

**THE
MYSTERY
OF MAGISTRACY
UNVAILED:**

OR,

**GOD'S Ordinance of Magistracy, Asserted, Cleared,
and Vindicated, from Heathenish Dominion,
Tyrannous and Antichristian Usurpation, Despisers of
Dignities, and Contemners of Authorities.**

**By an unworthy Servant and Subject of Jesus Christ, *the King of
Saints and Nations.***

Anon.

Based on the Edinburgh Editions of 1708 & 1795, and the First
Edition, Printed in London, 1663.

Simulated Title Page from 1708 edition.

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Iſa. 57. 14. *Caſt ye up, prepare the way, take up the ſtumbling blocks out
of the way of my People.*

Iſa. 5. 20. *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put
darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs; bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for
bitter.*

Matth. 19. 8. *But from the beginning it was not ſo.*

Iſa. 33. 22. *For the LORD is our Judge, the LORD is our Lawgiver,
the LORD is our King, he will ſave us.*

Iſa. 9. 6. *And the Government ſhall be upon his ſhoulders.*

Iſa. 1. 26. *And I will reſtore thy Judges as at firſt, and thy Counſellors as
at the beginning: afterwards thou ſhalt be called the City of Righteouſneſs,
the Faithful City.*

EDINBURGH, Printed by the Heirs and Succellors of *Andrew Anderſon,*
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PREFATORY NOTES

“Now, although God does not at present dwell in a visible tabernacle, yet are we reminded by this example [the gathering of the seventy] that pastors and *magistrates* are not duly ordained, unless they are placed in the presence of God; nor rightly inaugurated in their offices, unless when they consecrate themselves to God Himself, and when His majesty, on the other hand, acquires their reverence.”

John Calvin, commenting on Num. 11:17.

Authorship

The *Mystery of Magistracy Unveiled* was first published anonymously in 1663. Authorship has been attributed to George Gillespie.¹ But the author's style is far different from Gillespie's, and this attribution is also wrong on several other counts, the most obvious of which is an anachronism. The author cites Edward Gee's² *The Divine Right and Originall of Civil Magistrate from God, Illustrated and Vindicated*, published in 1658, whereas Gillespie went to be with his Lord in December, 1648.

Authorship has also been attributed to the radical Baptist, Henry Danvers³ (1619?-1687?), for a time the Governor of Stafford, England. Danvers was originally an Independent but ultimately became a Particular Baptist.⁴ The main difficulty here is that the actual author demonstrates the high view of Biblical law, characteristic of most puritans. On the face of it, this seems to conflict with Danvers' known views defending a “wide toleration”⁵ of heresy. Moreover, Danvers was a Fifth-Monarchist,⁶ yet the book itself, while postmillennial, does not reflect Fifth-Monarchy distinctives.

¹ See for example the Still Waters Revival Books website:

http://www.puritandownloads.com/swrb/search.php?search_query=mystery+of+magistracy&x=0&y=0, accessed June 11, 2012. See also the *First International Convention of Reformed Presbyterian Churches* (Glasgow, [1896?]), 351, <http://archive.org/details/firstinternatcon00unknuoft>.

² Edward Gee (1613-1660) was the Presbyterian minister of, Eccleston, Lancashire, England. The author cites Gee on p. 41 of this work.

³ Not to be confused with his fellow, and also radical, Baptist contemporary, Col. Robert Danvers (1624-1674), or with Henry Danvers (1573-1644), Earl of Danby.

⁴ Baptists holding to the reformed doctrine of *particular redemption* or *limited atonement*.

⁵ Henry A. Glass, *The Barbone Parliament* (Edinburgh, 1899), 74, <http://archive.org/details/barboneparliamen00glasrich>.

⁶ For an explanation of this term see:

Wikipedia, s.v. “Fifth Monarchists,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifth_Monarchists.

Nevertheless, the *assertion* of Danvers' authorship comes from at least one well respected source,⁷ but without any confirming evidence. And, admittedly, the style is similar to that of Danvers, so I have to suspend judgment until I see further evidence in his favor.

Why Read This?

This *pdf* edition has been prepared in 2012, the year of a U.S. Presidential election, a time for Christians to read and learn the Reformed doctrine of Magistracy. Following Edward Gee, the writer makes the essential—but forgotten—distinction between rulers who have attained power merely in the *providence* of God, but are usurpers, tyrants and despisers of the laws of God, and those rulers described in Rom. 13:1-7, who are ordained by the *preceptive will* of God.⁸ In the first category we can place rulers such as Absalom (briefly), Athaliah, Nero, Hitler, etc., which may be lawfully defied. In the second category are those like Moses, Samuel, David, Alfred the Great and Edward VI of England. The author makes it clear that Rom. 13:1-7 was never intended to apply to the Caesars of apostolic times.

Historically, the work was well regarded by Reformed Presbyterians (Covenanters) who would have disagreed strongly with Henry Danvers' views on toleration.

Style

Although much of the original style has been left intact so as to preserve some flavor of the 1708 edition, important changes have been made to help the modern reader. A *Times New Roman* font has been used and the lower case “s” is no longer represented by a character which looks strangely like an “f.” Page numbers and contents correspond with that edition but no attempt has been made to match line with line. Spelling has been modernized except in scriptural and other quotations and allusions. The frequent capitalization of nouns in the 1708 edition has not been

⁷ Richard L. Greaves, *Saints and Rebels, Seven Nonconformists in Stuart England* (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1985), 158, 165. Greaves tells us that the *Mystery of Magistracy* was written while Danvers was in hiding (p. 165). This could account for the fact that it seems to be written in haste, perhaps under difficult circumstances, so that many of the original scripture quotations appear to be from memory and are not exact. Greaves is my main source of information on Danvers.

⁸ The will of God as revealed in the *precepts* of scripture, especially in the law of God.

followed. Also, the italicization of the Preface has simply been inverted, with italics replaced by normal text and vice-versa. Elsewhere, the use of italics has been completely revised. Some additional subheadings have been inserted in chapter 13, in the hope of making it easier for the reader to separate and follow the lines of argument. The author's numbering system for his various points has been extensively revised, especially in chapter 13.

Readers should be aware that many of the original scripture quotations appear to have been made from memory and were not exact—a sign that the book, essentially a tract, may have been hurriedly written in difficult times. Nevertheless the quotations were fully in keeping with the sense of the KJV, and not misleading.⁹ In this edition scripture quotations have been revised to match the KJV. Ellipses have been inserted at points where our 17th century author abbreviated quotations so as to include only what was most relevant to his arguments. Quotation marks are also added.

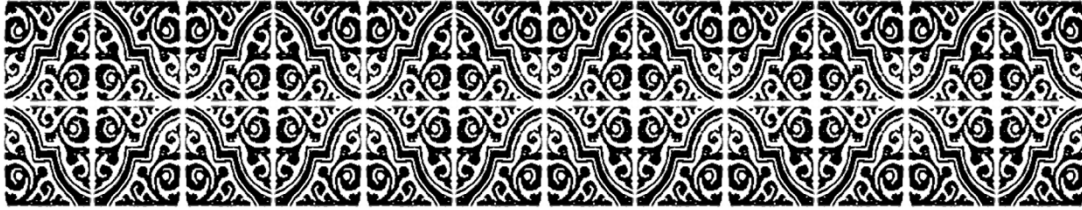
As in the 1795 edition, footnotes have replaced the marginalia of the 1663 and 1708 editions. Additional footnotes added by the editor are marked as such by the use of brackets.

Availability

The 1708 edition of this work may be found on Google Books. Unfortunately, the URL is too long and complex to display in this text, so a hyperlink is provided [here](#) instead. A further edition bound with the 1797 edition of Alexander Shields', *A Hind Let Loose*, and without the preface and several closing paragraphs, is also available online.¹⁰ An EEBO facsimile of the original 1663 edition, *The Mysterie of Magistracy Unvailed*, is available from Amazon.com, as are some other editions, possibly including the 1795 edition.

⁹ i.e. the quotations are not misleading in themselves. However, it is possible that a few may be misapplied.

¹⁰ Anon., *The Mystery of Magistracy Unvailed*, in *A Hind Let Loose*, by Alexander Shiels [Shields] (Glasgow, 1797), <http://archive.org/details/hindletlooseorhi00shie>.



A

PREFACE

TO THE

Christian Reader.

Amongst those many arts, by which the *Man of Sin* hath advanced himself into the *place of God*, this is none of the least, that though his whole doctrine, and especially his discipline, as to the complex and system of it, be but a blasphemous innovation, yet he still retains the ancient names, and fits them unto his very new orders. Thus he keeps the magnificent style of a *church*. He pretends great reverence to the *Scriptures*. He calls his officers

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bishops and *deacons*. And if any be so bold as to quarrel with his ceremonies, he hides the deformity of all, under the specious names of *decency* and *order*. By which means he shows how well he deserves to be styled *mystery*, as making his iniquity and *Satanical depths* under a religious and holy cover, by which the unwary and ignorant are easily ensnared into his obedience.

What is the practice of the popes, in religious, that I find to have been the usage of the *Roman* emperors, in civil affairs; who, though they did arrogate the sole power to themselves, yet to charm and quiet the multitude, and to make them by degrees to forget their liberty, they left them a faint shadow of it, and did preserve, says my author, *eadem magistratum vocabula*, i.e. the same titles of magistrates, which they were accustomed to in their times of a commonwealth. In this, as well as in his laws, and greatest part of his government, has the Pope made *an image of that beast*. And by retaining *eadem vocabula*, the old names, he has made his own devilish inventions, at first to be peaceably received, and since [then] (so great is the power of custom and prejudice) in most parts of the world, to be inviolably and religiously preserved.

But that *mystery* is now *unveiled*; and there is scarce any so ignorant, but is ready to smile at those texts—*Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*, and *Peter, feed my sheep*—when he hears them applied to support the Pope's *infallibility* and *supremacy*. Men who are willing to *search the Scriptures*, and find how plain and simple the style of them is, how far removed from all sophistry of men, who labor to wrest and torture them; cannot easily be induced to believe, that the bishop of *Rome*, who is never mentioned, should be, first *Peter's*, and then *Christ's, successor*; and not rather think that he, *who sits in the temple or church of God*, who, like God, gives new laws, and dispenses boldly

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with the old ones: who teaches *the very doctrine of devils*, which was characterized to forerun the apostasy of the last times, who pretends to *miracles*, and uses the name of Christ, only to oppose the parity of his worship, and to murder his worshipers. Who considers this, cannot but acknowledge, that he, unto whom these marks agree, is indeed that *Antichrist*, that *Man of Sin*, that *lawless One*, whom God has now discovered, and at last intends utterly to destroy.

