flesh and blood doth not reveal (11), but the son himself, to them whom his father hath given him (12). As concerning others, their fall is more terrible (13). For he causeth them to hear by preaching the outward word of the Gospel (14), but because they are not

of the number of the Elect, being called, they hear not (15), and forasmuch as they are not able to receive the spirit of truth (16), therefore they cannot believe, because it is not given unto them (17), wherefore when they are called to the feast, they refuse to come, so that the word of life is folly unto them, and an offence (18), and finally the savour of death to their destruction. (19.) There are yet others, whose hearts God openeth to receive and believe the things that they hear, but this is with that general faith, whereby the Devils believe and tremble (20). To conclude, they which are most miserable of all, those climb a degree higher, that their fall might be more grievous, for they are raised so high by some gift of grace, that they are a little moved with some taste of the heavenly gift (21): so that for the time they seem to have received the seed, and to be planted in the Church of God (22), and also shew the way of salvation to others (23). But this is plain that the spirit of adoption, which we have said to be only proper unto them which are never cast forth (24) but are written in the secret of God's people (25), is never communicate unto them. For if they were of the Elect, they should remain still with the Elect (26). All these therefore (because of necessity, and yet willingly, as they which are under the slavery of sin (27)), return to their vomit (28) and fall away from faith (29) are plucked up by the roots, to be cast into the fire (30). I mean, they are forsaken of God (31), who according to his will (the which no man can resist (32), and yet for all that because of their corruption and wickedness) (33), hardeneth them (34), maketh their hearts fat, stoppeth their ears, and blindeth them (35): and to bring this to pass, he useth partly their own vile concupiscences, to the which he hath given them up to be ruled and led by (36), and partly the spirit of lies, who keepeth them wrapt in his snares (37), by reason of their corruption, from the which as out of a fountain, issueth a continual flowing river of infidelity, ignorance, & iniquity: whereby it followeth that [they] having as it were made shipwreck of their faith, can by no means escape the day, which is appointed for their destruction, that God may be glorified in their just condemnation (38).

Notes of the fifth chapter.

(1) Acts 1:25; Romans 9:22; Matthew 25:41. (2) Romans 5:18; 1 Corinthians 15:21, &c. (3) Exodus 9:16; Romans 9:17, Romans 9:22. (4) Exodus 20:5; Ephesians 2:3; Romans 5:14. (5) Matthew 1:21; Acts 4:12. (6) Acts 14:16, Acts 14:17; Acts 17:30; Romans 1:24; Ephesians 2:11. (7) Romans 1:19, Romans 1:20; Acts 14:17; Acts 17:27. (8) Romans 1:20; John 15:22; Romans 2:12. (9) Romans 1:21, Romans 1:22. (10) John 17:3; John 3:36. (11) Matthew 11:27; Matthew 16:17. John 1:13; John 3:5, John 3:6. (12) Matthew 11:27. (13) Luke 12:47. (14) Matthew 22:14; Luke 13:34; Luke 19:42. (15) Jeremiah 7:27, Jeremiah 7:28; Proverbs 1:24. (16) John 14:17. (17) John 12:39, John 12:40; 2 Thessalonians 3:2; Matthew 13:11. (18) 1 Corinthians 1:18, 1 Corinthians 1:23. (19) 2 Corinthians 2:15, 2 Corinthians 2:16. (20) James 2:19. (21) Hebrews 6:4. (22) Acts 8:12; Matthew 13:1-58, and in many other places which we have above recited in the 2nd chapter. (23) Acts 1:17. (24) John 6:37. (25) Ezekiel 13:9; Revelation 22:18. (26) 1 John 2:19. (27) John 8:34; Romans 5:12; Romans 6:19, Romans 6:20; & 7:14; & 8:7. (28) 2 Peter 2:22. (29) 1 Timothy 4:1. (30) Matthew 15:13; John 15:2. (31) Acts 14:16. (32) Romans 9:19. (33) Romans 1:27, Romans 1:28; 2 Thessalonians 2:9 - 2 Thessalonians 2:11; John 3:19. (34) Isaiah 63:17; Exodus 4:21; Deuteronomy 2:30, & in many other places above recited in the 2nd chapter. (35) Isaiah 6:10; Romans 11:32. (36) Exodus 8:32; Psalms 95:8; Acts 7:42; Romans 1:26. (37) 2 Kings 22:23; 2 Corinthians 4:4; 2 Timothy 2:26; (38) 1 Timothy 1:19; Proverbs 16:4; Exodus 9:16; Romans 9:21, Romans 9:22, &c. The sixth Chapter. Of the last and full execution and

accomplishment of God's eternal counsell, as vwell tovwards the Elect as the Reprobate. FOR as much as God is justice itself, it is necessary that he should save the just, and condemn the unjust. Now they amongst men are only just, who being by faith joined to Christ (1), grafted (2), rooted in him (3), and made one body with him (4), are justified and sanctified in him, and by him: whereof it followeth, that the glory to the which they are destinate (5), to the glory of God (6), appertaineth to them as by a certain right or title. On the other part, they which remain in Adam's pollution and death, are justly hated of God: and so condemned by him, not excepting so much as them which die before they sin, as Adam did (7). But both these manners of executing God's judgments, as well in these as in the other which are elected are in three sorts: whereof we have already declared the first. For the Elect in that same moment that they have received the gift of faith, have after a certain sort passed from death to life (8), whereof they have a sure pledge (9). But this their life is hid in Christ, till this corporal death make them to step a degree further, and that the soul being loosed out of the bands of the body, enter into the joy of the Lord (10). Finally, in the day appointed to judge the quick and the dead (11), when that which is corruptible and mortal shall be clad with incorruptibleness and immortality, and God shall be all in all things, then they shall see his majesty face to face, and shall fully enjoy that unspeakable comfort and joy, which before all beginning was prepared for them, which is also the reward that is due to the righteousness and holiness of Christ: who was given for their sins, and raised again from death for their justification: by whose virtue and spirit they have proceeded and gone forward from faith to faith, as shall manifestly appear by the whole course of their life, and good works (12). Whereas altogether contrary, the Reprobate conceived, born, and brought up in sin, death, and wrath of God (13), when they depart out of this world, they fall into another gulf of destruction, and their souls are plunged in that endless pain (14), until the day come that their bodies & souls being joined again, they shall enter into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (15). Then by these two ways (which are clean contrary one to another) the last issue and end of God's judgments shall set forth manifestly his glory to all men, forasmuch as in his Elect he shall declare himself most just and most merciful. Most just, I say, for that he hath punished with extreme rigor and severity the sins of his elect in the person of his son, neither did receive them into the fellowship of his glory, before he had fully and perfectly justified and sanctified them in his son. And most merciful, for as much as he freely appointed with himself to elect them, and according as he had purposed, chose them freely in his son, by calling, justifying, and glorifying them, by means of that same faith which he had given them through the same grace and mercy. On the other side, touching the Reprobate, their corruption and infidelity, with such fruits as come thereof, and testimony of their own conscience, shall so reprove and accuse them, that although they resist and kick against the prick: yet the most perfect justice of God shall be manifest and shine by all men's confession in their just condemnation.

Notes of the sixth chapter.

(1) John 17:21. (2) Romans 6:5. (3) Colossians 2:7. (4) 1 Corinthians 10:16. (5) Romans 8:30; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:5; Romans 9:23. (6) Romans 3:25, Romans 3:26. (7) Romans 5:14; Ephesians 2:3; John 3:36. (8) & (9) John 5:24; 2 Corinthians 1:21, 2 Corinthians 1:22; 2 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 1:6 - 1 Corinthians 1:8; Romans 8:25; Ephesians 1:13, Ephesians 1:14; in the same 2:6; Romans 5:2. (10) Luke 23:43; Matthew 22:31, Matthew 22:32; Luke 16:22; Php 1:23. (11) & (12) 2 Timothy 4:1; Acts 3:21; Romans 8:21; 1 Corinthians 15:1-58; 1 Corinthians

13:1-13; Matthew 25:34; Romans 4:25; Romans 1:17. (13) Romans 5:12; Romans 7:14; Ephesians 2:3. (14) Luke 16:2, Luke 16:23, Luke 16:24. (15) Matthew 25:41. The seventh Chapter.

After vvhhat sorte this doctrine maie be preached vvith most profite.

SINCE we have now declared the effect of this doctrine: it remaineth also that we shew what order we think best to be observed in preaching and applying the same to every particular man. Whereas many find this matter so sharp and strange, that they flee from it as from a dangerous rock: it is partly to be attributed to the malice and arrogancy of men: and partly to the rashness and lack of discretion of them that teach it. And thirdly it is to be imputed to their ignorance which can not orderly apply the same to themselves, which faithfully and truly hath been taught of others. Concerning them which sin of malice, it only appertaineth to God to amend them: which surely he hath done always in his season, and likewise will do from time to time, to whom he hath appointed to shew mercy. But for others which remain obstinate in their sin and wickedness, there is no cause why we should be moved either for their number or authority, or dissemble God's truth. And as touching the second sort, I have thought these things principally to be observed in preaching this mystery.

First as in all other things (1), so chiefly in this matter of Predestination, they ought to take diligent heed, that instead of God's pure and simple truth, they bring not forth vain and curious speculations or dreams (2): which thing they can not choose but do, which go about to compass and accord these secret judgments of God with man's wisdom, and so do not only put difference betwixt Predestination and the purpose of God, which thing they must needs do, but separate the one from the other: for they either imagine a certain naked and idle permission, or else make a double purpose and counsel in God. From the which errors they must needs fall into many and great absurdities. For sometimes they are constrained to divide those things which of themselves are joined most straitly: and sometimes they are compelled to invent a great sort of foolish & dark distinctions, wherein the further they occupy themselves and search, the wider they stray from the purpose, and so entangle their miserable brains, that they can find no way out. This then ought to be avoided with all careful diligence, chiefly in this matter which above all other ought purely and sincerely to be taught in the Church of God.

Moreover as much as is possible let them take heed (though sometimes for a more clear understanding of things a man may be bold godly and reverently to do) that no strange manner of speech, or not approvable by God's word, be used: and also that such phrases and words which the Scriptures approve, be expounded fitly, lest otherwise any man should take occasion of offence, which as yet is rude and ignorant. Furthermore we must have good respect unto the hearers (3), wherein also we must make distinction betwixt the malicious and the rude: and again betwixt them which are willful ignorant, and those which are not capable through a simple and common ignorance. For to that further sort our Lord is accustomed to set forth plainly the judgment of God (4): but the other must be led by little and little to the knowledge of the truth (5). Likewise we must take heed that we have not so much respect to the weak, that they in the mean season which are apt to understand, be neglected, and not sufficiently taught: whereof we have notable examples in Paul, which declare to us the wisdom and circumspection which he observed in this matter, chiefly in the 9, 10, 11, 14, & 15th chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. Also, except some great cause let [hinder], that they begin at the lowest and most manifest causes, and so

ascend up to the highest (as Paul in his Epistle to the Romans which is the right order and way to proceed in matters of divinity, from the law goeth to remission of sins, and thence by steps he mounteth till he come to the highest degree) or else let them consist in that point which is most agreeable to the text or matter which they have in hand, rather than contrariwise to begin at the very top of this mystery, and so come down to the foot. For the brightness of God's majesty, suddenly presented to the eyes, doth so dim and dazzle the sight, that afterwards, if they be not through long continuance accustomed to the same, they wear blind, when they should see other things.

What then remaineth? That, whether they begin beneath and ascend upwards, or contrariwise, above, and come downward to the lowest degree, they take always heed, lest omitting that which ought to be in the midst, they leap from one extremity to another, as from the eternal purpose, to salvation, and much more from salvation to the eternal purpose: Likewise from God's eternal counsel to damnation, or backward from damnation to his purpose: leaving the near and evident causes of God's judgment. Except perchance they have to do with open blasphemers & contemners of God, who have need of nothing else, but the sharp pricks of God's judgments: or else with men so trained & exercised in God's word, that there be no suspicion of any offence. Finally, that they never so propound this doctrine, as if it should be applied to any one man particularly (6), although men must be used after divers sorts, some by gentleness, & some by sharpness, unless some Prophet (7) of God be admonished by some special revelation, which thing because it is out of course, and not usual, ought not lightly to be believed. When the ministers also visit the sick, or use familiar and private admonitions, it is their duty to lift up and comfort the afflicted conscience, with the testimonial of their Election, and again to wound and pierce the wicked & stubborn, with the fearful judgment of God: so that they keep a mean, refraining ever from that last sentence, which admitteth no exception nor condition. For this right and jurisdiction only appertaineth to God (8).

Notes of the seventh chapter.

(1) Matthew 28:20. (2) 2 Timothy 2:23. (3) 2 Timothy 2:15. (4) Matthew 23:1-39, the whole chapter; John 8:44; John 9:41; John 10:26; Luke 20:46; Matthew 23:38. (5) 1 Corinthians 3:2; Romans 14:1. (6) John 8:33, John 8:34; Php 3:2; 1 Timothy 6:3, 1 Timothy 6:4. (7) 2 Timothy 4:14; John 6:64, John 6:70. (8) Matthew 12:38, Matthew 12:39, with John 8:24. The eighth Chapter.

Hovv euerie man maie vvith profit applie this vniuersall doctrine to himselfe.

IT is most evident, that they which teach that man's salvation either in part or wholly dependeth and is grounded in works, destroy the foundation of the Gospel of God (1). And contrariwise, they that teach Justification freely by faith, ground on a sure foundation, but so, that they build upon that eternal counsel of God, whereupon Christ himself (2), and the Apostle Paul following Christ's steps, groundeth his doctrine (3). For seeing perseverance in faith is requisite to salvation (4), to what purpose shall faith serve me except I be sure of the gift of perseverance? Nor we need not fear, lest this doctrine make us negligent, or dissolute: for this peace of conscience whereof we speak (5), ought to be distinct & separate from foolish security, & he that is the son of God, seeing he is moved & governed by the spirit of God, (6), will never through the consideration of God's benefit take occasion of negligence, and dissolution. Then if by this doctrine we had but this one commodity, that we might learn to assure and confirm our faith against all brunts that might

happen, it is manifest that they which speak against, and resist this article of religion, either through their wickedness, or else through ignorance, or some foolish blind zeal, which happeneth when men will measure God according to the capacity of their own wits, subvert and destroy the principal ground and foundation of our salvation. And in very deed though some (as I must confess) do it not purposely: yet do they open notwithstanding the door to all superstition and impiety. As for them, which nowadays maliciously oppugn the truth, I beseech the Lord, even from the heart, either to turn their minds (if so be they appertain to the elect) or else to send them a most speedy destruction, that by their own example they may confirm and establish that doctrine, which so maliciously they resist. These other I will desire most instantly, and require them in the name of God, that they would better advise themselves what they do.

