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Gods Promise to His Plantation (1630)

John Cotton

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JOHN COTTON
Gods Promise to His Plantation (1630)

JOHN COTTON (1584-1652), leading Puritan clergyman in New England, defender of Congregationalism, and millenarian theologian, was born in Derby, Derbyshire, England, where he attended Grammar School from 1593-1597. At age 13, he enrolled at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he received his first degree in 1603. His knowledge of Hebrew was so proficient that he was awarded a scholarship at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, the nursery of Puritanism, where he received his A.M. degree in 1606. He remained at Cambridge until 1612, first serving as tutor, then as head lecturer, dean, and catechist, receiving his B.D. in 1613. Cotton's abilities were held in such high esteem that he was chosen vicar of St. Botolph's, in Boston, Lincolnshire, at the age of 27, where he remained as an effectual preacher until 1632. In 1615, Cotton introduced a congregational system of worship, altered Anglican liturgy, abolished genuflection and the wearing of surplices—all apparently with little opposition from church authorities. All along, John Cotton was in close contact with John Winthrop and other members of the Massachusetts Bay Company. When Winthrop's company departed for the New World, Cotton traveled to Southampton and preached his famous farewell sermon *Gods Promise to His Plantation* (1630). In 1632, William Laud, Bishop of London, summoned Cotton to the Court of High Commission. Cotton immediately knew for whom the bell tolled and went into hiding. In 1633, he embarked for Boston, in New England, in the company of Thomas Hooker, Edmund Quincy, and John Haynes—all soon to become prominent leaders.

John Cotton's fame had preceded him. Shortly after his arrival he was chosen teacher of the First Church of Boston,

with John Wilson as pastor. Cotton retained his position until his death in 1652. During the Antinomian Controversy involving many of his own parishioners (1636–38), Cotton eventually distanced himself from Anne Hutchinson, John Wheelwright, and Gov. Henry Vane, but offered to resign and to return to England. When the separatism of Roger Williams (later founder of Rhode Island) became a threat to the Bay Colony, Cotton opposed Williams' break with the Church of England and maintained that even though church and state were two separate entities, the magistrates acted as the protectors of the church. In 1642, he declined an invitation from England to represent New England's interest at the Westminster Assembly in London. John Cotton and Thomas Hooker also turned down an invitation to attend the Cambridge Synod (1646–49) to represent the Independents in the debate over the framing of a new model of church government in England. In his stead, Cotton sent his *Way of the Congregational Churches Cleared* (1648) to speak on New England's behalf. Four years later, while preaching at Harvard College, Cotton caught pneumonia and died in late 1652. Cotton's widow married the Rev. Richard Mather, whose son Increase in turn married Cotton's daughter Maria, who became the mother of Cotton Mather in 1663.

Of his many sermons, tracts, and exegetical works, several stand out. In 1640, he published *The Whole Book of Psalmes Faithfully Translated into English Meter*, a new translation of the Psalms, which evidently served as a model for the famous *Bay Psalm Book* (1640). His work on church membership was published as *The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven* (1644), and his defense of congregationalism appeared as *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England* (1645) and *The Way of the Congregational*

Churches Cleared (1648). In 1646, he published a popular catechism *Milk for Babes*, which remained in standard use for many years. His *Bloudy Tenent, Washed* (1647) is Cotton's response to Roger Williams' charges of persecution for liberty of conscience, in *The Bloudy Tenent, of Persecution* (1644). The selection reprinted below is Cotton's famous farewell sermon preached at the departure of the Winthrop fleet in Southampton in 1630. *Gods Promise to His Plantation* (1630)—courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society—is an ideological justification for engaging in such a risky venture, a promotional tract to encourage emigration, and a typological argument for possessing the wilderness. Like Winthrop's famous *Model of Christian Charity* (1630), John Cotton's sermon is central to the Puritan experiment in the New World.

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This introductory essay and the following text of *Gods Promise to His Plantation* were published in *The Kingdom, the Power, & the Glory: The Millennial Impulse in Early American Literature* (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall-Hunt Publishing, 1998). Copyright © 1998 Reiner Smolinski.

