

Monergism

*The Glorious Name of God*

# THE LORD OF HOSTS

JEREMIAH BURROUGHS

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# **The Glorious Name of God, The Lord of Hosts.**

Opened in two SERMONS, At MICHAEL'S Cornhill, LONDON.

Vindicating the Commission from this Lord of Hosts, to Subjects, in  
some cases, to take up Arms.

WITH A POSTSCRIPT, Briefly Answering A LATE TREATISE BY  
HENRY FERNE, D. D.

BY JER. BURROUGHS.

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## **To his Excellency, ROBERT, Earl of Essex,**

Viscount Hereford, Baron Ferrars of Chartley, Lord Bouchier and Lovaine, one of His Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, and General of the Army raised by the Parliament in defence of the true Protestant Religion, His Majesty's Person, the Laws and Liberties of the Kingdom, and the privileges of Parliament.

There is no man this day upon the face of the earth whom it more concerns to have this name of God, The Lord of Hosts, presented to him in the due lustre and glory of it than your Excellency, whom the Lord has not only honoured to stand up even in the forefront to maintain His cause and the cause of His people, but He has even put upon you this His own name; He has made you the Lord of His Hosts. It is that which every soldier may justly glory in, that God Himself seems to affect the glory of arms when He causes Himself to be, as it were, surnamed THE LORD OF HOSTS. The beams of this glorious name put some lustre upon the meanest in an army; what lustre then does it put upon your Excellency, who stand so near it? Happy the time that ever you were born to be made use of by God and His people in so noble and honourable a service as this. We read Zechariah 3:3 of Joshua, that great instrument of Reformation, in the return of Judah from her Captivity, that he stood in filthy garments, but the Angel spoke to those who stood before him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him," and unto him he said, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Those who stand up most eminent and forward in the cause of God and His people shall ever have some who will seek to stain their glory by slanders and reproachful names, to put them into vile garments; what viler garment can there be than the garment of Treason and Rebellion?

But the Angel stands by to take off these vile garments and to cleanse his servants even from this nominal iniquity; he will put change of raiment upon them; he will one day make it appear that there were none so faithful to God, their King and Country, as they. The Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, saith the Text, ver. 2, will rebuke them who thus stand up against his servants. The Lord who hath set His heart to bring mercy to Jerusalem, to His Church, will certainly rebuke such as stand to resist the great instruments thereof. Wherefore, that which the Angel of the Lord protested to Joshua, v. 6, I may in the name of the Lord, with a little change, protest unto your Excellency: Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, if you will walk in my ways, and if you will keep my charge, then you shall have an eminency in my house, and I will give you places among these that stand by. That is, among the blessed Angels in the heavens. If a cup of cold water shall not go without a reward, surely then the venturing estate, liberty, limbs, honour, blood, life for the cause of Christ shall not go without its reward.

Wherefore, most noble Lord of our Hosts, yea of the Hosts of God, Go on with true Heroic magnanimity and prosper, in the name of this glorious Lord of Hosts. The prayers of the Churches are for you; the blessings of the Saints are upon you. I believe never any General upon the earth hath been mentioned more in heaven than your Excellency hath been, and yet is in this cause.

That which is storied of the Cross appearing to CONSTANTINE, with these words, "HOC VINCES," I may with far more confidence apply to this name of God, The Lord of Hosts. This I present unto your Excellence, with this Motto, "Hoc vinces": The name is in itself a box of sweet ointment; give me leave to open it before your Excellency, that it may be fragrant indeed, and add quickening and strength. To that true noble heroic spirit fit for great actions, that God hath

honoured you withal, I here humbly present it opened and poured forth. The blessing of it be upon you and those great things undertaken by you, which is and shall be the prayer of

Your Excellency's in all humble service and duty, Jeremiah Burroughs.

