

CHAPTER 9

Here is in this chapter,

I. The impolite confederacy of the kings of Canaan against Israel (v. 1, 2).

II. The polite confederacy of the inhabitants of Gibeon with Israel,

- 1.** How it was subtly proposed and petitioned for by the Gibeonites pretending to come from a far country (v. 3-13).
- 2.** How it was unwarily consented to by Joshua and the Israelites, to the disgust of the congregation when the fraud was discovered (v. 14-18).
- 3.** How the matter was adjusted to the satisfaction of all sides, by giving these Gibeonites their lives because they had covenanted with them, yet depriving them of their liberties because the covenant was not fairly obtained (v. 19-27).

~~<000>~~ JOSHUA 9:1-2

THE APPLICATION OF THE GIBEONITES

Hitherto the Canaanites had acted defensively; the Israelites were the aggressors upon Jericho and Ai. But here the kings of Canaan are in consultation to attack Israel, and concert matters for a vigorous effort of their united forces to check the progress of their victorious arms. Now,

1. It was strange they did not do this sooner. They had notice long since of their approach; Israel's design upon Canaan was no secret; one would have expected that a prudent concern for their common safety would put them upon taking some measures to oppose their coming over Jordan, and maintain that pass against them, or to give them a warm reception as soon as they were over. It was strange they did not attempt to raise the siege of Jericho, or at least fall in with the men of Ai, when they had given them a defeat. But they were, either through presumption or despair, wonderfully infatuated and at their wits' end. Many know not the things that belong to their peace till they are hidden from their eyes.

2. It was more strange that they did it now. Now that the conquest of Jericho had given such a pregnant proof of God's power, and that of Ai of Israel's policy, one would have thought the end of their consultation should be, not to fight with Israel, but to make peace with them, and to gain the best terms they could for themselves. This would have been their wisdom (PHD Luke 14:32), but their minds were blinded, and their hearts hardened to their destruction. Observe,

(1.) What induced them now at last to enter upon this consultation. When they *heard thereof* (v. 1), not only of the conquest of Jericho and Ai, but of the convention of the states of Mount Ebal, of which we have an account immediately before, — when they heard that Joshua, as if he thought himself already completely master of the country, had had all his people together, and had read the laws to them by which they must be governed, and taken their promises to submit to those laws, — then they perceived the Israelites were in good earnest, and thought it was high time for them to bestir themselves. The pious devotion of God's people sometimes provokes and exasperates their enemies more than any thing else.

(2.) How unanimous they were in their resolves. Though they were many kings of different nations, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, etc., doubtless of different interests, and that had often been at variance one with another, yet they determined, *nemine contradicente* — *unanimously*, to unite against Israel. O that Israel would learn this of Canaanites, to sacrifice private interests to the public welfare, and to lay aside all animosities among themselves, that they may cordially unite against the common enemies of God's kingdom among men!

PHD JOSHUA 9:3-14

THE ARTIFICE OF THE GIBEONITES

Here,

I. The Gibeonites desire to make peace with Israel, being alarmed by the tidings they heard of the destruction of Jericho, v. 3. Other people heard those tidings, and were irritated thereby to make war upon Israel; but the Gibeonites heard them and were induced to make peace with them. Thus the discovery of the glory and grace of God in the gospel is to some a

savour of life unto life, but to others a savour of death unto death, ^{<47216>}2 Corinthians 2:16. The same sun softens wax and hardens clay. I do not remember that we read any where of a king of Gibeon. Had their government been at this time in a single person, perhaps his heart would have been too high to yield to Israel, and he would have joined with the rest of the kings against Israel. But these four united cities (mentioned 5:17) seem to have been governed by elders, or senators (v. 11), who consulted the common safety more than their own personal dignity. The inhabitants of Gibeon did well for themselves. We have,