But there is another *mystery*, of almost as fatal and pernicious consequence as, the other, which lies yet concealed, and that is the extent of the civil magistrates power; who it is, to whom that name belongs, and how far his dominion reaches. This being fully and impartially done, by the author of this following treatise, I shall not speak much to it here; but only advise the reader to consider seriously of how infinite concernment it is, to have his conscience settled, and the disputes arising from hence, rightly stated. For if there be a *false magistracy*, as well as a false and pretended *ministry*, then it is evident, that obedience and subjection (I mean in point of conscience) is as little due to the one, as reverence and honor is unto the other.

In this, as I have had myself, so I doubt not but every ingenious reader will likewise receive satisfaction. At least this advantage must needs be gained, that those who have hard thoughts of the *kingdom of Christ*, and load it with bitter invectives—as if it were utterly inconsistent with the civil peace—by perusing of this they will find their error, and be brought to confess, that there can be no lasting and solid peace, until that government be established, because the foundation of it is nothing else but righteousness. *He that loves his neighbor as himself*, who dares not wrong *his own flesh*, or injure any who bears his *Maker's*

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image, is already a subject of *Christ's kingdom*.¹¹ And whoever has entertained any other notion of it, do not know either what they pray for, when they say, *thy kingdom come*, or what they speak against when they reproach and vilify it. When men of the earth have consulted and employed their utmost rage, yet *Christ is King* indeed, and here is laid down a brief idea and platform of his government. And happy are they, who having already in spirit submitted unto the empire of this *King*, do wait by faith and patience, till he doth haste to accomplish the promise of his coming, when the *yoke of oppressors* shall utterly be removed, and we shall *serve him without fear*.

¹¹ See Mark 12:29-34.

T H E
M Y S T E R I E
O F
M A G I S T R A C Y
Unveiled.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Original and First Institution of Magistracy.

The first dominion or rule appointed by God amongst men, was placed in the elder brother or first born called the patriarch or head of the family. The institution of the patriarchal rule seems to be laid down in God's words to Cain concerning Abel: "And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him" (Gen. 4:7). Therefore were the first born called the "excellency of dignity, and...power" (Gen. 49:3). A catalog of the patriarchs both before and after the flood is recorded in Gen. 5 & 10. It was to the elders or patriarchs that Moses and Aaron addressed, when they came to conduct the Israelites out of Egypt (Exod. 4:29). A catalog of some of them are upon record¹² (Exod. 6:14). Which eldership, or birthright, Esau sold [to] his brother Jacob (Gen. 25:31; Heb. 12:16); and by virtue whereof the patriarch Judah gave judgment in the case of Tamar (Gen. 38:24). Though in this time amongst the children of men in the nations, there was another government set up, of which and the

¹² The Sanhedrin or 70 were chosen out of them, Num. 11:16, "Whom thou knowest to be elders."

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author thereof we read, Nimrod,¹³ the son of Cush, the son of Ham,¹⁴ “began to be a mighty one¹⁵ in the earth. He was a mighty hunter¹⁶ before the Lord¹⁷....And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel” (Gen. 10:8-10). He was¹⁸ the first that we read of that erected monarchical government, which was about 120 years after the flood, the foundation of the Assyrian monarchy; whose pattern the rest of the nations took in their governments (though arbitrary and oppressive in its nature and constitution); whereof you have an account, Judg. 9 and 1 Sam. 8. In imitation of whom the posterity of Esau set up their kings: “And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom,¹⁹ before there reigned any king over the children of Israel” (Gen. 36:31). Though profane Esau had in him no right of rule, having sordidly sold the same (Gen. 25:34; Heb. 12:16). This was the pattern that Israel also took when they would set up a king like the nations, to the rejecting of God, and bringing a plague and curse upon themselves (1 Sam. 8).

The second sort of rule and government we read of in Scripture, were judges and rulers; which upon the giving of the written law, God appointed to be the administrators thereof, with rules and directions to call them into and direct them in their trusts. The institution of the rule by judges: Deut. 16:18; Exod. 18:21, 22; Num. 11:14, &c. “Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates...and they shall judge the people with just judgment” (Deut. 16:18).

CHAPTER II.

Of the Orders or Kinds of Rulers.

The rulers were of two sorts, *superior* and *inferior*. The superior was a judge with a supreme council. The inferior were the judges and officers that were appointed in every gate or city.

¹³ Nimrod signifies a rebel [the original text has “And Nimrod”].

¹⁴ Ham was Noah’s third son, in whom was no right of rule, cursed also to servitude.

¹⁵ A mighty one or giant.

¹⁶ Hunting of men by persecutions, oppressions and tyranny, Jer. 16:16.

¹⁷ Openly, or without fear of God, Gen. 16:11. See [Henry] Ainsworth, *Annotations*, Gen. 10:8-10.

¹⁸ [“He was...” replaces “Who was...” in the originals.]

¹⁹ [Originals have “land of Esau.”]

1. Superior: “And they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone” (Num. 11:17), spoken of the 70, who were appointed as helps to the judge in the government. The judge was chief of the council and general of the army, called therefore sometimes king (Deut. 33:5). He was²⁰ principally to transact in the affairs of state: to teach the people the ordinances and laws (Exod. 18:20); to appoint and oversee the under judges and officers (Deut. 16:18; Exod. 18:21); to hear appeals and judge in difficult cases (Exod. 18:22; Deut. 17:8, 9).

2. Inferior: Such shall “be rulers of thousands...and...hundreds...and...tens. And let them judge the people at all seasons...every great matter shall they bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge” (Exod. 18:21-22, 26). Which government continued from Moses till Samuel, about 450 years, as Acts 13:20. There was no great difference between a king of God’s approving, and a judge, there being but one law and administration thereof to both (Deut. 17:18-20).

CHAPTER III.

Of the Qualifications Required in the Judge or Ruler.

The law of God required the following qualifications and properties in the rulers:

1. To be wise, able, understanding men, not children, weak, ignorant, or fools.

“Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men” (Exod. 18:21). “Take you wise men, and understanding...and I will make them rulers” (Deut. 1:13). “Set magistrates and judges which may judge all the people...such as know the laws of thy God” (Ezra. 7:25).

2. To be men well known among their brethren, not aliens or strangers.

“And known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you....So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you” (Deut. 1:13, 15). “Two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation” (Num. 16:2).

²⁰ [“He was...” replaces “who were...” in the originals]

“Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set...of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for the judgment of the Lord, and for controversies” (2 Chron. 19:8). “One from among thy brethren...thou mayest not set a stranger over thee” [Deut. 17:15].

3. To be just men, men of truth, fearing God, and hating covetousness, not wicked, unjust, false, deceitful, covetous, proud, oppressive, &c.

“The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God” (2 Sam. 23:2-3). “Such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness” (Exod. 18:21).

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Electors, Who Were to Apply the Foresaid Qualifications in the Choice of Rulers, and the Manner of Election.

The law of God required not only due qualifications in the ruler, but an orderly call by such who had right so to do. None being to take that honour upon himself, but he that was called (Heb. 5:4). And, that whoever honoured himself, his honour was nothing (John 8:54). Therefore to avoid ambition and usurpation on the one hand, and confusion and disorder on the other, the Lord appointed some to choose, others to confirm the persons chosen; and also something as to the manner of the choice.

1. The persons choosing were to be their brethren, the people over whom they were to rule, and that either in their own persons, or by their elders and deputies. “Take you wise men...and known amongst your tribes” [Deut. 1:13], “One from among thy brethren...thou mayest not set a stranger over thee” (Deut. 17:15). “Their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them” (Jer. 30:21). And the elders of Gilead said, “Come, and be our captain....Then Jephthah went with the elders...and the people made him...captain” (Judg. 11:6, 11). “And all the men of Shechem gathered together... and made Abimelech king” (Judg. 9:6). And the men of Judah made David

king (2 Sam. 2:4). The people made Saul king (1 Sam. 11:15). “Nay; but whom the Lord, and this people, and all the men of Israel, choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide” (2 Sam. 16:18). Which wholesome order when any went to invert, and to thrust themselves upon a people, and by fraud or force to usurp the rule, they became tyrants, and were said to take to themselves horns by their own strength, (Amos 6:13), and to possess that which was not theirs.

2. The manner of their elections were sometimes by vote, mostly by lot,²¹ wherein the Lord also was called into the choice, which was much their way of decision in all doubtful cases (Num. 17; 33:54; Josh. 7:14). The 70 elders were so chosen (Num. 11:26). Saul was chosen by lot, though anointed before (1 Sam. 10:1, &c.).

CHAPTER V.

Of the Dignity of the Office.

That this ordinance of God might work more effectually to the holy ends he had designed it, he was pleased to stamp his image and superscription upon it, as appears by the titles following, *viz.*

1. From their administering in God’s ordinance, [they are] called *God’s ministers*.

“He is the minister of God to thee for good...he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil” (Rom. 13:4), “they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing” (v. 6).

2. From their declaring God’s word upon the throne, and distributing God’s attributes of judgment, justice, and mercy, [they are] called *gods*.

“Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people” (Exod. 22:28). “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came...” (John 10:34-35). “God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods” (Psa. 82:1). “I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High” (Psa. 82:6). Therefore the ruler’s throne is called God’s throne: “Then Solomon sat upon the throne

²¹ Prov. 16:33.

of the Lord” (1 Chron. 29:23). “For the judgment is the judgment is God’s” (Deut. 1:17). And Jehoshaphat “said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for you judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment” (2 Chron. 19:6), and he set “the chief of the fathers of Israel for the judgment of the Lord” (v. 8). Therefore it was said that they that resisted God’s rulers, resisted God (Rom. 13:2; Num. 16:11).

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Ruler’s Duty to Enable Him to the Office.

1. To read and converse much in the book of the law.

“And it shall be when he sitteth upon the throne...that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book...And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left” (Deut. 17:18-20). “Set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people...such as know the laws of thy God” (Ezra 7:25). “And he brought forth the king’s son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony” (2 Kings 11:12). Therefore David was said to prevent the “dawning of the morning” (Psa. 119:147-148), and “night watches,” that he might meditate in the law. He called it the rejoicing of his heart, (v. 111). His portion and inheritance forever, which he loved above gold, yea more than much fine gold, (v. 127), and that his heart stood in awe of the word, and did not forget the law, (vv. 153, 161). And therefore it was said, he had more understanding than his teachers, or the ancients, (vv. 99, 100). The holy Scriptures being able to make wise, and thoroughly to furnish to every good work.