GODS P R O M I S E TO HIS P L A N T A T I O N .

2 Sam. 7. 10.

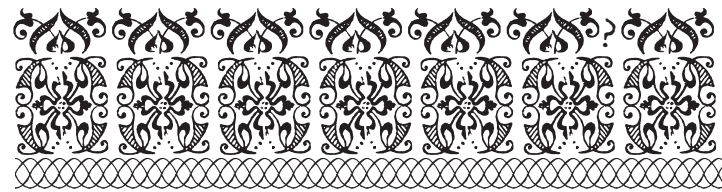
*Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel,
and I will plant them, that they may dwell in a
place of their owne, and move no more.*

As it was delivered in a Sermon,
By IOHN COTTON, B.D.
and Preacher of Gods
word in *Boston*.

P S A L M E 22. 27. 30. 31.

*All the ends of the world shall remember and turne unto the
Lord, and all the kindreds of the Nations shall worship
before thee.
A seede shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for
a generation.
They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a
people that shall be borne, that he hath done this.*

LONDON,
Printed by *William Jones* for *John Bellamy*, and
are to be solde at the three *Golden Lyons* by the
Royall Exchange. 1630.



To the Christian Reader:



ALTHOUGH no good Christian, or indeede ingenuous man, can doe anything lesse, than approve of such endeavours, as aime at the glory of God, and a Common good, especially when they are mannaged by a cleare warrant from Gods word. Yet for aymes and ends that men put to their actions being hidden in their hearts, there is no way to declare them, but by an honest profession of them, which is sufficient where wee are entertained but with that common charity one man is bound to yeeld another; But for the grounds and rule an action is wrought by, and the praise of it in that respect, there is another iudgement than that of charity to guide us by, namely, by proving it by the touch-stone of Gods word.

To the Christian Reader

Now because many may either not know, or doe not consider upon how full a ground and warrant out of the word of God that undertaking (which was the occasion of this Sermon) hath hitherto proceeded, I thought good (Courteous Reader) leave being with some difficultie obtained of the Reverend Authour to present unto thy view and consideration, that which may in part give thee satisfaction in this particular.

Ere long (if God will) thou shalt see a larger declaration of the first rise and ends of this enterprise, and so cleare and full a iustification of this designe, both in respect of that warrant it hath from Gods word, and also in respect of any other ground and circumstance of weight, that is considerable in the warrant of such worke, as (I hope) there will easily be removed any scruple of moment, which hitherto hath beene moved about it.

If thou hast any doubts yet unresolved, rather be intreated to understand from us, what may be the answer of them, than to discourage any man by them: so shalt thou be a helper and a friend, whereas otherwise (it may be against thy

To the Christian Reader

will) thou maist be anemie to a worke (for ought thou yet knowest) God is the Authour of.

It is hoped; there is none but will finde cause to approve of the worke, and of them that ingage themselves in it; But especially they who any way, at least by silence (a seeming applause) approved the Plantations of Virginia, St. Christophers, Bermudas, this having ends inferiour to none of them, and men (not to compare but to give due honour to all employed in such noble enterprises) promising as much by their usefulness, industrie, love to their Countrie, piety, and other qualifications as those did.

It is enough they adventure, that hazard their persons, families and estates, for that worke, which it may appeare to thee ere long thou art bound as well as they to further.

Now it were iniurious, if not impious, not onely to denie the right and benefit of thy prayers to such, but also to loade them with causelesse aspersions (though but in thy thoughts) for that, for which thou hast great cause to praise God for them, who hath stirred up their spirits to that which hath beene a maine meane of peopling the

To the Christian Reader

world, and is likely to be of propagating the Gospel. For the furtherance of which worke in the hands of those that sincerely intend it, let as fervent prayers passe from thee to the throne of grace for them, as I am confident, (thy occasions being made knowne unto them) would be put up from them in thy behalfe.

Thine I. H.

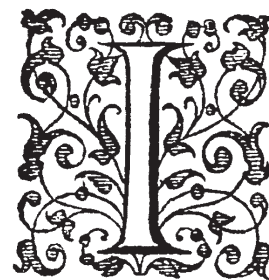


(1)



2 Sam. 7. 10.

Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their owne, and move no more.