II. The method they took to compass it. They knew that all the inhabitants of the land of Canaan were to be cut off; perhaps they had some spies in the congregation at Ebal, when the law was read, who observed and brought them notice of the command given to Israel (^{<6710>}Deuteronomy 7:1-3), that they should *show no mercy* to the Canaanites, give them no quarter in battle, which made them afraid of fighting them, and that they should *make no covenant with them*, which made them despair of gaining any advantage by treating with them; and therefore there was no way of saving their lives from the sword of Israel unless they could, by disguising themselves, make Joshua believe that they came from some very country, which the Israelites were not commanded to make war upon nor forbidden to *make peace with*, but were particularly appointed to *offer peace to*, ^{<6710>}Deuteronomy 20:10, 15. Unless they could be admitted under this notion, they saw there was but one way with them: they must submit to the fate of Jericho and Ai. Though the neighbouring princes *knew that all the men thereof were mighty* (^{<6802>}Joshua 10:2), and they knew it themselves, yet they durst not contend with Israel, who had an Almighty God on their side. This therefore is the only game they have to play, and observe,

1. They play it very artfully and successfully. Never was any such thing more craftily managed.

(1.) They come under the character of ambassadors from a foreign state, which they thought would please the princes of Israel, and make them proud of the honour of being courted by distant countries: we find Hezekiah fond of those that came to him from a far country (^{<2303>}Isaiah 39:3); they were not used to be thus courted.

(2.) They pretended to have undergone the fatigues of a very long journey, and produced what passed for an ocular demonstration of it. It should

seem it was then usual for those that undertook long journeys to take with them, as we do now for long voyages, all manner of provision in kind, the country not being furnished as ours is now with houses of entertainment, for the convenience of which, when we have occasion to make use of them, we have reason to be very thankful. Now they here pretended that their provision, when they brought it from home, was fresh and new, but now it appeared to be old and dry, whereas it might well be presumed they had not loitered, but made the best of their way; so that hence it must be inferred that they came, as they said they did, from a very far country: their sacks or portmanteaus were old; the wine was all drunk, and the bottles in which it had been were broken; their shoes and clothes were worse than those of the Israelites in forty years, and their bread was mouldy, v. 4, 5, and again, v. 12, 13. Thus God's Israel have often been deceived and imposed upon with a show of antiquity. But (as bishop Hall expresses it) *errors are never the older for being patched*, and so seeming old; but those that will be caught with this Gibeonitish stratagem prove they have not consulted with God. And thus there are those who make themselves poor with the badges of want and distress and yet have great riches (²¹³⁷Proverbs 13:7), or at least have no need of relief, by which fraud charity is misplaced and diverted from those that are real objects of it.

(3.) When they were suspected, and more strictly examined as to whence they came, they industriously declined telling the name of their country, till the agreement was settled.

[1.] The men of Israel suspected a fraud (v. 7): “*Peradventure you dwell among us*, and then we may not, we must not, make any league with you.” This might have discouraged the Gibeonites from urging the matter any further, concluding that if the peace were made the Israelites would not think themselves obliged to keep it, having thus solemnly protested against it in case they *dwelt among them*; but, knowing that there was no hope at all if they stood it out, they bravely ventured a submission. “Who knows but the people of Israel may save us alive, though thus inveigled into a promise; and if we tell them at last we shall but die.”

[2.] Joshua put the questions to them, *Who are you? and whence come you?* He finds himself concerned to stand upon his guard against secret fraud as well as against open force. We in our spiritual warfare must *stand against the wiles of the devil*, remembering he is a subtle serpent as well as

a roaring lion. In all leagues of relation and friendship we must first try and then trust, lest we repent at leisure agreements made in haste.

[3.] They would not tell whence they came; but still repeat the same thing: *We have come from a very far country*, v. 9. They will have it thought that it is a country Joshua knows nothing of nor ever heard of, and therefore would be never the wiser if they should tell him the name of it.

(4.) They profess a respect for the God of Israel, the more to ingratiate themselves with Joshua, and we charitably believe they were sincere in this profession: “*We have come because of the name of the Lord thy God* (v. 9), because of what we have heard of that name, which has convinced us that it is *above every name*, and because we have a desire towards that name and the remembrance of it, and would gladly come under its protection.”

(5.) They fetch their inducements from what had been done some time before in Moses's reign, the tidings whereof might easily be supposed ere this to have reached distant regions, the plagues of Egypt and the destruction of Sihon and Og (v. 9, 10), but prudently say nothing of the destruction of Jericho and Ai (though this was the true inducement, v. 3), because they will have it supposed that they came from home long before those conquests were made. We need not be long to seek for reasons why we should submit to the God of Israel; we may be furnished either with new or old, which we will.