2. To wait upon God for the Spirit of rule and government, which was promised and given to rulers.

“And I will take the spirit which is upon thee, and put upon them; and they shall bear the burden...with thee...” and he “took of the spirit

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that was upon him, and gave it to the seventy..." and "when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied" (Num. 11:17, 25). "And the Lord said to Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thy hand upon him... And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient" (Num. 27:18, 20-21). "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him" (Deut. 34:9). "And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him [Othniel], and he judged Israel, and went out to war" (Judg. 3:9-10). "And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him [Samson]" (Judg. 14:6). "And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established" (1 Sam. 3:20). "And the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee... and thou... shalt be turned into another man... And it was so, that when he had turned his back... God gave him another heart... And the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them" (1 Sam. 10:6, 9-10). "And the Spirit of Lord came upon David from that day forward... But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul," &c. (1 Sam. 16:13-14). "And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment" (Isa. 28:5-6).

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Ruler's Duty (in General) in the Discharge of his Trust, Wherein Government Principally Consists.

1. To encourage the good and the virtuous. "For rulers are not a terror to the good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same" (Rom. 13:3). "He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend" (Prov. 22:11). "Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right" (Prov. 16:13). "Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well" (1 Pet. 2:14).

2. To suppress and punish the evildoer. "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem" (Job 29:14).

And “If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment...then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked” (Deut. 25:1). “But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid...for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil” (Rom. 13:4). “A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them” (Prov. 20:26). “A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment, scattereth away all evil with his eyes” (Prov. 20:8). “And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth” (Job 29:17). “Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked” (Exod. 23:7). “He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord” (Prov. 17:15). “These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect to persons in judgment. He that saith to the wicked, thou art righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him. But unto them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them” (Prov. 24:23-25).

CHAPTER VIII.

*Of the Ruler’s Duty in Particular, as to the Manner of the
Discharge of his Trust, viz.*

1. Courageously in the fear of God. “Thus shalt thou do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect heart...Deal courageously, and the Lord shall be with the good” (2 Chron. 19:9, 11). “Ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s” (Deut. 1:17).

2. Justly and righteously. “Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts” (2 Chron. 19:7). “Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates...and they shall judge the people with just judgment” (Deut. 16:18). “That which is altogether just shalt thou follow” (v. 20). “Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him” (Deut. 1:16). “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment,

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in meteyard, in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye have” (Lev. 19:35-36). “I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem” (Job 29:14). Not pervert judgment (Deut. 24:17), nor wrest it (Exod. 23:6; Deut. 16:19-20).

3. Impartially. “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour” (Lev. 19:15). “Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s” (Deut. 1:17). God “accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich” (Job 34:19).

4. Mercifully. “Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy (Prov. 20:28). And therefore David said, he would “sing of mercy and judgment” (Psa. 101:1). “Defend the poor and the fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy” (Psa. 82:3). “The king’s strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob” (Psa. 99:4). Forbear not “to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain” (Prov. 24:11). “He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the Lord” (Jer. 22:16). “I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy....I was eyes to the blind and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out” (Job 29:12-13, 15-16).

5. Equitably. “All things whatsoever that you would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12). Our law judges no man “before it hear him, and know what he doeth” (John 7:51). “For all manner of trespass, whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing, which another challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges...If a man deliver unto his neighbour an ox or an ass...and it die, or be hurt or driven away, no man seeing it: Then shall an oath of the Lord be between them both” (Exod. 22:9-11). “The cause which I knew not I searched out” (Job 29:16).

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6. Truly. “One witness shalt not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin...that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established” (Deut. 19:15). At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death, but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death” (Deut. 17:6-7).

7. Warrantably according to law, not arbitrarily. “According to the sentence of the law...and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence...to the right hand, nor to the left” (Deut. 17:11).

8. Uncorruptly, withholding the hands from bribes. “And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous” (Exod. 23:8). “Thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes” (Deut. 16:19). “The king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it” (Prov. 29:4). “Her rulers with shame do love, Give ye” (Hos. 4:18). “Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards...therefore thus saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies” (Isa. 1:23-24). “Woe unto them...Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!” (Isa. 5:22, 23). “Fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery” (Job 15:34). And Samuel’s two “sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment” (1 Sam. 8:3). “They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right” (Amos 5:12). “He that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes...He shall dwell on high” (Isa. 33:15-16).

9. Humbly. And he shall read in the law “all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God...That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren” (Deut. 17:19-20). “Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do justice and judgment, and then it was well with him?” (Jer. 22:15). “But he shall not multiply horses to himself” (Deut. 17:16). “And...I will punish the princes, and the king’s children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel” (Zeph. 1:8). And the king said, “Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the

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kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?” Whilst the word was in his mouth, the voice came from heaven against him, “And he was driven from men, and did eat grass as the oxen” (Dan. 4:30-33). “Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol...the King of heaven, all whose works are truth...and those that walk in pride he is able to abase” (v. 37). “But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him...And thou his son...hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this” (Dan. 5:20, 22). And Herod was arrayed in royal apparel, and sitting upon his throne made an oration. “And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost” (Acts 12:21-23).

10. To stand far off from violence and oppression. “Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage” (Mic. 2:1-2). “Thus speaketh the Lord, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother. And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor” (Zech. 7:9-10). “I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them” (Num. 16:15). “Behold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord...whose ox...or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind my eyes?...I will restore it” (1 Sam. 12:3). “And they said, thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man’s hand” (v. 4). “Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate” (Prov. 22:22). Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan... which oppress the poor, which crush the needy...The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness...that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fishhooks” (Amos, 4:1-2). “The prince that wanteth understanding is also a great oppressor: but he that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days” (Prov. 28:16). The Lord by the prophet Samuel set the oppression of the kings of the nations, as an argument to deter them from that government (1 Sam. 8). “I will be a swift witness...

against those that oppress the hireling...the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right” (Mal. 3:5). They are God’s servants for good, not hurt (Rom. 13:4).

11. To attend diligently and constantly upon his trust. “And let them judge the people at all seasons” (Exod. 18:22). “He that ruleth, with diligence” (Rom. 12:8). “For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing” (chap. 13:6).

CHAPTER IX.

Of the People’s Duty to their Magistrates, in the Rules Following.

1. To yield subjection and obedience to them, with reverence and fear. “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God” (Rom. 13:1). “He is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake” (vv. 4-5). “Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work” (Titus 3:1). “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake.... For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men....Fear God. Honour the king” (1 Pet. 2:13-15, 17).

2. To pay them tribute. “For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing” (Rom. 13:6). “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour” (Rom. 13:7).

3. To pray and give thanks for them. “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour” (1 Tim. 2:1-3).

4. Not to curse, revile, or speak evil of the ruler. “Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people” (Acts 23:5). “Thou shalt not

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revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people” (Exod. 22:28). “Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter” (Eccl. 10:20). “Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities” (Jude 8). “But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power...bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord” (2 Pet. 2:10, 11). “Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the Lord shall return thy wickedness upon thy own head” (1 Kings 2:44). Miriam for her unseemly carriage to Moses, was struck leprous, and thrust out of the camp seven days (Num. 12; 15:20-41²²).

5. Not to be stubborn, disobedient, or presumptuous towards them. “According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline...to the right hand nor to the left. And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest...or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously” (Deut. 17:11-13). “And whosoever will not do the law of thy God...let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death...banishment, or to confiscation” (Ezra 7:26). “But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people” (Num. 15:30).

6. Not seditious or rebellious against them. “Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation” (Rom. 13:2). Korah and his company “rose up before Moses...and they gathered themselves together against Moses...and said, Ye take too much upon you” &c. (Num. 16:1-3). “And it came to pass as he had made an end of speaking...that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses...And all that appertained to them, went down alive unto the pit,” &c. (vv. 31-33). Which are proposed as an example of vengeance (Jude 11).

²² [The 1663 & 1708 originals read, “*Numb.* 12. 15. vers. 20. to the end.”]

CHAPTER X.

Of the Great Blessing Righteous Rulers are to a People; Held Out in the Characters and Resemblances Following.

1. From the comfort and blessing that attends them, [they are] compared to the morning light, and fruitful showers of rain. “He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning...without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain” (2 Sam. 23:3-4). “And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain” (Job 29:23). “He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor....He shall come down like the rain upon the mown grass: as thshowers that water the earth” (Psa. 72:4, 6).

2. From their representing God in his attributes, [they are] called gods. “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken” &c. (John 10:34-35). “Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people” (Exod. 22:28).

3. From their paternal love and regard to the people [they are] called fathers. “And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers” (Isa. 49:23). “Until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel” (Judg. 5:7). Therefore Christ Jesus in his kingly government [is] called “The everlasting Father” (Isa. 9:6). “And he hath made me a father to Pharaoh...and a ruler throughout all the land” (Gen. 45:8).

4. From their pastoral care of leading, feeding, and protecting his people, [they are] called shepherds. “He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands” (Psa. 78:70-72). “Spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people?” (1 Chron. 17:6). Christ’s kingly rule [is] therefore held forth under this term, “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs

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with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young” (Isa. 40:11). “And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince amongst them” (Ezek. 34:23-24). “And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd” (Ezek. 37:24).

5. From their natural care to prevent and allay distempers that may arise to annoy their peace, [they are] called physicians. “When a man shall take hold of his brother...saying, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler...In that day he shall swear, saying, I will not be a healer...make me not a ruler of the people” (Isa. 3:6-7).

6. From their protection and shelter, that by their wise conduct they extend to the people, [they are] called shields. “The princes of the people are gathered together...for the shields of the earth belong unto God” (Psa. 47:9). So Hos. 4:18.²³ “And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge” (Judg. 2:18). Therefore Josiah, that good king, is said to be the breath of their nostrils (Lam. 4:20). And of David: “but now thou art worth ten thousand of us: therefore now it is better that thou succour us out of the city” (2 Sam. 18:3). “And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest” (Isa. 32:2).

CHAPTER XI.

Of the Promised Blessing that is to Attend the Latter Days in a Righteous Rule and Ruler.