IN the beginning of this chapter, we reade of *Dauids* purpose to build God an house, who thereupon consulted with *Nathan* about it, one Prophet standing in neede of anothers help in such waigtie matters. *Nathan* encourageth the King unto this worke, verse 3. God the same night meetes *Nathan* and tells him a contrary purpose of his: Wherein God refuseth *Dauids* offer, with some kind of earnest and vehement dislike, verse 4. 5. Secondly, he refuseth the reason of *Dauids* offer, from his long silence. For foure hundred yeares together he spake of no such thing, unto any of the Tribes of *Israel*, saying, *Why build you not me an house?* in 6. 7. verses.

Now lest *David* should be discouraged with this

answer, the Lord bids *Nathan* to shut up his speech with words of encouragement, and so he removes his discouragement two wayes.

First, by recounting his former favours dispensed unto *David*. Secondly, by promising the continuance of the like or greater: and the rather, because of this purpose of his. And five blessings God promiseth unto *David*, and his, for his sake.

The first is in the 10. verse: *I will appoynt a place for my people Israel.*

Secondly, seeing it was in his heart to build him an house, God would therefore, *build him an house renowned for ever.* verse 11.

Thirdly, that he would accept of an house from *Salomon*, verse 12.

Fourthly, hee will be a Father to his sonne, vers. 14. 15.

Fifthly, that he will *establish the Throne of his house for ever.*

In this 10. verse is a double blessing promised:

First, the designment of a place for his people.

Secondly, a plantation of them in that place, from whence is promised a threefold blessing.

First, they shall dwell there like Free-holders in a place of their owne.

Secondly, hee promiseth them firme and durable possession, they shall move no more.

Thirdly, they shall have peaceable and quiet resting there, The sonnes of wickednesse shall afflict them no more: which is amplified by their former troubles, as before time.

From the appointment of a place for them, which is the first blessing, you may observe this note:

The placing of a people in this or that Country is from the appointment of the Lord.

This is evident in the Text, and the Apostle speakes of it as grounded in nature, *Acts* 17. 26. *God hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitation.* *Deut.* 2 chap. 5. 9. God would not have the *Israelites* meddle with the *Edomites*, or the *Moabites*, because hee had given them their land for a possession. God assigned out such a land for such a posterity, and for such a time.

Wherein doth this worke of God stand in appointing a place for a people? *Quest.*

First, when God espies or discovers a land for a people, as in *Ezek.* 20. 6. he brought them into a land that he had espied for them: And that is, when either he gives them to discover it themselves, or heare of it discovered by others, and fitting them. *Answ.*

Secondly, after he hath espied it, when he carrieth them along to it, so that they plainly see a providence of God leading them from one Country to another: As in *Exod.* 19. 4. *You have seene how I have borne you as on Eagles wings, and brought you unto my selfe.* So that though they met with many difficulties, yet hee carried them high above them all, like an eagle, flying over seas and rockes, and all hinderances.

Thirdly, when he makes roome for a people to dwell there, as in *Psal.* 80. 9. *Thou preparedst roome*

for them. When *Isaac* sojourned among the *Philistines*, he digged one well, and the *Philistines* strove for it, and he called it *Esek*: and he digged another well, and for that they strove also, therefore he called it *Sitnah*. and he removed thence, and digged an other well, and for that they strove not, and he called it *Rehoboth*, and said, *For now the Lord hath made roome for vs, and we shall be fruitfull in the Land*. Now no *Esek*, no *Sitnah*, no quarrell or contention, but now he sits downe in *Rehoboth*, in a peaceable roome.

Now God makes room for a people 3 wayes:

First, when he casts out the enemies of a people before them by lawfull warre with the inhabitants, which God calls them unto: as in *Ps.* 44. 2. *Thou didst drive out the Heathen before them*. But this course of warring against others, & driving them out without provocation, depends upon speciall Commission from God, or else it is not imitable.

Secondly, when hee gives a forreigne people favour in the eyes of any native people to come and sit downe with them either by way of purchase, as *Abraham* did obtaine the field of *Machpelah*; or else when they give it in courtesie, as *Pharoah* did the land of *Goshen* unto the sons of *Jacob*.