(6.) They make a general submission — *We are our servants*; and humbly sue for a general agreement — *Make a league with us*, v. 11. They insist not upon terms, but will be glad of peace upon any terms; nor will the case admit of delays, lest the fraud be discovered; they would fain have the bargain struck up immediately; if Joshua will but *make a league* with them, they have all they come for, and they hope their ragged clothes and clouted shoes will be no exception against them. God and Israel reject none for their poverty. But,

2. There is a mixture of good and evil in their conduct.

(1.) Their falsehood cannot be justified, nor ought it to be drawn into a precedent. We must not do evil that good may come. Had they owned their country but renounced the idolatries of it, resigning the possession of it to Israel and themselves to the God of Israel, we have reason to think Joshua

would have been directed by the oracle of God to spare their lives, and they needed not to have made these pretensions. It is observable that when they had once said, *We have come from a far country* (v. 6), they found themselves necessitated to say it again (v. 9), and to say what was utterly false concerning their bread, their bottles, and their clothes (v. 12, 13), for one lie is an inlet to another, and that to a third, and so on. The way of that sin is down-hill. But,

(2.) Their faith and prudence are to be greatly commended. Our Lord commended even the unjust steward, because he had done wisely and well for himself, ~~<2168>~~ Luke 16:8. In submitting to Israel, they submitted to the God of Israel, which implied a renunciation of the god they had served, a resignation to the laws of true religion. They had heard enough to convince them of the infinite power of the God of Israel, and thence might infer his other perfections of wisdom and goodness; and how can we do better for ourselves than surrender at discretion to infinite wisdom, and cast ourselves upon the mercy of a God of infinite goodness. The submission of these Gibeonites was the more laudable because it was,

[1.] Singular. Their neighbours took another course, and expected they should join with them.

[2.] Speedy. They did not stay till Israel had besieged their cities; then it would have been too late to capitulate; but when they were at some distance they desired conditions of peace. Thy way to avoid a judgment is to meet it by repentance. Let us imitate these Gibeonites, and make our peace with God in the rags of humiliation, godly sorrow, and mortification, so our iniquity shall not be our ruin. Let us be servants to Jesus, our blessed Joshua, and make a league with him and the Israel of God, and we shall live.

~~<1895>~~ JOSHUA 9:15-21

THE LEAGUE WITH THE GIBEONITES

Here is,

I. The treaty soon concluded with the Gibeonites, v. 15. The thing was not done with much formality, but in short,

1. They agreed to let them live, and more the Gibeonites did not ask. In a common war this would have been but a small matter to be granted; but in the wars of Canaan, which were to make a general destruction, it was a great favour to a Canaanite to have his *life given him for a prey*,
Jeremiah 45:5.

2. This agreement was made not by Joshua only, but by the princes of the congregation in conjunction with him. Though Joshua had an extraordinary call to the government, and extraordinary qualifications for it, yet he would not act in an affair of this nature without the counsel and concurrence of the princes, who were neither kept in the dark nor kept under foot, but were treated by him as sharers in the government.

3. It was ratified by an oath; they swore unto them, not by any of the gods of Canaan, but by the God of Israel only, v. 19. Those that mean honestly do not startle at assurances, but satisfy those with whom they treat, and glorify God by calling him to witness to the sincerity of their intentions.

4. Nothing appears to have been culpable in all this but that it was done rashly; they took of their victuals, by which they satisfied themselves that it was indeed old and dry, but did not consider that his was no proof of their bringing it fresh from home; so that, making use of their senses only, but not their reason, *they received the men* (as the margin reads it) *because of their victuals*, perceiving perhaps, upon the view and taste of their bread, not only that now it was old, but that it had been fine and very good at first, whence they inferred that they were persons of some quality, and therefore the friendship of their country was not to be despised. But *they asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord*. They had the Urim and Thummim with them, which they might have advised with in this difficult case, and which would have told them no lie, would have led them into no error; but they relied so much on their own politics that they thought it needless to bring the matter to the oracle. Joshua himself was not altogether without blame herein. Note, We make more haste than good speed in any business when we stay not to take God along with us, and by the word and prayer to consult him. Many a time we see cause to reflect upon it with regret that such and such an affair miscarried, because we *asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord*; would we acknowledge him in all our ways, we should find them more safe, easy, and successful.