## **To the Reader:**

The necessity of the time led me to preach on this subject, as the City was in great fear of a large Army approaching in the name of the King. The urgency of the subject for this time made me willing to make my reflections on this subject more public. I have expanded on certain aspects, especially in the argument for justifying the present taking up of arms, which has been strongly criticized as if it were against the King, but I argue that it is by commission from the Lord of Hosts, as discussed on page 27 and onwards. Providing satisfaction to people's consciences in this matter is of such great importance in these times that everyone should contribute to the best of their ability. I would have felt guilty if I had kept back what I could offer to help others find satisfaction in this matter. Although I am aware that it is a risky argument, and I may face consequences, I have enough if I can be useful. I can honestly say that if I have ever published anything with a sincere heart, aiming at the glory of God and your good, I find comfort in this. Regardless of the outcome, I will rejoice in this. Things would not have reached their current state if people's consciences had been properly informed about the liberties God has granted them. The infusion of contrary principles

and the belief that subjects must endure anything rather than rise up to defend their own rights have led to the bold actions of many among us.

What I have said is concise, as it comes to you in the form of a sermon and does not allow for lengthy discourse. However, if there is a need, it would not be very difficult to expand on these matters in another way. Read for your benefit, and I achieve my purpose.

Yours in the service of Christ, Jeremiah Burroughs.

It is ordered on the first day of December 1642, by the Committee of the House of Commons in Parliament, responsible for Printing, that this book entitled "The Glorious Name of God, The Lord of Hosts" be printed by Robert Dawlman, appointed for this purpose by Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs, the author thereof.

John White.

## **The Glorious Name of God, The Lord of Hosts.**

The Lord of Hosts is His Name. - Isaiah 47:4.

In this chapter, we have God's mercy to His Church and a threat of Babylon's destruction. When Babylon is used as God's instrument, it is eventually cast into the fire.

If the people of Israel, when God was about to deliver them from Babylonian Captivity, should ask the same question that Moses thought would be asked when he was sent to deliver them from Egyptian bondage, "What is His Name?" (Exodus 3:13), the Prophet answers here: "The Lord of Hosts is His Name." There, His Name was "I am"; here it is "The Lord of Hosts." And if they should question, "But can this deliverance really happen? Can Babylon be destroyed? Babylon is strong; who can bring down her power?" Yes, there is One who can do it—The Lord our Redeemer. The Lord of Hosts is His Name.

Here, we have this glorious title of the Lord for the comfort of His people in their distress and the terror of their enemies in their pride—The Lord of Hosts, The Lord of Armies. The English word "Hosts" is derived from the Latin "Hostis," because an army is meant for either defense or offense against enemies.

The Redeemer of God's people is the Lord of Hosts.

The purpose of this sermon is to teach you how to sanctify the Name of the Lord in this glorious title, The Lord of Hosts. It is the duty of the Saints to observe the way of God in their generation, to discern which name of God is most prominent in His administration, and to sanctify that particular Name accordingly.

We can say of this Name of God, The Lord of Hosts, what God Himself says of His Name Jehovah in Exodus 6:3: "By My Name Jehovah, I was not known to them." Similarly, by this Name, The Lord of Hosts, God has been scarcely known to us here in England until now. But He now reveals Himself to us through this Name in a glorious way. To sanctify it, we must explore it and recognize the profound glory it holds, which is much greater than it may initially appear to be. All of God's titles are filled with excellence. I will



explain the excellence of this title to you so that you may not take the Name of God in vain but sanctify it as it deserves.

This is a title that God has taken delight in and even gloried in throughout history. We find it mentioned not less than two hundred times in the Old Testament, most frequently in the prophecy of Zechariah. In Zechariah 1:3, we find it three times in one verse, and in one short chapter, Zechariah 8, we encounter it eighteen times.

Why is it used so frequently in that prophecy compared to others? Because the purpose of that prophecy was to encourage the people of God as they built Jerusalem and the Temple, facing many adversaries. Hence, the Lord revealed Himself to them often by the name of The Lord of Hosts.