Now to touch briefly how this doctrine may be applied, let us mark that all the works of God, even the least of all, are such that man cannot judge of them, but in two sorts: that is, either when they are done, or else by foreseeing them to come to pass by the disposition of the second and manifest causes, whose effects have been diligently, and by long use observed, as men accustom in natural things to do: wherein, notwithstanding men are wonderfully blind. In this matter then, which is most obscure of all others, it is no marvel if man's wit be driven into this strait, that it cannot otherwise understand but by this means, what is determined as touching himself in this secret counsel of God. But because these are most high mysteries [1 Corinthians 2:7], and therefore stand in the observation of those causes which pass all natural things, we must needs seek further, & come to God's word: which forasmuch as without all comparison, it is more certain than man's conjectures: so it can best direct us herein, and assure us. The scripture then witnesseth (7) that all those that God hath, according to his counsel, predestinate, to be adopted his children through Jesus Christ, are also called in their time appointed, yea and so effectually, that they hear the voice of him that calleth, and believe it (8): so that being justified and sanctified in Jesus Christ, they are also glorified. Wilt thou then, whosoever thou art, be assured of thy Predestination, and so, in order, of thy salvation, which thou lookest for, against all the assaults of Satan? Assured I say, not by doubtful conjectures, or our own fantasy, but by arguments and conclusions, no less true and certain (9), than if thou were ascended into Heaven, and had heard of God's own mouth his Eternal decree and purpose? Beware thou begin not at that most high degree: for so thou shouldest not be able to sustain the most shining light of God's majesty. Begin therefore beneath at the lowest order, and when thou shalt hear the voice of God (10) sound in thine ears, & in thy heart, which calleth thee to Christ the only mediator, consider by little and little, & try diligently (11), if thou be justified & sanctified in Christ through faith: for these two be the effects or fruits, whereby the faith is known, which is their cause. As for this thou shalt partly know by the spirit of adoption, which crieth within thee, Abba, father (12): & partly by the virtue & effect of the same spirit, which is wrought in thee. As if thou fall, & so declare indeed that although sin dwell in thee, yet it doth no more reign in thee (13): for is not the holy ghost he that causeth us not to let slip the bridle, & give liberty willingly to our naughty & vile concupiscences (14), as they are accustomed, whose eyes the prince of this world blindeth (15), or else who moveth us to pray when we are cold, and slothful? who stirreth up in us those unspeakable groanings (16)? who is he that when we have sinned (yea & sometimes willingly and wittingly) engendereth in us an hate of the sin committed, and not for the fear of punishment which we have therefore deserved, but because we have offended our most merciful father (17)? Who is he, I say, that testifieth unto us that our sighings are heard, and also moveth us to call daily God, our God, and our Father, even at

that time when we have trespassed against him (18)? Is it not that spirit, which is freely given to us as a gift, for a sure and certain pledge of our adoption (19)? Wherefore if we can gather by these effects, that we have faith, it followeth that we are called and drawn effectually. And again, by this vocation, which we have declared properly to belong to the children of God; that is evidently proved which we took in hand to shew, that is, forasmuch as we were Predestinate by the Eternal counsel and decree of God, (the which he had determined in himself) to be adopted in his son, therefore we were given to him, whereof the conclusion followeth, that since by the most constant will of God (20), which only is grounded on itself, and dependeth on none other thing, we are predestinate, and no man can take us out of the hands of the son: also seeing that to continue and persevere in the faith is necessary, it followeth, I say, that the hope of our perseverance is certain, and so consequently our salvation: so that to doubt any more of it, is evil and wicked (21). So far then it is against reason to say, that this doctrine maketh men negligent or dissolute, that contrariwise, this alone doth open us the way, to search out and understand, by the power of the holy Ghost, God's deep secrets, as the Apostle plainly teacheth (22), to the end that when we know them (albeit we know them here in this world but after a sort (23), so that we must daily fight with the spiritual armor against distrust (24,) we may learn to behave ourselves not idly, but rather to persevere valiantly (25), to serve and honour God, to love him, to fear him, to call upon him, that daily more and more as saith Peter, as much as in us lieth, we may make our vocation and election certain (26). Moreover how shall he stand sure and constant against so many grievous temptations, both within and without, and against so many assaults of fortune (as the world doth term it) that is not well resolved in this point which is most true? That is, that God according to his good will, doth all things whatsoever they be, and what instruments and means soever he useth in working of the same, for the commodity of his Elect (27). Of the which number he is, that findeth himself in this danger and trouble (28). As touching the other point, which concerneth Reprobation, because no man can call to mind the determinate purpose of Election, but at the same instant the contrary will come to remembrance: (besides that in the holy Scripture these two are oftentimes joined together) it must needs be, that such as esteem this part curious or unprofitable, and therefore not to be talked of, do great injury to the spirit of God. Therefore this part is to be weighed and considered, but with such modesty, that the height of God's judgments may at all times bridle our curious fancies, in such sort that we do not apply it particularly to any man, nor to any certain company. For in this also it differeth from Election, because Election (as hath been said) is revealed to us by the spirit of God within ourselves, not in others, whose hearts we can not know. And Reprobation is ever hid from men, except it be disclosed by God, contrary to the common course of things. For who can tell, if God have determined to shew mercy at the last hour of death, to him which hath spent all his life past lewdly and wickedly (29)? But this trust [hope] ought not to encourage any man to maintain, and continue in his sin and ungodliness. For I speak of those things which we ought to consider in others, for the examples of such mercy of God are very rare, neither any man that is wise will promise to himself through a vain security and trust, that thing which is not in his own power (30.) It is therefore sufficient if we understand generally that there be vessels prepared to perdition (31): the which, seeing God doth not reveal unto us who they are, we ought both in example of life & prayer, diligently endeavour to win and recover to their salvation, yea even very such, of whom by seeing their horrible vices, we almost despise (32). And if we observe this order, we shall receive great fruit of this doctrine. For first by the knowledge hereof, we shall learn humbly to submit ourselves to the majesty of God, so that the

more we shall fear and reverence him, the more we ought to labour to confirm in ourselves the testimony of our election in Christ (33). Furthermore when we shall diligently consider the difference, which through the mercy of God is betwixt men, which are all alike subject to the selfsame curse and malediction, it can not be, but we must acknowledge and embrace more earnestly the singular goodness of God, than if we did make this grace common to all men indifferently, or else referred the cause of the inequality of this grace to men (34). Besides this, when we know that faith is a special gift of God, shall we not receive it more willingly when it is offered, and be more careful to have the same to increase, than if we should imagine (as some do) that it is in every man's power to turn and repent when he will, because (they say) the Lord would that all men should be saved, and will not the death of a sinner? Finally, when we see the doctrine of the Gospel not only despised of all the world, but also cruelly persecuted: and when we see so great falsehood and rebellion amongst men, what thing can better confirm and fortify us, than to be assured that nothing chanceth by fortune, that God knoweth his (35), and that they which commit these things (except God turn their hearts) are those which are destinate, not by chance, but by the sure and eternal counsel of God, to be as it were a glass, wherein the anger and power of God doth appear? Truth it is, that these things can never be so commodiously and perfectly treated of, that man's reason and wit cannot find out something to reply always to the contrary, yea and so kindleth with desire of contradiction, that it is ready to bring an action against God, and to accuse and blame him as chief author of all things. But let the Devil roar and discontent himself, and the wicked kick and wince: yet their own conscience shall reprove & condemn them (36) when as ours, being confirmed in the truth, by the grace and mercy of our God, shall deliver and free us (37), in the day of Christ. To whom with the Father, and the holy Ghost, praise, glory, and honor be given for ever. So be it.

Notes of the eight chapter.

(1) Galatians 2:21; Romans 11:6. (2) John 6:44, John 6:45, and in divers places besides. (3) Romans 8:29, Romans 8:30; Romans 9:10, Romans 9:11, and the whole chapter; 1 Corinthians 2:10; Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 1:9; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:2, & in divers places besides. (4) Matthew 10:22. (5) Romans 5:1, Romans 5:5; Matthew 5:12; Matthew 24:48. (6) Romans 8:14. (7) Romans 8:29, Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 1:9. (8) John 10:27. (9) Romans 5:2; Romans 8:38; 1 Corinthians 2:10, 1 Corinthians 2:11; 2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 3:24. (10) Psalms 95:7, Psalms 95:8; John 10:27. (11) 2 Corinthians 13:5. (12) Galatians 4:6; 1 John 3:24; 1 Corinthians 2:10, 1 Corinthians 2:11, and in divers other places which we have already alleged. (13) Romans 6:1-23, almost through the whole chapter; 1 John 3:9. (14) Romans 6:11, Romans 6:12; Ephesians 4:29, Ephesians 4:30. (15) 2 Corinthians 4:4. (16) Romans 8:26. (17) Romans 7:24. (18) Romans 8:15, Romans 8:16. (19) Romans 8:27; Ephesians 4:30; Ephesians 1:13, Ephesians 1:14; 2 Corinthians 1:22, and in other places oftentimes. (20) Romans 11:29; Hebrews 6:17; 2 Timothy 2:19. (21) Romans 8:38; John 3:33; Romans 4:20, Romans 4:21; Romans 5:5; Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 4:16; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; Hebrews 10:22, Hebrews 10:23. (22) 1 Corinthians 2:10 - 1 Corinthians 2:12; Romans 8:16; 1 John 3:24. (23) 1 Corinthians 13:9. (24) 1 Timothy 6:12; Galatians 5:17. (25) Romans 6:1; Hebrews 10:23, Hebrews 10:24; James 3:17, James 3:18. (26) 2 Peter 1:10. (27) Romans 8:28, Romans 8:31, even to the very end of the chapter; Job 13:15; Romans 5:3; James 1:2. (28) Romans 8:16, Romans 8:38, Romans 8:39. (29) Luke 23:43. (30) James 4:13 - James 4:15; 2 Timothy 2:25;

Luke 12:20. (31) Romans 9:21; 2 Timothy 2:20. (32) Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 9:22; 1 Peter 2:12. (33) Php 2:12; 1 Peter 1:17; Romans 11:20. (34) Romans 9:23. (35) 2 Timothy 2:18,2 Timothy 2:19. (36) Romans 2:15. (37) 1 Peter 3:21.

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S. FAITH & JUSTIFICATION

FAITH & JUSTIFICATION by

Theodore Beza

1519-1605 The following article by Theodore Beza was taken from chapter four (sections 1-13) of his book *The Christian Faith*, translated into English by James Clark (Focus Christian Ministries Trust, East Essex England, 1992). This book was a "best seller" during the Protestant Reformation, and appeared in 1558 under the original title of *Confession De Foi Du Chretien*. The current modern edition contains no copyright notice, therefore it is assumed that the articles contained within it may be freely distributed. The electronic edition of this book was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. The above title was created for this on-line edition, and is not found in the original. We believe in the Holy Spirit; He is the essential Power of the Father and the Son (Genesis 1:2). He dwells in Them and is co-eternal and consubstantial with Them; He proceeds from Them (John 14:16, John 14:26; John 16:7-15). He is one God with Them (Romans 8:9-11; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 3:16) and is always a Person distinct from the One and the Other (Matthew 28:19). This is what the Church has well settled, by the Word of God, against Macedonius* and other similar heretics. His infinite might and power are demonstrated in the creation and preservation of all creatures, since the beginning of the world (Genesis 1:2; Psalms 104:29, Psalms 104:30).

But, in this treatise, we shall especially consider the effects which He produces in the children of God; how, along with faith, He brings to them the graces of God to make them sensible of the efficacy and power of them (Romans 8:12-17; 1 Corinthians 2:11-12; 1 John 4:13); in brief, how He brings them more and more to the end and goal to which they have been predestinated before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:3-4).

* Macedonius, (4th Century), denied the Divinity of the Holy Spirit. His heresy was condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD. The Holy Spirit makes us partakers of Jesus Christ by Faith Alone. The Holy Spirit is therefore the One through whom the Father places and maintains His elect in possession of Jesus Christ, His Son; and, consequently, of all the graces which are necessary to their salvation. But it is necessary, in the first place, that the Holy Spirit makes us suitable and ready to receive Jesus Christ. This is what He does in creating in us, by His pure goodness and Divine mercy, that which we call 'faith' (Ephesians 1:17; Php 1:29; Php 2:1-30; 1 Peter 1:2-9), the sole instrument by which we take hold of Jesus Christ when He is offered to us, the sole vessel to receive Him (John 3:1-13, John 3:33-36). The means which the Holy Spirit uses to create and preserve faith in us. In order to create in us this instrument of faith, and also to feed and strengthen it more and more, the Holy Spirit uses two ordinary means (without however communicating to them His power, but working by them): the preaching of the Word of God, and His Sacraments (Matthew 29:19-20; Acts 6:4; Romans 10:17; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23-25).

Further on, we will return to this; in the first place we shall define what this so precious faith is, and what are its effects and powers.

How faith is necessary, and what faith is

We are at this point such enemies of our own salvation, because of our natural corruption (Romans 8:7; 1 Corinthians 2:14), that if God had merely contented Himself to tell us that we shall find our salvation in Jesus Christ, we would only mock it; thus has the world always done and will do until the end (1 Corinthians 1:23-25; John 10:20; Acts 2:13; Luke 23:35). Even more, if He added nothing more than to tell us also that the means whereby we experience the efficacy of this remedy against eternal death is to believe in Jesus Christ, that would profit us nothing (John 3:5-6). For, in all this, we are more than dumb (Psalms 51:15; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 1:6), deaf (Psalms 40:6; John 8:47; Matthew 13:13), and blind through the corruption of our nature (John 1:5; John 3:3; John 9:41). It would be no more possible for us even to wish to believe than it would be for a dead man to fly (John 12:38-39; John 6:44).

It is necessary therefore that with all this, the good Father, who chose us for His glory, should come to multiply His mercy towards His enemies. In declaring to us that He has given His own only Son so that whosoever takes hold of Him by faith should not perish (John 3:16), He creates also in us this instrument of faith which He requires from us.

Now, the faith of which we speak does not consist only in believing that God is God, and that the contents of His Word are true:- for the devils indeed have this faith, and it only makes them tremble (James 2:19) -- But we call 'faith' a certain knowledge which, by His grace and goodness alone, the Holy Spirit engraves more and more in the hearts of the elect of God (1 Corinthians 2:6-8). By this knowledge, each of them, being assured in his heart of his election, appropriates to himself and applies to himself the promise of his salvation in Jesus Christ.

