III. THE EPISTLE

§ 27.

Britain has kings, but they are tyrants; she has judges, but unrighteous ones; generally engaged in plunder and rapine, but always preying on the innocent; whenever they exert themselves to avenge or protect, it is sure to be in favour of robbers and criminals; they have an abundance of wives, yet are they addicted to fornication and adultery; they are ever ready to take oaths, and as often perjure themselves; they make a vow and almost immediately act falsely; they make war, but their wars are against their countrymen, and are unjust ones; they rigorously prosecute thieves throughout their country, but those who sit at table with them are robbers, and they not only cherish but reward them; they give alms plentifully, but in contrast to this is a whole pile of crimes which they have committed; they sit on the seat of justice, but rarely seek for the rule of right judgment; they despise the innocent and the humble, but seize every occasion of exalting to the utmost the bloody-minded; the proud, murderers, the combined and adulterers, enemies of God, who ought to be utterly destroyed and their names forgotten. They have many prisoners in their gaols, loaded with chains, but this is done in treachery rather than in just punishment for crimes; and when they have stood before the altar, swearing by the name of God, they go away and think no more of the holy altar than if it were a mere heap of dirty stones.

§28.

Of this horrid abomination, Constantine, the tyrannical whelp of the unclean lioness of Dumnonia*, is not ignorant.

This same year, after taking a dreadful oath (whereby he bound himself first before God, by a solemn protestation, and then called all the saints, and Mother of God, to witness, that he would not contrive any deceit against his countrymen), he nevertheless, in the habit of a holy abbot amid the sacred altars, did with sword and javelin, as if with teeth, wound and tear, even in the bosoms of their temporal mother, and of the church their spiritual mother, two royal youths, with their two attendants, whose arms, although not cased in armour, were yet boldly used, and, stretched out towards God and his altar, would hang up at the gates of your city, O Christ, the venerable ensigns of their faith and patience; and when he had done it, the cloaks, red with coagulated blood, did touch the place of the heavenly sacrifice. And not one worthy act could he boast of previous to this cruel deed; for many years before he had stained himself with the abomination of many adulteries, having put away his wife contrary to the command of Christ, the teacher of the world, who has said: “What God has joined together, let no man separate,” and again: “Husbands, love your wives.” For he had planted in the ground of his heart (an unfruitful soil for any good seed) a bitter scion of incredulity and folly, taken from the vine of Sodom, which being watered with his vulgar and domestic impieties, like

* The present counties of Devon and Cornwall

poisonous showers, and afterwards audaciously springing up to the offence of God, brought forth into the world the sin of horrible murder and sacrilege; and not yet discharged from the entangling nets of his former offences, he added new wickedness to the former.

§29.

Come to now. I reprove you as present, whom I know as yet to be in this life extant. Why do you stand astonished, you butcher of your own soul? Why do you wilfully kindle against yourself the eternal fires of hell? Why do you, in place of enemies, desperately stab yourself with your own sword, with your own javelin? Cannot those same poisonous cups of offences satisfy your stomach? Look back (I beseech you) and come to Christ (for you labour, and are pressed down to the earth with this huge burden), and he himself, as he said, will give you rest. Come to him who wisheth not the death of a sinner, but that he should be rather converted and live. Unloose (according to the prophet) the bands of your neck, you son of Zion. Return (I pray you), although from the far remote regions of sins, unto the most holy Father, who, for his son that will despise the filthy food of swine, and fear a death of cruel famine, and so comeback to him again, hath with great joy been accustomed to kill his fatted calf, and bring forth for the wanderer, the first robe and royal ring, and then taking as it were a taste of the heavenly hope, you shall perceive how sweet our Lord is. For if you contemn these, be assured, you shall almost instantly be tossed and tormented in the inevitable and dark floods of endless fire.

§30.

What do you also, you lion's whelp (as the prophet said), Aurelius Conanus*? Are you not as the former (if not far more foul) to your utter destruction, swallowed up in the filthiness of horrible murders, fornications, and adulteries, as by an overwhelming flood of the sea? Have you not by hating, as a deadly serpent, the peace of youry country, and thirsting unjustly after civil wars and frequent spoil, shut the gates of heavenly peace and repose against your own soul? Being now left alone as a withering tree in the midst of a field, remember (I beseech you) the vain and idle fancies of your parents and brothers, together with the untimely death that befell them in the prime of their youth; and shall you, for your religious deserts, be reserved out of all your family to live a hundred years, or to attain to the age of a Methusalah? No, surely, but unless (as the psalmist said) you shall be speedily converted unto our Lord, that King will shortly brandish his sword against you, who hats said by his prophet, "I will kill, and I will cause to live; I will strike, and I will heal and there is no one who can deliver out of my hand."

Be therefore shaken out of your filthy dust, and with all your heart converted to Him who has created you, that "when his wrath shall shortly burn out, you may be blessed by fixing your hopes on him." But if otherwise, eternal pains

* King of Powys

will be heaped up for you, where you shall be forever tormented and never consumed in the cruel jaws of hell.

§31.

You also, who like the spotted leopard, are diverse in manners and in mischief, whose head is now growing grey, who is seated on a throne full of deceits, and from the bottom even to the top is stained with murder and adulteries, you wicked son of a good king, like Manasses sprung from Hezekiah, Vortiporius, you foolish tyrant of the Demetians*. Why are you so stiff?

Do not such violent gulps of sin (which you swallow up like pleasant wine, nay rather which swallow you up), as yet satisfy you, especially since the end of your life is daily now approaching? Why do you heavily clog your miserable soul with the sin of lust, which is fouler than any other, by putting away your wife, and after her honourable death, by the base practices of your shameless daughter? Waste not (I beseech you) the residue of your life in offending God, because as yet an acceptable time and day of salvation shines on the faces of the penitent, wherein you may take care that your flight may not be in the winter, or on the sabbath day.

"Turn away (according to the psalmist) from evil, and do good, seek peace and ensue it," because the eyes of our Lord will be cast upon thee, when you do righteousness, and his ears will be then open to your prayers, and he will not destroy your memory out of the land of the living. You shall cry, and he will hear you, and deliver you out of your tribulations; for Christ never despises a heart that is contrite and humbled with fear of him. Otherwise, the worm of your torture shall not die, and the fire of your burning shall never be extinguished.

§32.