Thirdly, when hee makes a Country though not altogether void of Inhabitants, yet void in that place where they reside. Where there is a vacant place, there is liberty for the sonnes of *Adam* or *Noah* to come and inhabite, though they neither buy it, nor aske their leaves. *Abraham* and *Isaac*,

when they * sojourned amongst the *Philistines*, they did not buy that land to feede their cattle, because they said There is roome enough. And so did *Jacob* pitch his Tent by *Sechem*, *Gen.* 34. 21. There was roome enough, as *Hamor* said, *Let them sit downe amongst us*. And in this case if the people who were former Inhabitants did disturbe them in their possessions, they complained to the King, as of wrong done unto them: As *Abraham* did because they tooke away his well, in *Gen.* 21, 25. For his right whereto he pleaded not his immediate calling from God, (for that would have seemed frivolous among the Heathen) but his owne industry and culture in digging the well, verse 30. Nor doth the King reject his plea, with what had he to doe to digge wells in their soyle? but admitteth it as a Principle in Nature, That in a vacant soyle, hee that taketh possession of it, and bestoweth culture and husbandry upon it, his Right it is. And the ground of this is from the grand Charter given to *Adam* and his posterity in Paradise, *Gen.* 1. 28. *Multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it*. If therefore any sonne of *Adam* come and finde a place empty, he hath liberty to come, and fill, and subdue the earth there. This Charter was renewed to *Noah*, *Gen.* 9. 1. *Fill the earth and multiply*. So that it is free from that common Grant, for any to take possession of vacant Countries. Indeed no Nation is to drive out another without speciall Commission from heaven, such as the *Israelites* had, unlesse the Natives do unjustly wrong them, and will not recompence the wrongs

* This sojourning was a constant residence there, as in a possession of their owne; although it bee called sojourning or dwelling as strangers, because they neither had the soveraigne government of the whole Countrey in their owne hand, nor yet did incorporate them selves into the Commonvealth of the Natives, to submit themselves unto their government.

done in peaceable sort, & then they may right themselves by lawfull war, and subdue the Countrey unto themselves.

This placing of people in this or that Country, is from Gods sovereignty over all the earth, and the inhabitants thereof: as in *Psal.* 24. 1. *The earth is the Lords, and the fulnesse thereof.* And in *Ier.* 10. 7. God is there called, *The King of Nations:* and in *Deut.* 10. 14. Therefore it is meete he should provide a place for all Nations to inhabite, and have all the earth replenished. Onely in the Text here is meant some more speciall appointment, because God tells them it by his owne mouth; he doth not so with other people, he doth not tell the children of *Sier*, that hee hath appointed a place for them: that is, He gives them the land by promise; others take the land by his providence, but Gods people take the land by promise: And therefore the land of *Canaan* is called a land of promise. Which they discern, first, by discerning themselves to be in Christ, in whom all the promises are yea, and amen.

Secondly, by finding his holy presence with them, to wit, when hee plants them in the holy Mountaine of his Inheritance: *Exodus* 15. 17. And that is when he giveth them the liberty and purity of his Ordinances. It is a land of promise, where they have provision for soule as well as for body. *Ruth* dwelt well for outward respects while shee dwelt in *Moab*, but when shee cometh to dwell in *Israel*, shee is said to come under the wings of

God: *Ruth* 2. 12. When God wrappes us in with his Ordinances, and warmes us with the life and power of them as with wings, there is a land of promise.

This may teach us all where wee doe now dwell, or where after wee may dwell, be sure you looke at every place appointed to you, from the hand of God: wee may not rush into any place, and never say to God, By your leave; but wee must discern how God appoints us this place. There is poore comfort in sitting downe in any place, that you cannot say, This place is appointed me of God. Canst thou say that God spied out this place for thee, and there hath settled thee above all hindrances? didst thou finde that God made roome for thee either by lawfull descent, or purchase, or gift, or other warrantable right? Why then this is the place God hath appointed thee; here hee hath made roome for thee, he hath placed thee in *Reboboah*, in a peaceable place: This we must discern, or els wee are but intruders upon God. And when wee doe withall discern, that God giveth us these outward blessings from his love in Christ, and maketh comfortable provision as well for our soule as for our bodies, by the meanes of grace, then doe we enjoy our present possession as well by gracious promise, as by the common, and just, and bountifull providence of the Lord. Or if a man doe remove, he must see that God hath espied out such a Country for him.