Faith, I say, does not only believe that Jesus Christ is dead and risen again for sinners, but it comes also to embrace Jesus Christ (Romans 8:16, Romans 8:39; Hebrews 10:22-23; 1 John 4:13; 1 John 5:19, etc). Whosoever truly believes trusts in Him alone and is assured of his salvation to the point of no longer doubting it (Ephesians 3:12). That is why St. Bernard said, conformably to the whole of Scripture, what follows, "If you believe that your sins cannot be blotted out except by Him against whom alone you have sinned, you do well. But add yet one point: that you believe that your sins have been forgiven you by Him. This is the testimony that the Holy Spirit gives to our heart, saying, 'Your sins are forgiven you'." The object and power of true faith

Since Jesus Christ is the object of faith, and indeed Jesus Christ as He is held forth to us in the Word of God, there follow two points which should be noted well. On the one side, where there is no Word of God but only the word of man, whoever he be, there is no faith there, but only a dream or an opinion which cannot fail to deceive us (Romans 10:2-4; Mark 16:15-16; Romans 1:28; Galatians 1:8-9). On the other side, faith embraces and appropriates Jesus Christ and all that is in Him, since He has been given to us on the condition of believing in Him (John 17:20-21; Romans 8:9). There follows one of two things: either all that is necessary for our salvation is not in Jesus Christ, or if all is indeed there, he who has Jesus Christ by faith has everything. Now, to say that all which is necessary for our salvation is not in Jesus Christ is a very horrible blasphemy, for this would only make Him a Saviour in part (Matthew 1:21). There remains therefore the other part: in

having Jesus Christ, by faith, we have in Him all that is required for our salvation (Romans 5:1). This is what the Apostle says, "There is no condemnation for those who are in Jesus Christ." (Romans 8:1).

How must that word be understood which we say after St Paul, "We are justified by faith alone"

Here is the explanation of our justification by faith alone: faith is the instrument which receives Jesus Christ and, consequently, which receives His righteousness, that is to say, all perfection. When therefore, after St. Paul (Romans 1:17; Romans 3:21-27; Romans 4:3; Romans 5:1; Romans 9:30-33; Romans 11:6; Galatians 2:16-21; Galatians 3:9-10, Galatians 3:18; Php 3:9; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 11:7) we say that we are justified by faith alone, or freely, or by faith without works (for all these ways of speaking give the same sense), we do not say that faith is a virtue which makes us righteous, in ourselves, before God. For this would be to put faith in the place of Jesus Christ who is, alone, our perfect and entire righteousness. But we speak thus with the Apostle, and we say that by faith alone we are justified, inasmuch as it embraces Him who justifies us, Jesus Christ, to whom it unites and joins us. We are then made partakers of Him and of the benefits which He possesses. These, being imputed and gifted to us, are more than sufficient to make us acquitted and accounted righteous before God. To be assured of one's salvation through faith in Jesus Christ is not at all arrogance or presumption

It is established that to be assured of one's salvation, through faith, is not only neither presumption nor arrogance, but, on the contrary, is the sole means of stripping oneself of all pride, to give all glory to God (Romans 8:16, Romans 8:38; Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 10:22-23; 1 John 4:13; 1 John 5:19; Romans 3:27; Romans 4:20; 1 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Corinthians 9:26-27). Because faith alone teaches us to go out of ourselves, and compels us, to earnestly acknowledge that in ourselves there is nothing but cause for complete damnation. Thus it sends us away to Jesus Christ, and it teaches us and assures us that we shall find salvation before God through His righteousness alone. Truly, all that is in Jesus Christ, that is to say, all the righteousness and perfection (in Him there was no sin and moreover He has fulfilled all the righteousness of the Law), is placed to our account and gifted to us as if it were our own, provided that we embrace Him by faith. That is why St. Bernard said, "The testimony of our conscience is our glory: not the testimony which the deceived mind, deceiving its owner, gives from itself to the vain-glorious Pharisee (Luke 18:11-12); this testimony is not true. But the testimony which the Holy Spirit gives to our spirit is true." Faith finds in Jesus Christ all that is necessary for salvation. This requires to be expounded in detail, so that one may know if, through faith, we take hold of a remedy sufficient to assure us fully of life eternal; according to what is written, "The just shall live by faith". (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:16-17; Galatians 3:11). We say therefore that everything which obstructs man from communion with God, who is perfectly righteous and good, lies in three points. But, in the face of each of them, we find the remedy, not in ourselves, but in Jesus Christ and all that He has, provided that we are united and joined to Him in communion of all benefits (John 17:9-11, John 17:20-26). That is why the Church, that is to say, the assembly of believers, is called the Spouse of Jesus Christ, her Husband (Romans 7:2-6; Romans 8:35; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:31-32); it is to more clearly show the greatness of the union and communion which exists between Jesus Christ and those who, through faith, have entrusted themselves to him. For, by virtue of this union and this spiritual marriage through faith, He takes all our miseries upon Himself, and we receive from Him all His treasures, by His pure goodness and mercy. This is what we are

going to see. The remedy which faith finds in Jesus Christ alone against the first assault of the first temptation: "The multitude of our sins": The assurance which we can have on this point regarding the saints or ourselves

Therefore let us now see how, in Jesus Christ alone, we find sure remedies against all the temptations of Satan and all the troubles of our conscience. In the first place, Satan and our conscience, to show that we are truly unworthy of being saved and very worthy of perishing, put in the forefront the nature of God, perfectly righteous, He who is the great Enemy and Avenger of all iniquity. Now, it is true, we are covered with infinite sins. It follows therefore that there is nothing more for us to do than to wait for the wages of sin, that is to say, eternal death (Romans 6:23).

What shall men be able to plead against this conclusion of Satan and of their conscience? Certainly, nothing which would avail, unless it is what I say. For if they have recourse to the mercy of God, forgetting His righteousness, they are deceiving themselves. One thing is certain, the mercy of God is such that it is necessary, however, that His righteousness also be totally acknowledged: which we declared already.

If we desire then, in order to cover our sins, to plead the merits of the saints:

1. We do them a great wrong; for David himself writes, "Enter not into judgement with Thy servant." (Psalms 143:2), and, in another passage, he confesses that his works cannot ascend to God (Psalms 16:2). And what does St Paul say of Abraham, this holy person and father of believers? "If Abraham", he says, "were justified by his works, he has reason for self-glorying, but not before God. For, what says the Scripture? Abraham believed in God, and this was imputed to him for righteousness." (Romans 4:2-3). And what says St. Paul regarding himself? "Certainly," he says, "I do not feel guilty, but I am not thereby justified." (1 Corinthians 4:4). How then can we plead the merits of the saints to satisfy for our sins, since they themselves have recourse only to the mercy of God alone, procured by Jesus Christ (Php 3:8)?

2. Moreover, if the saints themselves have merited paradise by their holy life (which cannot be, seeing that they themselves testify to the contrary), would they not have already received payment for their merits? With what claim, therefore, shall we plead them before God one more time?

3. Since, to say that they had so much merit that there remains some left over for us, is to give the lie to what they have left us in writing. Moreover, is it not as if we were saying that they have nothing to do with the death of Jesus Christ, seeing that they have in themselves more than enough to have need of Him?

4. And then, if they have excess merits, in what way would we know that they are ours? Is - it because we think it so, or because we have bought them? But St. Peter rebukes Simon the magician for this false and accursed trade: "May thy money perish with thee," he says, "for Thou hast thought to buy the gift of God with money". (Acts 8:20).

There is how, in believing that we honour the saints, we actually dishonour them as much as possible. Now, if the works of the saints have nothing to merit in this sphere, what shall we find in ourselves, or in any other living man, which is sufficient to fortify us against this assault of Satan? But, in order to cut short all these false imaginings, let us consider the following points.

Firstly, would we not think a man to be destitute of sense who persuades himself that he is free of a creditor under the pretext that he imagines he has paid, or that another has paid for him? This is how we always act towards God when we are not content with the sole satisfaction of Jesus Christ. For, what foundation have all the rest except the fantasy of men, as if God must find good all that seems good to us. But, on the contrary, let us hear what Jesus Christ says: "They honour me in vain, in teaching the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9). And, in another passage, "When you come to appear before me, who then demanded these things from you?" (Isaiah 1:12). In the second place, when we say that we rest on the sole mercy of God, but we imagine that we ourselves have paid for it, wholly or in part, is this not but to mock His mercy (Romans 4:4)?

Thirdly, not to be content with the sole merit of Jesus Christ, but to wish to add others to it, is this not as if one were saying that Christ is not Jesus, that is to say, our Saviour, but only in part (Galatians 2:21,)?

Fourthly, is this not to strip God of His perfect righteousness (Romans 3:26), and consequently of His Divinity (in the measure in which that is possible to us!) by daring to oppose to His wrath the works of men, against whom so much could be said, no matter how good they are (Luke 17:10)? David said, "Enter. not into judgement with thy servant." (Psalms 143:2).

Let us therefore learn to reply in a different manner to the aforesaid argument of Satan. You say, Satan, that God is perfectly righteous and the Avenger of all iniquity. -- I confess it; but I add another property of His righteousness which you have left aside: since He is righteous, He is satisfied with having been paid once. You say next that I have infinite iniquities which deserve eternal death.- I confess it; but I add what you have maliciously omitted: the iniquities which are in me have been very amply avenged and punished in Jesus Christ who has borne the judgement of God in my place (Romans 3:25; 1 Peter 2:24). That is why I come to a conclusion quite different from yours. Since God is righteous (Romans 3:26) and does not demand payment twice, since Jesus Christ, God and man (2 Corinthians 5:19), has satisfied by infinite obedience (Romans 5:19; Php 2:8) the infinite majesty of God (Romans 8:33), it follows that my iniquities can no longer bring me to ruin (Colossians 2:14); they are already blotted out and washed out of my account by the blood of Jesus Christ who was made a curse for me (Galatians 3:13), and who righteous, died for the unrighteous (1 Peter 2:24).

Thereupon, it is certain that Satan will know well to set our afflictions before our eyes, and especially death (Romans 5:12). He will allege that these are so many testimonies showing that God has not pardoned our sins.

But, as for afflictions, we must reply, firstly: although all affliction and death entered into the world by sin, God does not always have regard to our sins when He afflicts us. We establish this from the whole history of Job and elsewhere (John 9:3; 1 Peter 2:19; 1 Peter 3:14; James 1:2). But He has several other ends in view which tend to His glory and our profit, as we shall explain further on. On the other side, when God afflicts His own for their sins, even if He comes to make them feel the pains of death (Job 13:15), He is not provoked to anger against them as a Judge, to condemn them, but as a Father who is chastising His children in order to prevent them from perishing (2 Corinthians 6:9; Hebrews 12:6; 2 Samuel 7:14), or to give an example to others (2 Samuel 12:13-14). The remedy which faith alone finds in Jesus Christ alone against the second assault of the first temptation: "We are destitute of the righteousness which God justly demands from us"

Here is the second assault that Satan can raise against us on account of our unworthiness: It is not sufficient to have no sin, or to have satisfied for sins. But more is necessary; that man should fulfil all the Law, that is to say, that he love God perfectly and his neighbour as himself (Deuteronomy 17:26; Galatians 3:10-12; Matthew 22:1-46; Matthew 22:37-40). Bring therefore this righteousness, Satan will say to our poor conscience, or know well that you cannot escape the wrath and curse of God.

Now, against this assault, what will all men profit us except Christ alone? For it is a question of perfect obedience which is never found in any save in Jesus Christ alone. Let us learn therefore here to appropriate to ourselves once more, by faith, another treasure of Jesus Christ: His righteousness. We know that it is He who has fulfilled all righteousness (Matthew 3:15; Php 2:8; Isaiah 53:11). He has given a perfect obedience and love to God His Father, and has perfectly loved His enemies (Romans 5:6-10) as far as being made a curse for them, as St. Paul says (Galatians 3:13); that is to say, as far as bearing, for them, the judgement of the wrath of God (Colossians 1:22; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Thus, being clothed with this perfect righteousness which is given to us through faith, as if it were properly our own (Ephesians 1:7-8), we can be acceptable to God (John 1:12; Romans 8:17), as brothers and co-heirs of Jesus Christ. On this point, Satan must of necessity close his mouth, provided we have the faith to receive Jesus Christ and all the benefits He possesses in order to communicate them to those who believe in Him (Romans 8:33). The third assault of the same temptation: "The natural pollution, or original sin, which is in our persons, makes God hate us still"

There remains yet to Satan an assault with this temptation about our unworthiness, as follows: although you have satisfied for the penalty of your sins, in the Person of Jesus Christ, and are also, through faith, covered with His righteousness, you are nevertheless corrupt in your nature; in it there dwells still the root of all sin (Romans 7:17-18). How, then, will you dare to appear before the majesty of God who is the Enemy of all pollution (Psalms 5:5), and who sees the depths of the heart (Psalms 44:21; Jeremiah 17:10)?

Now, in this sphere, we find anew a prompt remedy in Jesus Christ alone. We must rely on Him. Truly we are yet enclosed in this mortal body (Romans 7:24), so that we do not practise the good that we wish, we still feel the sin which dwells in us (Romans 7:21-23), and the flesh which battles against the Spirit (Galatians 5:17). This is why, with regard to ourselves, we are still polluted in the body and in the soul (1 Corinthians 4:4; Php 3:9). But inasmuch as we have faith, we are united (1 Corinthians 6:17), embodied (Ephesians 4:16; Colossians 2:19), rooted (Colossians 2:7), ingrafted in Jesus Christ (Romans 6:5). In Him, from the first moment of His conception in the womb of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35), our nature was more fully restored and sanctified (Hebrews 2:10-11), than it ever was when created pure in Adam; seeing that Adam was made only in the image of God (Genesis 1:27; 1 Corinthians 15:47), whereas Christ is true God, who has taken to Himself our flesh, conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. This sanctification of human nature in Jesus Christ is reckoned as ours, through faith. Thus, the remainder of natural corruption which, even after regeneration, still dwells in us, cannot enter into our account (Romans 8:1-3). Our unworthiness is covered and swallowed up by the holiness of Jesus Christ, which is far more powerful to sanctify us before God than natural corruption is to pollute us.

Remedy against the second temptation: "Have we faith or not?" In a second temptation Satan will then answer that Jesus Christ did not die for all sinners, seeing that all will not be saved. Let us then have recourse to our faith, and reply to him that in truth, only believers will receive the fruit of this suffering and satisfaction of Jesus Christ. But, instead of disturbing us, this gives us assurance; for we know that we have faith (Romans 8:15; 1 Corinthians 2:12-16; 1 John 4:13). As we have said before, it is not enough to have a general and confused belief that Jesus Christ came to take away the sins of the world. But it is necessary that each apply to himself and appropriate to himself Jesus Christ through faith, so that each concludes in himself: I am in Jesus Christ through faith, that is why I cannot perish, and am sure of my salvation (Romans 8:1, Romans 8:38-39; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 1 John 5:19-20).