1. In restoring the law to its primitive luster and glory.²⁴ “The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable....Who among you will give ear to this? who will hearken and hear for the time to come?” (Isa. 42:21, 23). “And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the

²³ [Possibly Hos. 2:18 is intended here.]

²⁴ [The author foresees the reinstatement of Theonomic rule in the latter days.]

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law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Mic. 4:2).
“Remember ye the law of Moses” (Mal. 4:4).

2. In restoring judges as at the first; as in the best times, whether of Moses, or of David, and Solomon. “And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city” (Isa. 1:26). “I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness” (Isa. 60:17). “And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them” (Jer. 30:21). “And my princes shall no more oppress my people” (Ezek. 45:8). “And no oppressor shall pass through them any more” (Zech. 9:8).

But before we proceed to the next head, take here a passage out of one *Ferarius*, a commentator upon Isa. 1:26, which providence hath brought to my hand, not unseasonable for thy perusal.

Isa. 1:26: “*And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning*” &c.

Upon these words *Ferarius* a commentator, lately set out by public authority, hath this observation:

What is this, saith he, at the *first*, and at the *beginning*? That is *anciently*, of *old*; meaning such as *Moses*, *Joshua*, *Samuel*, and the like; for those were properly called judges, and under them the commonwealth was much better governed, than under kings, except David, and the beginning of Solomon. For those words of the people were displeasing unto the Lord, when they said, *give us a king*. We must therefore note, that anciently those were called judges, who had not regal power, so as by their own authority, to raise taxes, to levy soldiers, to press servants, and the like, which they can do who have supreme and absolute dominion. But judges then, were only the assertors and defenders of the public liberty. For when the people were oppressed by their enemies, God presently raised up some man who should set them free, and recover their liberty for them. To this we may add, that their power was not transmitted to their posterity, like that of kings, but out of what family and tribe he pleased, God chose one to be a judge. And therefore when the people did demand a king of Samuel, and would be contented with judges no longer, God answered him, *they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them*. Intimating that in the time of the judges, God himself reigned; not as the kings of this world do use to do,

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who moved by pride and ambition, as if they were lords, do rule their subjects after their own will, and by military forces, and a pompous train of attendants, do overawe their kingdoms. Whereas God himself did govern his people by these judges; who being filled with the Holy Spirit, abode in their own houses and built no cities, nor castles, nor stately palaces for themselves, nor desired the empty glory and vain splendour of a court. And therefore Abimelech, who that he might have supreme dominion, did hire soldiers, and keep a guard, and set himself forth with an unwonted kind of magnificence, he is in Scripture styled a king, Judg. 9. But Gideon did clean otherwise, who when the people offered him, that *he should be their king, and his son after him*, answered, *I will not rule over you, nor shall my son: the Lord shall rule over you*. Therefore it is observable, that the Lord here doth not say, he will restore their *princes*, and their *lords*, but their *judges* and *counsellors*, who should govern the commonwealth with greater mercy and mildness.

Again, it is observable, when judges and counsellors are thus restored, then it is said, *the city shall be called the faithful city, the city of righteousness*. It is good magistrates that make a city good; for such is the nature of human frailty, that, without the inspection of another, it cannot be contained in its duty. And those who thus can restrain and govern a people, are only given by God, who when he is angry with a people, gives *children to be their princes, and babes to rule over them*, childish, effeminate, and foolish men, who being unskilled in the arts of government, suffer their people to destroy each other by luxury, and oppression (Isa. 3:4-5).

Thus far Ferarius, among the critical writers upon Isaiah. Which may be left to the reader without a comment; for if the mere force and evidence of truth could make a Jesuit and a Spaniard speak thus much, it is evident that gospel times, for which that prophecy was calculated, do require another kind of magistracy, than as yet the world hath been happy with: for the fulfilling of which promise, it is the saints' duty daily to pray.

3. In restoring peace, judgment, justice and righteousness. “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall he called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end,

upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6-7). “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.... And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb” &c. “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:1-6, 9). “Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king’s son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor” &c. “In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth” (Psa.72:1-4, 7). “For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river” &c. (Isa. 66:12). “And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times” (chap. 33:6).

CHAPTER XII.

Of the Judgment and Curse Attending No Rule, or an Evil Ruler.

1. The evil of anarchy, where no rule is.

“In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judg. 17:6). “For behold the Lord...doth take away...the stay and the staff....The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient,” &c. “And...give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people

shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable” (Isa. 3:1-5). “Wherefore...holdest [thou] thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he? And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, that have no ruler over them?” (Hab. 1:13-14).

2. The evil and judgment of weak rulers.

“And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them” (Isa. 3:4). “Woe unto thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!” (Eccl. 10:16). “Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished” (Eccl. 4:13). “For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor” (v. 14). “As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them” (Isa. 3:12).

3. The evil and curse of wicked rulers; who instead of suppressing unrighteousness, and executing vengeance upon the evildoer, are found themselves, either:

3.1. Drunkards, unclean, deceitful, profane, idolaters, oppressing, bloody, and blasphemous persons. “They make the king glad with their wickedness, and the princes with their lies” (Hos. 7:3). “In the day of our king the princes have made him sick with bottles of wine” (v. 5). “Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law? They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood” (Psa. 94:20-21). “Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain” (Ezek. 22:27). “Ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock” (Amos 6:12). “Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy” (Amos 4:1). “They that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day is blasphemed” (Isa. 52:5). “Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them” (Isa. 1:23). “They sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes; That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek” (Amos 2:6-7).

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3.2. Or protectors, encouragers, or favorers of such. “The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted” (Psa. 12:8). “If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked” (Prov. 29:12). “Not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them” (Rom. 1:32). Who instead of being like fathers, shepherds, shields, &c. are compared by the Holy Spirit to the unclean ravenous beasts and creatures following, *viz.*

3.2.1. To lions. “As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people” (Prov. 28:15). “And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion” (2 Tim. 4:17). “Her princes within her are roaring lions” (Zeph. 3:3).

3.2.2. To bears. “As...a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler” (Prov. 28:15). “And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear” (Dan. 7:5, with v.17).

3.2.3. To bulls. “Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round” (Psa. 22:12). “Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy” &c. (Amos 4:1).

3.2.4. To dragons. “Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?” (Isa. 51:9), *viz.*, Pharaoh (Ezek. 29:3-4). “He hath swallowed me up like a dragon” *viz.*, Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 51:34). “And behold a great red dragon” (Rev. 12:3).

3.2.5. To serpents. “In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and; he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea” (Isa. 27:1).

3.2.6. To leopards. “And lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings” (Dan. 7:6). “And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard” (Rev. 13:2).

3.2.7. To wolves. “Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain” (Ezek. 22:27). “Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves” &c. (Zeph. 3:3).

3.2.8. To foxes. “And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox” (Luke 13:32).

3.2.9. To dogs. “For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me....Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog” (Psa. 22:16, 20).

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3.2.10. To fishers and hunters. “Behold I will send for many fishers...and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them” (Jer. 16:16). “And makest men as the fishes of the sea” &c. “They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag” (Hab. 1:14-15).

3.2.11. To briars, and thorns, and brambles. “The prince...and the judge asketh for a reward” &c. “The best of them is as a brier, the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge” (Mic. 7:3-4). “And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king” &c. (Judg. 9:15).

3.2.12. To thieves and robbers. “Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers?” (Isa. 42:24). “Companions of thieves” (chap. 1:23).

3.2.13. To a rod, staff, axe, saw, plague. “O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation...Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?” &c. (Isa. 10:5, 15). “Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war” (Jer. 51:20).

3.2.14. To devils. “Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried...and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is” (Rev. 2:10, 13). “The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them” (chap. 11:7). “And the great dragon...called the Devil, and Satan...was cast out” (chap. 12:9).

CHAPTER XIII.

Of the People’s Duty Under Wicked Rulers, Both Towards God and Them.

1. Towards God.

1.1. To be sensible of God’s hand, that thereby is in judgment lifted up against them for sin. “And I will set my face against you, and...they that hate you shall reign over you” (Lev. 26:17). “And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies” (Judg. 2:14). “Because thou servedst

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not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck” &c. (Deut. 28:47-48). “Also Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight” (2 Kings 17:19-20). “O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets” (Isa. 10:5-6). “Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law” &c. (Isa. 42:24). “For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof” (Prov. 28:2). “And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them. Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand. Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity” (Psa. 106:41-43). “And when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries” (2 Chron. 12:7-8).

1.2. To accept of the punishment, and be humbled under God’s mighty hand. “If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity” &c. (Lev. 26:40-41). “I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I

have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me” (Mic. 7:9). “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time” (1 Pet. 5:6).

1.3. To repent and turn from the provoking sin. “If they sin against thee...and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives...and make supplication...saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies...and pray unto thee” &c. “Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication” (1 Kings 8:46-48). “At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them” (Jer. 18:7-8). “We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments” &c. “O Lord to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses” &c. (Dan. 9:5-9).

1.4. To cry unto the Lord for help and deliverance. “And the children of the Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning” &c. “And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them” (Exod. 2:23-25). “And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows” (Exod. 3:7-8). “For it repented the Lord because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them” (Judg. 2:18). “And when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel” (Judg. 3:9). “For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper” (Psalm 72:12). [Note also:] Psalm 83:11; Deut. 4:27-30. See Psalm 12:5: “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy” &c.

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1.5. To groan more earnestly for the righteous rule and dominion of Jesus Christ, who shall therefore be the “desire of [all] nations;” who will judge the people righteously, and break in pieces the oppressor, in whose days the righteous shall flourish, Rev. 6:9-11; Psa. 72. “And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts” (Hag. 2:7). “For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God...For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together” &c. “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:19, 22-23).

2. Towards the evil rulers themselves.

2.1. To bewail their abominations, and stand off from their defilements. “Go through the midst of the city...and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof” (Ezek. 9:4). “Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone” (Hos. 4:17). “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11).

2.2. To pray for them as enemies and persecutors, for their restraint and conversion. “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4). “And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge” (Acts 7:60).

2.3. To own our subjection to them, only as to a plague, judgment, and curse, groaning and complaining under the burden, as under the lion’s paw. “Behold we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it. And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us...over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress” (Neh. 9:36-37).

2.4. Not to confederate with them, or engage to their upholding, by oath, covenant, &c. “Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts” &c. (Isa. 8:12-13). “Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord” (2 Chron. 19:2). “They strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return

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from his wickedness” (Jer. 23:14). “Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you: we bless you in the name of the Lord” (Psa. 129:8). “In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord” (Psa. 15:4). Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins” (Rev. 18:4). “But above all things, my brethren, swear not” (Jam. 5:12). “Israel then shall dwell in safety alone” (Deut. 33:28). [See also] Esther 3:8.