Secondly, though there be many difficulties, yet

he hath given us hearts to overlooke them all, as if we were carried upon eagles wings.

And thirdly, see God making roome for us by some lawfull meanes.

Quest.

But how shall I know whether God hath appointed me such a place, if I be well where I am, what may warrant my removeall?

Answe.

There be foure or five good things, for procurement of any of which I may remove. Secondly, there be some evill things, for avoiding of any of which wee may transplant our selves. Thirdly, if withall we finde some speciall providence of God concurring in either of both concerning our selves, and applying general grounds of removall to our personall estate.

I.

First, wee may remove for the gaining of knowledge. Our Saviour commends it in the Queene of the South, that she came from the utmost parts of the earth to heare the wisdom of *Salomon*: *Matth.* 12. 42. And surely with him she might have continued for the same end, if her personall calling had not recalled her home.

Secondly, some remove and travaile for merchandize and gaine-sake; *Daily bread may be sought from farre*, *Prov.* 31. 14. Yea our Saviour approveth travaile for Merchants, *Matth.* 13. 45, 46. when hee compareth a Christian to a Merchantman seeking pearles: For hee never fetcheth a comparison from any unlawfull thing to illustrate a thing lawfull. The comparison from the unjust Steward, and from the Theefe in the night, is not taken from

the injustice of the one, or the [9] theft of the other; but from the wisdom of the one, and the so-dainnesse of the other; which in themselves are not unlawfull.

Thirdly, to plant a Colony, that is, a company that agree together to remove out of their owne Country, and settle a Citty or Common-wealth elsewhere. Of such a Colony wee read in *Acts* 16. 12. which God blessed and prospered exceedingly, and made it a glorious Church. Nature teacheth Bees to doe so, when as the hive is too full, they seeke abroad for new dwellings: So when the hive of the Common-wealth is so full, that Tradesmen cannot live one by another, but eate up one another, in this case it is lawfull to remove.

Fourthly, God alloweth a man to remove, when he may employ his Talents and gifts better elsewhere, especially when where he is, he is not bound by any speciall engagement. Thus God sent *Ioseph* before to preserve the Church: *Iosephs* wisdom and spirit was not fit for a shepheard, but for a Counsellour of State; and therefore God sent him into *Egypt*. *To whom much is given, of him God will require the more*: *Luke* 12. 48.

Fifthly, for the liberty of the Ordinances. 2 *Chron.* 11. 13, 14, 15. When *Ieroboam* made a desertion from *Judah*, and set up golden Calves to worship, all that were well affected, both Priests and people, solde their possessions, and came to *Ierusalem* for the Ordinances sake. This case was of seasonable use to our fathers in the dayes of

Queene *Mary*; who removed to *France* and *Germany* in the beginning of her Reign, upon Proclamation of alteration of religion, before any persecution began.

2. Secondly, there be evils to be avoided that may warrant removeall. First, when some grievous sinnes overspread a Country that threaten desolation. *Mic.* 2. 6. to 11 verse: When the people say to them that prophesie, *Prophecy not*; then verse 10. *Arise then, this is not your rest.* Which words though they be a threatning, not a commandement; yet as in a threatning a wise man foreseeeth the plague, so in the threatning he seeth a commandement, to hide himselfe from it. This case might have beene of seasonable use unto them of the *Palatinate*, when they saw their Orthodoxe Ministers banished, although themselves might for a while enjoy libertie of conscience.

Secondly, if men be overburdened with debts and miseries, as *David's* followers were; they may then retire out of the way (as they retired to *David* for safety) not to defraud their Creditors, (*for God is an avenger of such things*, 1 *Thess.* 4. 6.) but to gaine further opportunity to discharge their debts, and to satisfie their Creditors. 1 *Sam.* 22. 1, 2.