Thus, to confirm that we have repulsed Satan in the three preceding assaults of the first temptation, and in order to resist this second, it is necessary to know if we have this faith or not. The means is to return from the effects to the cause which produces them. Now, the effects which Jesus Christ produces in us, when we have taken hold of Him by faith, are two. In the first place, there is the testimony which the Holy Spirit gives to our spirit that we are children of God, and enables us to cry with assurance, "Abba, Father". (Romans 8:16; Galatians 4:6). In the second place, we must understand that when we apply to ourselves Jesus Christ by faith, this is not by some silly and vain fancy and imagining, but really and in fact, though spiritually (Romans 6:14; 1 John 1:6; 1 John 2:5; 1 John 3:7). In the same way as the soul produces its effects when it is naturally united to the body, so, when, by faith, Jesus Christ dwells in us in a spiritual manner, His power produces there and reveals there His graces. These are described in Scripture by the words 'regeneration' and 'sanctification', and they make us new creatures with regard to the qualities that we can have (John 3:3; Ephesians 4:21-24). This regeneration, that is to say, a new beginning and new creation, is divided into three parts. In the same way as the natural corruption, which holds our person captive, both soul and body, produces in us sins and death (Romans 7:13), so the power of Jesus Christ, flowing and entering into us with efficacy, as coming to take possession of us, produces in us three effects: the putting to death of sin, that is -to say, of this natural corruption which Scripture calls the 'old man', his burial, and, finally, the resurrection of the new man. St. Paul, in particular, describes these things at length (Romans 6:1-23, and almost everywhere else; cf. 1 Peter 4:1-2). The putting to death of the corruption, or of sin, is an effect of Jesus Christ in us. Little by little, He destroys this cursed corruption of our nature, so that it becomes less powerful to produce in us its effects: the motions, the consents and the other actions contrary to the will of God. The burying of the old man is an effect of the same Jesus Christ (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12; Colossians 3:3 - Colossians 3:4). By His power, the old man, who has received his deathblow, does not cease to be annihilated little by little. In short, in the same way as the burying of our body is a progression from death, so the burying of our old man is a progression and consequence of his being put to death. To this end the afflictions, with which the Lord visits us daily, greatly serve (2 Corinthians 4:16); He comes likewise with spiritual and physical trials which we must diligently make use of, to put to death more and more the rebellion of the flesh, which fights against the Spirit (1 Corinthians 9:27; Galatians 5:17). Finally, for believers, the first death is the completion of this putting to death and burying of sin, for it puts an end to the war of the flesh against the Spirit (Php 3:20-21). The resurrection of the new man, this man whose qualities and faculties are truly renewed, is the third effect of the same Jesus Christ living in us. Having put to death in our nature that which it had of corruption, He then gives to us a new power and remakes

us. Thus, our understanding and our judgement, illuminated by the pure grace of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:18), and governed by the new power which we draw from Jesus Christ (Romans 8:14), begin to understand and to approve that which, previously, was folly to them (1 Corinthians 2:14) and, abomination (Romans 8:7). And then, in the second place, the will is rectified to hate sin and embrace righteousness (Romans 6:6). Finally, all the faculties of the man begin to shun that which God has forbidden, and to follow all that he has commanded (Romans 7:22; Php 2:13).

These are therefore the two effects that Jesus Christ produces in us. If we experience them, the conclusion is infallible: we have faith, and, consequently, as we have said, we have in us Jesus Christ living eternally.

It is therefore evident that each believer must watch above all to maintain, by continual supplication, this aforementioned testimony which the Spirit of God gives to His own; he must also develop, by a continual exercise of good works to which his vocation calls him, the gift of regeneration which he has received (Romans 12:9-16). In this sense it is said that he who is born of God does not sin (1 John 5:18), that is to say, he does not addict himself to sin, but resists it more and more, so that he has correspondingly more assurance of his election and calling (2 Peter 1:10). Since to know this regeneration, it is necessary to come to its fruits. Thus, as I have said, the man, being freed from the bondage of sin, that is to say, from his natural corruption, begins, thanks to the power of Jesus Christ who dwells in Him, to produce the good fruits, which we call 'good works'. This is why we say, and with good reason, that the faith of which we speak can no more exist without good works than the sun without light or the fire without heat (1 John 2:9-10; James 2:14-17).

END OF ARTICLE

S. Jesus Christ the Son of God

Jesus Christ the Son of God

by Theodore Beza (1519-1605) The following article by Theodore Beza was taken from chapter three (sections 16-26) of his book *The Christian Faith*, translated into English by James Clark (Focus Christian Ministries Trust, East Essex England, 1992). This book was a "best seller" during the Protestant Reformation, and appeared in 1558 under the original title of *Confession De Foi Du Chretien*. The current modern edition contains no copyright notice, therefore it is assumed that the articles contained within it may be freely distributed. The electronic edition of this book was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. Original pagination has been retained for purposes of reference. The title for this on-line edition was taken from the chapter heading from which this section was extracted.

How God has turned the sin of man to His glory

There would remain nothing more for the whole world, except to go to its ruin (Romans 3:19). But God, being not only very righteous, but also very merciful, had according to His infinite wisdom, eternally established a way to turn all the evils to His great glory: to the greater manifestation of His infinite goodness (Romans 3:21-25), towards those whom He has chosen eternally so as to be glorified in their salvation (Romans 8:29; Romans 9:23). And, on the other side, He has turned the sin of man to the manifestation of His sovereign power and His wrath, by the just condemnation of the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction (Romans 9:22; Exodus 9:6). As St. Augustine well says; "If all were saved, the wages of sin demanded by justice would be hidden. If none were saved, no-one would see what grace bestows."

Jesus Christ is the sole Mediator chosen and promised by God This sole and unique way is the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God with all which flows from it. Bit by bit this was promised from Adam to John the Baptist, published and preached by the patriarchs and the prophets, and also typified in various ways under the Law (Genesis 3:15; Genesis 12:3; Genesis 18:18; Genesis 22:18; Deuteronomy 18:15-18; 2 Samuel 7:12; Romans 1:2-3 etc.) Thus, the Son is fully contained in the books of the Old Testament, so that the men of those times were saved by faith in Jesus Christ who was to come. The similarity and the difference between the Old and the New Testament

Therefore there has never been and there never shall be but one covenant of salvation between God and men (Hebrews 13:8; Romans 3:25; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 Corinthians 10:1-11; Ephesians 1:7-10; see the whole Epistle to the Hebrews). The substance of this covenant is Jesus Christ. But, having regard to the circumstances, there are two Testaments or 'Covenants'. We have the authentic titles and contents of them; which we call 'Holy Scripture' and the 'Word of God'. One is called 'Old' and the other 'New' (Jeremiah 31:31-32; Hebrews 8:6). The second is much better than the first, for the first did declare Jesus Christ, but from afar off, and hidden under the shadows and images which vanished at His coming; He Himself is the Sun of Righteousness (John

4:23-24).

Why it was necessary that Jesus Christ be true man in nature, in His body and in His soul, but without any sin

It was necessary that the Mediator of this covenant and this reconciliation be true man, but without any stain of original sin or any other, for the following reasons:

Firstly, since God is very righteous and man is the object of His wrath, because of natural corruption (1 Timothy 2:5; John 1:14; Romans 1:3; Galatians 4:4; Romans 8:2-4; 1 Corinthians 1:30), it was necessary in order to reconcile men with God, that there be a true man in whom the ruins caused by this corruption would be totally repaired.

Secondly, man is compelled to fulfil all the righteousness which God demands from him in order to be glorified (Matthew 3:15; Romans 5:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21). It was therefore necessary that there be a man who would perfectly fulfil all righteousness in order to please God.

Thirdly, all men are covered with an infinite number of sins, as much internal as external; that is why they are liable to the curse of God (Romans 3:23-26; Isaiah 53:11, etc). It was therefore necessary that there be a man who would fully satisfy the justice of God in order to pacify Him.

Finally, no corrupt man would have been able, in any way, to even begin to fulfil the least of these actions. He would first of all have had need of a Redeemer for himself (Romans 8:2; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:1-2). So much was necessary for himself before he could buy back the others, or could do anything pleasing or satisfying to God (Romans 14:23; Hebrews 11:6). It was therefore THE CHRISTIAN FAITH by THEODORE BEZA, page 11 necessary that the Mediator and Redeemer of men be true man in his body and in his soul, and that he be, nevertheless, entirely pure and free from all sin.

Why it was necessary that Jesus Christ be true God

It was necessary that this same Mediator be true God and not only man (John 1:14, etc); at the very least for the following reasons:

Firstly, if He was not true God, He would not be Saviour at all, but would himself have need of a Saviour (Isaiah 43:11; Hosea 13:4; Jeremiah 17:5-8).

Secondly, it is necessary, from the justice of God, that there be a relationship between the crime and its punishment. The crime is infinite, for it is committed against One whose majesty is infinite. Therefore there is here need of an infinite satisfaction; for the same reason, it was necessary that the One who would accomplish it as true man be also infinite, that is to say, true God.

Thirdly, the wrath of God being infinite, there was no human or angelic strength known which could bear such a weight without being crushed (John 14:10, John 14:12, John 14:31; John 16:32; 2 Corinthians 5:19). He who was to live again, after having conquered the devil, sin, the world and death united to the wrath of God, had to be therefore not only perfect man, but also true God.

Lastly, in order to better manifest this incomprehensible goodness, God did not wish that His grace should only equal our crime; He willed that where sin abounds, grace superabounds (Romans 5:15-21). For this reason, while he was created in the image of God, the first Adam, author of our

sin, was earthly, as his 'frailty showed well (1 Corinthians 15:45-47). Jesus Christ, on the contrary, the second Adam, through whom we are saved, while being true and perfect man, is nevertheless the Lord come from Heaven, that is to say, the true God. For, in essence, all the fullness of divinity dwells in Him (Colossians 2:9). If the disobedience of Adam made us fall, the righteousness of Jesus Christ gives us more security than we had previously. We hope for life procured by Jesus Christ, better than that which we lost in Adam; even more so as Jesus Christ surpasses Adam.

How the mystery of our salvation has been accomplished in Jesus Christ

Therefore we confess that, in order to fulfil the covenant promised to the ancient fathers and predicted by the mouth of the prophets (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:31, Luke 1:35, Luke 1:55, Luke 1:70) the true, unique and eternal Son of God the Father (Romans 1:3; John 17:5; John 16:28; Php 2:6-7) took, at the time appointed by the Father, the form of a servant. Being conceived in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and without any operation of man (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:28, Luke 1:35), He took human nature with all its infirmities, sin excepted (Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 5:2).

Luke 3:22 The two natures, that of God and that of man, have been united in one Person since the moment of the conception of the flesh of Christ

We confess that, from the moment of this conception, the Person of the Son has been inseparably united to the human nature (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:31-32, Luke 1:35, Luke 1:42-43). There are not two Sons of God, or two Jesus Christs: but One alone is properly Son of God, Jesus Christ. At all times the properties of each of the two natures remain entire and distinct. For the divinity separated from the humanity, or the humanity disjoined from the divinity, or the one being confounded with the other, would profit us nothing.

Jesus Christ is therefore true God and true man (Matthew 1:21-23, Luke 1:35). He has a true human soul, and a true human body formed from the substance of the virgin Mary, and by the power of the Holy Spirit. By this means, he was conceived and born of this virgin Mary, virgin, I say, before and after the birth. And all this was accomplished for our redemption.

Summary of the accomplishment of our salvation in Jesus Christ

He therefore descended to earth to draw us up to Heaven. (Eph. 2:6). From the moment of His conception until His resurrection, He bore the punishment of our sins in order to unburden us of them (Matthew 11:28; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18; Isaiah 53:11). He perfectly fulfilled all righteousness so as to cover our unrighteousness (Romans 5:19; Matthew 3:15). He has revealed to us the whole will of God His Father, by His words and by the example of His life, so as to show us the true way of salvation (John 15:15; Acts 1:1-2).

Finally, to crown the satisfaction for our sins which He took upon Himself (Isaiah 53:4-5), He was captured in order to release us, condemned so that we might be acquitted. He suffered infinite reproach in order to place us beyond all shame. He was nailed to the cross for our sins to be nailed there (Colossians 2:14). He died bearing the curse which we deserved, so as to appease for ever the wrath of God through the accomplishment of His unique sacrifice (Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 10:10, Hebrews 10:14). He was entombed to show the truth of His death, and to vanquish death even in its own house, that is to say even in the grave; He

experienced no corruption there, to show that, even while dead, he had conquered death (Acts 2:31). He was raised again victorious so that, all our corruption being dead and buried, we might be renewed in new, spiritual and eternal life (Romans 6:1-23; and nearly everywhere in St. Paul). By this means, the first death is no longer to us a punishment for sin and an entrance into the second death, but, on the contrary, is the ending of our corruption and an entrance into life eternal. Lastly, being raised again and then having spoken throughout forty days here below to give evidence of His resurrection (Acts 1:3, Acts 1:9-11), He ascended visibly and really far above all heavens, where He sat down at the right hand of God His Father (John 14:2). Having taken possession for us of His eternal kingdom, He is, for us also, the sole Mediator and Advocate (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 9:24), and governs His Church by His Holy Spirit, until the number of the elect of God, His Father, is completed (Matthew 28:20, etc).

How Jesus Christ, having withdrawn into heaven, is nevertheless here below with His own

We understand that glorification brought immortality to the body of Jesus Christ, besides sovereign glory; but this did by no means change the nature of His true body, a body confined to one certain space and having bounds (Luke 24:39; John 20:25; Acts 1:3). For this reason, He took away into Heaven, from our midst, His human nature, His true body (Acts 1:9-11; Acts 3:21). There He shall remain until He comes to judge the living and the dead.

But, with regard to the efficacy of His Holy Spirit, as to His Divinity, (by which we are made partakers not only of half of Christ, but of all of Him and all His goods, as will be said soon), we acknowledge that He is and shall be with His own until the end of the world (Matthew 28:20; John 16:13; Ephesians 4:8). This is what Jesus Christ said regarding Himself-, "The poor you will have always with you, but Me you will not have always." (Matthew 26:11); again, after His Ascension, the angels say to the Apostles: "Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven shall so come as you saw Him go away into Heaven." (Acts 1:11). And St Peter says to the Jews that Heaven must hold Him until the time of the restoration of all things. (Acts 3:21). For the same reason, St Augustine, following Scripture, has well said that it is necessary to guard oneself from stressing the Divinity to the point of coming to deny the truth of the body; the body is in God, but it is not necessary to draw the conclusion that it is everywhere, as God is everywhere.

