

GAMON HANNIBAL

THE PRAISE OF
A GODLY
WOMAN

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The Praise of a Godly Woman:

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The Praise of a Godly Woman

**THE PRAISE OF A
GODLY WOMAN**

A Sermon preached at the Solemne Funerall

of the Right Honourable Ladie, the Ladie

Frances Roberts, at *Lanhide-rock-Church*

in *Cornwall* the tenth of

Auguft, 1626

By

TO THE TRVLY

NOBLE Iohn Roberts,

Son and Heire to the Right

Honourable Richard *Lord* Roberts

of *Truro*: the Vnualuable Riches of

fincere Grace here, and of Eternall

Glory hereafter

Honovrable Sir,

Although it bee true (which a worthy Diuine¹ obferueth)

¹ Mr. *Bolter* Dific. of true Happineffe, p. 61.

that formall Hypocrites are heartned and hardned in their lewd courfes & falfe conceits of happineffe, when they heare more infamous Sinners than themfelues, glorioufly and flatteringly commended at their Deaths; yet we need not feare any fuch bad effect by the Funerall-commendation of Gods true Saints, becaufe the publike Teftimonie of their iuft Praifes doth not onely make the wicked more inexcufable, and the Glory of Gods Graces fhine farre brighter to Pofteritie; but alfo enkindleth in the hearts of the godly a greater fire of Zeale for imitation. Thefe are fome of the Ends, why it hath euer been and is ftill an vnreprouable Cuftome in Gods Church, that the Godly fhould be *Marked*² and *Honoured*³ at their Deaths, as *Hezekiah* was by all *Iudah & Ierufalem: Valentinean, Satyrus* and *Theodofius* by Saint *Ambrofe*⁴: *Bafil, Gregory* and *Gorgonia* by *Nazianzen*⁵: *Nepotian, Paula* and *Marcella* by *S. Ierom*⁶. Had not their Holy Liues and Happie Deaths beene publifhed by fuch vnpartiall Pens, wee fhould haue bin ignorant now of many excellent Courfes of fanctified Men and Women, of many comfortable workings of the Holy Ghoft in them, and fhould haue wanted many inflaming Motiues to follow their religious fteps. Vpon this confideration I was bold to commend vnto Gods people

² *Pfalms. 37. 37. Deut. 34. 7, 10, 11, 12. Hebr. 3. 2. & 11. cap.*

³ *2 Chron. 32. 33.*

⁴ *S. Ambr. tom. 3.*

⁵ *Greg. Nazian. Orat. 30. Orat. 28. Orat. 25.*

⁶ *S. Ierom. Ad Heliud. Ad Euftoch. Ad Princip. Ad Ocean.*

the more than Ordinary passages of your Honourable Mothers Holy Life and Death: wherein I haue as a Christian spoken the truth of a Christian, that is, (as Saint *Ierom*⁷ protesteth in a like case) made a true Narration; not a Vain-glorious Panegyrick. Let Poets and Oratours praise those women, which *Poppæa*-like⁸, are graced with all other things fauing a Gracious Heart: Let them commend their Wit, Wealth, Beautie, Nobilitie, and other Gifts of Fortune (as they call them) in stead of Vertues⁹. Wee the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God, must adorne none with the Honourable Attributes of Heauenly Praise; but such as are truly beautified, enriched, and ennobled with the Purity and Power of Gods Feare in their Humble Soules¹⁰. This praise the Lord will prosper¹¹, which is vttered in that *Wisdom*¹², whereof the *Feare of the Lord is the beginning*. But for the Saints themselves: I dare say with Saint *Augustine*¹³, that they desire

⁷ *Testor Iesum cui illa feruuit & ego feruire cupio, me utramq, in partē nihil fingere; sed quasi Christianū de Christianā quæ sunt vera proferre, id est, Historiam scribere non Panegyricum. S. Ierom, Epitaph. Paulæ.*

⁸ *Poppæa cuncta alia fuere præter Honestum animum. Tacit. Annal. l. 13.*

⁹ *Laudauit ipse Nero apud rostra formam eius & quòd diuinæ formæ parens fuisset, aliaque fortunæ munera pro Virtutibus. Id. Annal. l. 16.*

¹⁰ *Esaï. 61. 3.*

¹¹ *Eccles. 15. 10.*

¹² *Prou. 9. 10.*

¹³ *Epist. 125.* where S. *Augustine* refuseth to commend vnto a wicked Husband his godly wife that was dead, not onely because she desired not his praise, saying: *Laudem ab hominibus iam illa non quærit, imitationem verò tuā tantum quærit etiam defuncta, quantum te dilexit etiam diffimilem viuā;* but also because her Husband loued Her not,

more the Imitation, than the Commendation of their vertues: and therefore to tell you the truth (as the fame Father doth his friend) you fhould neuer haue heard mee commend this deceafed Lady, but in hope, that Gods Graces in Her might by this meanes, furuiue in your religious Imitation, and not only in you and all them that are of Her blood; but alfo in all them that haue heard or fhall reade this Sermon. This is all the gaine I looke and pray for, that Gods¹⁴ word, which I haue faithfully alledged (not without fome Illuftrations (I confeffe) borrowed from the holy Fathers¹⁵, whereof I need not to be afhamed) may be constantly practifed by vs all. For when all is done and faid, affure your felfe (Deare Sir) it is only the Life of Grace, the Grace of the *Feare of the Lord* can truly Honour you, or any vpon earth, fweetly comfort you at your Death, and eternally Glorifie your Soule and Bodie in Heauen. Abandon then I befeech you in the name of Chrif¹⁶, all iniquitie, and all workers of iniquitie, yea abominate the fweeteft fin, to which your youthfull affections are moft endeared, elfe you will neuer be able to encline and enlarge them to the purfuit and practife of fo excellent and Glorious a Grace as the *Feare of*

which he proueth thus: *Nam utiq; fi amares, cum illa effe poft mortem defiderares, quod profectò non eris, fi quàlis es, talis eris.*