And you too, Cuneglasus†. Why have you fallen into the filth of your former wickedness? Yes, since the very first Spring of your tender youth, you bear, you rider and ruler of many, and guider of the chariot which is the receptacle 'of the bear, you contemner of God, and vilifier of his order, yoou tawny butcher, as in the Latin tongue your name signifies. Why do you raise so great a war as well against men as also against God himself, against men? Yes, your own countrymen, with your deadly weapons. And against God with your infinite offences? Why, besides your other innumerable backslidings, having thrown out of doors your wife, do you, in the lust, or rather stupidity of your mind, against the apostle's express prohibition, denouncing that no adulterers can be partakers of the kingdom of heaven, esteem her detestable sister, who had vowed unto God the everlasting continency, as the very flower (in the language of the poet) of the celestial nymphs? Why do you provoke with your frequent injuries the lamentations and sighs of saints, by your corporally afflicted

* Inhabitants of Dyfed.
† Prince of Rhos in Gwynedd.

means, which will in time to come, like a fierce lioness, break your bones into pieces?

Desist, I beseech you (as the prophet said) from wrath, and leave off your deadly fury, which you breath out against heaven and earth, against God and his flock, and which in time will be your own torment. Rather, with altered mind obtain the prayers of those who possess a power of binding over this world, when in this world they bind the guilty, and of loosening when they loosen the penitent. Be not (as the apostle said) proudly wise, nor hope in the uncertainty of riches, but in God who gives you many things abundantly, and by the amendment of your manners purchase for yourself a good foundation for hereafter, and seek to enter into that real and true state of existence which will be not transitory but everlasting. Otherwise, you shall know and see, in this very world, how bad and bitter a thing it is for you to leave the Lord your God, and not have his fear before your eyes, and in the next, how you shall be burned in the foul encompassing flames of endless fire, nor yet by any manner of means ever die. For the souls of the sinful are as eternal in perpetual fire, as the souls of the just in perpetual joy and gladness.

§33.

And likewise, you dragon of the island, who has deprived many tyrants, of their lives as well as of their kingdoms, and though the last mentioned in my writing, the first in mischief, exceeding many in power, and also in malice, more liberal than others in giving, more licentious in sinning, strong in arms, but stronger in working your own soul's destruction, Maelgwn*. Why are you (as if soaked in the wine of the Sodomitical grape) foolishly rolling in that black pool of your offences? Why do you wilfully heap, like a mountain, upon your kingly shoulders, such a load of sins? Why do you show yourself to the King of kings (who has made you, both in kingdom and in stature of body, higher than almost all the other chiefs of Britain) not better likewise in virtues than the rest, but on the contrary, for your sins much worse.

Listen then awhile and hear patiently the following enumeration of your deeds, wherein I will not touch any domestic and light offences (if any of them are light) but only those open ones which are spread far and wide in the knowledge of all men. Did you not, in the very beginning of your youth, terribly oppress with sword, spear, and fire, your uncle, the king together with his courageous bands of soldiers, whose countenances in battle were not unlike those of young lions? Not regarding the words of the prophet, who says, "The bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days"; and even if the sequel of your sins were not such as ensued, yet what retribution could you expect, for this offence only, at the hands of the just Judge, who hath said by his prophet: "Woe be to you who spoils, and shall you not yourself be spoiled? And you who kills, shall you not yourself be killed? And when you shall make an end of your spoiling, then shall you yourself fall."

* Probably Maelgwn Gwynedd, king of Gwynedd.

§34.

But when the imagination of you violent rule had succeeded according to your wishes, and you were urged by a desire to return into the right way, night and day the consciousness of your crimes afflicted you, while you ruminated on the Lord's ritual and the ordinances of the monks, and then published to the world and vowed before God to be a monk with no intention to be unfaithful, as you said, having burst through those toils in which such great beasts as you were used to become entangled; whether it were love of rule, of gold, or silver, or, what is stronger still, the fancies of thy own heart. And did you not, as a dove which cleaves the yielding air with its pinions, and by its rapid turns escapes the furious hawk, safely return to the cells where the saints repose, as a most certain place of refuge?

Oh, how great a joy should it have been to our mother church, if the enemy of all mankind had not lamentably pulled you, as it were, out of her bosom! Oh, what an abundant flame of heavenly hope would have been kindled in the hearts of desperate sinners, had you remained in your blessed estate! Oh, what great rewards in the kingdom of Christ would have been laid up for your soul against the day of judgment, if that crafty wolf had not caught you, who had been a wolf and now become a lamb (not much against your own will) out of the fold of our Lord, and turned you from a lamb into a wolf like himself, again? Oh, how great a joy would the preservation of your salvation have been to God the Father of all saints, had not the devil, the father of all castaways, as an eagle of monstrous wings and claws, carried you away against all right and reason, to the unhappy band of his children?

And to be short, your conversion to righteousness gave as great joy to heaven and earth, as now your detestable return, like a dog to his vomit, breeds grief and lamentation: which being done "the members which should have been busily employed, as the armour of justice for the Lord, have now become the armour of iniquity for sin and the devil". For now, you do not listen to the praises of God sweetly sounded forth by the pleasant voices of Christ's soldiers, nor the instruments of ecclesiastical melody, but to your own praises (which are nothing) rung out after the fashion of the giddy rout of Bacchus by the mouths of thy villainous followers, accompanied with lies and malice, to the utter destruction of the neighbours; so that the vessel prepared for the service of God, is now turned to a vessel of dirt, and what was once reputed worthy of heavenly honour, is now cast as it deserves into the bottomless pit of hell.

§35.

Yet neither is your sensual mind (which is overcome by the excesses of your follies) at all checked in its course with committing so many sins, but hot and prone (like a young colt that covets every pleasant pasture) runs headlong forward, with irrecoverable fury, through the intended fields of crime, continually increasing the number of its transgressions. For the former

marriage of your first wife (although after your violated vow of religion she was not lawfully yours, but only by right of the time was she with you), was now despised by you. Another woman, the wife of a man then living, and he no stranger, but your own brother's son, enjoyed your affections. Upon which occasion that stiff neck of yours (already laden with sins) is now burdened with two monstrous murders, the one, of your aforesaid nephew, the other, of her who once was your wedded wife. And, you are now from low to lower, and from bad to worse bowed, bent, and sunk down into the lowest depth of sacrilege.