There can be no other true religion In this mystery of our redemption, incomprehensible to human reason, God has revealed Himself as true God, that is to say, perfectly just and perfectly merciful.

Perfectly just, firstly, for He has punished all our sins with full severity (Romans 3:25; 2 Corinthians 5:21), in the Person of Him who made Himself surety and security in our place, that is to say, in Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:6; 1 Peter 2:24). In the next place, He receives us and acknowledges us as His if we are covered and clothed with the innocence, sanctification and perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:19; Colossians 2:14). On the other side, He has revealed Himself as perfectly merciful, for, finding in us only ground for damnation, He willed that His Son take our nature in order to find in Him the remedy which would appease His justice (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 1:30). Freely communicating Him to us, with all the treasures which He possesses (Romans 8:32), He makes us partakers of eternal life, solely by His goodness and mercy, on condition that we take hold of Jesus Christ by faith; which we will develop a little later.

But, on the contrary, any religion which opposes to the wrath of God anything other than the sole innocence, righteousness and satisfaction of Jesus Christ, received by faith, strips God of His perfect justice and His mercy. For this reason, such a religion (eg. Romanism) must be regarded as false and deceptive. This article was made available on the internet via REFORMATION INK (www.markers.com/ink). Refer any correspondence to Shane Rosenthal: Rosenthal2000@aol.com

S. Supralapsarianism: The Fall of Man Was Both Necessary and Wonderful

Theodore Beza: Supralapsarianism: The Fall of Man Was Both Necessary and Wonderful from *Quæstionum Et Responsionum Christianarum Libellus*

(1570) Questions 190-194 Q190. Can God be thought to will anything which he does not approve, and thus that which is evil?

BEZA: Truly, it must be confessed, that whatever God decreed, it is ordained altogether willingly, but here also shines forth His infinite wisdom, that with Him even the darkness has a bit of light, yet in such a way that it is and remains darkness, that is, it is good also that there should be evil; for God found the method whereby it might happen, that what is and remains evil by its own nature, might still have a bit of good before Him, and (as Augustine rightly and elegantly said) it may not happen except by His will, that is, apart from His decree, and yet be against his will, that is, what is by its own nature unrighteous, and therefore does not please God. For example, that God saved His own by the gracious redemption of His own Son Christ, is to His own exceedingly great glory, which otherwise [if men had not sinned] would not have shone forth. But man would not have required redemption from sin and death, unless sin and death existed. Therefore, in respect to the ordinance of God, it was good that sin and death enter into the world; and yet this sin is and remains sin so much by its own nature, that it could not be expiated for except by a very terrible penalty. Again, we receive far more in Christ than we lost in Adam. Therefore, it was best and most useful for us that Adam fell, in respect to God, who prepares a kingdom of eternal glory for us by this wonderful means. And nevertheless, this Fall is so evil by its own nature, that even those who are justified and believe, experience many miseries and calamities from it, even to death. Also, this is the great glory of God, that He shows Himself to be a most severe punisher of sin. But if sin had not existed, no opening would be made for this judgement. Therefore, it was good, in respect to the ordinance of God, that sin exist, and afterwards be spread abroad, which is damned in the demons and all those who are outside of Christ, with eternal punishment. Likewise, this also is the will of God (Peter said), that is, His decree, that all who do right, are affected by evils. But he who does well, is not able to be hurt apart from sin. It is good therefore, in respect to God's will (that is, His ordinance) that there be persecutors of the church, whom, notwithstanding, He most severely punishes, justly, as sinners against His will, that is, against that which He approves of them doing. Therefore, by the express words of the apostles, that which is against God's will or decree (that is, against that which He approves and commands), does not come to pass; on the other hand, it cannot be said that God is contrary to Himself, or that he wills iniquity, as Augustine rightly concluded from the Word of God against Julian.

Q191. Therefore, it seems right that permission be distinguished from will.

BEZA: What should be the thought concerning this distinction I addressed a little before. Certainly, if permission is set against will, that is decree, this opposition is not only false, but is also foolish

and ridiculous. Even if in those actions which are not of free choice in and of themselves, as when merchants who are in danger throw their goods overboard, and generally as often as men choose the lesser evil to avoid the greater inconvenience, even profane men know that free-will has dominion. But if you set permission against will, that is, to that which God wants, as pleasing and acceptable to Him and of itself, and by its own nature; so that that which is good in and of itself is matched with that which is good by chance, and like as from the immense wisdom of God the darkness all serves the purpose of light, it has some measure of good (clearly, not by its own nature, but in respect to its end to which it is guided by God), then I would admit it; only this should be added, that this permission is not vain and idle, as some sleep, but very active and powerful, and yet most righteous permission, which can best be understood in a few words. I don't think that you would say that a judge is a certain idle spectator, when he hands criminals over to the executioner after hearing his case to receive this or that kind of punishment. For the executioner doesn't put him to death so much as he is the instrument of the judge who puts him to death. So if anything happens cruelly from the sentence of the judge, it is attributed, not so much to the executioner who executes, as to the judge who commands.

Q192. I concede all these things. But how many dissimilarities are there between these illustrations and the things which we are discussing?

BEZA: I confess. For otherwise there is no, or at least very little between a like thing and a same thing. Nevertheless, I wish that the chief points be brought up by you, so I can respond to them individually.

Q193. In the sentencing of judges, a trial goes before; but in these things concerning which you entreat, often nothing of this trial is observed.

BEZA: How many things are done rightly by the magistrates of this world, whose trial does not appear to the subjects? And do you attribute less to God, who searches thoroughly all things past and future lying hid in the depth of the hearts of men?

Q194. The executioner does nothing except from sentences received. But where have evil men received any such command as to kill one another, or to harm good men?

BEZA: In this you are deceived, that whatever God decreed, you think he gives knowledge of it with some loud voice, to those whose works He has decreed to use. However, experience has shown this is not always true in either case, that is, whether He has decided to use mercy, or to use justice, not even when He uses knowing instruments. For who would doubt that Pharaoh was ordained by God to receive Joseph and to prepare a hospitable place for the church? Yet he himself outwardly received no mandate concerning this, no, nor even thought of any such thing in himself. Yet this was decreed by God, and the quiet motion of Pharaoh's heart tended to the executing of that which the Lord decreed. The prophets predicted a thousand times that the Chaldeans [Babylonians] were ordained to punish the evil Israelites, and to nurture the good; and in the same way, as if Nebuchadnezzar had received an express mandate concerning this, so the Lord did not expressly command any such thing to the Chaldeans, but, as Ezekiel wrote, the heart of the king, partly given to Satan and his seers, and partly to his own desires, willingly inclined him to accomplish that which God had determined. How much more must the same be believed, as often as the Lord uses the things which lack reason [animals], or even that which is utterly without

life, as His executioners. For in this way He called flies, frogs, locusts, grasshoppers, hail, and death to punish Pharaoh; so also the wisest of all men said, that even lots themselves do not fall by chance. For by a secret motion all things serve the executing of the decrees of God. But there is this difference, that good instruments do nothing except by faith, that is, upon assurance that they are called to do that which they do, and with a mind fixed to obey. But as for the evil instruments, sin they are led with a blind force by Satan and their own lusts, and have not the least consideration for obedience to God, with whose express word they know, or ought to know, that their counsels strive. Therefore, they do not serve the Lord, although God secretly uses the work of them, even the unwilling, so that they do nothing else, than that which He Himself, the wonderful worker, has decreed.

S. The Two Parts of the Word of God: Law & Gospel

The Two Parts of the Word of God: Law & Gospel by Theodore Beza (1519-1605) The following article by Theodore Beza was taken from chapter four (sections 22-30) of his book *The Christian Faith*, translated into English by James Clark (Focus Christian Ministries Trust, East Essex England, 1992). This book was a "best seller" during the Protestant Reformation, and appeared in 1558 under the original title of *Confession De Foi Du Chretien*. The current modern edition contains no copyright notice, therefore it is assumed that the articles contained within it may be freely distributed. The electronic edition of this book was scanned and edited by Shane Rosenthal for Reformation Ink. Original pagination has been retained for purposes of reference. Original title appears below. That which we call *The Word of God: Its two parts -- the Law and the Gospel* On this subject we call the "Word of God" (for we know well that the Eternal Son of God is also so named) the canonical books of the Old and New Testament; for they proceed from the mouth of God Himself.

We divide this Word into two principal parts or kinds: the one is called the "Law", the other the "Gospel". For, all the rest can be gathered under the one or the other of these two headings.

What we call Law (when it is distinguished from Gospel and is taken for one of the two parts of the Word) is a doctrine whose seed is written by nature in our hearts. However, so that we may have a more exact knowledge, it was written by God on two Tables and is briefly comprehended in ten commandments. In these He sets out for us the obedience and perfect righteousness which we owe to His majesty and our neighbours. This on contrasting terms: either perpetual life, if we perfectly keep the Law without omitting a single point, or eternal death, if we do not completely fulfil the contents of each commandment (Deuteronomy 30:15-20; James 2:10).

What we call the Gospel ("Good News") is a doctrine which is not at all in us by nature, but which is revealed from Heaven (Matthew 16:17; John 1:13), and totally surpasses natural knowledge. By it God testifies to us that it is His purpose to save us freely by His only Son (Romans 3:20-22), provided that, by faith, we embrace Him as our only wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30). By it, I say, the Lord testifies to us all these things, and even does it in such a manner that at the same time he renews our persons in a powerful way so that we may embrace the benefits which are offered to us (1 Corinthians 2:4). The similarities and the differences between the Law and the Gospel

We must pay great attention to these things. For, with good reason, we can say that ignorance of this distinction between Law and Gospel is one of the principle sources of the abuses which corrupted and still corrupt Christianity. The majority of men, blinded by the just judgement of God, have indeed never seriously considered what curse the Law subjects us to, nor why it has been ordained by God. And, as for the Gospel, they have nearly always thought that it was nothing other than a second Law, more perfect than the first. From this has come the erroneous distinction between precept and advice; there has followed, little by little, the total ruin of the benefit of Jesus Christ.

Now, we must besides consider these things. The Law and the Gospel have in common that they are both from the one true God, always consistent with Himself (Hebrews 1:1-2). We must not therefore think that the Gospel abolishes the essence of the Law. On the contrary, the Law establishes the essence of the Gospel (Romans 10:2-4); this is what we shall explain a little further on. For both set before us the same God and the essence of the same righteousness (Romans 3:31), which resides in perfect love to God and our neighbour. But there is a great difference in these points which we shall touch on, and especially concerning the means of obtaining this righteousness.

For, in the first place, as we alluded to before, the Law is natural to man. God has engraven it in his heart from creation (Romans 1:32; Romans 2:14-15). When, a long time afterwards, God made and exhibited the two Tables of the Law, this was not to make a new law, but only to restore our first knowledge of the natural law which, because of the corruption of sin, was little by little becoming obliterated from the heart of man (Romans 7:8-9). But the gospel is a supernatural doctrine which our nature would never have been able to imagine nor able to approve without a special grace of God (1 Corinthians 1:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14). But, the Lord has revealed it, firstly to Adam shortly after his sin, as Moses declares (Genesis 3:15), afterwards to the patriarchs and the prophets in increasing degrees as seemed good to Him (Romans 1:2; Luke 1:55, Luke 1:70), until the day in which He manifested Jesus Christ in Person. It is He who has clearly announced and accomplished all that is contained in the Gospel (John 15:15; John 6:38). This Gospel God still reveals today and will reveal it until the end of the world by the preaching instituted in His Church (John 17:18; Matthew 28:20; 2 Corinthians 5:20). In the second place, the Law lays bare to us the majesty and justice of God (Hebrews 12:18-21). The Gospel sets forth this same justice to us, but there it is pacified and satisfied by the mercy manifested in Christ (Hebrews 12:22-24). In the third place, the Law sends us to ourselves in order to accomplish the righteousness which it commands us, that is to say, the perfect obedience to its commandments, which is necessary in order to escape guilt. That is why it shows us our curse and subjects us to it, as the Apostle declares (Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:10-12). But the gospel teaches us where we shall find what we do not have and, having found it, how we shall be able to enjoy it. That is why it delivers us from the curse of the Law (Romans 3:21-22; Galatians 3:13-14). In conclusion, the Law pronounces us blessed when we accomplish it without omitting anything; the Gospel promises us salvation when we believe, that is to say, when, by faith, we take hold of Jesus Christ who has everything which we lack, and still more that we need. Now, these two terms -- to do what the Law commands, or to believe what God offers us in Jesus Christ -- are two things which are not only very difficult but totally impossible to our corrupt nature. This latter, as St Paul says, cannot even perceive what is of God (2 Corinthians 3:5; Php 1:29). That is why it is necessary to add a fourth difference between the Law and the Gospel.

Thus, the fourth difference between the Law and the Gospel is that the Law, by itself, can only show us, and make us see, our evil more exceedingly, and aggravate our condemnation; not through any fault of its own (for it is good and holy), but because our corrupt nature burns for sin the more it is reprov'd and threatened, as St. Paul has declared through his own example (Romans 7:7-14). But the Gospel not only shows us the remedy against the curse of the law, but it is at the same time accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit who regenerates us and changes us (as we have said above); for He creates in us the instrument and sole means of applying to us

this remedy (Acts 26:17-18). In order to speak even more clearly, let us expound these words "letter" and "spirit" which some have taken in the wrong sense. I say, therefore, that the Gospel is not "letter", that is to say, only a dead doctrine which sets before us in their bareness and simplicity (I do not say those things which it is fitting for us to do -- for that is the office of the Law) the things which it is necessary for us to believe: that salvation is promised freely in Jesus Christ to those who believe; but it is "spirit", that is to say, a powerful means full of efficacy from the Holy Spirit, and He uses it to create in us the power to believe the things which He teaches us, that is to say, to embrace free salvation in Jesus Christ. It is thus that the Law itself, which kills us and damns us in ourselves, justifies us and saves us in Jesus Christ, taken hold of by faith (Romans 3:31). This is the reason why I have said that the Law and the Gospel are not contrary in that which concerns the essence of the righteousness with which we must be clothed in order to be accepted before God and to participate in eternal life; but they are contrary with regard to the means of having this righteousness. For the Law justly seeks in us this righteousness; it has no regard to what we can do but to what we ought to do (Galatians 3:12). Man, indeed, by his own fault alone, has made himself unable to pay; nevertheless, he does not cease to be a debtor even if he is unable to pay. And consequently, the Law does us no wrong in demanding from us that which we owe, although we cannot pay it. But the Gospel, softening this righteous rigour as with the honey of God's mercy, teaches us to pay by Him who has made Himself our Surety, who has put Himself, I say, in our place and paid our debt, as principal debtor, and to the last farthing (Colossians 2:13-14). So that the rigour of the Law which made us tremble in ourselves and struck us down completely, now confirms us and accepts us in Jesus Christ. For, since eternal life is due to those who have obeyed the Law perfectly, and Jesus Christ has fulfilled all righteousness in the name of those who should believe in Him and take hold of Him by faith (1 Corinthians 1:30; Php 3:9), it follows that, even according to the rigour of the Law, salvation cannot fail those who, by faith, have become united and incorporated with Jesus Christ. For what ends the Holy Spirit uses the preaching of the Law

Having carefully understood this distinction of the two parts of the Word of God, the Law and the Gospel, it is easy to understand how and to what end the Holy Spirit uses the preaching of the one and the other in the Church. For there is no doubt that He employs them for the purpose for which they have been established.