¹⁴ *Ier. 23. 22, 28. 1 Pet. 4. 11. Tit. 2. 8. 2 Tim. 2. 15. 1 Tim. 4. 13. & 6. 3.*

¹⁵ – *Ingenuo pudore qui ornabat ætatem, quid cuius effet, confiteri ... Illud (aiebat) Tertulliani, iftud Cypriani, hoc Lactantij, illud Hilarij eft. Sic Minutius Fælix, ita Victorinus, in hunc modum eft locutus Arnobius. S. Ierom. ad Heliodor de Nepotian.*

¹⁶ *2 Theff. 3. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Prou. 4. 14. 1 Cor. 5. 11. Ephef. 5. 11. Pſalm. 26. 4, 5. & 119. 32, 36, 128. 2 Chron. 19. 2. & 20. 37.*

the Lord; because this godly Feare and the impenitent Allowance of any luft, is as incompatible as Heauen and Hell: fo that if you fhould hate to be diuorced from your Bosome-fin whatfoeuer it be (which God forbid) you could haue no true right and intereft to the precious promifes of this and of that other life¹⁷. Thinke on this continually, and hold it your greateft Honour, the Nobleft employment of your Soule, as it is indeed, to keep your felfe (as a King¹⁸ did before you.) from your iniquitie. *Quod fi tu (quod procul abfit) nolueris, ego liber ero. Epiftola, immo concio me hæc mea, cum lecta fuerit, abfoluet.*¹⁹ And fo I reft, being mindfull of your Vertues,

Saint Mauganthe

19. Auguft 1626.

¹⁷ *1 Tim. 4. 8.*

¹⁸ *Pfal. 18. 23.*

¹⁹ *S. Ierom. ad Caftorin. Materteram.*

Yours in all Christian Devotion,

and heartfelt prayer to

God for you,

Hannibal Gamon

THE PRAISE OF A

Godly Woman

Prov. 31. 30

**– But a woman that feareth
the Lord, fhee fhall be praifed**

Praife is a Debt (faith *Gregory Nazianzen*²⁰) and it muft be paid, not to men alone, but to women alfo; yet not to euery woman, be fhee neuer fo noble, wittie, wealthy or faire²¹, vnleffe fhe be godly withall: For *fauour is deceitfull, and beautie is vaine; but a woman that feareth the Lord, fhee fhall be praifed.*

²⁰ *Orat. 25. fol. 439. Rom. 13. 7, 8.*

²¹ *Non poffumus reprehendere diuini artificis opus; fed quem delectat corporis pulchritudo, multo magis illa delectet venustas, quæ ad imaginem, Dei eft intus, non foris comptior. S. Ambr. Inftit. Virg. c. 4. Prou. 11. 22. Eccle. 11. 2. ... Homo igitur mihi non tam vultu quam affectu admirands emineat atque excellat: vt in his laudatur, in quibus etiam Deus prophetico iudicio laudatur de quo fcriptum eft Pfal. 66. 5. Terribilis in confiliis fuper filios hominum; cuius opera coram Deo luceant, qui bona iugibus operibus facta contextat. Id. ib. cap. 3.*

The Diuifion.

A promife this is and affirmatiue, and an affirmatiue promife hath two parts in it. The firft is the Partie to whom it is made, and fhee is *Muliertimens Dominum*. A woman that feareth the Lord, which is alfo the reafon why fhe fhall be praifed: euen becaufe fhe is *a woman fearing the Lord*. The fecond is the thing promifed, and that is *Laudabitur, fhe fhall be praifed*.

I.

In the former, it is not enough that fhe is a woman, becaufe euery woman is not *Timens*, one that *Feareth*, nor fufficient that fhe *Feareth*; becaufe euery woman that feareth is not *Timens Dominum*, one that *feareth the Lord*; but *fhe* that *fhall be praifed*, is all three. 1. A woman by nature²², where the weaker her fex is, the more fhee fhall be commended. 2. By Grace²³, *a woman that feareth*, where the continuall act of this Fearing is required. 3. *That feareth the Lord*, where the right Obiect of her continuall feare is limited.

II.

And in the latter we are to confider; Firft, to what matters,

²² *Naturale vocabulū eft Fœmina. naturalis vocabuli generale, Mulier. – Tert. de Virg. Veland. cap 4.*

²³ *Aliud eft Timere fimpliciter, aliud Timere Deum – quippe timere & amare fimpliciter prolata, affectione: cum additamento aute virtutes figurificāt. Simples nemp affectiones infunt naturaliter nobis tanquam ex nobis, Additamenta ex Gratiâ. S. Bern. de Grat. & lib. Arb.*

Laudabitur, her praife will reach, and in what respect to *Ipsa* Her perfon. Then fecondly, When *fhe fhall be praifed*; not for the prefent, perhaps, no more than fhe hath beene heretofore; yet *Laudabitur*, the time will come when *fhe fhall be praifed*, and then too her praife fhall fo be, that it fhall be ftill. Thirdly, of whom fhee fhall haue praife, for *Laudabitur* is an action, and must bee done of fome agent, therefore we muft finde who fhall praife her, and they will fall out to be her Hufband and her Children (if fhe haue them²⁴) and if they faile in this dutie, then the godly fhall praife her; and if they ceafe to doe it, then her own workes fhall praife her, yea rather than faile, God himfelfe fhall praife her, which is beft of all. So fure fhe is to be praifed, not for the prefent onely, but for euer. And fo this Text befides that it is a *Promife*, it is alfo a *Motiue* to ftirre vs vp to feare God, that so we also may haue true and eternall praife of God. It is both, and both waies wee to haue vfe of it, as of a *Promife*, and as of a *Motiue*: both thefe waies at once; *A woman that feareth the Lord fhe fhall be praifed.*

A Promife, and Motiue.