For:

2.4.1. If we have sworn or covenanted, then we are solemnly bound, which God will require at our hands. “Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head”—though made with wicked Nebuchadnezzar—(Ezek.17:18-19).

2.4.2. They swear to a plague; as before, Lev. 26:17—“they that hate you shall reign over you.”

2.4.3. It is against promised mercies, Isa. 1:26: “And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.”

2.4.4. Because it would be in deceit and hypocrisy, which is so abhorring to the Lord. “Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully” (Psa. 24:4). “For our transgressions are multiplied before thee,” &c. “In transgressing and lying against the Lord,” &c. “Conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood” (Isa. 59:12-13). “And let none of you imagine evil...against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord” (Zech. 8:17). “And I will come near to you in judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers,” &c. (Mal. 3:5).

2.5. To use all lawful means to be delivered from their violence.

2.5.1. Either by hiding and obscuring in the place. Moses was hid from Pharaoh’s pursuers three months (Exod. 2:2; Acts 7:20; Heb. 11:23). David hid himself, with his men, from Saul’s furious pursuit (1 Sam. 22:1-2; 23:13, 16, 19, 24, 29; 26:1). The prophets were hid “by fifty in a cave” (1 Kings 18:4, 13). Jotham hid

himself from Abimelech (Judg. 9:5). Joash and his nurse was hid from Athaliah's rage (2 Kings 11:2). Jeremiah and Baruch was hid by the Lord (Jer. 36:26). "Jesus hid himself" (John 8:59).

2.5.2. Or by flight into other parts for shelter. As the priests, Levites, and people of Israel fled from Jeroboam, leaving their possessions, and joined themselves with Rehoboam, strengthening the kingdom of Judah (2 Chron. 11:14-17). David to Gath (1 Sam. 27:3-6), &c. Joseph and Mary with the child into Egypt, from Herod, (Matth. 2:13-14).

2.5.3. By open or secret resistance, when the providence of God makes way for the same: As in the time of the judges, when the people willingly offered themselves (Judg. 5:2, 16-17), with the judges raised up for their deliverance, to oppose and resist the present tyrants that were over them (Judg. 3:8, 9, 15, 20). Those also in David's time that joined to him, in opposition to Saul and his house (1 Chron. 12). Jehoiada and the people of Judah resisting Athaliah in behalf of Joash (2 Kings 11:4 &c). Hezekiah was said to rebel against the king of Assyria in not serving him; and this was done when the Lord was with him, and prospered him, and the issue proved very happy.

[*Some Queries and Answers Relating to Christian Magistracy*]

1. *Query.* But it is queried, that though here are many good rules and precepts laid down, relating to magistracy and government, yet since these are given to the Jews (a peculiar, distinct, and typical people) for the ordering and managing their commonwealth, how do these belong to the nations? And how can they be properly urged as rules or institutions for that great ordinance of magistracy amongst them?

1.1. *Answ.* First: It will behoove all those that plead subjection to magistracy as God's ordinance, upon a conscientious bottom [basis], to bring some institution for it out of God's word, which only can make an ordinance, and bind the conscience, which if they do, it must necessarily be either some institution given to his people, or to the nations; but of any such rules, directions, laws, statutes, ordinances given to the nations to direct them in government, we read not; and therefore it is said, Psa. 147:19-20, "*He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them.*" Therefore will it behoove any of the nations, that would prove their

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government divine, as founded upon the Scriptures, to come up to this scriptural pattern, as well for the supremacy as subjection, if they would lay any obligation upon conscience.

Secondly: That it is no more improper for the nations to have recourse to the Scriptures for rules for the government of their bodies and outward man, than for their souls and inward, for civil as well as religious policy, for righteousness as well as holiness. All scripture being given by divine inspiration, “and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” And so though most of the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, were written to the Jews—for to them chiefly “were committed the oracles of God” (Rom. 3:2)—yet are universally extensive over the whole world. And it is to be observed, that though God from heaven by his own mouth gave these rules of government to the Jews, yet was it the privilege of any of the nations as proselytes to come under that government and sovereignty that the Lord Christ shall have in this kingdom.

But:

Thirdly: and more specially it is observed, that the rules, directions, and qualifications here mentioned about government, do not relate to those types, ceremonies, or shadows that were given to them as a typical people. But [they] are matters of moral equity, agreeable to the light of nature, and law written in the heart, tending to the advancement of public justice and righteousness. And so are they perpetually binding to the end of the world, and that to all men that would preserve peace and righteousness. And therefore it is said, Deut. 4:5-8,

Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me. . . . Keep therefore, and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

And which laws, as well for their moral equity, as well as their divine authority, hath gained so much reputation in this nation,

that it is a maxim in the law, That no act of parliament, or law repugnant to the law of God, is of any force. And in the statute of 28th H. 8. chap. 7,²⁵ That no man of what estate, degree, or condition whatsoever, hath power to dispense with God's law, as all the clergy of the realm, and most part of the universities of Christendom, and we also affirm.²⁶ And further it is asserted, That against scripture, [neither] law, prescription, statute, nor custom may avail, and if any be brought in against it, they are void and against justice.²⁷ In the year 180, Lucius the first Christian king of Britain, wrote to Elutherius bishop of Rome, for the Roman laws, for the better settlement of his kingdom, who wrote to him, that:

The Roman laws of the emperors, we may at all times mislike, but the law of God by no means. By the Divine clemency you have of late received in your kingdom of Britain, the law and faith of Christ. You have with you the Old and New Testament. Out of them, (in God's name) by the counsel of your state, take you a law, and therewith by God's permission, govern your kingdom.²⁸

1.2. [*Answ.*] King Alfred began his laws thus, The Lord spake these words, &c., and so repeated the judicial laws, which he affirmed the best for the government of his kingdom, and so according to his law was his government blest above all other kings of the nations.

2. *Query*, But it is again queried, if such a magistracy only, is to be reputed God's ordinance, (to whom a conscientious subjection is to be paid) that is consonant to the institution and appointment of his word, as here laid down; what shall we say to those Scriptures that seem to hold out, not only that the heathen magistracy, so much different from this, is his ordinance; but that whoever is in possession of the power, however he get into the same, yet it is to be reputed God's ordinance, and to be conscientiously subjected to as such?

2.1. *Answ.* Though it may be needless to spend much further time to answer this, which is so fully cleared in the discourse already, wherein this great ordinance of magistracy is so fully discovered, and plainly asserted from God's word, which can only make out his ordinance, and may be sufficient to every judicious mind to evince

²⁵ [i.e. the statute book of the "28th regnal year of Henry VIII, Chapter 7."]

²⁶ [Henry] Finch, *lib.* 1. p.3. [This and the two following footnotes, relate to positions in the text inferred from the marginalia of the 1663 edition. They do not correspond with the 1795 edition.]

²⁷ Doctor and Student [Historic dialog].

²⁸ [John] Speed, *lib.* 6. chap. 19. p.103.

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what is the contrary (the holding out of light being the best way to discover darkness, and the opening of truth, to detect errors). Yet for the better clearing hereof, and the removing (if it may be) those thick clouds, which either ignorance, interest, custom, received opinion, prejudice, or the offence of the cross, may have cast before men's eyes, we shall take this method in the answer of the query: *First*, we shall give a reply to those arguments brought to prove the heathen magistrate to be God's ordinance; *Secondly*, we shall answer those arguments about the possessory power.

First: As to the arguments usually offered about the heathen magistrate, to prove him to be God's ordinance, they are these that follow.

2.1.1. Because he is said to be of God, or to proceed from him, Dan. 2:37-38; 5:18-19; 2 Chron. 36:23; Ezra 1:2; Prov. 8:15-16.

2.1.2. Because some are said to be anointed by him, Isa. 45:1; 1 Kings 19:15; 2 Chron. 36:23.

2.1.3. Because the saints are bound to obey them, Titus 3:1; Rom. 13:1-2, 5; 1 Pet. 2:13-15.

2.1.4. Because saints enjoyed places under them, Esther 2:17; 8:15.

2.1.5. Because the saints prayed for them, honored and blessed them, 1 Tim. 2:2; Gen. 47:7, 10; Dan. 6:21.

2.1.6. Because saints applied to them for justice, Acts 25:10, 12; Acts 26:32.

2.1.7. Because they paid custom and tribute to them, Matt. 17:24; Matt. 22:17, 21; Luke 2:1, 4-5; Rom. 13:6.

2.2. *Answer*. First, in general: that the heathen magistrate was God's ordinance, *viz.* the ordinance of his providence is owned; but not the ordinance of his precept. For there is the ordinance of God's providence, and the ordinance of his precept. The one, ordering all things that cometh to pass in the world; the other, only that which is good and acceptable in his sight. And that it is not the ordinance of this precept, may appear by the reasons following:

First: Because there is no institution for it in the word of God; no precept being given to the heathen concerning their magistrates,

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but they are left in that , as in all other things, *walking after their own lusts*,²⁹ *lying in wickedness, and living in the vanity of their own minds*,³⁰ under the regiment and conduct of the devil, who is therefore said to have the kingdoms of this world (as the ruler, prince, king, and god thereof) at his disposal; as Luke 4:6; Eph. 2:2; 6:12; John 14:30; Rev. 13:2; 2 Cor. 4:4. [See also] Job 1:12-19, where the devil is said to order the several regiments and bands against Job.

Secondly: Because the heathen magistracy stands in direct opposition and contradiction to God's magistracy. The latter being appointed and ordained for a blessing to mankind in general, and to the saints in particular, bounded by wholesome equal rules, that answer the law of God and light of nature, in the distribution of equal and impartial justice. Whereas the former was appointed, or rather permitted, for a curse to mankind in general, and a scourge and plague to the saints in particular; in contradiction to the law of God, and light of nature; being from the beginning a lawless, boundless thing, that, in an arbitrary and tyrannous way, hath acted according to their own lusts, over both bodies and souls, for the advancement of particular persons and interests, in fleshly pride, state, and glory, to the unjust peeling,³¹ oppressing, and suppressing the people in general, contrary to the light of nature, and law of God: And to the truth whereof, besides the sad experience that every age produces, you have this Scripture evidence.