We are then all so blind, whilst our corruption reigns in us, that we are ignorant even of our ignorance (John 9:41) and, not ceasing to smother the little light of knowledge which has been left to us so as to render ourselves inexcusable (Romans 1:20-21; Romans 2:1), we are pleased about that which ought to displease us most. It is necessary, before all things, that God, all good and full of pity, makes us know clearly the cursed pit in which we are. He could do it no better than by informing us, by the declaration of His Law, what we ought necessarily to be. Thus, blackness can never be better known than in being placed beside white (Romans 3:20; Romans 7:13). This is why God begins with the preaching of the Law. In it alone we can see what we ought to be; and yet we cannot fulfil a single point of it. In it alone, we can see how near we are to our damnation, unless there comes to us some very strong and sure remedy. And indeed, the stupidity which has reigned in the world at an times and reigns now more than ever, shows clearly how necessary it is that God begins at this point in order to draw us to Himself: by making us know what great and certain danger those are in who think least of it. The fact is, the Law was not given to justify us (for

if this were so, Jesus Christ would have died in vain, as St. Paul says; Galatians 2:21; Galatians 3:18-21), but, on the contrary, to condemn us, and to show us the hell which is opened wide to swallow us, to annihilate and totally abase our pride, in making the multitude of our sins pass before our eyes and showing us the wrath of God which is revealed from Heaven against us (Romans 1:18; Romans 4:15; Galatians 3:10, Galatians 3:12). However, for a long time men have been blind and senseless. Not only do they seek their salvation in that which condemns them wholly or in part, that is to say, in their works, instead of running to Jesus Christ by faith, the only remedy against all that they can be justly accused of before God; but, what is more, they do not cease to add law upon law to their conscience, that is to say, condemnation upon condemnation, as if the Law of God did not condemn them enough (Galatians 4:9-10; Galatians 5:1; Colossians 2:8, Colossians 2:16-23). It is like a prisoner to whom the prison door would be opened, but who, turning away from a freedom which he does not understand, goes away and voluntarily locks himself in a prison which is even more secure.

There then is the first use of the preaching of the Law; to make known our innumerable faults so that in ourselves we begin to be miserable and greatly humble ourselves; in short, to beget in us the first degree of repentance which is called 'contrition of heart'; this produces a full and open confession toward the Lord. For he who does not know that he is sick will never come to the physician. 'Mere are none more unfit to receive the light of salvation than those who think they see clearly by themselves, through lack of understanding how thick is the darkness in which they are born; so great that they must come out of it. On the contrary, they have always made it thicker from then on, and have not ceased to rush on willingly in it (John 9:41). The other part of the Word of God called "Gospel": Its authority, why, how and for what end it was written

After the Law comes the Gospel, the use and necessity of which cannot be better understood than by noting the following points:

Firstly, even as there is only one Saviour (Matthew 1:21; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5), there is also only one doctrine of salvation which is called Gospel, that is to say, Good News (Romans 1:16). It was fully announced and declared to the world by Jesus Christ (John 15:15) and the Apostles (John 17:8; 2 Corinthians 5:19-20), and faithfully recorded by the Evangelists (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 1:25) so as to prevent the wiles and craftiness of Satan who, without this, would have more easily put forward to men his dreams under the name of the gospel; however, he has not entirely failed to do so, by the just vengeance of God who has been provoked to anger against the men who, in their accustomed manner, have always preferred darkness to light. And when we say that the Apostles and Evangelists have faithfully recorded all the doctrine of the Gospel, we understand three points:

1. They have truly added nothing of their own as far as the substance of the doctrine is concerned (Colossians 1:28; 2 Timothy 3:16-17), but they have obeyed with precision and simplicity what the Lord had said to them: "Go, preach all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20); and St. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, confesses that he does so (1 Corinthians 11:23).

2. They have omitted nothing of that which is necessary to salvation. For, otherwise, they would have been disloyal to their commission which is not possible. And we see also St. Paul (Acts 20:27; Galatians 1:9) and St. Peter (1 Peter 1:25) testify how conscientious they have been and how particular in this area (John 15:15; John 16:13). That is why St. Jerome, writing on this

subject, says, Chatter and babbling must not be believed without the authority of Holy Scripture." And St. Augustine says even more clearly, "It is true that the Lord Jesus did many things which have not all been written down; for the Evangelist himself testifies that Jesus Christ said and did much that has not been written down. But God has chosen to have written down those things which are sufficient for the salvation of those who believe. (John 20:30-31)

3. What they have written, is written in such a way that the most uncultured and most ignorant in the world, if it is only held out to them, can learn there what is necessary for their salvation (1 Corinthians 1:26-27). For otherwise, why would the Gospel have been put in written form in a language which everyone was then able to understand (1 Corinthians 14:6-40), and even in the most familiar and popular manner of speaking which it had been possible to choose (1 Corinthians 2:1). That is why St. Paul said that if the Gospel was hidden, it was hidden to those who were perishing and whose mind the god of this world had blinded, that is to say, the unbelievers (2 Corinthians 4:3). And, indeed, the experience of all times has shown that God has not called the most wise and most learned, but, on the contrary, mostly of the most ignorant of the world (Isaiah 29:14; Luke 10:21; 1 Corinthians 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 3:18); so far from the truth is it, that He wished to hide or cover His doctrine so that it should be understood by no-one.

We draw, then, two conclusions from this discourse which are very useful to what we are discussing: The first is, that it is not necessary to reckon as Gospel anything which men have added to the Word of God written, that is to say, the doctrine contained in the books of the Old and New Testament; but that all additions are merely superstitions and a corruption of the only true Gospel of our Lord (Matthew 15:9); St. Paul, has also spoken of this (Galatians 1:8-9; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). And St. Jerome wrote on this subject, "What is said without the authority of Holy Scripture is also easily set aside, as has been said." The second conclusion is that those who say that it only belongs to certain persons to read Scripture, and who, for this reason, do not want it to be translated into the common language, for fear that simple women and other people may read it (Romans 1:14; Galatians 3:28; Matthew 11:28), are the true antichrists, and instruments of Satan (Matthew 23:13); they are afraid that their abuses be discovered by the coming of the light. The manner in which the Gospel includes, in substance, the books of the Old Testament

Moreover, by this word Gospel we are far from meaning what is commonly called such, i.e., certain extracts which are disconnected without reason, neither discourses from the books of the four Evangelists or from the Epistles of St. Paul. On the contrary, we understand under this word Gospel, not only all of the New Testament but also all that has been promised or predicted in the Old Testament on the subject of Jesus Christ (Acts 26:22-23; 3 John 1:5; Romans 1:2).

For, as we have already said, the Gospel is the only means by which from the beginning of the world, God has always saved His elect (Hebrews 13:8; Acts 4:12). That is why, as Moses declares (Genesis 3:15), God began to announce it to the world from the sin of Adam, although it was manifested and preached clearly, a long time afterwards, by Jesus Christ Himself in Person, and by His Apostles (Romans 1:1-6; Romans 16:25-26).

Thus, to summarize, we call Gospel the Good News which, from the beginning, and by His grace and mercy alone, God has announced to His Church: those who, by faith, embrace Jesus Christ shall partake of eternal life in Him (Romans 3:21-22; John 6:40).

How what we say about the authority of the written Word must be understood: Why it is necessary that it be translated into all languages. When we say that the Gospel, written and recorded in the manner which God has given us, is the sole ordinary means which God uses to save men (that is why this Word is called The Word of Life and of reconciliation; John 6:68; Acts 5:20; Php 2:16); we do not stop at the syllables, nor at the paper and ink, nor at a Gospel hung by the neck, or pronounced only as the charmers pronounce their charms, nor at a well patterned book, or worshipped with incense or other fineries. Let us never displease God by approving such sorceries and sacrileges.

But, in the first place, we close the door to all these fantastic notions which the Devil has made use of, in all times, to corrupt men. And then, we hear the Gospel well and duly preached and expounded, so as to better understand the substance of it (Romans 10:8; 1 Peter 1:25), to put it in the heart where, by faith, it can produce the fruits of true repentance (Matthew 13:23; Acts 16:14). The Apostles show this clearly. When Jesus Christ sent them out, He did not say to them, "Go, read the Gospel in an unknown tongue, and worship the book in which it is written." but He said to them, "Go and preach the Gospel to every creature." (Matthew 28:19). I leave aside the remonstrances that St. Paul makes to the Corinthians when he speaks of the abuse that those committed in taking pleasure in hearing foreign languages ring out in the Church of God, without any prophet to explain what was said (1 Corinthians 14:1-40). But how shall anyone believe without having heard, seeing that faith comes from what is heard, as St. Paul says (Romans 10:17)? And how shall anyone hear it when, far from being duly expounded, it is chanted in an unknown language (1 Corinthians 14:9, 1 Corinthians 14:16-28)? How also shall anyone be established in the holy and true doctrine, comforted amid so many and various temptations, warned to resist false doctrines (Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16), without meditating night and day in the Word of God (Psalms 1:2), and examining carefully the passages of Holy Scripture (Acts 17:11; John 5:39). Thus has it always been done in the Church, until the Devil, through the just punishment of God, removed this light to bring in his darkness, without anyone perceiving it. St. Peter is a witness for this, when writing to all believers, he commends the diligence with which they should take heed to hear the word of the prophets (2 Peter 1:19-20). For he knew that the word which the Lord had said to him, "Feed my sheep." (John 21:15-17), must be heard from the preaching of the Word of Life. St. Paul, also, expounded the same thing and practised it (Acts 20:27-28).

However, we do not say that it is permitted to everyone to be a teacher in the Church, and to expound the Holy Scriptures; for this office belongs, as we shall soon say more fully, to those who are called and lawfully ordained to do it (Romans 10:15). But we say that everyone must read the Scriptures, and have the knowledge of them to confirm what has been expounded well in the Church, and to reject the false doctrine of false pastors. We say that the reading of the Holy Scriptures, -- adding what is necessary, i.e. the pure preaching and exposition of them: it is for this that teachers and pastors are ordained in the Church (1 Corinthians 4:2; 2 Corinthians 5:19-20), and not to re-sacrifice Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:18) or to howl in a language unknown to the people (1 Corinthians 14:28) --, is far from committing heresy; on the contrary, there is no other means of extirpating heresies (2 Timothy 3:15-17). And whoever prevents the reading of the Scriptures takes away, at the same time, from the poor people the only means of consolation (Romans 15:4) and salvation (Luke 1:77; Acts 13:26; Ephesians 1:13).

How the Holy Spirit uses the external preaching of the gospel to create faith in the heart of the elect, and to harden the reprobate In the same way as the external preaching of the Gospel is an odour of death for the rebels who harden themselves, so is it an odour of life for the children of God (2 Corinthians 2:15-16). Not that this force and power to save resides in the sound of the word, or that it comes from the energy of him who preaches (1 Corinthians 3:7-8). But the Holy Spirit, whose office we are describing, uses this external preaching as a pipe or channel; He comes then to pierce to the depth of the soul, as the apostle says (Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:23), so as to give by His grace and goodness alone, understanding to the children of God that they may be able to perceive and comprehend this high mystery of their salvation through Jesus Christ (Acts 16:14; Ephesians 1:18-19). Then, He also corrects their judgement so that they approve, with wisdom from God, what sense and reason used to think was folly (1 Corinthians 2:6-16). Moreover he corrects and changes their will so that, with ardent affection, they embrace and receive the sole remedy which is offered in Jesus Christ (Php 1:29; Acts 13:48) against the despair into which, without this, the preaching of the Law would necessarily bring them (Ephesians 2:1, Ephesians 2:4-5). This then is how the Holy Spirit, by the preaching of the Gospel, heals the wound which the preaching of the Law has uncovered and made worse (Romans 6:14). This, I say, is how the Holy Spirit, by the preaching of the Gospel, creates in us the gift of faith which comes, at the same time, to take hold of an that is necessary for salvation in Jesus Christ; this is what we have shown above. The other fruit of the preaching of the law, once the preaching of the gospel has effectually done its work

Among the effects that Jesus Christ produces when He dwells in us, we have shown, and this is not the least, that He creates in us a pure heart (Psalms 51:10) to know (Jeremiah 24:7), to will and to do what is of God (Php 2:13); previously we were slaves in sin (Romans 6:22), enemies of God (Ephesians 2:12), incapable even of thinking anything good (2 Corinthians 3:5).

Thus, when our disposition has been changed, the preaching of the Law begins also to change its effect in us, such that instead of terrifying us, it consoles us (1 John 2:17; 2 Peter 1:10-11); instead of showing us how near our damnation is, it serves us as a guide to teach us the good works (Jeremiah 31:33; Romans 7:22) in which God has purposed we shall walk (Ephesians 2:10); finally, instead of being an unpleasant and unbearable yoke, it becomes pleasant and light to us (Matthew 11:30). There remains with us only one regret: that of not being able to obey it perfectly, as we wish to do, on account of the remnant of our corruption which battles against the Spirit (Romans 7:22-23). But all this regret does not drive us to despair, but rather drives us to pray ardently to our Father who strengthens us more and more (Romans 8:23-26). Faith, which is the testimony of the Spirit of God crying in our hearts (Romans 8:15), indeed assures us that the curse of the Law has been blotted out by the blood of Jesus Christ to whom it unites us (Romans 8:1); moreover, the same faith also assures us that the Spirit shall conquer, however long He tarries (Romans 6:14), and even death shall be the means of our victory (John 5:24; 1 Corinthians 15:26, 1 Corinthians 15:54; Hebrews 2:14). Thus is brought to completion in us, by degrees, the remainder of true repentance, which comes from true conversion; it begins with contrition, or feeling of sin, and progresses by amendment of all that is in the man, visible and invisible (1 Thessalonians 5:23). That is also why we conclude that this leads every true penitent to confess his fault before him whom it concerns, that is to say, before those who have been offended, and even before the whole assembly of the Church, if that is necessary. This confession must be

accompanied, according to the measure in which this is possible, with restitution and satisfaction towards one's neighbour, for, without this, repentance can only be feigned and counterfeit. Thus, it is easy to see that we do not reject, but, on the contrary, require as necessary to salvation the true confession which has been ordained of God. Nevertheless, we have no desire to torment consciences by auricular confession (as it is called), which men have invented, in place of true confession and repentance, nor to establish towards God any other satisfaction than the sole satisfaction of Jesus Christ. The second means which the Holy Spirit uses to enable us to enjoy Jesus Christ, and why the Lord has never been content solely with the preaching of His word.