I.

The partie that fhall be praifed.

²⁴ *Mulier enim no naturâ nomen est vxoris, sed vxor coditione nomen est mulieris. Tert. ib. c. 5. Gen. 2. 23. Hæc vocabitur mulier, quoniam de viro suo sumpta est: Quia sumpta est (inquit) de viro suo, non quia virum experta ... Non enim corruptelæ, sed sexus vocabulum est. Gal. 4. 4. Luke 1. 28. S. Ambr. ibid. c. 5.*

A weake fex²⁵ to beginne with, and yet being ftrengthened by Grace²⁶, no impediment; but that a woman as wel as a man may feare the Lord, and haue praife of him, and fo become the partie who fhall, and one Reafon too, why *fhee fhall be praifed*.

For a woman muft be more good than nature, art, policie, preferment can make her, elfe fhee is not good enough for Gods Spirit to praife her. He commends neither men nor women confidered in their pure Naturalls only, in that eftate of corruption, they all heare alike to their difgrace, that they are *All vnder finne*²⁷, *All come*²⁸ *fhort of the glory of God*, and are *All the children of*²⁹ *wrath*, becaufe they *Are without all feare of God*³⁰

By nature then both fexes are alike faultie, alike difcōmendable in Gods fight, and fo they fhould be in ours. We fhould not difpraife women more than men, for the fex fake only (as fome doe³¹) becaufe they haue as noble foules as men, for³² foules haue no fexes, (as Saint *Ambrofe* faith) nor praife women for the endowments of the flefh onely (as otherfome doe³³)

²⁵ *1 Pet. 3. 7. Ier. 50. 37. Nah. 3. 13. Gal. 3. 27, 28.*

²⁶ – *Ex parte natura (nifi fit fortitude maioris gratiae) facilius incarnatur ad malum fexus formineus. Bonau. L. 2. d. 21. q. 3. p. 18.*

²⁷ *Rom. 3. 9.*

²⁸ *Rom. 3. 23.*

²⁹ *Ephes. 2. 3.*

³⁰ *Rom. 3. 18.*

³¹ *Eurip. Plutarc. de Tranquilit Mulier quantibuis proba, Mulier tamen est.*

³² *Anima enim fexum non habet. – De Virg. som. 1. lib: 3. fol. 99.*

³³ *Cornel. Agrip. de Nobilit. fæminei fexus. Bocacius de claris mulieribus.*

vnleffe they be adorned alfo with the fauing Graces of the Spirit, whereof a chiefe one is not noble birth, great wealth, excellent wit, or rare beautie: but *the feare of the Lord*, his treafure.³⁴ This godly feare is that, that makes a Woman in relation³⁵ to God, praife-worthy. And good reafon it fhould do fo, if we regard the weakneffe of a woman, in whom fo excellent a Grace as *the feare of the Lord*, is found, and the Nobleneffe of fearing the Lord, being fo found.

Firft, a womans weakneffe is naturally³⁶ greater than the mans, and therefore by how much her flefh is weaker, and her fpirit leffe willing, by fo much the combate fhe hath, is more difficult, and the victory fhe gets, more commendable. I know a man (*Blefenfis* by name) that thought two things fhould excufe him at the dreadfull day of iudgement, the Frailty of his flefh, and the Ignorance of his minde; but then he feared left God would iudge men by womē, whose fex being more fraile, more ignorant than that of mens, were for all that oftentimes more holy, more deuout than many men.

Secondly, the *Feare of the Lord* is the trueft Nobilitie (as

³⁴ *Ef. 33. 6.*

³⁵ *Caiet. in. loc.*

³⁶ *Naturaliter etiam maior lucti est inter carnem et spiritū mulieris quam viri: quantò enim caro eius infirmior, & spiritus minus promptus, tātò pugna difficilior – & victoria commēdabilior. Pet. Blef. fer. 33. p. 420. Timeo autem ne fortè viri à virginibus iudicentur: Comparatione tamē non Auctoritate: quia per duo tantum fcilicet: per Fragilitatē carnis & Ignorantiam mentis putobā, &c. fer. 35. p. 428.*

*Gerfon*³⁷ proues) the noblest grace that can ennoble and extoll a man or a woman. Other naturall, ciuill, and meere morall excellencies, perfections, and endowments a woman may haue, nay (which is neereft the point) other kindes of Feare she may haue, and yet be bafe, feruile, curfed as *Iezebel*³⁸, not praife-worthy, as namely, if she feare men³⁹, or what elfe besides more than God, or not for God (as Saint *Bernard*⁴⁰ limits) or if she feare God as a Iudge, in respect of his punishments only⁴¹, & not as a Father for loue of his goodneffe, and from an hatred of wickedneffe, or if she haue caft off the feare of the Lord, which she hath seemed to haue, or if she puts off his *Feare* from time to time, and continues not in it.