Afterwards, you also did publicly marry the widow, by whose deceit and suggestion such a heavy weight of offences was undergone, and take her, lawfully, as the flattering tongues of your parasites with false words pronounced it, but as we say, most wickedly, to be your own in wedlock. And therefore, what holy man is there, who, moved with the narration of such a history, would not presently break out into weeping and lamentations? What priest (whose heart lies open unto God) would not instantly, upon hearing this, exclaim with anguish in the language of the prophet: "Who shall give water to my head, and to my eyes a fountain of tears, and I will day and night bewail those of my people, who are slaughtered."

For full little (alas!) have you, with your own ears, listened to that reprehension of the prophet speaking in this wise: "woe be unto you, wicked men, who have left the law of the most holy God, and if you shall be born, your portion shall be to malediction, and if you die, to malediction shall be your portion, all things that are from the earth, to the earth shall be converted again, so shall the wicked from malediction pass to perdition". If they return not unto our Lord, listening to this admonition: "son, you have offended; add no further offence thereunto, but rather pray for the forgiveness of the former." And again, "be not slow to be converted unto our Lord, neither put off the same from day to day, for his wrath comes suddenly."

Because, as the Scripture says, "When the king hears the unjust word, all under his dominion become wicked." And, the just king (according to the prophet) raises up his region.

§36.

But warnings truly are not wanting to you, since you had as your instructor the most eloquent master of almost all Britain. Take heed, thereof, lest that which Solomon noted, befall you, which is, "even as he who stirs up a sleeping man out of his heavy sleep, so is that person who declares wisdom unto a fool, for in the end of his speech will he say, 'what have you first spoken?' Wash your heart (as it is written) from malice, O Jerusalem, that you may be saved." Despise not (I beseech you) the unspeakable mercy of God, calling by his prophet the wicked in this way from their offences: "I will on a sudden speak to the nation, and to the kingdom, that I may root out, and disperse, and destroy, and overthrow." As for the sinner he does, in this wise, exhort him vehemently to repent. "And if the same people shall repent from their offence, I will also repent of the evil which I have said that I would do unto them." And again, "who

will give them such a heart, that they may hear me, and keep my commandments, and that it may be well with them all the days of their lives." And also, in the canticle of Deuteronomy, "a people without counsel and prudence, I wish they would be wise, and understand, and foresee the last of all, how one pursues a thousand, and two put to flight ten thousand." And again, our Lord in the gospel, "Come unto me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will make you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find repose for your souls."

For, if you turn a deaf ear to these admonitions, contemn the prophets, and despise Christ, and make no account of us, humble though we be, so long as with sincere piety and purity of mind we bear in mind that saying of the prophet, that we may not be found "dumb dogs, not able to bark" (however, I for my part may not be of that singular fortitude, in the spirit and virtue of our Lord, as to declare, "to the house of Jacob their sins, and the house of Israel their offences"); and so long as we shall remember that of Solomon, "he who says that the wicked are just, shall be accursed among the people, and odious to nations, for they who reprove them shalt have better hopes." And again, "respect, not with reverence your neighbour in his ruin, nor forbear to speak in time of salvation." And as long also as we forget not this, "root out these who are led to death, and forbear not to redeem them who are murdered"; because, as the same prophet says, "riches shall not profit in the day of wrath, but justice delivers from death." And, "if the just indeed be hardly saved, where shall the wicked and sinner appear?

If, as I said, you scorn us, who obey these texts, the dark flood of hell shall without doubt eternally drown you in that deadly whirlpool, and those terrible streams of fire that shall ever torment and never consume you, and then shall the confession of your pains and sorrow for your sins be altogether too late and unprofitable to one, who now in this accepted time and day of salvation defers his conversion to a more righteous way of life.

§37.

And here, indeed, if not before, was this lamentable history of the miseries of our time to have been brought to a conclusion, that I might no further discourse of the deeds of men; but that I may not be thought timid or weary, whereby I might the less carefully avoid that saying of Isaiah, "Woe be to them who call good evil, and evil good, placing darkness for light, and light for darkness, bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter, who seeing see not, and hearing hear not, whose hearts are overshadowed with a thick and black cloud of vices", I will briefly set down the threatenings which are denounced against these five aforesaid lascivious horses, the frantic followers of Pharaoh, through whom his army is wilfully urged forward to their utter destruction in the Red Sea, and also against such others, by the sacred oracles, with whose holy testimonies the frame of this our little work is, as it were, roofed in, that it may not be subject to the showers of the envious, which otherwise would be poured thereon. Let, therefore, God's holy prophets, who are to mortal men the mouth of God, and

the organ of the Holy Ghost, forbidding evils, and favouring goodness, answer for us as well now as formerly, against the stubborn and proud princes of this our age, that they may not say we menace them with such threats, and such great terrors of our own invention only, and with rash and over-zealous meddling. For to no wise man is it doubtful how far more grievous the sins of this our time are than those of the primitive age, when the apostle said, “Any one transgressing the law, being convicted by two or three witnesses, shall die, how much worse punishment do you think then that he deserves, who shall trample under his foot the Son of God?”

§38.

And first of all appears before us, Samuel, by God’s commandment, the establisher of a lawful kingdom, dedicated to God before his birth, undoubtedly known by marvellous signs, to be a true prophet unto all the people, from Dan even to Beersheba, out of whose mouth the Holy Ghost thunders to all the potentates of the world, denouncing Saul the first king of the Hebrews, only because he did not accomplish some matters commanded him of our Lord, in these words which follow: “You have done foolishly, neither yet have you kept the commandments of our Lord your God, that he has given you in charge; which if you had not committed, even now had our Lord prepared your reign over Israel for ever, but your kingdom shall rise no further.” And what did he commit, whether it was adultery or murder, like to the offences of the present time? No, truly, but broke in part one of God’s commandments, for, as one of our writers says, “The question is not of the quality of the sin, but of the violating of the precept.” Also, when he endeavoured to answer (as he thought) the objections of Samuel, and after the fashion of men wisely to make excuses for his offence in this manner: “I have obeyed the voice of our Lord, and walked in the way through which he has sent me”. With this rebuke was he corrected by him: “What! Will our Lord have burnt offerings or oblations, and not rather that the voice of our Lord should be obeyed? Obedience is better than oblations, and to hearken to him, better than to offer the fat of rams. For as it is the sin of soothsaying to resist, so is it the offence of idolatry not to obey; in regard, therefore, that you have cast away the word of our Lord, he has also cast you, away that you not be king.” And a little after, “Our Lord has this day rent the kingdom of Israel from you, and delivered it up to your neighbour, a better man better than you. The Triumpher of Israel truly will not spare, and will not be bowed with repentance, neither yet is he a man that he should repent”; that is to say, upon the stony hearts of the wicked: wherein it is to be noted how he says, that to be disobedient unto God is the sin of idolatry. Let not, therefore, our wicked transgressors (while they do not openly sacrifice to the gods of the Gentiles) flatter themselves that they are not idolaters, whilst they tread like swine the most precious pearls of Christ under their feet.