We have said that the Sacraments are the other means, the other instrument by which the Holy Spirit applies to us all that is necessary for our salvation. But, since by this word is generally understood all the signs by which any sacred and spiritual thing is declared to us, it is necessary, first of an, to limit the meaning of the word.

Therefore, we must understand that our God, who is perfectly merciful, in using our very poor and miserable nature as a means to better manifest His goodness and long suffering, has not been content to simply make known to us and to show us, as it were from a distance, the means by which it has pleased Him to save us. Nevertheless, even in this, He uses incomprehensible gentleness and compassion in informing us of His will through men similar to ourselves (Deuteronomy 18:15; Php 2:7; 2 Corinthians 5:19-20), and, what is more, stammers, so to speak, with us as nurses do with their little children (1 'Mess 2:7). But, in addition, to crown His infinite goodness, He has willed to add to the preaching of His Word certain actions which are designed to compel the most uneducated and stubborn in the world to believe more and more that God is not mocking them in offering them eternal life by this most wondrous means -- the death of His own Son. Thus, by such signs and actions, all their senses are driven to consent to the doctrine of the Gospel, as if they were already fully enjoying the salvation which is promised to them. In the same way, we see (if it is proper to make a comparison between affairs in the world and the incomprehensible goodness of God) that, when judicially the possession or ownership of something is awarded to us, certain ceremonies and actions will be used in the act of taking possession or in the execution of a warrant, to assure us and to testify to others that such and such belongs to us. Even in our civil affairs, although a lawyer has signed a contract and appended the name of the witnesses, in addition to all this, the seal of the office where the contract was drawn up will be affixed, so as to render the contract more valid and authentic (Romans 4:11).

Thus, from the beginning, our Lord God was not content with announcing to Adam the grace by which He had purposed to save His Church through His Son; He willed to add thereto sacrifices, as living figures of the future sacrifice of Jesus Christ, to strengthen the faith of the children of God in the redemption which they were awaiting (Hebrews 11:4). Then afterwards, renewing this covenant of grace and of mercy to Abraham, He added thereto the Sacrament of circumcision (Genesis 17:10-11). Finally, at the time of Moses, He added thereto the Sacrament of the Passover Lamb and many other ceremonies (Exodus 12:1-51); these were Sacraments representing to them what Jesus Christ would accomplish in His time, that is to say, all the mystery of their salvation: the Apostle declares this amply in the Epistle to the Hebrews. But when the time appointed by God arrived, Jesus Christ, by His coming, put an end to all that which had prefigured His coming. He put an end to the shadows and Old Testament Sacraments and brought to the

world another greater clarity so that, henceforth, men might worship God with more pure and spiritual service, as approaching more. closely the nature of God who is Spirit (John 4:21-25). However, having still regard to our frail and dull nature, He thought well to add some Sacraments and external signs to the preaching of this eternal Word, to better nourish and support our faith. For, although Jesus Christ has already acquitted us by His death, yet, while we are below, we possess the Heavenly Kingdom only by hope (Romans 8:24; 1 Corinthians 13:9); it is needful that we be supported to grow in this and persevere to the end (Ephesians 4:15).

S. Thirty-Eight Aphorisms against Castalio

[Theodore Beza's Thirty-Eight Aphorisms against Castalio.] For the stopping of the mouthes of the slaundersous, as also for the further instructing of the ignorant, in this both necessarie and comfortable doctrine of God his election, I haue thought good here to set down a shorte summe of the whole matter, contained in certaine briefe & plaine Aphorismes, Translated out of a learned Treatise of Theodorus Beza, against Castalion.

Translated by Iohn Stockwood 1. GOD worketh effectually, or bringeth all things to pass according to the counsel of his own will.

2. This counsel doth God execute or fulfill at certain moments of times: yet the counsel itself is everlasting, and going before all things, not only in time, inasmuch as it is before all time, but also in order. For otherwise the will of God should not be the chief rule of the counsel of God: but rather the qualities of things foreseen & foreknown, and driving God to take this or that counsel, should prescribe or appoint a rule to the will of God.

3. This counsel cannot be separated from the will of God, but that we must rob God of his divinity or Godhead.

4. This counsel is not put only in the governing and guiding of the event or that, that cometh to pass, as Pallas is feigned of the Poet to turn away Pandarus Dart from Menelaus breast unto his nether parts fenced with his belt: but hath a working & effectual strength in all things, which Paul hath declared by this word *energein*, *Energein*, which signifieth to work effectually.

5. This strength and efficacy is attributed unto God's working, but is not said to be of God. Therefore by this word [*Efficacy* or *strength*] is not declared any natural power given by God the Creator, to the things he hath created, that they should do this or that: but by this word is understood the power of God, which he hath in himself to do all things.

6. This universal particle, *All*, in the saying of Paul, can by no manner of exception at all be restrained, but that God in that point must be made to be idle, according to the opinion of Epicurus. And if we shall say that any thing is done against his will, he shall be robbed of his infinite, or endless power.

7. The conclusion thereof standeth, that God himself, according as it pleased him, to decree all things to come to pass from everlasting, even so also he bringeth them to pass by his power in their time as he willeth.

8. Yet of these things doth there follow none of these blasphemies, to wit, either that God is the Author of sin, either is delighted with iniquity, either willeth iniquity: or that Satan or man in doing of evil, do obey God, or, in that they do evil, they do that that God will, and therefore are without blame. Let all such blasphemies as these, be most far, not only from our tongues, but also from our cogitations or thoughts.

9. And thus it may be proved that these sequels and conclusions that they would gather of our doctrine, are of no force: God doth execute or perform the counsels of his will by second causes and instruments, not as bound unto them as the Stoics did suppose, but freely and mightily making, moving, and guiding them, as it pleased him.

10. Of these instruments there are two principal kinds. For some of them have life, to wit, such as are stirred by an inward moving of their own: others are without life and are only carried of an outward force by others rather than of themselves. Those instruments that have life are also in a double difference. For some of them are endued with judgment and reason, others are without reason, and are carried with a blind force of nature.

11. The instruments which are without life, yea and also they that have life, but are void of reason, are said to do neither well nor ill, because that they are rather caused to do, than to do of themselves: but they which use those instruments, are said to do either well or ill.

12. Instruments endued with reason and judgment, are either Angels, or men, and the same again of two sorts. For Angels, some are good, some are bad: and men by nature are all evil, but by grace there is such difference made between them, that some of them are wholly evil, and some of them are in part good, to wit, so far as the spirit of God hath sanctified or made them holy.

13. Such things as are of this sort, when as in any action they are moved by their own inward moving, are worthily said to work, and therefore in this kind of instruments only falleth the difference of well or ill doing. And in this respect, they cannot properly be called instruments, but rather efficient or working causes.

14. Now I call that an evil action, which hath not the revealed or opened will of God for the end: and contrariwise, I call it a good action which hath respect or looketh to the will of God.

15. The same, albeit they be causes, so far as they work by their own proper motion, yet in another respect they are called instruments, to wit, as often and so far forth as they are moved by another. As when the hangman by the commandment of the Magistrate, killeth a man, or when as by impulsion or setting on of the Devil, men hurt one another: or when as at the commandment, and in the name of any, we do either good or evil unto any man.

16. In this kind of actions, all men see that one & the same work is attributed unto two, to wit, unto the one as to him that moveth, and worketh by another, as by an instrument, and to the other, as to him that worketh himself, for he is in such sort an instrument, that he also worketh by his own inward motion, and not simply, as the Hammer or Axe in the hand of the Smith.

17. Yea, for this double respect, a double work seemeth sometime to be done, insomuch that the one may be laudable or praiseworthy, and the other wicked: as if the Magistrate deliver a man that is an offender unto the hangman to be executed, there is no man but will worthily praise this work: but if the hangman being moved with hatred or covetousness, or any other wicked lust, rather than looking unto the commandment of the Judge, do kill the same offender, certainly before God he cannot escape the crime of murder.

18. Now let us apply these things unto God, whose efficacy or strength, we have proved before to step in, in all things that are done without exception, and in such sort, that by those things which he hath created as by instruments, he doth execute or perform in his time, whatsoever he hath

decreed from everlasting.

19. Whatsoever God doth is good, seeing from him, which is the chief good, no evil can proceed. But he doth all things. All things therefore are good, so far forth as they are done by God. And that difference of good and evil, hath only place in the instruments, and in those of whom we have spoken in the thirteenth proposition.

20. For if these instruments be good, and do look unto the opened will of God, they work well, and God also worketh well by them: whereby it cometh to pass, that, that work is always good: as when good Angels do that which God commandeth, and holy men follow, God calling them.

21. Evil instruments (evil I say, not by creation, but by corruption) insofar as they work, they do always work evil, and therefore they worthily incur or run into God's anger: but so far forth as God worketh by them, they do serve to the good work of God, either against their wills, or else of ignorance. For God, by what instruments soever he worketh, worketh always well.

22. Now he so worketh by those instruments, as he doth not only suffer them to work, neither only moderate or rule the event or thing that falleth out, but also he raiseth them up, stirreth, moveth, guideth, and that which is greatest of all he createth them, to the end that he might work by them, which he hath appointed: all which things God doth rightly, and without any injustice.

23. For as often as one evil man sinneth either against himself, or against another wicked person, God without any sin maketh, either that the evil man taketh vengeance upon himself, or that evil men shall punish other evil men, with such punishment as they have deserved: both which works of God are most righteous: and by such examples of his judgments, God lifteth up and comforteth those that are his.

24. But so often as wicked men do hurt the good, the wicked men sin, & in the end, suffer such punishments as they have deserved: yet nevertheless, by them the Lord chasteneth, instructeth and strengtheneth his own, and plainly by the open enemies of his Church maketh his Church glorious.

25. Yet cannot these evil instruments be said to obey God, because albeit God by them bringeth his work to pass, yet they, so far as in them is, and as concerning their own counsel and will, do not the work of God, but their own work for the which they are justly punished. For albeit whatsoever God worketh by the wicked be good, yet whatsoever the wicked work is evil.

26. Neither is this consequent or reason good, God worketh all things, therefore he worketh sin. For the guilt of sin agreeth not but to the vicious and faulty quality, which is wholly in the working instrument.

27. By reason of this corrupted quality, the work which of itself is but one, is made some manner of way twofold and double, insomuch that the one, that is the just work of God, directly fighteth against the other, that is, the unjust work of man.

28. Yet God worketh otherwise by the good instruments than by the evil, for besides that he worketh his work by the good instruments, the good instruments also do work their own work by the same force & efficacy which the Lord giveth unto them: finally the Lord worketh his work by them, and also worketh in them to will & to perform. But by the wicked, as by Satan, or by men,

insofar as they are not regenerate or born anew, as often as the Lord executeth or performeth the just counsels and decrees of his everlasting will, he indeed sheweth forth his strength and efficacy in his work by them, either not knowing of it, or against their wills and purposes: but yet insofar as they work their own work, the Lord worketh not in them, but letteth loose the reins unto Satan, to whom by his just judgment he giveth them over being wicked, to be moved and stirred forward, that they may be carried away of their own will and his.

29. Therefore we do not refuse this term, suffering, or granting, neither yet came it in our minds, to say that God so worketh in the evil, as he doth in the good. But because that Sophisters have corrupted the difference of will and sufferance, which Augustine no doubt took of the Greeks, and they received from Augustine, therefore do we flatly refuse it.

30. For the Sophisters set will against permission, or sufferance: whereof doth follow that God suffereth the things which he suffereth, either against his will, or at leastwise being idle, & not caring for them. But contrariwise, lest we should either take from God his endless and unmeasurable power, or after the opinion of the Epicures, say as the thing indeed is, that God neither worketh anything by instruments, but willingly, nor yet suffereth the instruments to work, but willingly, yet in such sort that whatsoever he worketh, he worketh most justly, and whatsoever he permitteth or suffereth, he most justly suffereth.

31. And God worketh in respect of his own work: and permitteth or suffereth in respect of the work that the evil instruments do of their own accord work, or insofar as they are active and not passive instruments, that we may keep the terms used in the schools. Yet doth God justly suffer the thing that these instruments unjustly work, for because that sins, insofar as they are suffered by God that willeth, are not sins: but punishments of sin. For with GOD it is a just thing to punish sins with sins. But these selfsame actions insofar as they come from satan, and evil men provoked by Satan and their own concupiscence or lust, are so far sins, which the Lord in his time doth justly punish. For the Lord doth never suffer sins so far as they are sins, nay he doth always forbid them.

32. Neither is this consequence or reason good: God willeth all things, therefore he alloweth all things. For he willeth many things, and therefore suffereth them, not because he simply alloweth of them, but after a certain sort, for he alloweth them, so far as he suffereth them, even so far as they are no sins, as we said even now: But he disalloweth & punisheth them, so far as he hath respect or looketh unto the evil instruments, whose actions they are.

33. These are Augustine's words, Enchirid. ad Laurent. Cap. 100. "Great are the works of the Lord, for they are excellent in all his wills, so that after a wonderful and unspeakable manner that cometh not to pass besides his will, which is done against his will: because it should not come to pass if he would not suffer it: and doubtless he suffereth it not unwilling, but willing." The same Augustine, Lib. 5. Contr. Julian. Cap. 3. When as he had of purpose disputed against them which make an idle foreknowledge or sufferance, at length he bursteth forth into these words, "We doubtless (saith he) if we suffer those over whom we have power, to do wickedness before our eyes, shall be guilty with them. But how innumerable things doth he suffer (speaking of God) To be done before his eyes, which doubtless if he would not, he would by no means suffer? And yet he is both just and good."

34. The whole Scripture beareth witness, and very common sense or reason doth tell us, that without the will of God nothing is done, no not of those things which seem most chiefly to come to pass by chance or fortune, as Genesis 27:20, God is said quickly to have brought the prey unto Jacob's hands. And Exodus 21:13, As often as murder is committed at unawares, the Lord, saith Moses, caused him to come into thine hands. The selfsame thing is taught as concerning the falling out of Lots, Proverbs 16:33. As concerning all the counsels of men, Daniel 4:32. Of the falling of Sparrows, Matthew 10:29. To be short, of all things without exception, Ephesians 1:11.