Looke we then first to the Obiect of the *Laudable womans feare*, that he whom she feareth be the Lord, in respect of his Mercy and Iustice both; then to the continuall employment of her *Feare*, not one that hath feared him, or will feare him; but one that doth feare him for the present, and continueth therein, elfe shee is not a woman *Timens Dominum, Fearing the Lord*, and fo not worthy to be *praifed*.

³⁷ *Tractat. de Nobilitate, part. 2. p. 52. lit. E. Et Greg. Naz. Orat. 13. tom. I. fol. 352.*

³⁸ *2 Kings 9. 34. Act. 14. 25. 1 Ioh. 4. 18.*

³⁹ *Matth. 10. 28. Ef. 51. 12.*

⁴⁰ *Convertatur ad ipsum etiam Timor tuus, quia peruerfus est timor omnis, quo metuis aliquid praeter eum aut non propter eum. S. Ber. in cap. Ieiun. fer. 2.*

⁴¹ *Quid magnū est, pœnā timere? Quis enim nō timet? quis Latro, quis sceleratus, quis nefarius? &c. S. August. de Verb. Apost. fer. 15. fol. 332. tom. 10.*

I.

The Obiect of her feare.

Firft then (that the Obiect may be right) the⁴² *Lord is her feare*, who fhall be praifed. For if He be not, all exquisitenesses besides are nothing in comparifon; and if He be, all fufficiencies (remarkable in that fex) are improved, and all Duties (obferueable in the feare of the Lord) are practifed. To fee this the better, let vs follow *Tertullians*⁴³ rule, and oppofe one againft another, a vefsell of difhonour againft a vefsell of honour, a woman not Fearing, againft a woman Fearing the Lord.

A womā fearleffe of God.

She that fears not the Lord, fets light by Gods anger and her Hufbands⁴⁴, not caring whether they bee pleafed or difpleafed. Shee neglects to plant the feare of the Lord in her childrens hearts, chufing rather to be an example of wickedneffe vnto them, and to mifplace them in mariage for finifter refpects. She brings want of things neceffary to her family by her waftefulneffe, brauery, and idleneffe. She contemnes her naturall and legall kindred, lifts vp her felfe aboue her equals, difdaines

⁴² *Deut. 10. 12. 2 King. 17. 36. Luk. 12. 5. Ef. 8. 13. Mal. 1. 6.*

⁴³ *Loquacitas in ædificatione nulla turpis, fi quando turpis. Itaque fi de aliquo bono fermo eft, res postulat contrarium quoque boni recensere. Quid enim sectandum fit, magis illumabis, fi quod vitandū fit, proinde digeffferis. Tertul. de Patien. c. 5. tom. 2.*

⁴⁴ *Esth. 1. 12, 17, 20, 22. Eccl. 26. 26. Ef. 36. 9. & 3. 16. Prou. 30. 33. Ecclef. 25. 13. & alibi paffim. Vbi verò timor Dei non eft, ibi diffolutio vitæ eft. S. Aug. de Temp. fer. 213. tom. 10.*

her inferiours, dishonours her place by an ouer-loftie or an ouer-bafe and contemptible behaiour in the fame. She alienates the hearts of Gods people from her, by neglecting the offices of courtesies and helpfulneffe. She declines and vnderualewes the moft fearching meanes of Saluation, the Word, Prayer, Conference, Repentance, Meditation, Sacraments; in a word (according to Saint *Ambrofes*⁴⁵ Diftinction) fhe feares hell torments, becaufe fhee hath finned, but fhee feares not Gods difpleafure, left fhe fhould finne, and therefore fhee liues and dies in worldlineffe, wantonneffe, pride, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, ftrife, reuenge, impatiencie, gluttonie, or fome fuch darling finne: and tell me (Beloued) if fuch a woman not beautified and adorned with religion and the feare of the Lord, be worthy to bee praifed of the Lord? I am fure the ancient Fathers⁴⁶ declaime bitterly againft her filthy heart, falfe haire, adulterate paintings, naked breafte, new-fangled fafhions of fuperfluous, monftrous attire: & the holy Scriptures⁴⁷ vilifie her to her face, threatning her (notwithftanding all her other

⁴⁵ *Aliud eft timere quia peccaueris, aliud timere ne pecces. Et ibi eft formido de fupplicio, hic follicitudo de praemio. Epift. 84. tum. 3. Eft quem timor Dei ligat, qui non expauefcit ad vultus hominũ, fed ad memoriam gehennalium tormentorum. Et hic quidem peccare non metuit, fed ardere. S. Bern. de Tripl. Coberent: Vincul. &c. Ef. 33. 14.*

⁴⁶ *Tertul. de Habit. Mulieb. & de Cultu Fœm. tom. 2. S. Cyprian de Difcipl. & Hab. Virg. to. 2. Greg. Naz. aduerf. mulier: Ambitiosè fe ornantes. to. 2. S. Ephræm aduerf. improbas mulieres tom. 1. if his workes. Riuet. l. 3. c. 21.*

⁴⁷ *2 King. 9. 20, 30, 34. Ef. 3. 16, &c. & 32. 9, 10, 11. 1 Pet. 3. 3, 4. Matth. 5. 36. & 6. 27. Ecclef. 25. 13, 19.*

ornaments and excellencies of nature, art, policie, preferment,) that without this *Feare of the Lord*, it shall not be well with her, *Ecclef. 8. 13.* The Lord will come neare to her to iudgement, he will be a fwift witneffe againft her, *Mal. 3. 5.* She fhall leaue her memorie to be curfed⁴⁸, and her reproach fhall not be blotted out, fhe fhall be counted vngodly of all⁴⁹, more bitter than death⁵⁰. As rottenneffe in her husbands bones⁵¹, As fpittle⁵², yea As a Dogge⁵³, and at laft fhe fhall be caft into hell fire, *Saluâ Veniâ*, without pardon from God, becaufe (faith *Tertullian*⁵⁴) fhe hath finned *Saluo metû*, without any feare of God.