Times of Reformation and Temple work often face strong opposition. Therefore, we need to keep the name of God in our thoughts and sanctify it in our hearts during such times when such work is underway.

It's true that God accomplished this work without bloodshed; it was not by human power or might but by the Spirit of the Lord, as we read in Zechariah 4:6. However, considering that, in terms of secondary causes, this work required an army to carry it out, even though God did it Himself, His name needed to be sanctified in it as the Lord of Hosts. In the New Testament, we seldom encounter this title; I can recall it appearing only twice. In one of these instances, it is quoted from the Old Testament (Romans 9:29). In that passage, the Hebrew word is retained as "The Lord of Sabbath," not "The Lord of Sabbath," as some interpret it. There's a significant difference between these two phrases: "The Lord of Sabbath" signifies the Lord of rest, while "The Lord of Hosts" indicates the Lord of Armies. These words come from different roots in Hebrew. The second

occurrence is in James 5:4, where the English word "Hosts" is not used, but the Hebrew word "Sabbath" is retained. In the New Testament, we encounter God's titles filled with sweetness and grace, such as "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," "The God of all consolation," "The Father of mercies," "The God of peace," and so on. Thus, we have even more reason to humble ourselves, living in Gospel times, yet facing a situation where God has seemingly altered His name and now appears to us in this fearsome title, The Lord of Hosts.

This title is inherently fearful, yet as we delve into it, we will discover that, like the name of Christ (Canticles 1:3), it is like an ointment poured forth—a sweet, refreshing, and pleasant ointment. In 2 Samuel 6:2, the Lord speaks of His name set between the Cherubim, referred to as "The Lord of Hosts who dwells between the Cherubim." The Mercy-seat was indeed located between the Cherubim. What I aim to do today is to reveal this name of the Lord of Hosts written upon the Mercy-seat between the Cherubim. Although it is terrifying in itself, all God's saints will have it presented to them from the Mercy-seat today—a name filled with goodness and mercy to the utmost of our desires. In this kingdom, we have already witnessed the Lord of Hosts on His Mercy-seat, making this awe-inspiring title amiable and lovely to us, from which He dispenses grace and abundant mercy in the manifestation of this glorious title. It is comforting to behold the Lord of Hosts seated upon His Mercy-seat, and this is what I aim to present to you today.

Now, God is referred to as The Lord of Hosts for two reasons:

First, because all creatures in heaven and on earth are His armies. He is the supreme Lord over them all. The angels, the sun, the moon, the stars, the dragons, the depths, the fire, hail, snow, wind, the

mountains, trees, cedars, the beasts, and all creeping things, flying fowls, the kings of the earth, and all people constitute the Hosts of the Lord (Psalm 148:2, etc.).

Second, concerning God's special providence in the significant affairs of wars and battles in the world. While God's providence extends to the smallest things in the world, He claims a more distinct and specific acknowledgment of His providential work in matters of war. Hence, He adopts the title The Lord of Hosts for Himself.

If I were to discuss the first reason, it would take considerable time, as it is more general. Therefore, I will focus on the second reason, which is more specific and presently relevant. God is the God of armies. To emphasize His involvement in matters of war, He is even described as "a man of war" (Exodus 15:3). God seems to take great pride in His involvement in matters of war. Psalm 24:8 declares, "Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." God's providence is significant in all wars, but particularly in those wars that concern His people, whether as a means of chastisement, defense, or offense against their enemies.