II. The fraud soon discovered, by which this league was procured. *A lying tongue is but for a moment*, and truth will be the daughter of time. Within three days they found, to their great surprise, that the cities which these ambassadors had treated for were very near them, but one night's foot-march from the camp at Gilgal, ~~(600)~~ Joshua 10:9. Either their own scouts or the parties that sallied out to acquaint themselves with the country, or perhaps some deserters that came over to them from the enemy, informed them of the truth in this matter. Those that suffer themselves to be deceived by the wiles of Satan will soon be undeceived to their confusion, and will find that near, even at the door, which they imagined was very far off.

III. The disgust of the congregation at this. They did indeed submit to the restraints which this league laid upon them, and smote not the cities of the Gibeonites, neither slew the persons nor seized the prey; but it vexed them to have their hands thus tied, and they *murmured against the princes* (v. 18) it is to be feared, more from a jealousy for their own profit than from a zeal for the fulfilling of God's command, though some of them perhaps had a regard to that. Many are forward to arraign and censure the actions of princes while they are ignorant of the springs of those actions and are incompetent judges of the reasons of state that govern them. While therefore we are satisfied in general that those who are over us aim at nothing but the public good, and sincerely seek the welfare of their people, we ought to make the best of what they do and not exercise ourselves in things above us.

IV. The prudent endeavour of the princes to pacify the discontented congregation, and to accommodate the matter; herein all the princes concurred and were unanimous, which doubtless disposed the people to acquiesce.

1. They resolved to spare the lives of the Gibeonites, for so they had expressly sworn to do (v. 15), to let them live.

(1.) The oath was lawful, else it had not bound them any more than Herod's oath bound him to cut off John Baptist's head; it is true God had appointed them to destroy all the Canaanites, but the law must be construed, *in favorem vitae* — *with some tender allowance*, to mean those only that stood it out and would not surrender their country to them, and not to bind them so far to put off the sense of honour and humanity as to

slay those who had never lifted up a hand against them nor ever would, but before they were reduced to any extremity, or ever attempted any act of hostility, with one consent humbled themselves; the *kings of Israel were certainly more merciful kings than to do so* (^{<128B>}1 Kings 20:31), and the God of Israel a more merciful God than to order it so. *Satis est prostrasse leoni* — *It is enough to have laid the lion prostrate*. And besides, the reason of the law is the law; the mischief designed to be prevented by that law was the infecting of the Israelites with their idolatry, (^{<180A>}Deuteronomy 7:4. But if the Gibeonites renounce their idolatry, and become friends and servants to the house of God, the danger is effectually prevented, the reason of the law ceases, and consequently the obligation of it, especially to a thing of this nature. The conversion of sinners shall prevent their ruin.

(2.) The oath being lawful, both the princes and the people for whom they transacted were bound by it, bound in conscience, bound in honour to the God of Israel, by whom they had sworn, and whose name would have been blasphemed by the Canaanites if they had violated this oath. They speak as those that *feared an oath* (^{<200D>}Ecclesiastes 9:2), when they argued thus: *We will let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we swore*, v. 20. He that ratifies a promise with an oath imprecates the divine vengeance if he wilfully break his promise, and has reason to expect that divine justice will take him at his word. God is not mocked, and therefore oaths are not to be jested with. The princes would keep their word,

[1.] Though they lost by it. A citizen of Zion *swears to his own hurt and changes not*, (^{<190B>}Psalms 15:4. Joshua and the princes, when they found it was to their prejudice that they had thus bound themselves, did not apply to Eleazar for a dispensation, much less did they pretend that no faith is to be kept with heretics, with Canaanites; no, they were strangers to the modern artifices of the Romish church to elude the most sacred bonds, and even to sanctify perjuries

[2.] Though the people were uneasy at it, and their discontent might have ended in a mutiny, yet the princes would not violate their engagement to the Gibeonites; we must never be over-awed, either by majesty or multitude, to do a sinful thing, and go against our consciences.