A womā fearing the Lord.

But on the other fide what perfonall fufficiency, what fingular duty is there requifite in a Woman, either in respect of God, or of her hufband, children, kindred, feruants, place, and of Gods people, which the life of Grace, the Grace of the Feare of the Lord doth not animate, aduance, and accomplifh? This godly Feare ennobleth Nobilitie, beautifieth Beautie, enricheth wealth, teacheth wit, wifdome. She that hath this *Feare*, dare not

⁴⁸ *Ecclef. 23. 26. Prou. 10. 7.*

⁴⁹ *Ecclef. 26. 25.*

⁵⁰ *Ecclef. 7. 26*

⁵¹ *Prou. 12. 4.*

⁵² *Ecclef. 26. 21.*

⁵³ *Ecclef. 26. 25.*

⁵⁴ *Sic ergò & ipfi, faluâ veniâ in gehennam detrudentur, dum faluô metû peccant. De pænît. c. 5. Reuel. 21. 8. & 22. 15.*

for her heart, but be loath to offend her husband, and deny her inferiority⁵⁵, but be an example of godlineffe to her children⁵⁶, prouide things neccessary for her seruants⁵⁷ both in health and in sickneffe; loue her naturall and legall⁵⁸ kindred, esteeme her equals aboue her selfe⁵⁹, countenance and relieue her inferiours⁶⁰, maintaine the dignitie of her place by all such vertues as may discharge the⁶¹ fame; winne the affections of Gods people, to her more and more, by the offices⁶² of courtesies, salutations, gifts, vifitations, inuitations and of helpfulneffe; yea she that feares God, dare not for her heart but *Honour them that feare God, Pfsal. 15. 4.* but keepe her set taskes⁶³ of hearing, reading, fasting, praying, meditating, moderating passionate distempers, and of all other gracious exercises, of Selfe-deniall⁶⁴; so that there is not any knowne⁶⁵ sinne which she nourisheth, alloweth, or goeth

⁵⁵ *Gen. 3. 16. Eph. 5. 23. 33. 1 Cor. 7. 34.*

⁵⁶ *1 Tim. 5. 10. 2 Tim. 1. 5. & 3. 15. Tit. 2. 4. Deut. 6. 7.*

⁵⁷ *Prou. 31. 15, 21. Matth. 8. 6.*

⁵⁸ *1 Tim. 5. 4. Epth. 2. 7, 10. & 4. 4. Ruth 4. 15. Exod. 18. 7.*

⁵⁹ *Phil. 2. 3. Rom. 12. 10, 16.*

⁶⁰ *Iam. 2. 1. 1 Tim. 6. 18.*

⁶¹ *Titus 2. 3.*

⁶² *Luk. 1. 45, 56. Prou. 1. 20 & 5. 20 Gal. 6. 10 1 Tim 5. 10 Iob 6. 14*

⁶³ *Gal. 6. 9. Iam. 1. 19. 1 Tim. 4. 13. 1 Theff 5. 17. Luk. 2. 37. Ephef. 4. 26. Phil. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 3. 4. Luk. 9. 23. & 14. 26.*

⁶⁴ *Pfsal. 18. 23. & 77. 10. Gen. 39. 9. Prou. 16. 6. & 8. 13.*

⁶⁵ *Gen. 17. 1. Pfsal. 6. 8. & 116. 9. Act. 10. 33. 2 Cor. 6. 17. Iob 34. 21. Prou. 15. 3. & 5. 22. 2 Chron. 16. 9 1 King. 17. 1. Magna est cautela peccati, Dei semper presentiam*

on in, but quaketh and trembleth at the very firft thoughts, yea motions and inclinations thereunto, as being in the fight⁶⁶ of an inuifible God, vnder the perpetuall prefence of his All-feeing glorious pure eye, which fhew will not prouoke to anger by any finne, for all the gold that euer the Sunne made, or fhall make while it ftands in Heauen⁶⁷.

This glorious defcription of a woman fearing the Lord, is not mine (Bleffed Brethren) but the Scriptures, wherein I finde; 1. The caufe of her Feare to be not Selfe-Loue⁶⁸, but the Loue of God; not the fpirit of Bondage⁶⁹; but the Spirit of Adoption: 2. The Obiect of her feare to be not the precepts of men⁷⁰, but the Commandements of God⁷¹: not his Threats only⁷², but his Promifes alfo⁷³: not his Anger only againft fin⁷⁴, but his Mercy alfo in Chrif⁷⁵: not his Prefence only, as a Reuenging Iudge⁷⁶,

timere. S. Aug. de Temp. tom. 212. tom. 10.