First: You have God himself by the prophet Samuel, amply describing the nations' government[s], to deter his people from taking pattern from them in their unrighteous model.³² Wherein you have at large the arbitrariness, tyranny, pride, covetousness, and oppression of their kings, and customs, declared, and what a howling curse it would prove to them if they embraced the same.

Secondly: In the same case you have Jotham in his parable (to take the people from that hankering after the nations' government[s]) significantly holding out the nature of that constitution; declaring it was fit for nothing but the useless, sapless, aspiring, scratching bramble to engage in it; that neither the olive, fig-tree, nor vine, that had any virtue, sweetness, or savor, would meddle with it, under hazard

²⁹ 1 Thess. 4:5.

³⁰ Eph. 4:17, 18.

³¹ i.e. plundering or pillaging

³² 1 Sam. 8.

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of losing all; thereby showing that it was fit only for the worst of men, and unmeet for any good man to intermeddle with. And therefore Gideon refused it, when it was offered him (Judg. 8:22-23). Whereas God's ordinance requires the best of men, *viz.* men of truth, fearing God, and hating covetousness, &c., who are under promises to be bettered by them, and to receive virtue and spirit from them. And of this sort were all the four monarchs, not only from Nimrod the first, to Nebuchadnezzar the last of Babel's monarchs³³ (who raised up, pulled down, killed and kept alive whom they would), but all the rest of them, whose ambitious, tyrannous, and cruel natures are therefore held forth by those apt resemblances of fierce, cruel, ravenous, unclean beasts, as lions, bears, leopards, dragons, yea devils themselves.

Thirdly: Because when God's people, notwithstanding these cautions given, would imitate the nations in their heathenish constitutions, they were said to reject God and his sovereignty,³⁴ in rejecting that wholesome constitution that he had appointed for their good. But surely, had that heathenish constitution been of God, it would not be a rejecting of God to embrace it; none of God's ordinances do use to clash and interfere with each other.

Fourthly: Because when given them by his hand of providence, it is declared to be done in wrath and judgment, and as a fruit of their great sin and rebellion—which none of God's ordinances were—as was testified by that great thundering and lightning,³⁵ as a token of his great displeasure and their great transgression, which they also in their confession declared.

Fifthly: When as a fruit of their sin, that National Constitution is given them, God disowns it to be of him. Hos. 8:4: "*They have set up kings, but not by me...princes, and I knew it not.*" *Viz.* though by his providential ordering he had in wrath given them their desire for their hurt, yet he disclaims the Constitution to be of him, or according to his preceptive will.

Sixthly: Because it is that which is influenced by the devil, and hath stood in enmity and opposition to the Lord in his ways, worship, ordinances, and people all along, that have improved their utmost interests to invent and establish ways of wickedness and idolatry, to

³³ Dan. 5:19.

³⁴ 1 Sam. 8.

³⁵ 1 Sam. 12:17-19.

the cruel slaughtering of all that refused to bow to their cursed idols; who killed the prophets, the Lord Christ himself, and murdered his saints and followers ever since, and will be found warring and fighting against him, till they are subdued and utterly vanquished by him; who must break down and dash in pieces the image-government, overcome the beast and his ten horns. But surely God and Christ will never destroy their own ordinances, standing in enmity against them.

[Objections Answered]

1. *Object.* But it is said to be of God, and to proceed from him, according to those scriptures cited in the first argument.

1.1 *Answ.* It is granted to be said to be given of God, but if duly examined, it will be found [to be] no other than his providential disposal; and so was he said to give to the devil power over Job (Job 1:12). The evil spirits had power and commission over Ahab's prophets (1 Kings 22:22). And the robbers have power to the spoiling of others; "into whose hand God bringeth abundantly" (Job 12:6). "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers?" (Isa. 42:24). Who is said to give to the devil the kingdoms of men (Luke 4:6). And to the beast power over the saints, and over all kingdoms, tongues and nations (Rev. 13:5, 7). He having put into the hearts of the kings of the earth to "fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled" (Rev. 17:17). Which giving must relate to the giving of his hand and providence, not to the giving of his word and precept.

2. *Object.* But some were said to be anointed by God, as Hazael and Cyrus.

2.1. *Answ.* As for Hazael's anointing, whether that ceremony past upon him is not manifest, but the end of such a setting him apart, is declared (not to make him God's magistrate, but his rod), *viz.*, to be appointed a particular scourge and plague to Israel, being designed to dog's work, to rip up women with child, dash their children, slay their young men, fire their strong holds, &c.³⁶

And as for Cyrus, who is called God's anointed,³⁷ it appears he was therefore so called, from the service he was designed for, *viz.*, to be a deliverer and restorer of his people from their captivity, and to help forward the rebuilding of the temple. The term *anointed* usually signifying in scripture,

³⁶ 2 Kings 8:11, 12, with 1 Kings 19:16.

³⁷ Isa. 45:1.

an ordering, sanctifying, and setting apart to some work or business. Jesus Christ was God's anointed,³⁸ and so are the saints and believers called his anointed ones.³⁹

3. *Object.* But the saints are exhorted to obey, and to be subject to such as the scriptures mentioned do require.

3.1. *Ans.* Wheresoever voluntary and conscientious subjection is required, it is to the right ordinance of magistracy. It is true, the saints as well as the nations, were, for a season, to be given up into the hands of such powers, by the fore-appointment of God, who were to subdue, overcome and rule over them, as did the Egyptians, Philistines and Babylonians of old, over his people for their iniquity. And that, during this slavery and bondage, there was to be a patient subjection to the overpowering force, relating both to bodies and goods, thereby kissing the rod, owning the stroke, not murmuring, kicking, or repining against God's providence. Which subjection under all those cruel tyrants and taskmasters, cannot rationally be conceived to be voluntary, or out of conscience, but constrained, as being for their sin under the lion's paw, and subjected to the power of the prevailing robber, groaning under the oppression, and waiting of the day of deliverance, expecting the righteous rulers, that are to be (according to promise) a blessing to the creation, when the oppressor shall cease, and the evil beasts be put out of the land. When, instead of subjection to, and obeying such, there shall be a shaking off the yoke, yea, a binding "*their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron*" (Psa. 149:6-8).

4. *Object.* But saints enjoyed places under them, as Joseph, Esther, Nehemiah, Daniel, &c.

4.1. *Ans.* These were extraordinary persons, raised up by an extraordinary Spirit, for extraordinary ends in extraordinary times; which are no precedents to us, without the like extraordinary call, and so no proof to the assertion; for examples prove not otherwise than they are brought to some known rule. For by the examples of Abraham, Jacob, David, and many of the patriarchs of old, you might live in polygamy, enjoy concubines, put away wives for ordinary matters, &c. And it is to be observed, that in the instances given, these persons in their great places:
1. Kept the law of their God; 2. Served the work of their generation, for which they were raised up, acting for the saints;

³⁸ Psa. 105:15.

³⁹ 2 Cor. 1:21.

3. Defiled not themselves with the heathenish customs;
4. Acted against no good;
5. Engaged to no evil.

5. *Object.* But the saints prayed for them, honored them, according to the Scripture instances.

5.1. *Answ.* As for praying for them, that was no otherwise than for all other men; and limited also by the apostle in urging that duty, as to the ends thereof, *viz.*, That the saints might live “a quiet and peaceable life” and that they might be converted, and “come unto the knowledge of the truth” that they might be saved, 1 Tim. 2:1-3—which no more proves them to be God’s ordinance, than the praying for all other enemies and persecutors.

And as for the titles of honor given to them, that no more ordains them than the contrary, *viz.*, dishonorable and ignoble titles (whereof there are divers instances to be given, terming them dogs, foxes, lions, serpent, devils &c.,) degrades them.

6. *Object.* But the saints address to them for justice.

6.1. *Answ.* As for addressing to them for justice, or an command so to do, we find not, but the contrary; the saints being expressly required not to carry their controversies unto them to decide; and the reason given, because they were wicked and unjust (1 Cor. 6:1-3).

And as for Paul’s appeal to Caesar, these particulars are to be observed in it as:
1. He was brought before the seat of judicature, he did not voluntarily come to them (Acts 23:23). 2. Being threatened to be murdered by his countrymen, who lay in wait by the way for him (Acts 23:14; 25:3), he claims the benefit of the heathen’s own law for his preservation, not for his adversaries accusation (Acts 25:11; 28:19), as though one should appeal to a thief, to save one’s self from murder; 3. His appeal to Caesar might be to get an opportunity to testify of Christ, and to preach the gospel at Rome, as the Lord had before declared to him he should, as Acts 23:11, and as he accordingly did.

7. *Object.* But Christ paid, and commanded tribute to be paid, and accordingly the saints did pay tribute to each power then in being, according to the Scripture instances given.

7.1. *Answ.* It is true Christ paid tribute, but yet with such cautions and considerations, as leave the title unstated, and as much undetermined, as if never any such thing had been mentioned or done. He paid it, but wherefore? Not for conscience, but for wrath’s sake, that

he might not offend them (Matt. 17:27), declaring withal that he as a free man was imposed upon contrary to right.

And as for his command to pay it, as urged from Matt. 22:21, it will be found to be no such thing; leaving them in a great loss in that matter, that came to ask such a catching question of him, as Luke 20:26, where it is said, “They could not take hold of his words...and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.”

And for any of those instances of the saints going up to be taxed, and paying of tribute, they cannot otherwise be judged than as forced acts, and as badges of their Roman yoke and bondage, as has already been made appear.

*As to the Arguments usually brought from Rom. 13, to Prove the Powers in Possession to be God’s Ordinance.*⁴⁰

1. *Object.* But it is said, Rom. 13:1, “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers” and gives the reason, “For there is no power but of God: the powers that are, are ordained of God.” Where the tyrannical Roman Caesars, the powers in possession, are owned to be the ordinance of God, and that because of their said possession, to whom therefore, all are required to be subject for conscience sake.

To this I have little more to say than what is learnedly and fully answered by Mr. Gee in his treatise entitled, *The Divine Right and Original of the civil Magistrate from God*; to which I would refer the reader for his better satisfaction. But because the book is large, and it may not easily be obtained, I have presumed hereafter, (though unusual) to insert the substance of his said arguments upon this question, as I had collected the same out of the said book, for my own satisfaction, which you may please to take as follows, and as near as may be in his own words.

In answering this great question, this method shall be observed:

First, to give the sense and true meaning of the terms in the text, *viz.*, 1. What is meant by *power*? 2. What by being *of God*? 3. What by their being *ordained of God*?