3. Thirdly, in case of persecution, so did the Apostles in *Acts* 13. 46, 47.

3. Thirdly, as these generall cases, where any of them doe fall out, doe warrant removeall in generall: so there be some speciall providences or particular cases which may give warrant unto such or

such a person to transplant himselfe, and which apply the former generall grounds to particular persons.

First, if soveraigne Authority command and encourage such Plantations by giving way to subjects to transplant themselves, and set up a new Commonwealth. This is a lawfull and expedient case for such particular persons as be designed and sent: *Matth.* 8. 9. and for such as they, who are sent, have power to command.

Secondly, when some speciall providence of God leades a man unto such a course. This may also single out particulars. *Psal.* 32. 8. *I will instruct, and guide thee with mine eye.* As the childe knowes the pleasure of his father in his eye, so doth the childe of God see Gods pleasure in the eye of his heavenly Fathers providence. And this is done three wayes.

First, if God give a man an inclination to this or that course, for that is the spirit of man; & *God is the Father of spirits: Heb.* 12. 9. *Rom.* 1. 11, 12. 1 *Cor.* 16. 12. *Paul* discerned his calling to goe to *Rome*, by his *τὸ πρόθυμον*, his ready inclination to that voyage; and *Apollos* his loathnesse to goe to *Corinth*, *Paul* accepted as a just reason of his refusall of a calling to goe thither. And this holdeth, when in a mans inclination to travaile, his heart is set on no by-respects, as to see fashions, to deceive his Creditors, to fight Duels, or to live idly, these are vaine inclinations; but if his heart be inclined upon right judgement to advance the Gospell, to maintaine his

family, to use his Talents fruitfully, or the like good end, this inclination is from God. As the beames of the Moone darting into the Sea leades it to and fro, so doth a secret inclination darted by God into our hearts leade and bowe (as a byas) our whole course.

Secondly, when God gives other men hearts to call us, as the men of *Macedon* did *Paul*, *Come to us into Macedonia, and helpe us*. When wee are invited by others who have a good calling to reside there, we may goe with them, unlesse we be detained by waightier occasions. One member hath interest in another, to call to it for helpe, when it is not diverted by greater employment.

Thirdly, there is another providence of God concurring in both these, that is, when a mans calling and person is free, and not tyed by parents, or Magistrates, or other people that have interest in him. Or when abroad he may doe himselfe and others more good than hee can doe at home. Here is then an eye of God that opens a doore there, and sets him loose here, inclines his heart that way, and outlookes all difficulties. When God makes roome for us, no binding here, and an open way there, in such a case God tells them, he will appoint a place for them.

Use. 2. Secondly, this may teach us in every place where God appoints us to sit downe, to acknowledge him as our Landlord. The earth is the Lords, and the fullnesse thereof; his are our Countries, our Townes, our houses; and therefore let us acknowl-

edge him in them all. The Apostle makes this use of it among the *Athenians*, *Acts* 17. 26, 27. *He hath appointed the times, and places of our habitation, that we might seeke, and grope after the Lord*. There is a threefold use that we are to make of it, as it appeareth there; Let us seek after the Lord, why? Because if thou comdest into an house, thou wilt aske for the owner of it: And so if thou comdest into a forreigne land, and there findest an house and land provided for thee, wilt thou not enquire, where is the Landlord? where is that God that gave mee this house and land? He is missing, and therefore seek after him.

Secondly, thou must feele after him, grope after him by such sensible things, strive to attaine the favour of your Landlord, and labour to be obedient to him that hath given you such a place.

Thirdly, you must labour to finde him in his Ordinances, in prayer and in Christian communion. These things I owe him as my Landlord, and by these I find and enjoy him. This use the very Pagans were to make of their severall Plantations: And if you knew him before, seeke him yet more, and feele after him till you finde him in his Ordinances, and in your consciences.

Thirdly, when you have found God making way and roome for you, and carrying you by his providence into any place, learne to walke thankfully before him, defraud him not of his rent, but offer your selves unto his service: Serve that God, and

Use. 3.

↓
teach your children to serve him, that hath appointed you and them the place of your habitation.