⁶⁶ *Multum enim refrænât homines cōfciencia, fi credamus nos in cōfpectu Dei uiuere, fi non, tantum quæ gerimus uideri defuper, fed etiam quæ cogitamus, aut loquimur, audiri a Deo putamus &c. Lact. de Irâ Dei. c.8.*

⁶⁷ *Ef. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 3. 22. Pfalm. 119. 14.72. 127.162.*

⁶⁸ *2 Tim. 1. 7 & 3. 2.*

⁶⁹ *Rom. 8. 15.*

⁷⁰ *Ef. 29. 13.*

⁷¹ *Deut. 4. 10. Ef. 66. 2. Eccl. 12. 13. Prou. 13. 13. Pfal. 119. 161.*

⁷² *Pfal. 119. 120. & 52. 6.*

⁷³ *2 Cor. 7. 1. Heb. 4. 1. Pfal. 130. 4.*

⁷⁴ *Deut. 5. 9*

⁷⁵ *Hos. 3. 5. Pfal. 33. 18 & 130. 4.*

but his Forbearance also as a louing Father⁷⁷. 3. The workings of her Feare to be in the heat of temptations and afflictions, not Despairing⁷⁸; but Beleeuing the forgiueneffe of her finnes, not Limiting God to the present danger; but⁷⁹waiting for his mercy, not Distrusting his Prouidence; but hoping for Good⁸⁰. not Murmuring against him; but praifing Him, and praying vnto Him⁸¹, yea (which is the proper Act of her Feare) not Louing any fin, but hating and efchewing all fin⁸², not out of a flauifh terrour of punifhment; but chiefly becaufe it is Sinne, an Infinite euill; and becaufe an Infinite Good God, whom fhe loueth (faith Saint *Auguftine*) is offended by it, though fhe fhould neuer goe to Hell-fire to be punifhed for it⁸³.

II.

The continuance of her Feare.

⁷⁶ *Ier. 5. 22. Act. 10. 2, 33.*

⁷⁷ *Mal. 1. 6. Of. 3. 5. Hebr. 12. 9.*

⁷⁸ *Ier. 17. 17. Ecclef. 2. 8.*

⁷⁹ *Pfal. 33. 18. 20. Ecclef. 2. 7.*

⁸⁰ *Pfal. 115. 11. & 56. 3. Ecclef. 2. 9.*

⁸¹ *1 Cor. 10. 10. Pfalm. 22. 23. Act. 10. 2.*

⁸² *Exod. 20. 20. Ecclef. 15. 13. Prou. 8. 13. & 16. 6. 2 Tim. 1. 7. 1 Ioh. 4. 18. Hof. 3. 5. Pfal. 97. 10. Ier. 4. 18. & 2. 19.*

⁸³ *Verò-Christianus – proficiēdo perveniet ad talem animū, vt plus amet Dominum quàm timeat Gehēnam: vt etiāſi dicat illi Deus, vtere delicife carnalibus ſempiternis & quantum potes; pecca, nec morieris, nec in Gehēnam mitteris, ſed mecum tantummodo non eris; exhorreſcat et omninò non peccet, non iam vt in illud quod timebat non incidat, ſed ne illum quem ſic amat, offēdat. De Catechiz. Rudib. cap. 27. tom. 4. fol. 912.*

Laftly, in the Scriptures I finde Perfeuerance or Conftancie⁸⁴ to be euer an infeperable Attendant vpon her Feare! For ſhe is not one that hath not yet taſted of this fauing Grace, or elſe not continued in the ſame; but ſhe is a woman for the preſent, *Timens Dominum, Fearing the Lord*. You ſhall neuer finde Her otherwiſe, than (as God would haue her) *In the feare of the Lord all the day long, Prou. 23. Fearing and keeping his Commandements alwaies, Deut. 4. Doing her Husband Good and not euill all the daies of her life,* verſe the 12. of this Chapter.

It is true indeed, as Feare is oppoſed to Diffidence, *Luke 1*. So ſhe ſerues God without a Diſtruſtfull Feare all the daies of her life; becauſe of Gods continuall preſence with Her⁸⁵, continuall mercy towards Her⁸⁶, continuall power⁸⁷ ouer Her, in Strengthening, Helping, and Vpholding Her, *Eſai. 41. 10*. But yet as Feare is oppoſed to Negligence, ſo ſhe ſtill feares God, leſt ſhe ſhould be ſecure by reaſon of his Power which is inuincible⁸⁸; of his Wiſdome, which is infallible⁸⁹; of his Mercy, which is compaſſionate⁹⁰; and of his Iuſtice, which is inflexible⁹¹.

⁸⁴ *Ierem. 32. 39, 40. Deut. 4. 10. Prou. 23. 17. & 14. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 15.*

⁸⁵ *Matth. 28. 20 Ef. 43. 1, 2.*

⁸⁶ *Ier. 14. 9. Lam. 3. 22, 23.*

⁸⁷ *2 Cor. 12. 9. Ef. 26. 4. & 45. 24. Pſal. 121. & 35. 24. Rom. 8. 26.*

⁸⁸ *Matth. 10. 28. Deut. 28. 58.*

⁸⁹ *Eſai. 29. 15, 16. Pſal. 50. 21.*

⁹⁰ *Eſai. 43. 25. & 63. 9. & 49. 13, 15.*

⁹¹ *Eſai. 42. 14.*

It is as true also (which *Gerfon* and others haue obserued⁹²) that many times a Deuout Soule is so disquieted with a flauish Feare of the Aduerfary; that she feares lest she hath not any true Feare of Gods Maieftie; but yet (*B. B.*) say the *Pelagian* what hee can to the contrary, such is the Euerlastingneffe of Gods Loue⁹³, Mercie⁹⁴, and Couenant⁹⁵, the Vnconquerableneffe of his Power⁹⁶, the Immortality of his Word⁹⁷, the Certaintie of his Promises⁹⁸, the Efficacie of Christs Spirit⁹⁹; Prayer¹⁰⁰, Merits¹⁰¹, and of Faith in them¹⁰²; yea such is the durable vigour of this fauing Grace of *the Feare of the Lord*¹⁰³, that being once rooted

⁹² *De diuerfis tentat. Diaboli, part 3. Mr. Greenham* 5. part, among his Rules for an Afflicted minde.