Secondly, to give several arguments from Scripture to clear the same.

1.1. By *power* we are to understand *authority*, the word being ἐξουσία, *potestas*, which signifies such a power as consists in *right*, *interest* and *propriety*, opposed to *unrighteousness* and *unlawful*; not δύναμις, *potentia*,

⁴⁰ [This subheading has been formed from a sentence at the same location in the originals. The word “Secondly” has been omitted from the beginning of the sentence.]

which signifies mere *mightiness* or *ability*, [as] opposed to *weakness* and *impotency*; the latter being a natural power consisting in vigor and strength; the former a moral power, consisting in right and title; and therefore relates to dominion, wherein right, title, and interest lies; and so is the word taken for the most part, generally throughout the scriptures.

Natural power is found not only in man, but beasts. *Moral* is proper to reasonable creatures only; these are both in the ruler, yet so as the natural power is more in the servants and subjects, though the moral power is in the magistrate, which natural is sometimes put forth against the moral; as in all uproars and usurpations. If natural power could oblige to obedience, the monarch was bound to resign his crown to the multitude, every commotion and rout were to be submitted to, and not repressed; the effect of the natural power is but to subject the conquered to an actual subduedness, to crouch down as a man doth to a lion under his paw, or a traveler to a highway robber. The effect of the moral is to subject the reason and conscience, being founded in the light of nature, and law of God. The strength of the moral lies in its word, more than the sword; in its *reason* more than *might*. It gives *law*⁴¹—the scepter going before the sword, and is that which legitimates it.

1.2. What [is meant by the phrase] “by God,” or “being of God”?

This phrase is of divers acceptations, *viz.* 1. There is a being *of his hand, work, or providence*; 2. [A being] *of his mouth, word, declaration*.

1.2.1 Of this *providential* being [*of God*]; it is that by which all things come to pass in the world: and thus the sinful acts of the creature are said to be *of him*, as Sampson’s unlawful desire of a wife (Judg. 14:3); Rehoboam’s unjust refusal (2 Chron. 10:13); Amaziah’s insolent rejection of Joash (2 Chron. 25:20). So God was said *to harden Pharaoh’s heart*; so he is said to put a *lying spirit into the mouth of Ahab’s prophets*, to lead men into temptation, to give up to strong delusion, to put into the heart to do evil. Not as if he positively acted these things, or efficaciously infused them into men, for he will do no iniquity. He tempts no man; but inasmuch as he leaves men to Satan, and themselves, so is it said to be *of him*. But such a being *of God* cannot be meant here [in Rom. 13:1].

1.2.2. Things are said to be *of his mouth, word, or declaration*, when he giveth forth his *law* or *precept*, and so no unrighteousness is

⁴¹ [The 1708 original has: “in its *Reason*, more than *Might*; which gives Law; the *Scepter* going before the *Sword*...” which seems confusing. Other originals are similar.]

of him, and he that doth not righteousness is not *of* him. In this sense must this being *of* God be here understood, *viz.*, *of his mouth and precept*.

1.3. What is meant by being *ordained of* God?

There is a twofold ordination (as before, a being) *of* God; one by his providence, whereby all things that come to pass in the world, are effected; and another by his appointment, or orderly disposal, much agreeable to the former. The first is the order of his counsel and proceeding in providence; the other is the order of his word or law given to men; the former to *all* creatures, the latter to *reasonable* creatures. The former orders all actions and things, the latter always appoints that which is good, and only that. By the latter Israel should have continued under Samuel's government, but⁴² they rejected God and him in choosing a king. Absalom should have been subject to his father, but he rebelled against him. Athaliah should have yielded obedience to the posterity of Ahaziah, but she usurped, and took the kingdom away from them to herself. The kings, rulers, and people, should have paid obedience to Jesus Christ, but they conspired against, and murdered him. The angels should have kept their first station, but they left their habitation. Unto this order of God is opposed all that confusion which sin brings into the world, and which is disclaimed by him, he being "not the author of confusion, but of peace" (1 Cor. 14:33). And so by the former, *viz.*, the ordinance of God's providence and counsel, the contrary to the order of the law cometh to pass. The Israelites reject Samuel; and so all the rest of the instances. Whereby it will appear, that *ordained* in the text, must relate to his *precept*, not to his *providence* only. For if taken to relate to the former, there is nothing peculiarly here spoken of than what is universally extensible to every other creature. The rebel may as well be said to be ordered of God, as the magistrate. The one being no more in this sense his ordinance, than the other, both being the product of his providence.

2. [The true meaning of the above terms in Rom. 13:1 is now established:]

So [we now see] that by *power* is not meant a mere *force*.

By being *of* God, [is] not [meant] a mere *act of possession*.

By *ordained*⁴³ *of* God, is not meant a mere *being of the order of his providence*.

⁴² [The word "but" has been substituted for the word "when" here, and in four similar instances below.]

⁴³ [Originals have "By *Ordinance of God*."]]

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Several arguments and reasons why present possession proves not God's ordination.

1. Because possession in every case, or anything possessible, gives not title; and that possession gives not title, is clear.

First: Because the power of right magistracy may be in one, and actual rule by providence in another; as in the cases of Joash and Athaliah; Solomon and Adonijah; David, Absalom and Sheba.⁴⁴

Secondly: Because God hath expressly disowned the being of them, that have been in present possession of command; as Hos. 8:4: "They have set up kings, but not by me...princes, and I knew it not." Hab. 2:5-6: Pronounce a woe to the king of Babylon (who had gathered to himself all nations, and heaped unto him all people) because he increased that which was not his. And in Amos 6:13, a threat is denounced against them that had taken to themselves horns by their own strength. Ezek. 21:25-27: the possessor there is disowned, and threatened to be removed, as having no right, that he might come whose right it is.

Thirdly: Because God hath expressly authorized and owned the act of rising up in arms, to expel them that have been in actual rule, in them that have been subject to them: as [in] Judg. 2:16, 18, the Lord raised up judges to deliver them from their present oppressors that ruled over them; as [in] Judg. 3:15, God is said to raise up Ehud; and [in] chap. 4:9, it is said the Lord sold Sisera (the present possessor) into the hand of a woman; 2 Kings 3:4, &c., Jehoram against Mesha king of Moab; 1 Chron. 22:22, those that sided with David against Saul.

Fourthly: Because of the many examples of persons taking up arms, and employed for the recovery of person, goods, and countries, out of the hands of them that have had the present possession of them—which could not be done, if dominion were founded by God in providential possession—as Gen 14:14, Abraham against the four kings that had possessed themselves of the spoil of Sodom, &c.; David

⁴⁴ 1 Chron. 33; 2 Sam. 20:21.

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against Absalom the present possessor (2 Sam. 18:1); Jonathan that went up to invade the Philistines in their possessions, &c. (1 Sam. 13:3-4).

2. Because providence, without a rule of God's word, signifies no allowance or disallowance from the Lord.

First: Because that which is herein attributed to providence, is by Scripture denied. Eccl. 9:1-2: "All things come alike to all:" none knowing "love or hatred by all that is before them."

Secondly: Because the putting anything to be a rule, beyond or further than Scripture, so as to make a law of God, which is not there delivered, denies the sufficiency and perfection thereof, which is perfect and ought not to be added to, or diminished from (Deut. 4:2; 2 Tim. 3:15).

Thirdly: Because God hath reprov'd his people for following providence without recourse to himself; their confederacies with Egypt, and leaning upon horses and armies, because strong (Isa. 30:1-2; 31:1).

Fourthly: Because providence in itself is so indistinct and various; as Eccl. 8:14. It happeneth to the just, "according to the work of the wicked"...and to the wicked "according to the work of the righteous." So that no argument can be made from it.

3. Because that the ordination spoken of in the text, is *preceptive*, not merely *providential*.

First: Because the nature of the power here spoken of, argues this to be the sense of the word, *ordained*, here; the power being not *natural*, but *moral*; and if so, then it must be ordained by his *precept*.

Secondly: From the nature of the subjection pressed to here; and for the enforcing hereof, this is the first and principal reason, *viz.*, because the powers are *of God*. Therefore the subjection is not to be a mere passive subjection, as under a burden and cross, but a free willing voluntary, and actual subjection, for conscience sake, which only *moral* duties ordered by God's word can require.

Thirdly: From the prohibition and penalty annexed to the resistance, *viz.*, "shall receive to themselves damnation." An ordinance of providence may be resisted—that is, endeavored to be prevented and altered—and no damnation incurred. Yea, such a resistance, many times, is the fulfilling of a man's duty; therefore must it be an ordination of *precept*.

Fourthly: That cannot be the sense of the term, *ordained of God*, which may be said of him that "resisteth the power" when he

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resists, and in respect of his so doing; and that cannot be the sense of that attribute, the *ordinance of God*, which may be spoken of the resister's act, in his resistance of the power. But to be in the place of power by *providence*, may be said of the resister of the power, then when he so resists; therefore that cannot be the sense of the term, *ordained of God*. Were not Absalom and Athaliah in the place of power by eventual⁴⁵ providence? And was not the one and the other a resister of the true power, and that by treachery and violence?

Fifthly: Because this cannot agree to every power intended by the text, because the providence of God doth often so order it, that the magistrate is not only disturbed, but ousted. As in the former instances, who can deny but that David and Joash were the powers meant in the text, which may befall any other lawful ruler. Wherefore if it cannot relate universally to every power, that it is ordered of God in an actual rule, we must take the text to mean some other ordinance.⁴⁶

Sixthly: From the end for which it is ordained, *viz.*, to be a terror not to good, but to evil works, “a revenger to execute wrath” upon the evildoer; which proves it not merely *providential*, for that always accomplishes its end. Providential ordination doth sometimes order the quite contrary, *viz.*, to be a punisher of the well-doer, and a scourge and plague to them, and an encourager to the wicked. Therefore must it relate to its *preceptive* ordination.

Seventhly: From the sense of the words, as they may be rendered word for word out of the Greek copy, *viz.*, *For the power is not, if not of God; and the powers that be of God, are ordained, viz.*, according to his ordinance, not their self-creation.

Eighthly: From the magistrate's duty, the ruler being, “not a terror to good works, but the evil...Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.” But he that without title is got into rule, cannot be capable of this; for being a self-created power, usurpation is an evil to be punished hereby.