§39.

But although this one example as an invincible affirmation might abundantly suffice to correct the wicked; yet, that by the mouths of many witnesses all the offences of Britain may be proved, let us pass to the rest. What happened to

David for numbering his people, when the prophet Gad spoke to him in this manner? Thus, said our Lord: “The choice of three things is offered thee, choose which you will, that I may execute it upon you. Shall there be a famine for seven years, or shall you flee three months before your enemies, and they pursue you, or shall there be three days’ pestilence in your land?” For being brought into great straits by this condition, and willing rather to fall into the hands of God who is merciful, than into those of men, he was humbled with the slaughter of seventy thousand of his subjects. Unless, with the affection of an apostolic charity, he had desired to die himself for his countrymen, that the plague might not further consume them, saying, “I am he that has offended, I the shepherd have dealt unjustly: but these sheep, what have they sinned? Let thy hand, I beseech you, be turned against me, and against the house of my father”; he would have atoned for the unadvised pride of his heart with his own death.

For what does the scripture afterwards declare of his son? “And Solomon wrought that which was not pleasing before our Lord, and he did not fill up the measure of his good deeds by following the Lord like his father David. And our Lord said unto him, because you have behaved so yourself, and not observed my covenant and precepts, which I have commanded you, breaking it asunder; I will divide your kingdom, and give the same to your servant.”

§40.

Hear now likewise what fell upon the two sacrilegious kings of Israel (even such as ours are), Jeroboam and Baasha, unto whom the sentence and doom of our Lord is by the prophet in this way directed: “For what cause have I exalted you a prince over Israel, in regard that they have provoked me by their vanities. Behold I will stir up after Baasha and after his house, and I will give over his house as the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Whoever of his blood shall die in the city, the dogs shall eat him; and the dead carcass of him that dies in the field, the fowls of the air shall eat.”

What does he also threaten that wicked King of Israel, a worthy companion of the former, by whose collusion and his wife’s deceit, innocent Naboth was for his father’s vineyard put to death, when the holy mouth of Elias, yes, the selfsame mouth that was instructed with the fiery speech of our Lord, thus spoke to him: “Have you killed and also taken possession, and after this will you yet add more? Thus says our Lord, in this very place, wherein the dogs have licked the blood of Naboth, they shall lick up thy blood also.” Which fell out afterwards in that very sort, as we have certain proof.

But lest perchance (as befell Ahab also) the lying spirit, which pronounces vain things in the mouths of your prophets may seduce you, listen to the words of the prophet Micaiah: “Behold God has suffered the spirit of lying to possess the mouths of all your prophets that remain here, and our Lord has pronounced evil against you.” For even now it is certain that there are some teachers inspired with a contrary spirit, preaching and affirming rather what is pleasing, however depraved, than what is true: whose words are softer than oil, and the same are darts, who say, peace, peace, and there shall be no peace to them,

who persevere in their sins, as says the prophet in another place also, “It is not for the wicked to rejoice, said our Lord.”

§42.

Azarias, also, the son of Obed, spoke unto Asa, who returned from the slaughter of the army of ten hundred thousand Ethiopians, saying, “Our Lord is with you while you remain with him, and if you will seek him out, he will be found by you, and if you will leave him, he will leave you also.” For if Jehosaphat, for only assisting a wicked king, was thus reproved by the prophet Jehu, the son of Ananias, saying, “If you give aid to a sinner, or love them whom our Lord hates, the wrath of God hangs over you,” what shall become of them who are fettered in the snares of their own offences? Whose sin we must of necessity hate, if not their souls, if we wish to fight in the army of the Lord, according to the words of the Psalmist, “Hate evil, you who love our Lord.” What was said to Jehoram, the son of the above-named Jehosaphat, that most horrible murderer (who being himself a bastard, slew his noble brothers, that he might possess the throne in their place, by the prophet Elias, who was the chariot and charioteer of Israel? “Thus speaks the Lord God of your father David. Because you have not walked in the way of your father Jehosaphat, and in the ways of Asa the king of Judah, but have walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and in adultery according to the behaviour of the house of Ahab, and moreover have killed your brothers, the sons of Jehosaphat, men far better than you, behold, our Lord shall strike you and your children with a mighty plague.” And a little afterwards, “And you shall be very sick of a disease of your belly, until your entrails, together with the malady itself, shall from day to day come forth out of you.” And, listen also what the prophet Zachariah, the son of Jehoiada, threatened Joash, the king of Israel, when he abandoned our Lord even as you now do. The prophet spoke in this manner to the people: Thus says our Lord, why do you transgress the commandments of our Lord and do not prosper? Because you have left our Lord, he will also leave you.”

§ 42.

What shall I mention of Isaiah, the first and chief of the prophets, who began his prophecy, or rather vision, in this way: “Hear me, you heavens and you earth, conceive in your ears, because our Lord has spoken, I have nourished children, and exalted them, but they themselves have despised me. The ox has known his owner, and the ass his master’s crib, but Israel has not known me, and my people have not understood.” And, a little further with threatenings answerable to so great a folly, he said, “The daughter of Zion shall be utterly left as a tabernacle in the vineyard, and as a hovel in the cucumber garden, and a city that is sacked.” And especially, convening and accusing the princes, he said, “Hear the word of our Lord, you princes of Sodom, perceive the law of our Lord, you people of Gomorrah.” Wherein it is to be noted, that unjust kings are termed the princes of Sodom, for our Lord, forbidding sacrifices and gifts to be offered to him by such persons, and seeing that we greedily receive those offerings which in all nations are displeasing to God, and to our own destruction suffer them not to be bestowed on the poor and needy, speak thus to them who,

laden with riches, are likewise given to offend on this head: “Offer no more your sacrifice in vain, your incense is abomination unto me.” And again, he denounced them thus: “And when you shall stretch out your hands, I will turn my eyes away from you, and when you shall multiply your prayers, I will not hear.” And he declared why he did this, saying, “Your hands are full of blood.” And likewise showing how he may be “appeased, he says, “Be washed, be clean, take away the evil of your thoughts from miy eyes: cease to do evil, learn to do well: seek for judgment, succour the oppressed, do justice to the pupil or orphan.” And then assuming as it were the part of a reconciling mediator, he adds, “Though your sins shall be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow: though they shall be as red as the little worm*, they shall be as white as wool. If you shall be willing to hear me, you shall feed on the good things of the land; but if you will not, but provoke me into wrath, the sword shall devour you.”