⁹³ *Efai.* 54. 8, 9, 10. c. 49. 15. *Ier.* 31. 3. 36. c. 33. 20, 21. *Ioh.* 13. 1. *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. *Mat.* 12. 20. *Efai.* 42. 3.

⁹⁴ *Pfal.* 103. 17. 2 *Sam.* 7. 15.

⁹⁵ *Pfal.* 89. 28, 34. *Efai.* 55. 3. c. 59. 21. *Ier.* 32. 40.

⁹⁶ *Ioh.* 10. 29. *Iude* *verf.* 24. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *Efai.* 26. 4. *Pfal.* 80. 17. *Manus Dei est ista, non nostra vt non difcedamus à Deo, manus inquã eius est ista, qui dixit, Timorem meum dabo in cor eorũ &c.* *S. Aug. de Bono perfeuer.* c. 7. to. 7. *Ier.* 32. 27.

⁹⁷ 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. 1 *Ioh.* 3. 9.

⁹⁸ *Ephef.* 1. 13. *Numb.* 13. 19. *Iof.* 21. 45. 1 *Ioh.* 5. 10. *Hebr.* 7. 27. c. 11. 11. *Rom.* 4. 21. 1 *Cor.* 1. 9.

⁹⁹ *Efai.* 59. 21. *Ephef.* 1. 13, 14. c. 4. 30. *Ioh.* 14. 16, 17. 1 *Ioh.* 2. 27.

¹⁰⁰ *Luke* 22. 32. *Ioh.* 17. 15, 20. *Rom.* 8. 34. *Hebr.* 7. 25.

¹⁰¹ 1 *Pet.* 1. 2, 3, 4, 5. 1 *Ioh.* 5. 4, 18.

¹⁰² 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. *Ephef.* 6. 6. *Matth.* 16. 18.

¹⁰³ *Ierem.* 31. 40. *Perfeuerantiam enim promiffit Deus, dicens: Timorem meum dabo in cor eorum vt à me non recedant. Quod quid est aliud quàm talis ac tantus erit Timor meus, quem dabo in cor eorum, vt mihi perfeuerantèr adhæreant? Idem de Bono*

by God, (as Saint *Augustine* vrgeth) it cannot be remoued; but through it we may perfeueringly adhere vnto God according to his promife: *I will put my Feare in their hearts, that they fhall not depart from me, Ier. 32. 40. with Pfal. 80. 17.* She then that truely hath this *Feare*, doth fo feare the Lord in Loue, and loue him in feare¹⁰⁴, that as in the midft of Gods not Confuming, but Confummating Anger (for fo Saint *Augustine*¹⁰⁵ calls Gods Anger towards the Godly) fhee can fee the yerning and relenting Bowels of a Compaffionate Father, fo in the height of Satans Terrifying iniectiōns, fhe can fhunne and abhorre Gods Difpleafure¹⁰⁶, more than all other miferies of Punifhments, and therefore in what ftate foeuer fhe be of Confolation or Defertion, fhee is ftill the fame Woman, *Timens Dominum, Fearing the Lord.*

Thus wee haue feene who fhe is, who *fhall be praifed*, lest we fhould praife Her vnawares, whom we fhould not praife. And now it were good we did thinke a little better on the Reafon, why *fhe fhall be praifed*, euen becaufe fhe is fuch a woman fearing the Lord.

The Reafon.

Perfeuer. c. 2. tom. 7. Rom. 11. 29.

¹⁰⁴ *Abfit enim vt timore pereat amor, fi castus est timor. S. Aug. in Pfal. 119. tom. 8.*

¹⁰⁵ *Eft ira confummationis, & eft ira cōfumptionis, (nam omnis Vindicta Dei, Ira dicitur) fed aliquando ad hoc vindicat Deus, vt perficiat: aliquando ad hoc vindicat, vt damnet. Idem in Pfal. 58 to. 8. f. 599.*

¹⁰⁶ – *Qui glutine Deo conglutinatur, id eft charitate ... terribilius & horribilius ipsâ Gehenna iudicat, in re leuiffima vultū omnipotentis scientèr offendere. S. Bern. de Tripl. Coharen. Vincul.*

For if any thing, fo rare and excellent a Grace as the *Feare of the Lord* is, fhould moue vs to affect it, and labour for it, eſpecially being found in ſo weake a Veſſell as a Woman is¹⁰⁷. For I could tell you, there are more *Michals*¹⁰⁸ than *Abigails*¹⁰⁹, more *Iezebels*¹¹⁰ than *Sarah's*¹¹¹, more proud *Vafthy's*¹¹², than humble *Efthers*¹¹³, more Fearefull women, than Women *Fearing the Lord*; and therefore the rarer ſuch Phœnixes are (as S. *Ierom* calls them¹¹⁴) not *One* to be found by wiſeſt *Salomon*¹¹⁵, among a *Thouſand*, greater is her praiſe *that feareth the Lord*¹¹⁶.