Ninthly: From the contrary ends for which ordained, the ruler was appointed a “minister...for good,” the tyrant and usurper for evil. The removing usurpation, therefore said to be a mercy: Isa. 10:27; 14:15-16, &c. The contrary, the removing magistracy, a judgment: Isa. 3: 1-3, &c., Deut. 28:43, 48; Lev. 26; Psa. 106:4-5. [It is] One thing to be God's *rod, axe*,

⁴⁵ [The meaning seems to be: *by the eventuation of providence*.]

⁴⁶ [The edition of *The Mystery of Magistracy Unveiled* bound with Alexander Shields' *A Hind Let Loose* ends here with the words “THE END” appended. Anon., *The Mystery of Magistracy Unveiled*, in *A Hind Let Loose*, by Alexander Shiels [Shields] (Glasgow, 1797), <http://archive.org/details/hindletlooseorhi00shie>.]

saw, &c., another thing to be his *minister*. To be instruments of his *providence*, and instruments of his *ordinance*, very much differ. Those that were under the Chaldean monarchy are resembled to fishes and creeping things that have no ruler over them (Hab. 1:4).

Tenthly, Because the saints are forbidden to address to such rulers for judgment in their controversies, because they are wicked and unjust (1 Cor. 6:1-3).

3.1. *Object*. But they do much good, however unlawful in their entrance, yet they answer much the end of magistracy, in punishing many evil doers.

3.1.1 *Answ*. That cannot be good which has a bad principle. A government, for constitution good may, for the acts it puts forth, be bad; but a government for constitution bad, cannot for the acts it puts forth be good. For to the making of an action good, there must go: first, warrantableness of the matter done; secondly, a warrantable calling of the party to it. This may be an allegation to induce the subject to bear, and improve to the best what he cannot remedy. But it breeds no obligation on him to take such a ruler to be a power *ordained of God*, and so conscientiously submit to him as his lawful ruler.

4. In the next place, that this may appear no novel doctrine, take here following the judgments of several, both ancient and modern authors in the case.⁴⁷ [Authors] who do first deny that such a sense can be put upon the text, as some do urge from it. And, secondly, affirm that it may be lawful and warrantable, to resist a present possessor, and power that is in being—if unlawful, usurped, and tyrannous.

4.1 First some authors, that deny such a sense can be put upon the text.

Chrysostom on Rom. 13: “He speaks not of the prince but of the *thing itself*; wherefore he says not the *prince* is not but of God; but discourses of the thing itself, saying, the *power* is not but of God.”

Theophilact. “He speaks of the prince’s *office*, not of the *prince*. As when a man should say, a wife is joined to her husband *of God*.”

⁴⁷ [Quotes have been placed around the various passages in this section, only where an actual quotation—as distinct from a summarization, etc.—appears to be intended by our writer. In some cases it is not entirely clear.]

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He does not say that what man so-ever lies with a woman has her for his wife of God; but God has joined her to him that is married.”

Musculus. “It is to be noted, he does not say there is not a *prince* or *king* who is not of God, but the *power* is not but of God. For he speaks not of the abuse of the power, and the tyranny which many princes exercise, nor yet of those who by force break into power, *but of the power itself Divinely ordained*. Although every power be of God, yet every prince is not presently of God. It is written of some that they had been set up, but not by God.”

Panus.⁴⁸ “The duty of subjects towards the magistrate, is obedience; that if he be a *lawful* magistrate, they ought all to obey him” (Rom. 13:1).

The *Harmony of the Confessions of the [Faith of the Christian and] Reformed Churches*. “Although many horrible confusions grow from the disorder and madness of men, yet there is a lawful government, ordained by God” (Rom. 13:1).

Dr. Mayor. He moveth the question, whether the subjection in the text, be due to every power once up, either by right or by wrong? His answer is, the conscience is not bound to usurpers; but they may be removed again, as Jehoiada removed Athaliah, and set up the rightful king.

Dr. Hammond interprets it of obedience to the supreme powers rightly established and constituted; and that subjection is to be to the supreme governor, legally placed in that kingdom.

Mr. Bridges in answer to *Dr. Ferne [Fearne]*. The powers that be, *viz.*, so or so established by consent of man, are ordained of God to be obeyed; or it is God’s ordinance that men should be under government, and submit without resistance, to that kind of government they have by consent established. That other kind of tyranny or usurpation has no right, no ordination at all, and so no subjection due to it. There is in every ordained power, as well as God’s institution of it, and [an?] injunction of obedience to it, as man’s constitution of it.

Mr. Prynne. “The whole scope of the text in sum is only this: that Christians ought in conscience to be subject to all lawful

⁴⁸ [1663 edition has *Becanus*]

higher powers,” &c., “and not resist them in the execution of their just authority.”

Mr. Burroughs. “Let everyone be subject to the higher powers. Mark, it is not to *man* first, but to the *power*. It is not to the will of man, that hath power, but to the power of that man. Now the power, the authority, is that which a man has in a legal way.”

4.2 Secondly: Some other authors there are asserting that resistance against an unlawful occupant is just and lawful, with examples both Scriptural and others for the same.

King James in his remonstrance for the right of kings, &c. “The public laws make it lawful and free for any person to enterprise against any usurper of the kingdom. Every man, as Tertullian says, is a Soldier enrolled to bear arms against tyrants and public enemies.”

Chamier. “All citizens, or free subjects, have a right or warrant to rise up against tyrants, who by open force possess the kingdom.”

Dr. Willet. “When the kingdom is usurped without any right, as by Athaliah, or when the land is oppressed by foreign invaders; in these cases, there is less question to be made of resistance.”

Mr. Hooker. “In kingdoms hereditary, birth gives right unto sovereign dominion” &c. “Therefore in case it does happen, that without right of blood a man be possessed, all these new elections and investings are utterly void, and the possessor may be entered as a usurper.”

*Arnisaeris.*⁴⁹ “He who is a tyrant in title, the matter is plain, and determined by all without any difficulty, that he may be lawfully repulsed. Or if by force he be gotten into the throne, he may be warrantably thence removed; because he has not any whit of power which is legitimate and unto which resistance is forbidden for the fear of God or conscience sake, and therefore [he is] no further to be looked at than as an enemy.”

Treatise of Monarchy. “Be they [taken] captive or possessed at pleasure, they have no duty of obedience incumbent upon them. Neither do they sin in not obeying, nor do they resist Gods ordinance, if at any time of advantage they use force to free themselves from such a violent possession.”

Mr. Bridge [William Bridge]. “Mere conquest is nothing else but an unjust usurpation; and if the conqueror rules the whole kingdom, and keeps them under by conquest only, why may not the subjects rise and take arms to deliver themselves from the slavery?”

⁴⁹ [Henning Arnisaerus (Arniseus)?]

Augustine, P. Martyr, Grotius. “They that state and determine the question, *What is a just cause or ground of war?* laid down the quarrel *de rebus repetendis*, or for the recovery of what is injuriously invaded or occupied, as one good justifiable and necessary occasion of the taking up arms by prince or people. But if title follow possession, and all they the true proprietors and lords, or the powers ordained of God, that have the occupation or actual command of persons and places, it could not be. For there could be no war just for recovery, to dispossess men of what they hold, or to oust them of what they are seized upon.”

4.3 Examples of persons that have opposed, and disowned mere possessory powers.

First: Those that fell from Saul to David (1 Chron. 12:38-39).

Secondly: Those that acted for David, against the possessor Absalom, and Sheba (2 Sam. 15; 16; 2 Sam. 20:1-2, 14).

Thirdly: Upon Jeroboam’s usurpation (2 Chron. 1:13, 16-17).

Fourthly: In the controversy between Asa king of Judah, and Baasha king of Israel, the Israelites fell off from their king to Asa, because the Lord was with him (2 Chron. 15:8-9, &c. 1 Kings 15:17, &c.). Jeremiah exhorted to relinquish the present possessor Zedekiah, and to yield to Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 27:6; 21:8-9). Queen Elizabeth and England, helping the Hollander against the King of Spain.

4.4. Examples of such who have repulsed the present domination of them who have had present command over them.

As Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Sampson, &c. Hezekiah against the King of Assyria (2 Kings 18:7). Those that have cast off the Turkish yoke, as the princes of Hungary, Macedon, Greece, as Scaunderbagg [Skanderbeg], Hungades, &c.

4.5. Examples of such who have invaded the possessor.

As Abraham’s arraying, pursuing, and fighting in the rescue of Lot. Mesha king of Moab rebelling against Jehoram king of Israel, was reduced by Jehoram and Jehoshaphat, Elisha being in the expedition (2 Kings 3:4-5).

The assistance given the Palsgrave to recover the Palatinate by the protestant princes of England, Swethland,⁵⁰ Germany, &c.

5. Finally: Take notice of sore absurdities, that necessarily follows this assertion, *viz.*, that possession proves ordination.

First: It gives equal warrant for all to stickle for the government.

Secondly: It makes void all God’s cautions, restrictions and qualifications.

⁵⁰ [Sweden.]

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Thirdly: It frustrates any other coming thereto, as by birth, inheritance, purchase, free choice, making them unlawful, condemning oaths of allegiance, to heirs and successors, so much pleaded and practiced of late.

Fourthly: It says there is no unjust possessor, no unlawful or disorderly occupant—that usurpation is no sin, and that none can take too much upon him, or more than his own.

Fifthly: It crosses their principle, that asserts all power to be in the people; though indeed all power is of God, and to be derived therefore orderly from him.

Sixthly: It thwarts the very principle of reason, and law of nature, which requires to do to others, as we would be done unto; but it is unnatural to invade others rights by violence, and by dishonest means to encroach upon others' properties.

Seventhly: From the impossibility of determining what kind of possession shall make the power *God's ordinance*. It must either be partial or plenary; not partial, for then others may be equally so; not plenary, for then every interruption makes a disobligend.⁵¹

Eighthly: It is utterly inconsistent and contradictory with itself, condemning all resistance against the present occupant, yet justifying every resistance, that is but successful, however murderous or unjust.

Ninthly: This would utterly make void all the prophecies that foretold the coming of Antichrist; and yet, if once come, it would forever keep him upon the stage, in opposition to Jesus Christ, and to the vacating all the promises and prophecies of his dispossession and destruction, upon a penalty of resisting God's ordinance and damnation to oppose him.

Tenthly: This reproves all resistance and opposition that has been made against any possessor, by any of the saints; requiting only in them a neutrality in every contest that happens, and a subjecting to those only that are uppermost and got into possession—which cannot be known until the controversy be decided. Neither ought there to be a cleaving to either side, the event being so uncertain.

F I N I S.

⁵¹ [One to whom no obligation is due?]