

Secondly, when some special providence of God leads a man unto such a course. This may also single out particulars. Ps. xxxii, 8, I will instruct, and guide thee with mine eye. As the child knows the pleasure of his father in his eye, so doth the child of God see God's pleasure in the eye of his heavenly Father's providence. And this is done three ways.

First, if God give a man an inclination to this or that course, for that is the spirit of man; and God is the father of spirits (Rom. i, 11, 12; 1 Cor. xvi, 12). Paul discerned his calling to go to Rome by his *τὸ πρόθυμον*, his ready inclination to that voyage; and Apollos his loathing to go to Corinth Paul accepted as a just reason of his refusal of a calling to go thither. And this holdeth when, in a man's inclination to travail, his heart is set by no by-respects, as to see fashions, to deceive his creditors, to fight duels, or to live idly, these are vain inclinations; but if his heart be inclined upon right judgment to advance the gospel, to maintain his family, to use his talents fruitfully, or the like good end, this inclination is from God. As the beams of the moon darting into the sea leads it to and fro, so doth a secret inclination darted by God into our hearts lead and bow (as a bias) 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 help us. When we are invited by others who have a good calling to reside there, we may go with them unless we be detained by weightier occasions. One member hath interest in another, to call to it for help, when it is not diverted by greater employment.

Thirdly, there is another providence of God concurring in both these, that is, when a man's calling and person is free, and not tied by parents, or magistrates, or other people that have interest in him. Or, when abroad, he may do himself

and others more good than he can do at home. Here is then an eye of God that opens a door there, and sets him loose here, inclines his heart that way, and outlooks all difficulties. When God makes room for us, no binding here, and an open way there, in such a case God tells them he will appoint a place for them.

Verse 2. Secondly, this may teach us in every place where God appoints us to sit down, to acknowledge him as our landlord. The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; his are our countries, our towns, our houses; and therefore let us acknowledge him in them all. The Apostle makes this use of it among the Athenians (Acts xvii, 26, 27), He hath appointed the times and places of our habitation; that we might seek 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 comest into an house thou wilt ask for the owner of it; and so, if thou comest into a foreign land, and there findest an house and land provided for thee, wilt thou not inquire, Where is the landlord? where is that God that gave me this house and land? He is missing, and therefore seek after him.

Secondly, thou must feel after him, grope after him by such sensible things, strive to attain the favor of your landlord, and labor to be obedient to him that hath given you such a place.

Thirdly, you must labor to find 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 several plantations. And if you knew him before, seek him yet more, and feel after him till you find him in his ordinances and in your consciences.

Verse 3. Thirdly, when you have found God making way and room for you, and carrying you by his providence into any place, learn to walk thankfully before him, defraud him not of his rent, but offer yourselves unto his service. Serve that God, and teach your children to serve him, that hath appointed you and them the place of your habitation.

2. Observation. A people of God's plantation shall enjoy their own place with safety and peace.

This is manifest in the text. I will plant them, and what follows from thence? They shall dwell in their own 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 read of in Ps. lxxxix, 21, 22, The enemy shall not exact upon them any more. And in Ps. xcii, 13, Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. God's plantation is a flourishing plantation (Amos ix, 15).

*Q.* What is it for God to plant a people?

*Ans.* It is a metaphor taken from young Impes. I will plant them, that is, I will make them to take root there; and that is, where they and their soil agree well together, when they are well and sufficiently provided for, as a plant sucks nourishment from the soil that fitteth it.

Secondly, When he causeth them to grow as plants do, in Ps. lxxx, 8-11. When a man grows like a tree in tallness and strength, to more firmness and eminency, then he may be said to be planted.

Thirdly, When God causeth them to fructify (Ps. i, 5).

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

But here is something more especial in this planting; for they were planted before in this land, and yet he promiseth

here again that he will plant them in their own land; which doth imply, first, That whatever 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 (Is. lxi, 3), that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. So that there is implied not only a continuance of their former good estate, but that he would make them a good people, a choice generation: which he did, first, by planting the ordinances of God among them in a more glorious manner, as he did in Solomon's time.

2. He would give his people a nail, and a place in his tabernacle (Is. lvi, 5). And that is to give us part in Christ; for so the temple typified. So, then, he plants us when he gives us root in Christ.

Thirdly, When he giveth us to grow up in him as calves in the stall (Mal. iv, 2, 3).

Fourthly, And to bring forth much fruit (John xv, 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.

*Reasons.* This is taken from the kind 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 forever as in a house of rest.