§43.

Receive the true and public avoucher, witnessing, without any falsehood or flattery, the reward of your good and evil, not like the soothing humble lips of your parasites, which whisper poisons into your ears. And also directing his sentence against ravenous judges, he said thus: “Your princes are unfaithful, companions of thieves, all love gifts, hunt after rewards. They do no justice to the orphan, the widow’s cause does not enter into them. For thus says our Lord God of hosts, the strong one of Israel, Alas, I will take consolation upon my foes, and be revenged upon my enemies; and the heinous sinners shall be broken to powder, and offenders together with them, and all who have left our Lord, shall be consumed.” And afterwards, “The eyes of the lofty man shall be brought low, and the height of men bowed down.” And again, “Woe be to the wicked, evil befall him, for he shall be rewarded according to his handywork.”

And a little after, “Woe be unto you who arise early to follow drunkenness, and to drink even to the very evening, that you may fume with wine. The harp, and the lyre, and the tabor, and the pipe, and wine are in your banquets, but you do not respect the work of our Lord, and neither do you yet consider the works of his hands. Therefore, are my people led captive away, because they have not had knowledge, and their nobles have perished with famine, and their multitude has withered away with thirst. Therefore, has hell enlarged and dilated his spirit, and without measure opened his mouth, and his strong ones, and his people, and his lofty and glorious ones, shall descend down unto him.” And afterwards, “‘Woe be unto you who are mighty for the drinking of wine, and strong men for the procuring of drunkenness, who justify the wicked for rewards, and deprive the just man of his justice. For this cause even as the tongue of the fire devours the stubble, and as the heat of the flame burns up, so shall their root be as the ashes, and their branch shall rise up as the dust. For they have cast away the law of our Lord of hosts, and despised the speech of the holy one of Israel. In all these the fury of our Lord is not turned away, but as yet his hand is stretched out.”

* Vermilion, the English version, seems derived from *vermes*, a worm.

§44.

And further on, speaking of the day of judgment and the unspeakable fears of sinners, he says, “Howl, because the day of our Lord is near at hand (if so near at that time, what shall it now be thought to be?) for destruction shall proceed from God. For this, shall all hands be dissolved, and every man’s heart shall wither away, and be bruised. Tortures and dolours shall hold them, as a woman in labour so shall they be grieved, every man shall at his neighbour stand astonished, burned faces shall be their countenances. Behold, the day of our Lord shall come, fierce and full of indignation, and of wrath, and fury, to turn the earth into a desert, and break her sinners in small pieces from off her; because the stars of heaven and the brightness of them, shall not unfold their light, the sun in his rising shall be covered over with darkness, and the moon shall not shine in her season; and I will visit upon the evils of the world, and against the wicked, their own iniquity, and I will make the pride of the unfaithful to cease, and the arroganece of the strong, I will bring low.”

And again, “Behold our Lord will disperse the earth, and he will strip her naked, and afflict her face, and scatter her inhabitants; and as the people, so shall be the priest; and as the slave, so shall be his lord; as the handmaid, so shall be her lady; as the purchaser, so shall be the seller; as the usurer, so shall be he that borrows; as he who demands, so shall he be that owes. With dispersing shall the earth be scattered, and with sacking shall she be spoiled. For our Lord has spoken this word. The earth has bewailed, and has flitted away; the world has run to nothing, she is weakened by her inhabitants, because they have transgressed laws, changed right, brought to ruin the eternal truce. For this shall malediction devour the earth.”

§45.

And afterwards, “They shall lament all of them who now in heart rejoice, the delight of the timbrels has ceased, the sound of the gladsome shall be silent, the sweetness of the harp shall be hushed, they shall not with singing drink their wine, bitter shall be the potion to the drinkers thereof. The city of vanity is wasted, every house is shut up, no man entering in; an outcry shall be in the streets over the wine, all gladness is forsaken, the joy of the land is transferred, solitariness is left in the town, and calamity shall oppress the gates, because these things shall be in the midst of the land, and in the midst of the people.” And a little further, “Swerving from the truth, they have wandered out of the right way, with the straggling of transgressors have they gone astray. Fear and intrapping falls, and a snare upon thee who art the inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass: whoever shall flee from the voice of the fear, shall tumble down into the intrapping pit; and whoever shall deliver himself out of the downfall, shall be caught in the entangling snare, because the floodgates from aloft shall be opened, and the foundations of the earth shall be shaken. With bruising shall the earth be broken, with commotion shall she be moved, with tossing shall she be shaken like a drunken man, and she shall be taken away as if she were a pavilion of one night’s pitching, and her iniquities shall hang heavy upon her, and she shall fall down, and shall not attempt to rise again.

And it shall be, that our Lord in the same day shall look on the warfare of heaven on high, and on the kings of the earth, who are upon the earth, and they shall be gathered together in the bundle of one burden into the lake, and shall there be shut up in prison, and after many days shall they be visited. And the moon shall blush, and the sun be confounded, when our Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and be glorified in the sight of his seniors."

§46.