[3.] Though they were drawn into this league by a wile, and might have had a very plausible pretence to declare it null and void, yet they adhered to it. They might have pleaded that though those were the men with whom they exchanged the ratifications, yet these were not the cities intended in

the league; they had promised to spare certain cities, without names, that were very far off, and upon the express consideration of their being so; but these were very near, and therefore not the cities that they covenanted with. And many learned men have thought that they were so grossly imposed upon by the Gibeonites that it would have been lawful for them to have recalled their promise, but to preserve their reputation, and to keep up in Israel a veneration of an oath, they would stand to it; but it is plain that they thought themselves indispensably obliged by it, and were apprehensive that the wrath of God would fall upon them if they broke it. And, however their adherence to it might be displeasing to the congregation, it is plain that it was acceptable to God; for when, in pursuance of this league, they undertook the protection of the Gibeonites, God gave them the most glorious victory that ever they had in all their wars (Joshua 10), and long afterwards severely avenged the wrong Saul did to the Gibeonites in violation of this league, ~~1200~~ 2 Samuel 21:1. Let this convince us all how religiously we ought to perform our promises, and make good our bargains; and what conscience we ought to make of our words when they are once given. If a covenant obtained by so many lies and deceits might not be broken, shall we think to evade the obligation of those that have been made with all possible honesty and fairness? If the fraud of others will not justify or excuse our falsehood, certainly the honesty of others in dealing with us will aggravate and condemn our dishonesty in dealing with them.

2. Though they spared their lives, yet they seized their liberties, and sentenced them to be *hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation*, v. 21. By this proposal the discontented congregation was pacified; for,

(1.) Those who were angry that the Gibeonites lived might be content when they saw them condemned to that which, in the general apprehension, is worse than death, perpetual servitude.

(2.) Those who were angry that they were not spoiled might be content when their serving the congregation would be more to the public advantage than their best effects could be; and, in short, the Israelites would be not losers either in honour or profit by this peace with the Gibeonites; convince them of this, and they will be satisfied.

~~1322~~ JOSHUA 9:22-27

THE GIBEONITES MADE BONDMEN

The matter is here settled between Joshua and the Gibeonites, and an explanation of the league agreed upon. We may suppose that now, not the messengers who were first sent, but the elders of Gibeon, and of the cities that were dependent upon it, were themselves present and treated with, that the matter might be fully compromised.

I. Joshua reproves them for their fraud, v. 22. And they excuse it as well as they can, v. 24.

1. Joshua gives the reproof very mildly: *Wherefore have you beguiled us?* He does not load them with any ill names, does not give them any harsh provoking language, does not call them, as they deserved to be called, *base liars*, but only asks them, *Why have you beguiled us?* Under the greatest provocations, it is our wisdom and duty to keep our temper, and to bridle our passion; a just cause needs not anger to defend it, and a bad one is made never the better by it.

2. They make the best excuse for themselves, that the thing would bear, v. 24. They found by the word of God that sentence of death was passed upon them (the command was to *destroy all the inhabitants of the land*, without exception), and they found by the works of God already wrought that there was no opposing the execution of this sentence; they considered that God's sovereignty is incontestable, his justice inflexible, his power irresistible, and therefore resolved to try what his mercy was, and found it was not in vain to cast themselves upon it. They do not go about to justify their lie, but in effect beg pardon for it, pleading it was purely to save their lives that they did it, which every man that finds in himself the force of the law of self-preservation will therefore make great allowances for, especially in such a case as this, where the fear was not merely of the power of man (if that were all, one might flee from that to the divine protection), but of the power of God himself, which they saw engaged against them.

II. Joshua condemns them to servitude, as a punishment of their fraud (v. 23), and they submit to the sentence (v. 25), and for aught that appears both sides are pleased.

1. Joshua pronounces them perpetual bondmen. They had purchased their lives with a lie, but, that being no good consideration, he obliges them to hold their lives under the rent and reservation of their continual labours, in hewing wood and drawing water, the meanest and most toilsome employments. Thus their lie was punished; had they dealt fairly and plainly with Israel, perhaps they would have had more honourable conditions granted them, but now, since they gain their lives with ragged clothes and clouted shoes, the badges of servitude, they are condemned for ever to wear such, so must their doom be. And thus the ransom of their lives is paid; dominion is acquired by the preservation of a life that lies at mercy (*servus dicitur a servando* — a servant is so called from the act of saving); they owe their service to those to whom they owe their lives. Observe how the judgment is given against them.

(1.) Their servitude is made a curse to them. “Now you are cursed with the ancient curse of Canaan,” from whom these Hivites descended, *a servant of servants shalt thou be*, ^{<0025>}Genesis 9:25. What shall be done to the false tongue but this? Cursed shall it be.