Secondly, It is taken from the office God takes upon him, when he is our planter, he becomes our husbandman; and if he plant us who shall pluck us up? (Is. xxvii, 1, 2; Job xxxiv, 29). When he giveth quiet, who can make trouble? If God be the gardner, who shall pluck up what he 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 he confers upon us. When he promiseth to plant a people, their days shall be as the days of a tree (Is. lxx, 22). As the oak is said to be an hundred years in growing, and an hundred years in full strength, and an hundred years in decaying.

*Q.* 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 sources of wickedness afflicted them. Jeroboam was a son of wickedness, and so was Ahab, and Ahaz, and divers others.

*Ans.* Because, after David's time, they had more settledness 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 follows not but that they might wrong themselves by trespassing against God, and so expose themselves to affliction. Whilst they continued God's plantation, they were a noble vine, a right seed, but if Israel will destroy themselves the fault is in themselves. And yet, even in their captivity, the good among them God graciously provided for. The basket of good figs God sent into the land of Chaldea for their good (Jer. xxiv, 5). But if you rebel against God, the same God that planted you will also root you out again, for all the evil which you shall do against yourselves (Jer. xi, 17). When the Israelites liked not the soil, grew weary of the ordinances, and forsook 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 he waxed weary of them and cast them out of his sight.

Verse 1. To exhort all that are planted at home, or intend to plant abroad, to look well to your plantation, as you desire that the sons of wickedness may not afflict you at home, nor enemies abroad, look that you be right planted, and then you need not to fear, you are safe enough. God hath spoken it, I will plant them, and they shall not be moved, neither shall the sons of wickedness afflict them any more.

*Q.* What course would you have us take?

*Ans.* Have special care that you ever have the ordinances planted among you, or else never look for security. As soon as God's ordinances cease, your security ceaseth likewise; but if God plant his ordinances among you, fear not, he will maintain them (Is. iv, 5, 6). Upon all their glory there shall be a defence; that is, upon all God's ordinances: for so was the ark called the glory of Israel (1 Sam. iv, 22).

Secondly, have a care to be implanted into the ordinances, that the word may be engrafted into you, and you into it. If you take rooting in the ordinances, grow up thereby, bring forth much fruit, continue and abide therein, then you are vineyard of red wine, and the Lord will keep you, (Is. xxvii, 2, 3), that no sons of violence shall destroy you. Look into all the stories, whether divine or human, and you shall never find that God ever rooted out a people that had the ordinances planted among 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.

Thirdly, be not unmindful of our Jerusalem at home, whether you leave us or stay at home with us. Oh, pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love her (Ps. cxxii, 6). They shall all be confounded and turned back that hate Sion (Ps. cxxix, 5). As God continueth his pres-

ence with us (blessed be his name), so be ye present in spirit with us, though absent in body. Forget not the womb that bare you and the breast that gave you suck. Even ducklings hatched under a hen, 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 yolk? In the amity and unity of brethren the Lord hath not only promised, but commanded a blessing, even life forevermore (Ps. cxxxiii, 1, 2).

Fourthly, go forth, every man that goeth, with a public spirit, looking not on your own things only, but also on the things of others (Phil. ii, 4). This care of universal helpfulness was the prosperity of the first plantation of the primitive Church (Acts iv, 32).

Fifthly, have a tender care that you look well to the plants that spring from you, that is, to your children, that they do not degenerate as the Israelites did; after which they were vexed with afflictions on every hand. How came this to pass? Jer. ii, 21: I planted them a noble vine, holy, a right seed, how then art thou degenerate into a strange vine before me? Your ancestors were of a noble, divine spirit, but if they suffer their children to degenerate, to take loose courses, then God will surely pluck 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 root them up. For want of this the seed of the repenting Ninevites was rooted out.

Sixthly, and lastly, offend not the poor natives, but, as you partake in their land, so make them partakers of your precious faith; as you reap their temporals, so feed them with your spirituals: win them to the love of Christ, for whom Christ died. They never yet refused the gospel, and

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

Verse 2. Secondly, for consolation to them that are planted by God in any place, that find rooting and establishing from God, this is a cause of much encouragement unto you, that what he hath planted he will maintain, every plantation his right hand hath not planted shall be rooted up, but his own plantation shall prosper and 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 bulwarks, and fortifications for your own defence; but ever let the name of the Lord be your strong tower, and the word of his promise the rock of your refuge. His word that made heaven and earth will not fail till heaven and earth be no more. Amen.