2. Observation. *A people of Gods Plantation shall enjoy their owne place with safetie and peace.*

This is manifest in the Text: I will plant them; and what followes from thence? They shall dwell in their owne place: But how? Peaceably, they shall not be moved any more. Then they shall dwell safely, then they shall live in peace. The like promise you reade of in *Psal.* 89. 21, 22. *The enemy shall not exact upon them any more.* And in *Psal.* 92. 13. *Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God. Gods plantation is a flourishing plantation,* *Amos* 9. 15.

Quest.

What is it for God to plant a people?

Answ.

It is a Metaphor taken from young Impes; I will plant them, that is, I will make them to take roote there; and that is, where they and their soyle agree well together, when they are well and sufficiently provided for, as a plant suckes nourishment from the soyle that fitteth it.

Secondly, When hee causeth them to grow as plants doe, in *Psal.* 80. 8, 9, 10, 11. When a man growes like a tree in tallnesse and strength, to more firmenesse and eminency, then hee may be said to be planted.

Thirdly, When God causeth them to *fructifie.* *Psal.* 1. 4.

Fourthly, When he establisheth them there, then he plants, and rootes not up.

But here is something more especiall in this planting; for they were planted before in this land, and yet he promiseth here againe, that hee will plant them in their owne land: which doth imply, first, That what ever former good estate they had already, he would prosper it, and increase it.

Secondly, God is said to plant a people more especially, when they become *Trees of righteousness,* *Isay* 61. 3: That they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. So that there is implied not onely a continuance of their former good estate, but that hee would make them a good people, a choice generation: which he did, first, by planting the Ordinances of God amongst them in a more glorious manner, as he did in *Salomons* time.

2. He would give his people *a naile, and a place in his Tabernacle,* *Isay* 56. 5. And that is to give us part in Christ: for so the Temple typified. So then hee plants us when hee gives us roote in Christ.

Thirdly, When he giveth us to *grow up in him as Calves in the stall:* *Mal.* 4. 2, 3.

Fourthly, & to *bring forth much fruit,* *Iob.* 15. 1. 2.

Fifthly, and to continue and abide in the state of grace. This is to plant us in his holy Sanctuary, he not rooting us up.

This is taken from the kinde acceptance of *David's* purpose to build God an house, because he saw it was done in the honesty of his heart, therefore he promiseth to give his people a place wherein they should abide for ever as in a house of rest. Reason.

Secondly, it is taken from the office God takes upon him, when he is our planter, hee becomes our husbandman; and *if hee plant us, who shall plucke us up?* *Isay* 27. 1, 2. *Iob* 34. 29. When he giveth quiet, who can make trouble? If God be the Gardiner, who shall plucke up what hee sets down? Every plantation that he hath not planted shall be plucked up, and what he hath planted shall surely be established.

Thirdly, from the nature of the blessing hee confers upon us: When he promiseth to plant a people, their dayes shall be as the dayes of a Tree, *Isay* 65. 22. As the Oake is said to be an hundred yeares in growing, and an hundred yeares in full strength, and an hundred yeares in decaying.

Quest. But it may be demanded, how was this promise fulfilled by the people, seeing after this time they met with many persecutions, at home, and abroad, many sonnes of wickednesse afflicted them; *Ieroboam* was a sonne of wickednesse, and so was *Ahab*, and *Ahaz*, and divers others.

Answe. Because after *David's* time they had more settlednesse than before.

Secondly, to the godly these promises were fulfilled in Christ.

Thirdly, though this promise was made that others should not wrong them, yet it followes not but that they might wrong themselves by trespassing against God, and so expose themselves to affliction. Whilst they continued Gods plantation, they were a noble Vine, a right seede, but if *Israel*

will destroy themselves; the fault is in themselves. And yet even in their captivity the good amongst them God graciously provided for: The *Basket of good figges* God sent into the land of *Caldea* for their good: *Ier.* 24. 5. But if you rebell against God, the same God that planted you will also roote you out againe, for all the evill which you shall doe against your selves: *Ier.* 11. 17. When the Israelites liked not the soile, grew weary of the Ordinances, and forsooke the worship of God, and said, *What part have we in David?* after this they never got so good a King, nor any settled rest in the good land wherein God had planted them. As they waxed weary of God, so hee waxed wearie of them, and cast them out of his sight.