I do not know of any one thing in which the Providence of God is more clearly depicted in Scripture than in its involvement in wars, as many particulars will be fully presented to you:

First, God acts in the initiation of wars when and how He pleases. He is the great General, and all battles are orchestrated by Him. He calls for them before they happen, and when He calls, they undoubtedly come upon a nation. Jeremiah 25:29 states, "Behold, I begin to bring evil upon the City which is called by My name, etc., for I will call for a sword." God does not just call for a sword against the heathen but also against the cities named after Him. Surely there is as much of God in this city as in any city in the world today, yet God may call for

a sword against it; do not be complacent. Do you not hear God calling for it now? Isaiah 5:26 says, "God will hiss for the Nations from the ends of the earth, and behold they shall come with speed swiftly." And in Isaiah 7:18, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the Fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the Bee that is in the Land of Assyria, and they shall come." Let God give even the slightest signal of His will, and they shall come. Pompey once arrogantly said, when one of his officers told him they lacked men, "Let me but stamp with my foot upon the ground of Italy, and I shall have men enough—footmen and horsemen will come from every corner." Although his statement was proud, and he ultimately faced disappointment, it holds true for the Lord of Hosts. Let Him speak a word or take any action to gather armies, and they will immediately assemble to fight His battles. When He wills, He can stir up the hearts of the kings of the earth to hate the wicked and make war against them (Revelation 17:16). The ten kings will hate the wicked one, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. It's astonishing that they have waited this long, enduring such vile servitude under her. Their servitude encompasses soul, body, and possessions, so much so that one might think a human spirit couldn't bear it, let alone the spirit of a king. But when God's time comes, the spirits of the kings of the earth will be swiftly roused to wage war against her.

An observation made by Abulensis on 1 Chronicles 14:8 highlights God's notable providence towards David. During the seven years David resided in Hebron, he faced no wars initiated by the Philistines. During this time, he was relatively weak, being king only over the house of Judah. However, when all of Israel came to him, and he became king over them all, the Philistines came against him. Can we not perceive God's remarkable providence towards us as well, that He did not call for the sword against us until now, after we had a

Parliament that could not be dissolved except by its own consent, until our militia was nearly established throughout the kingdom, and until we had an army for defense? If God had called for the sword before these things, what would have become of us? Oh, the merciful providence of God towards England in this matter! God is very evident in inciting wars, consulting about them, influencing men's hearts towards them, diverting them from peace, and so forth. Pharaoh's heart was hardened against the Israelites so that he would go to battle against them, because God intended to destroy him. God was the reason Rehoboam was inclined to heed the counsel of young Cavaliers and harden his heart against his wise advisors, for God had a plan to tear ten tribes away from him. God also prompted Ahab to go to war against Ramoth Gilead, leading to his destruction.

Secondly, the Lord establishes His standard in war. He expresses this in Isaiah 5:26: "He will lift up an ensign to the Nations." Regardless of who the standard-bearer is, it is God Himself who raises the standard.

Thirdly, God conducts the muster of the army. Isaiah 13:4 states, "The Lord of Hosts mustereth the Host of the battle." The Lord of Hosts is the muster-master in armies. He condescends to use these expressions to more specifically and fully reveal His providential role in military affairs.

Fourthly, the Lord furnishes weapons from His armory. Jeremiah 50:25 says, "The Lord hath opened His armory and brought forth the weapons of His indignation, for this is the work of the Lord of Hosts." God has a magazine, an armory that He opens during times of war. Regardless of whether arms come from overseas or elsewhere, not a single piece can come except from God's magazine.

If God did not open His armory, neither we nor our enemies would have weapons.

There was a time when God closed His armory to Israel, and during that time, there was neither sword nor spear found in the hands of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan, except for Saul and Jonathan (1 Samuel 13:22).

Fifthly, it is the Lord who provides His people with their banners to display (Psalm 60:4): "Thou hast given a Banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." Some oppose the truth, attempting to take away the Gospel from them. Therefore, God has given them banners to be displayed in defense of the truth. God calls us to contend earnestly for the truth (Jude 1:3) and fight for it if necessary. If we are in danger of losing it, God gives us our banners not to be folded up but to be displayed in defense of the truth.