(2.) Yet this curse is turned into a blessing; they must be servants, but it shall be for *the house of my God*. The princes would have them slaves *unto all the congregation* (v. 21), at least they chose to express themselves so, for the pacifying of the people that were discontented; but Joshua mitigates the sentence, both in honour to God and in favour to the Gibeonites: it would be too hard upon them to make them every man's drudge; if they must be *hewers of wood and drawers of water*, than which there cannot be a greater disparagement, especially to those who are citizens of a royal city, and *all mighty men* (^{<002E>}Joshua 10:2), yet they shall be so *to the house of my God*, than which there cannot be a greater preferment: David himself could have wished to be a door-keeper there. Even servile work becomes honourable when it is done for the house of our God and the offices thereof.

[1.] They were hereby excluded from the liberties and privileges of true-born Israelites, and a remaining mark of distinction was put upon their posterity throughout all their generations.

[2.] They were hereby employed in such services as required their personal attendance upon *the altar of God in the place which he should choose* (v. 27), which would bring them to the knowledge of the law of God, keep

them strictly to that holy religion to which they were proselyted, and prevent their revolt to the idolatries of their fathers.

[3.] This would be a great advantage to the priests and Levites to have so many, and those mighty men, constant attendants upon them, and engaged by office to do all the drudgery of the tabernacle. A great deal of wood must be hewed for fuel for God's house, not only to keep the fire burning continually upon the altar, but to boil the flesh of the peace-offerings, etc. And a great deal of water must be drawn for the divers washings which the law prescribed. These and other such servile works, such as washing the vessels, carrying out ashes, sweeping the courts, etc., which otherwise the Levites must have done themselves, these Gibeonites were appointed to do.

[4.] They were herein servants to the congregation too; for whatever promotes and helps forward the worship of God is real service to the commonwealth. It is the interest of every Israelite that the altar of God be well attended. Hereby also the congregation was excused from much of that servile work which perhaps would otherwise have been expected from some of them. God had made a law that the Israelites should never make any of their brethren bondmen; if they had slaves, they must be of the heathen that were round about them, ^{<R254>}Leviticus 25:44. Now in honour of this law, and of Israel that was honoured by it, God would not have the drudgery, no, not of the tabernacle itself, to be done by Israelites, but by Gibeonites, who were afterwards called *Nethinim*, men given to the Levites, as the Levites were to the priests (^{<R18>}Numbers 3:9), to minister to them in the service of God.

[5.] This may be looked upon as typifying the admission of the Gentiles into the gospel church. Now they were taken in upon their submission to be under-officers, but afterwards God promises that he will *take of them for priests and Levites*, ^{<R16>}Isaiah 66:21.

2. They submit to this condition, v. 25. Conscious of a fault in framing a lie whereby to deceive the Israelites, and sensible also how narrowly they escaped with their lives and what a kindness it was to have them spared, they acquiesce in the proposal: *Do as it seemeth right unto thee*. Better live in servitude, especially such servitude, than not live at all. Those of the very meanest and most despicable condition are described to be *hewers of wood and drawers of water*, ^{<R21>}Deuteronomy 29:11. But skin for skin,

liberty, and labour, and *all that a man has, will he give for his life*, and no ill bargain. Accordingly the matter was determined.

(1.) Joshua delivered them out of the hands of the Israelites that they should not be slain, v. 26. It seems there were those who would have fallen upon them with the sword if Joshua had not interposed with his authority; but wise generals know when to sheathe the sword, as well as when to draw it.

(2.) He then delivered them again into the hands of the Israelites to be enslaved, v. 27. They were not to keep possession of their cities, for we find afterwards that three of them fell to the lot of Benjamin and one to that of Judah; nor were they themselves to be at their own disposal, but, as bishop Patrick thinks, were dispersed into the cities of the priests and Levites, and came up with them in their courses to serve at the altar, out of the profits of which, it is probable, they were maintained. And thus Israel's bondmen became the Lord's freemen, for his service in the meanest office is liberty, and his work is its own wages. And this they got by their early submission. Let us, in like manner, submit to our Lord Jesus, and refer our lives to him, saying, "*We are in thy hand, do unto us as seemeth good and right unto thee; only save our souls, and we shall not repent it:*" if he appoint us to bear his cross, and draw in his yoke, and serve at his altar, this shall be afterwards neither shame nor grief to us, while the meanest office in God's service will entitle us to a *dwelling in the house of the Lord all the days of our life*.