And, after a while, giving a reason why he threatens in that sort, he says thus: "Behold the hand of our Lord is not shortened that he cannot save, neither is his ear made heavy that he may not hear. But your iniquities have divided between you and your God, and your offences have hidden his face from you, that he might not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity: your lips have spoken lying, and your tongue utters iniquity. There is none who calls on justice, neither is there he who judges truly, but they trust in nothing, and speak vanities, and have conceived grief, and brought forth iniquity." And a little after, "Their works are unprofitable, and the work of iniquity is in their hands; their feet run into evil, and make haste that they may shed the innocent blood; their thoughts are unprofitable thoughts, spoil and confusion are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known, and in their steps there is no judgment, their paths are made crooked unto them, every one who treads in them is ignorant of peace; in this respect is judgment removed far off from you, and justice takes no hold on you." And after a few words, "And judgment has been turned back, and justice has stood afar off, because truth has fallen down in the streets, and equity could not enter in; and truth is turned into oblivion, and whoever has departed from evil, has lain open to spoil. And our Lord has seen, and it was not pleasing in his eyes, because there is no judgment."

§47.

And thus far may it suffice among many, to have recited a few sentences out of the prophet Isaiah.

But now with diligent ears listen to him, who was foreknown before he was formed in the belly, sanctified before he came out of the womb, and appointed a prophet in all nations: I mean Jeremiah, and hear what he has pronounced of foolish people and cruel kings, beginning his prophecy in his mild and gentle manner.

"And the word of God was spoken unto me, saying, 'Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, and thou shalt pronounce, Hear the word of our Lord, thou house of Jacob, and all you Kindred of the house of Israel'. Thus says our Lord, 'what iniquity have your fathers found in me, who have been far removed from me, and walked after vanity, and are become vain', and have not said, where is he who made us go up out of the land of Egypt?" And after a few words, "From the beginning of your age you have broken my yoke, violated my bands, and said, I will not serve, I have planted you, my chosen vine, all true seed. How are you

therefore converted into wickedness? O strange vine! If you shall wash yourself with nitre, and multiply the soapweed, you are spotted in my sight with your iniquity, says our Lord." And afterwards, "Why will you contend with me in judgment? You have all forsaken me, said our Lord, in vain have I corrected your children, they have not received discipline. Hear the word of our Lord. Am I made a solitariness unto Israel, or a late bearing land! Why therefore have my people said, we have departed, we will come no more unto thee? Does the virgin forget her ornament, or the spouse her veil? My people truly have forgotten me for innumerable days. Because my people are foolish, they have not known me, they are unwise and mad children. They know to do evil, but to do well they have been ignorant."

§48.

Then the prophet speaks in his own person saying, "O Lord your eyes respect faith, you hast stricken them, and they have not sorrowed, you have broken them and they have refused to receive discipline, they have made their faces harder than the rock, and will not return." And also, our Lord: "Declare the same to the house of Jacob, and make it heard in Judah, saying, 'Hear, you foolish people who have no heart, who having eyes see not, and ears hear not. Will you not therefore dread me, said our Lord, and will you not conceive grief from my countenance, who have placed the sand as the bound of the sea, an eternal commandment which she shall not break, and her waves shall be moved, and they cannot, and her surge shall swell, and yet not pass the same?' But to this people is framed an incredulous and an exasperating heart, they have retired and gone their ways, and not in their heart said, let us fear our Lord God."

And again, "Because there are found among my people wicked ones, framing wiles to entangle as if they were fowlers, setting snares and gins to catch men: as a net that is full of birds, so are their houses filled with deceits. Therefore, are they magnified and enriched, they are become gross and fat, and have neglected my speeches most vilely, the orphans' cause they have not decided, and the justice of the poor they have not adjudged. What shall I not visit these men, says our Lord? Or shall not my soul be revenged upon such a nation?"

§49.

But God forbid that ever should happen to you, that which follows, "You shall speak all these words unto them, and they shall not hear you; and you shall call them, and they shall not answer; and you shall say unto them, 'This is the nation that has not heard the voice of their Lord God, nor yet received discipline, faith has perished, and been taken away from out of their mouth'."

And after some few speeches, "Whoever falls, does he not arise again, and whoever is turned away, shall he not return again? Why therefore are these people in Jerusalem, with a contentious aversion alienated? They have apprehended lying, and they will not come back again, I have been attentive, and listened diligently, no man speaks what is good. There is none who repents

of his sin, saying, what have I done? All are turned unto their own course, like a horse passing with violence to battle. The kite in the sky has known her time, the turtle, and swallow, and stork have kept the season of their coming, but my people have not known the judgment of God."

And the prophet, being smitten with fear at so wonderful a blindness, and unspeakable drunkenness of the sacrilegious, and lamenting them who did not lament themselves (even according to the present behaviour of these our unfortunate tyrants), beseeched of our Lord, that an augmentation of tears might be granted him, speaking in this manner, "I am contrite upon the contrition of the daughter of my people, astonishment has possessed me: is there no balm in Gilead, or is there no physician there? Why, therefore, is not the wound of the daughter of my people healed? Who shall give water unto my head, and to my eyes a fountain of tears, and I will day and night bewail the slaughtered of my people? Who will grant me in the wilderness the inn of passengers? And I will utterly leave my people, and depart from them; because they are all of them adulterers, a root of offenders, and they have bent their tongue as the bow of lying, and not of truth, they are comforted in the earth, because they have passed from evil to evil, and not known me, said our Lord."

And again: "And our Lord has said, because they have forsaken my law, which I have given them, and have not heard my voice, nor walked thereafter, and have wandered away after the wickedness of their own heart, in that respect our Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, said, these words, 'Behold I will feed this people with wormwood, and give them to drink the water of gall'." And a little after (speaking in the person of God), "See therefore, that you do not pray for this people, nor assume for them praise and prayer, because I will not hear in the time of their outery unto me, and of their affliction."

§50.

What then shall now our miserable governors do, these few who found out the narrow way and left the broad, were forbidden by God to pour out their prayers for such as persevered in their evils, and so highly provoked his wrath, against whom on the contrary side when they returned with all their hearts unto God (his divine Majesty being unwilling that the soul of man should perish, but calling back the castaway that he should not utterly be destroyed) the same prophets could not procure the heavenly revenge, because Jonas, when he desired the like most earnestly against the Ninevites, could not obtain it. But in the meanwhile, omitting our own words, let us rather hear what the prophetic trumpet sounds in our ears speaking thus: "If you shall say in your heart, 'Why have these evils befallen?' For the multitude of your iniquities. If the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his sundry spots, you may also do well when you have learned evil", ever supposing that you will not.