To exhort all that are planted at home, or intend to plant abroad, to looke well to your plantation, as you desire that the sonnes of wickednesse may not afflict you at home, nor enemies abroad, looke that you be right planted, and then you neede not to feare, you are safe enough: God hath spoken it, I will plant them, and they shall not be moved, neither shall the sonnes of wickednesse afflict them any more.

Use 1.

What course would you have us take?

Have speciall care that you ever have the Ordinances planted amongst you, or else never looke for security. As soone as Gods Ordinances cease, your security ceaseth likewise; but if God plant his Ordinances among you, feare not, he will maintaine them. *Isay* 4. 5, 6: *Vpon all their glory there*

Quest.

Answe. 1.

shall be a defence, that is, upon all Gods Ordinances: for so was the Arke called *the Glory of Israel*, 1 *Sam.* 4. 22.

2. Secondly, have a care to be implanted into the Ordinances, that the word may be ingrafted into you, and you into it: If you take rooting in the Ordinances, grow up thereby, bring forth much fruite, continue and abide therein, then you are a vineyard of red wine, and the Lord will keepe you, *Isay* 27. 2. 3. that no sonnes of violence shall destroy you. Looke into all the stories whether diuine or humane, and you shall never finde that God ever rooted out a people that had the Ordinances planted amongst them, and themselves planted into the Ordinances: never did God suffer such plants to be plucked up; on all their glory shall be a defence.

3. Thirdly, be not unmindfull of our *Ierusalem* at home, whether you leave us, or stay at home with us. *Oh pray for the peace of Ierusalem, they shall prosper that love her. Psal.* 122. 6. *They shall all be confounded and turned backe that hate Sion. Psal.* 129. 5. As God continueth his presence with us, (blessed be his name) so be ye present in spirit with us, though absent in body: Forget not the wombe that bare you, and the breasts that gave you sucke. Even ducklings hatched under an henne, though they take the water, yet will still have recourse to the wing that hatched them: how much more should chickens of the same feather, and yolke? In the amity and unity

of brethren, the Lord hath not onely promised, but commanded a blessing, even life for evermore: *Psal.* 133. 1. 2.

- Fourthly, goe forth, every man that goeth, 4. with a publicke spirit, looking not on your owne things onely, but also on the things of others: *Phil.* 2. 4. This care of universall helpfullnesse was the prosperity of the first Plantation of the Primitive Church: *Acts* 4. 32.

- Fifthly, have a tender care that you looke well 5. to the plants that spring from you, that is, to your children, that they doe not degenerate as the Israelites did; after which they were vexed with afflictions on every hand. How came this to passe? *Ier.* 2. 21. *I planted them a noble Vine, holy, a right seede, how then art thou degenerate into a strange Vine before mee?* Your Ancestours were of a noble diuine spirit, but if they suffer their children to degenerate, to take loose courses, then God will surely plucke you up: Otherwise if men have a care to propagate the Ordinances and Religion to their children after them, God will plant them, and not roote them up. For want of this, the seede of the repenting *Ninivites* was rooted out.

- Sixthly, and lastly, offend not the poore Natives, 6. but as you partake in their land, so make them partakers of your precious faith: as you reape their temporalls, so feede them with your spiritualls: winne them to the love of Christ, for whom Christ died. They never yet refused the Gospell, and therefore

more hope they will now receive it. Who knoweth whether God have reared this whole Plantation for such an end?

Vse 2. Secondly, for consolation to them that are planted by God in any place, that finde rooting and establishing from God, this is a cause of much encouragement unto you, that what hee hath planted he will maintaine, every plantation his right hand hath not planted shalbe rooted up, but his owne plantation shall prosper, & flourish. When he promiseth peace and safety, what enemies shall be able to make the promise of God of none effect? Neglect not walls, and bulwarkes, and fortifications for your owne defence; but ever let the Name of the Lord be your strong Tower; and the word of his Promise the Rocke of your Refuge. His word that made heaven and earth will not faile, till heaven and earth be no more.
Amen.

FINIS.

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