Then I muſt tell you, that euery Feare is not commendable. Not that Feare which is Hypocriticall, for this is Superſtition, when men feare the Feare of Idolaters¹¹⁷. Not that feare which is Worldly, for this is wicked ſelfe-Loue, when men feare

¹⁰⁷ *1 Pet. 3. 7. Vir itaq, nominatus eſt, quòd maior in eo Vis eſt quàm in fœmina, & hinc Virtus nomen accepit. Item Mulier à mollicie eſt dicta ... velut Mollier. Lact. de Opf. Dei. cap. 12.*

¹⁰⁸ *1 Sam. 18. 21. & 25. 41.*

¹⁰⁹ *2 Sam. 6. 16, 20.*

¹¹⁰ *1 King. 21. 7. 2 King. 9. 22, 30.*

¹¹¹ *1 Pet. 3. 6.*

¹¹² *Efth. 1. 12.*

¹¹³ *Efth. 8. 5.*

¹¹⁴ *Optima fœmina rarior eſt Phœnice. Malarum fœminarū tam copioſa ſunt examina &c. S. Ier. epiſt.*

¹¹⁵ *Ecclef. 7. 28. Prou. 3. 10.*

¹¹⁶ *Laus tantò maior deferri ſolet, quantò eſt bonum rarius quod exigit Laudem. S. Aug. lib. 1. de Ciuit. Dei. cap. 28. tom. 5.*

¹¹⁷ *Eſai. 8. 12 Col. 2. 20.*

Men¹¹⁸, Loffe of Goods, Fire and faggot, more than God the Onely Soueraigne Commander of the Soule, the Only Dreadfull Threatner of euerlafting Burnings. Nor that feare which is Seruile¹¹⁹ or adulterate¹²⁰, for this is no Vertue (proues *Parif.*) when men feare the *Euill of Punifhment* only; not the *Euill of Sinne*, as an Adultereffe feares the Comming home of her Hufband; but feares not the Committing of Adultery. Nor is that feare commendable, which is Diftrufffull or Immoderate like *Ruben* (as *Gerfon*¹²¹ alludes) growen great, and lying with *Bilhah*, for this is Infidelitie when men tie Gods Grace to prefent deliuerance out of danger, without a Beleeuing and waiting Spirit for his Mercie, *Efai. 28. 16.*

But the *Feare* for which a *Woman fhall be praifed*, is informed by Wifdome, inftructed by Vnderftanding, directed by Counfell, ftrengthened by Might, gouerned by Knowledge, adorned with

¹¹⁸ 2 Tim. 3. 2. Mat. 10. 28. *Quis animæ Dominator, nifi Deus folus? Quis iste, nifi ignium comminator? ... Illi potius metum confecandū &c. Tertul. aduerf. Gnof. c. 9. tom. 3.*

¹¹⁹ *Timor Seruilis nō eft Virtus, quialicet mala declinari faciat: non tamen hoc facit benè, id eft fauidibilitè; immo ilitè et brutalitè, videlicet folo metæ feræ, ita enim occupat animum & intentionam timentis, oraculos cordis ad folam pœnæ euafionem habeat &c. Paris. de Virtutibus, fol. 81. lit. H. & Paludan. l. 3. d. 34. q. 3.*

¹²⁰ – *Coniun quæ adulterinum animū gerit, etiam fi timòre viri non adulterium perpetrat: tamen quod deeft aperi, ineft voluntati, Cafta verò alitè timet: nam & ipfa times virum; fed caftè. Deniq, timet illa, no vir infeftus adueniat, ifta ne offenfus abfcadat. S. Aug. epift. 120. c. 21. to. 2.*

¹²¹ *Ruben violat Balamdum nimium grandis effectus eft, quia timor fi fimius eft, dum fe cuftodire nititur, format inutiles imaginationes, quibus fe connoluens à falutaribus impeditur. Tract. 10. fuper, Magnificat. part 3.*

Pietie, as Saint *Ambrose* collects out of the eleuenth of *Efay*¹²². It is a Faithfull feare trusting in God¹²³, and making Him her *Feare*, *Efai.* 8. 13. and her Hope too in the Day of Euill, not without this feruent Prayer vnto Him then: *Be not thou a Terrour vnto me*, *Ier.* 17. 17. A chaft and *Cleane Feare*¹²⁴, *Cleanfing from all filthineffe of the flefh and Spirit.*¹²⁵ A Reuerent and Godly Fear¹²⁶, Preparing the heart, Humbling the Soule in Gods fight¹²⁷, Trembling at his Word¹²⁸, not Difobeying it, Efcchewing¹²⁹ euill, Working righteoufneffe and Giuing much almes¹³⁰. A Bleffed Feare it is¹³¹, Bleffing them that haue it, Bleffing the Lord that giues it, Praifing Him and faying: *That his Mercy endureth for euer*

¹²² *Lege Efaiam: vide quantia fubiecerit timorem vt faceret irreprehenfibilam & bonum Timorem. Spiritus inquit Sapientia &c. Talle Timori Domini ifta & eft irrationabilis & infipiens Timor, vnus ex illis: Foris pugnae, intus Timores. In Pfal. 118. Ser. 5. tom. 4.*

¹²³ *Pfal. 115. 11. & 147. 11. Efai. 50. 10.*

¹²⁴ *Pfal. 19. 9*

¹²⁵ *2 Cor. 7. 1.*

¹²⁶ *Hebr. 12. 28.*

¹²⁷ *Ecclef. 2. 17. & 21. 6.*

¹²⁸ *Efai. 66. 2. Eccle. 2. 15.*

¹²⁹ *Iob 1. 1.*

¹³⁰ *Act. 10. 35, 2, 31. Ecclef. 25. 1.*

¹³¹ *Pfal. 112. 1. & 128. 1.*

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