And afterwards: "These words said our Lord to this people, who have loved to move their feet, and have not rested, and not pleased our Lord. Now shall he remember their iniquities, and visit their offences; and our Lord said to me,

'Pray not for these people to work their good, when they fast, I will not hear their prayers; and if they offer burnt sacrifices and oblations, I will not receive them'."

And again, "And our Lord said to me, 'If Moses and Samuel shall stand before me, my soul is not bent to this people, cast them out away from my face, and let them depart'." And after a few words: "Who shall have pity on you Jerusalem, or who shall be sorrowful for you, or who shall pray for your peace? You have left me (said our Lord) and gone away backward, and I will stretch forth my hand over you, and kill you.

And, somewhat after: "Thus said our Lord, 'Behold I imagine a thought against you, let every man return from his evil course, and make straight your ways and endeavours, who said, we despair, we will go after our own thoughts, and every one of us will do the wickedness of his evil heart.' Thus, therefore said our Lord, 'Ask the Gentiles, who has heard such horrible matters, which the virgin Israel has too often committed? Shall there fail from the rock of the field, the snow of Lebanon? Or can the waters be drawn dry that gush out cold and flowing? Because my people have forgotten me'."

And also, somewhat after this, propounding unto them an election, he speaking said, "Thus said our Lord, 'Give judgment and justice, and deliver him who by power is oppressed out of the hand of the malicious accuser; and for the stranger, and orphan, and widow, do not provoke their sorrow, and neither work unjustly the grief of others, nor shed forth innocent blood.' For indeed, if you shall accomplish this word, there shall enter in through the gates of this house, kings of the lineage of David, sitting upon his throne. But if you will not heed these words, by myself I have sworn (said our Lord) that this house shall be turned into a desert." And again (for he spoke of a wicked king), "As I live (said our Lord) if it be that Jechoniah shall be a ring on my right hand, I will pluck him away, and give him over into the hands of those who seek his life."

§51.

Moreover, holy Abraham cried out, saying, "Woe be unto them who build a city in blood, and prepare a town in iniquities", saying, "Are not these things from our almighty Lord? And many people have failed in fire, and many nations nave been diminished." And thus complaining, he begins his prophecy: "How long, O Lord, shall I call, and you will not hear? Shall I cry out to you, to what end have you given me labours and griefs, to behold misery and impiety?" And on the other side, "Judgment was sat upon, and the judge has taken in regard hereof, the law is rent in pieces, and judgment is not brought fully to his conclusion, because the wicked, through power, tread the just under foot. In this respect, perverse judgment has passed forth."

§52.

And note also what blessed Hosea the prophet says of princes: "For that they have transgressed my covenant, and ordained against my law, and exclaimed, we have known thee, because you are against Israel. They have persecuted

good, as if it were evil. They have reigned for themselves and not by me; they have held a principality, but they have never acknowledged me."

§53.

And hear likewise. the holy prophet Amos, in this sort threatening: "In three heinous offences of the sons of Judah, and in four I will not convert them, for they have cast away the law of our Lord and not kept his commandments, but their vanities have seduced them. And I will send fire upon Judah, and it shall eat the foundations of Jerusalem." Thus said our Lord; "In three grievous sins of Israel, and in four I will not convert them, for they have sold the just for money, and the poor man for shoes, which they tread upon the dust of the earth, and with blows about their heads they beat the poor, and they have eschewed the way of the humble." And after a few words, "Seek our Lord and you shall live, that the house of Joseph may not shine as fire, and the flame devour it, and he shall not be, who can extinguish it. The house of Israel hates him who rebukes it inside its gates, and abhors the upright word."

Which Amos, being forbidden to prophesise in Israel, without any fawning flattery, said in answer, "I was not a prophet, nor yet the son of a prophet, but a goatherd; I was plucking sycamores and our Lord took me from my herd, and our Lord said to me, 'Go your way and prophesise against my people of Israel: and now hear the word of our Lord' (for he directed his speech unto the king), you say, do not prophesy against Israel, and do not assemble troops against the house of Jacob. For which cause our Lord says thus, 'your wife shall play the harlot in the city, and your sons and daughters shall die by the sword. Your ground shall be measured by the cord, and you shall end your life in a polluted land. Israel shall be led captive from their own country'."

And afterwards, "Hear therefore these words, you who do outrageously afflict the poor, and practise your mighty power against the needy of the earth, who say, when shall the month pass over that we may purchase, and the sabbaths that we may open the treasuries." And within a few words after, "Our Lord swears against the pride of Jacob, if he shall in contempt forget your actions. If, in these the earth shall not be disturbed, and every inhabitant thereof fall to lamentation, the final end will ascend as a flood. I will turn your festival days into wailing, and cast haircloth on the loins of everyone, and on the head of every man baldness, and make him as if he mourns one over-beloved, and those who are with him like the day of his sorrow." And again, "By the sword shall die the sinners of my people, who say, evils shall not approach, and shall never alight upon us."

§54.

And listen, likewise, what holy Michah the prophet has spoken, saying, "Hear me, tribes of Israel. What shall adorn the city? Shall not fire? And, the house of the wicked, hoarding up unjust treasures and, with injury, unrighteousness? If the wrongful dealer shall be justified in the balance, and deceitful weights in the scales, by which they have heaped up their riches in ungodliness."

§55.

And hear also what threats the famous prophet Zephaniah thundered out: said he, “The great day of our Lord is near; it is at hand, and approaches very swiftly. The voice of the day of our Lord is appointed to be bitter and mighty, that day, a day of wrath, a day of tribulation and necessity, a day of clouds and mist, a day of the trumpet and outery, a day of misery and extermination, a day of darkness and dimness upon the strong cities and high corners. And I will bring men to tribulation, and they shall go as if they were blind, because they have offended our Lord, and I will pour out their blood as dust, and their flesh as the dung of oxen, and their silver and gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of our Lord. And, in the fire of his zeal, shall the whole earth be consumed, when the Lord shall accomplish his absolute end, and bring solitariness upon all the inhabitants of the earth. Come together and be joined in one, you nation without discipline, before you become like the fading flower, before the wrath of our Lord falls upon you.”

§56.

And give ear also unto that which the prophet Hageai spoke: “Thus said our Lord, I will move the heaven, and earth, and sea, and dry land, and I will drive away the thrones of kings, and root out the power of the kings of the Gentiles, and I will chase away the chariots of those who mount upon them.”

§57.