35. And that the will of God, yea and the same most effectually, doth then also step in, when as he worketh by the wicked, may plainly appear almost in every leaf of the scripture. So is he said to have sent Joseph into Egypt, Genesis 45:8. So he stirred up Pharaoh to declare his power in him, Exodus 4:21. So he gave David's wives unto his son Absalom, 2 Samuel 12:11. So he moved the heart of David to number the people, 2 Samuel 24:1. So he commanded Shimei to curse David, 2 Samuel 16:10. So David calleth his enemies the sword & hand of the Lord, Psalms 17:13-14. So the Lord calleth the Medes and Persians his sanctified, and the instruments of his wrath, Isaiah 10:5, and Isaiah 13:6. So he calleth the falling away of the ten Tribes his work, 2 Chronicles 11:4. So Job saith, the Lord giveth, and the Lord hath taken away, Job 1:21. So the king of Babylon is compared unto an Axe and a Saw, to wit, because the Lord executed or brought to pass his work by him, thinking on no such thing, Isaiah 10:15. So the godly are afflicted or troubled, by the will and Predestination, or foreordaining of God, Romans 8:29, and 1 Peter 3:17, and 1 Peter 4:19. So there is no evil in the City which the Lord hath not done, Amos 3:6, and Jeremiah, Lamentations 3:37, Lamentations 3:38. Who is he then, (saith he) which hath said, and it cometh to pass, and the Lord hath not commanded? Out of the mouth of the Lord proceedeth there not good and evil?

36. Go to then, let for example be chosen the most excellent, and also the most wicked deed that ever was: The most excellent, if we behold either both the endless justice, and mercy of the father, or the infinite obedience and love of the son: But the most wicked, if we consider the instruments themselves, to wit, Satan, Judas, the Jews, Pilate, and Herod. This deed (we speak of) is, the death of the son of God, full of cruelty and reproach. In this fact, if we deny the everlasting counsel of God to have stepped in, we shall be convinced or proved to speak false by infinite testimonies of the Scripture. For sure it is, that we were not chosen before the foundations of the world were laid, but only in him appointed to die, Ephesians 1:4, and 1 Peter 1:20. Wherefore he is also called the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, Revelation 13:8, To wit, not only by the foreknowledge, but especially by the determined counsel of God, insomuch that Herod and Pilate, although thinking of no such thing, yet therefore came together, to fulfill such things as the hand and counsel of the Lord had decreed be done, Acts 4:28. Therefore he could not be taken but at his hour, John 7:30, and John 8:29, and John 12:27. For he was delivered by the determined counsel of God, and decree before going, Acts 2:23. And was wounded of God for our iniquities, Isaiah 53:5. For God is he who spared not his own son, but gave him for us all, Romans 8:32. Therefore if there were but this one example of God's everlasting providence, which never is idle, it were abundant enough to suffice, to convince, or reprove all those which falsely cry out, that God is made the author of sin, when as we say that nothing cometh to pass, but by the righteous will of God.

37. And yet do we not therefore excuse but rather most sharply accuse Satan working in the disobedient children, (Ephesians 2:2.) Even then also when as the Lord most effectually, or

strongly, and most justly bringeth his work to pass, both by Satan himself, and also by the bond slaves of Satan, 2 Timothy 2:26. Wherefore we do everywhere acknowledge and reverence the goodness and judgments of God, albeit the reason of them many times do not to us appear. And we condemn both the instruments which are evil, and also naughty and wicked actions, to wit, all the counsels and subtleties of Satan: the envy of Joseph's brethren, and the selling of their brother: the ungodliness and hardness of Pharaoh: Absalom's mind bent to kill his Father, and his detestable incest: the unadvisedness also of David himself: the wickedness of Shimei: the malice and treachery of David's enemies: the wicked falling away of Jeroboam, and the ten Tribes: the ravenny [violent plundering] of the Chaldeans: the insatiable covetousness, incredible Lechery, intolerable arrogancy of the Babylonians. To be short, all the wicked counsels, and most savage cruelty of the ungodly against the Church.

38. It is also manifest by very many and most plain testimonies of the scripture, that God doth punish sins with sins, and that with no idle, but very strong and effectual, yet notwithstanding, most just permission or sufferance. For it is he that giveth kings in his anger, Hosea 13:11, Nehemiah 9:37, and Job 34:30. It is he that causeth to err, Isaiah 63:17. Because he mingleth amongst them the spirit of error, Isaiah 19:14. It is he which hardeneth and turneth the hearts, which blindeth the eyes, which maketh drunk with the wine of giddiness, Exodus 4:21, and Exodus 7:3, and Exodus 9:12, and Exodus 10:1, and Exodus 11:10, and Exodus 14:4, Deuteronomy 2:29, Joshua 11:20, and 1 Samuel 2:25, and 2 Chronicles 22:7, Psalms 105:25. It is he that punisheth his contempt, giving men up into a reprobate mind, Romans 1:28, And sending the strength of error to believe a lie, 2 Thessalonians 2:11. It is he which deceiveth Prophets, Ezekiel 14:9. Finally, it is he that sendeth also evil spirits, giving them commandment to hurt, & granting them also efficacy or power to deceive, as 1 Kings 22:22-23, and 2 Chronicles 18:21-22, Job 1:12, and Job 2:6.

These things beeing thus mani- fest by these so plaine testimonies, let the Pellagians, Freewillians, Annabaptistes, Papistes, and the rest of that filthie rabble, crye out if they liste, till they ware hoarse, and their heartes ake againe, that wee make G O D the Authour of sinne, from which blasphemie wee are as farre, as they are voide of Christian charitie, in so iudging of us, ascribing unto G O D his prouidence the whole swinge in all things, which as they proceede from him (as hath beene shewed before) are verie good, albeit in respecte of the in- struments, whereby it pleaseth him in iustice sometime to worke by, they may be verie evill.

FINIS.

S. Twenty-Nine Propositions

Twenty-Nine Propositions by

THEODORE BEZA, MINISTER AND DEFENDER OF THE GOSPEL.

Against Sebastian Castalio, Captain of the AnaBaptist Heretics.

Translated by John Knox.

[Addressing the AnaBaptist whose attack on the doctrine of Predestination Knox is refuting, he says]: These Propositions following have I translated forth of the work written by that learned and godly man, Theodorus Beza,¹ against the calumnies of your captain, Castalio.

1. The first Proposition: God effectually worketh and bringeth to pass all things, according to the counsel of his own will. 2. This counsel doth God execute in certain moments of time; nevertheless the counsel itself is eternal, and passeth before all things, not only in time (as it that is before all time), but also in order. For otherwise the will of God should not be the principal and first rule of God's counsel, but rather the qualities of things foreseen and foreknown, and moving God to take this counsel, or that should prescribe a rule to the will of God. 3. This counsel may not be separated from the will of God, only of necessity we spoil God of his Godhead. 4. This counsel is not put in moderation and in direction of chance or fortune, but it hath an effectual and working strength in all things, as Paul speaketh. 5. This strength and efficacy is attributed to God working, but it is not said to be of God; therefore by this word efficacy, or strength, is not declared any nature and power given by God the Creator to the things that be created, that they should do this or that, but thereby is understood the power of God, which he hath in himself to do all things. 6. This universal particle, 'all,' in the words of Paul, can by no manner of exception be restrained, but that God in that part shall be judged idle, as Epicurus did falsely affirm. And if we shall say that any thing is done which God may not impede, then shall he be spoiled of his infinite power. 7. So that the conclusion is, sithence that God himself, even as it hath pleased him to determine all things to come from eternity, even so he worketh by his own power, that the same things come to pass in their time as he willeth. 8. Of these things notwithstanding none of those blasphemies doth follow, wherewith we be burdened; to wit, that God is the author of sin; either that he delighteth or willeth iniquity; either that Satan or men doing wickedly do obey God; either in so far as they do evil, that they do the thing that God will, and therefore be blameless. Let such blasphemies be far not only from our mouths, but also from our cogitations and thoughts. 9. That none of these blasphemies may be concluded of our doctrine may thus be proved. 10. God putteth in execution the counsels of his will, by second causes and mid instruments, not as bound unto them, as the Stoics did affirm, but freely and potently making, moving, and directing them, as it pleaseth his wisdom. 11. Of those instruments there are two principal kinds. The one hath life and moving, the other be without life, which rather be moved by force of others than move themselves. There be two sorts of those that have life, the one be endued with reason and judgment, the other be without reason, and are only carried by the blind force of nature. 12. Those that be without life, and those also that

have life, but lack reason, can neither be said to do well nor evil; but those that use them as instruments may be said either to do well or evil. 13. Those that have life endued with reason, are either angels or men. The angels be of two sorts, some good, some bad; but as for men, all by nature are evil: but by grace they are so separated, that some are utterly evil, some partly good, to wit, in so far as the Spirit of God hath sanctified them. 14. Such as in any action are moved by their own inward motion, justly may be said to work, and therefore in that kind of instruments falleth the difference of good and evil works; neither yet properly, in that respect, may they be called instruments, but the causes efficient. 15. An evil action I call that which hath not the revealed will of God for the assurance and end; and by the contrary, the work is good when the worker looketh to obey God's express commandment. 16. These same, although they be causes, in so far as they work by their own proper motion, yet are they in another respect called instruments, in so far as they are moved by another. As when the hangman, by the commandment of the magistrate, killeth a man; or when, by instigation of the Devil, men hurt others; or when, at the commandment of any, we do either good or evil to any man. 17. In this kind of actions, it is evident, that one work is attributed to two; to the one, as to him that worketh by an instrument, and to the other, as to the worker by motion or commandment; such workers are instruments, not simply as the hammer or axe is in the hand of the smith or hewer, but they are such instruments as also move by their own inward motion. 18. And for this double respect, a double work appeareth sometimes to be done; insomuch that the one may be laudable and the other wicked. As if the Magistrate shall commit an offender worthy of death to the executor of justice, this work is praise-worthy of all good men. But if the Lictor [Executioner], inflamed rather with envy, avarice, or any other wicked affection, then looking to the commandment of the judge, shall kill the same offender, most certain it is, that before God he can not avoid the crime of murder. 19. Now, let us apply these things to God, whose efficacy before we have proved to work in all things without exception; and so that by those things which he hath made as by instruments, he executeth in time whatsoever he hath decreed from eternity. 20. Whatsoever God worketh is good, seeing from him, who is infinitely good, no evil thing can proceed; but he worketh all things, therefore all things be good insofar as they are done by God. And that difference of good and evil hath only place in the instruments, and in those of whom we have spoken in the 14th proposition. 21. For if those instruments be good, and if their actions look to the revealed will of God, they do well, and God also doth well by them. Wherefore that work is always good; as when the good angels execute that which God commandeth, and holy men do follow, God calling them. 22. Evil instruments, evil, I say, not by creation but by corruption, insofar as they work always, they do evil, and therefore justly do they incur the wrath of God. But insofar as God worketh by them, they either by ignorance, or else against their purposes, serve to the good work of God. But God himself, by whatsoever instruments he worketh, worketh at all times well. 23. And so he worketh by those instruments, that not only he permitteth and suffereth them to work, neither doth he only moderate the event or change, but also he raiseth them up. He moveth, he directeth, and that which is most of all, he also createth, to the end that by them he shall work that which he hath appointed. Which things God doth righteously, and without any injustice. 24. For when the wicked man sinneth, either against himself, either against any wicked person, God without any sin, doth, and bringeth to pass, that the wicked man shall take vengeance upon himself, or that evil men shall take vengeance upon other wicked men who have deserved punishment. And this one and other work of God is most just; and by such examples of his judgment, God erecteth and comforteth his afflicted. 25. How oft that evil men hurt good men,

the wicked men sin, and in the end they suffer just punishment, and yet by them, nevertheless, doth God chasten, instruct, and confirm his own; and by the manifest enemies of his Church doth God make glorious his Church. 26. Yet can it not be said that those evil instruments do obey God. For albeit that God worketh his work by them, yet they, so far as in them lieth, and as concerning their own counsel and will, do not the work of God, but their own work, for the which meritably they are punished. Albeit, whatsoever God worketh by the wicked is good, yet whatsoever the wicked men work is evil. 27. Neither is the consequent, God worketh all things, ergo, he worketh sin, for the name of sin is not but in the vicious and faulty quality, which is altogether in the instrument that worketh. 28. By reason of this corrupted quality, the work which in the self is one, some manner of way is double, and may be divided: Inasmuch that the one, that is, the just work of God, directly fighteth [opposeth] and repugneth against the unjust work of man. 29. God, nevertheless, far other ways worketh by his good instruments than he doth by his evil instruments. For besides that by his good instruments he worketh his work, the good instruments also do their work by that strength and efficacy which the Lord ministereth unto them. And God also worketh his work by them, and in them he worketh to will and to perform; but by the evil, as by Satan and wicked men, in so far as they are not regenerate, as oft as God doth execute the just counsels and decrees of his eternal will, he declareth his own strength and efficacy in his work by them, which they do either ignorantly, or else against their purpose. And yet, insofar as they work, God worketh not in them, but he looseth the bridle to Satan, to whom, by his just judgment, he giveth them over, to be moved and possessed forward to all iniquity, that they may be carried to perdition, even by the instigation of the Devil, and by their own proper will.

Thus have you briefly the sum of our doctrine in this matter; which if ye be able by manifest Scriptures, or yet by good arguments from the same deduced, to improve, then can we not refuse to make satisfaction, as the Church of Christ Jesus shall require of us. But if that unjustly ye have accused us, and have further imputed cruelty upon God, by reason that his judgments, most just in themselves, are to your senses incomprehensible; then can we not of conscience cease to require of you a greater modesty, and also of the lawful Magistrate, an order to be taken that your malice and venom may be repressed, assuring them, that if betimes your enterprises be not impeded, that they shall shortly feel what confusion ye have of long fostered in your breasts; your poison is more pestilent than that of the Papistry was in the beginning. God, for his mercy's sake, preserve his church, and purge your hearts to his glory.

Footnotes:

1. Beza's Propositions against Castalio occur in his treatise entitled, "Ad Sabastiani Castellionis calumnies, quibus unicum Salutis nostræ fundamentum, id est Æternam Dei Predestinationem, evertere nititur, Responsio." (Theod. Bezæ Volumen Primum Tractationum Theologicorum, p. 371. Editio Secunda, Genevæ, 1582, 3 vol. in 1, folio.)

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