Now also behold what Zecharia the son of Iddo, that chosen prophet, said, beginning his prophecy in this manner: “ ‘Return to me, and I will return to you, said our Lord, and be not like your fathers, to whom the former prophets have imputed’, saying, ‘Thus said our almighty Lord’. Turn away from your ways, and they have not marked whereby they might obediently hear me.” And afterwards, “The angel asked me, ‘what do you see?’ And I said, I see a flying scythe, twenty cubits long. ‘The malediction which has proceeded upon the face of the whole earth; because every one of her thieves shall be punished even to the death, and I will throw him away’, sas our almighty Lord, and he shall enter into, the house of fury, and into the house of swearing falsehood in my name.”

§58.

Holy Malachi the prophet also says, “Behold, the day of our Lord shall come, inflamed as a furnace, and all proud men, and all workers of iniquity shall be as stubble, and the approaching day of the Lord of hosts shall set them on fire, which shall not leave a root nor a bud of them.”

§59.

Hear also what holy Job debated of the beginning and end of the ungodly, saying, “For what purpose do the wicked live, and grow old dishonestly. Their issue has been according to their own desire, and their sons before their faces, and their houses are fruitful, and neither fear nor the scourge of our Lord is

upon them. Their cows have not been abortive, those great with young have brought forth their young and not missed, but remain as an eternal breed; and their children rejoice, and taking the psaltery and harp, have finished their days in felicity and fallen peaceably asleep down into hell."

Does God, therefore, not behold the works of the wicked? Not so, truly, "But the candle of the ungodly shall be extinguished, and destruction shall fall upon them, and pains as of one in childbirth, shall withhold them from wrath; and they shall be as chaff before the wind, and as the dust which the whirlwind has carried away. Let all goodness fail his children; let his eyes behold his own slaughter, nor yet by our Lord let him be redeemed."

And a little after, he said of the same men, "who have ravenously taken the flock with the shepherd, and driven away the beast of the orphans, and engaged the ox of the widow, and deceiving, have declined from the way of necessity. They have reaped other men's fields before the time; the poor have laboured in the vineyards of the mighty without food and pay, they have made many to sleep naked without garments; of the covering of their life, they have bereaved them,"

And somewhat afterwards, when he had thoroughly understood their works, he delivered them over to darkness. "Let, therefore, his portion be accursed from the earth; let his plantings bring forth witherings; let him be rewarded for this according to his dealings; let every wicked man be broken in pieces like the unsound wood. For, arising in his wrath has he overthrown the impotent. Wherefore, truly shall he have no trust of his life; when he shall begin to grow diseased, let him not hope for health, but fall into languishing. For his pride has been the hurt of many, and he has become decayed and rotten, as the mallows in the scorching heat, or as the ear of corn when it falls off from its stubble." And afterwards, "If his children shall be many, they shall be turned to the slaughter, and if he gathers together silver as if it were earth, and likewise purify his gold as if it were dirt, all of this shall the just obtain."

§60.

Hear, moreover, what blessed Ezra, that encyclopedia of the divine law, threatens in his discourse. "Thus, said our Lord God: 'My right hand shall not be sparing upon sinners, neither shall the sword cease over them who spill the innocent blood on the earth. Fire shall proceed from out of my wrath, and devour the foundations of the earth, and sinners as if they were inflamed straw. Woe be unto them who offend, and observe not my commandments', said our Lord, 'I will not forbear them. Depart from me you apostatising children, and do not pollute my sanctuary'. God knows who offend against him, and he will therefore deliver them over to death and to slaughter. For now, many evils have passed over the round compass of the earth. A sword of fire is sent out against you, and who is he that shall restrain it? Shall any man repulse a lion that hungers in the wood? Or shall any one quench out the fire when the straw is burning? Our Lord God will send out evils, and who is he that shall repress them? And fire will pass forth from out of his wrath, and who shall extinguish it? It shall shine brilliantly, and who will not fear it? It shall thunder, and who will not shake with dread? God will threaten all, and who will not be terrified?

Before his face, the earth trembles, and the foundations of the sea shake from the depths."

§61.

And mark also what Ezekiel the renowned prophet, and admirable beholder of the four evangelical creatures, says of wicked offenders, unto whom pitifully lamenting beforehand the scourge that hung over Israel, our Lord said, "Too far has the iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah prevailed, because the earth is filled with iniquity and uncleanness. Behold I am, my eyes shall not spare, nor will I take pity." And afterwards, "Because the earth is replenished with people, and the city fraught with iniquity, I will also turn away the force of their power, and their holy things shall be polluted, prayer shall approach and sue for peace, and it shall not be obtained."

And somewhat after, "The word of our Lord was spoken unto me, saying, 'You, son of man. The land that shall so far sin against me as to commit an offence, I will stretch forth my hand upon her, and break in pieces her foundation of bread, and send upon her famine, and take away mankind and cattle from her; and if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, be in the midst of her, they shall not deliver her, but they in their justice shall be saved.' Said our Lord, 'If it so be, I shall also bring in evil beasts upon the land and punish her, she likewise shall be turned to destruction, and there shall not be one who shall have free passage from the face of the beasts, and although these three men are in the midst of her, as I live', said our Lord, 'their sons and daughters shall not be preserved, but they alone shall be saved, and as for the land it shall fall to confusion'."

And again, "The son shall not receive the unrighteousness of the father, neither the father the son's unrighteousness. The justice of the just shall be upon himself. And the unjust man, if he turns himself away from all the iniquities which he hath done, and keeps all my commandments, and acts justly with an abundance of mercy, he shall live in life and shall not die. All his sins, whatsoever he has committed, shall have no further being; he shall live the life in his own justice which he has performed. 'Do I with my will voluntarily wish the death of the unrighteous,' said our Lord, 'rather than that he should return from his evil way and live?' But when the just shall turn himself away from his justice, and do iniquity, according to all the iniquities which the unrighteous hath committed, all the just actions (which he has done) shall remain no further in memory. In his offence wherein he has fallen, and in his sins in which he hath transgressed, he shall die."

And, within some words afterwards: "All nations shall understand, that the house of Israel is led captive away for their offences, because they have forsaken me. And I have turned my face from them, and yielded them over into the hands of their enemies, and all have perished by the sword; according unto their unclean sins, and after their iniquities, I have dealt with them and turned my face away from them."