Sixthly, God Himself enters the field with His people, often reassuring them of His presence (Deuteronomy 20:4): "The Lord your God is He that goeth with you to fight." When God declares, "I am with you," you can complete this promise for your safety and comfort by adding various assurances: "I am with you to assist you, I am with you to guide you, I am with you to encourage you, bless you, save you, comfort you, reward you," and so on. God says, "I am with you." This is like a piece of a line that our faith can extend. Once we have this promise in our hearts, we can add whatever we need, leading to full peace and joy.

In Judges 4:8, Barak was hesitant to go into the field unless Deborah accompanied him. Similarly, it is unwise to go into battle without God. Yet, if you hold this promise in your heart, you will have strength in your hands. Zechariah 10:5 declares, "They shall be as mighty men which tread down their enemies as mire in the streets, in

the battle, and they shall fight because the Lord is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded."

Seventhly, God is not only with His people in their battles, but He leads them as their Captain (Joshua 5:13): "Joshua saw a man with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him, and said, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but a Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." This man was evidently Christ, for Joshua fell on his face and worshipped Him. The Captain of the Lord's Host said to Joshua, "Loose thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy."

Eighthly, God condescends even to be the trumpeter in the wars of His people. While it might be considered beneath a General to blow the trumpet for his army, the great General, the Lord of Hosts, blows the trumpet Himself to encourage His people in battle (Zechariah 9:14): "And the Lord shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with the whirlwinds of the South." Why the South? Because those winds are the hottest and, therefore, the swiftest. If we see the South wind, we predict that it will be hot, as Christ mentioned in Luke 12:54-55. If we think our General is moving too slowly, the Lord of Hosts, the great General, is swift enough. In the preceding verses, the arrows of the Lord are described as going forth like lightning. Swiftmess in an army is of great significance and has been a notable advantage to our adversaries. We must not lag in this aspect unless we want to be unequal to them.

Ninthly, God is the rearward of His people in times of battle (Isaiah 52:12): "Ye shall not go out with haste, nor by slight: for the Lord will go before you: and the God of Israel will be your Rearward." The term "Rearward" implies the guard and defense behind. An army is

secure when it is strong in both the rearward and the front. God is both before and behind in the armies of His people.

Tenthly, God's providence in wars operates in their duration. How long wars persist in a land and when they come to an end are entirely determined by the Lord of Hosts. He works in sustaining the warring parties, providing reinforcements, and even breaking treaties, among other things. When we cry out, "How long shall the sword devour?" we must remember that when God commissions the sword, it must continue until its task is complete. As stated in Jeremiah 47:6-7: "Oh, thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? Put up thyself into the scabbard, rest and be still." The answer is given: "How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Askelon, and against the sea shore? There hath He appointed it." In Hosea 11:6, it is said, "The sword shall abide on his cities, and consume his branches, and shall devour them because of their own counsels." While we may be troubled when the sword approaches our cities, we should consider how much more devastating it would be if it entered our cities. Therefore, to avoid such calamity, we must heed our own counsel. If God leaves a Parliament or city to their own counsel, the sword will remain among them longer than we might anticipate, until it has thoroughly consumed. God often takes His time before drawing His sword, making preparations and delays, but once drawn, He may not sheathe it until it has been bathed, filled, fattened, satiated, and drunk with blood, as described in Isaiah 34:5-6.

When God gives the command, wars come to an end. Psalm 46:9 declares, "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in fire."



A remarkable example of God's intervention to end a war can be found in 1 Kings 12:21. It is an exceptional instance not found elsewhere in the Bible and unparalleled in history. King Rehoboam was furious with the ten tribes that had seceded from his rule. His anger was further fueled by the young, daring Cavaliers surrounding him. He assembled a formidable army, numbering 180,000 men, intending to reunify the kingdom under the house of David. They possessed great power and were fueled by fierce rage, without questioning the justice of their cause. They were set to go forth with cruelty and bloodshed. But how was this all suddenly halted? In 1 Kings 12:22-24, we read that "the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah the prophet, saying, 'Speak to Rehoboam, Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up to fight against your brethren, return every man to his house.'" The text notes that "they hearkened to the word of the Lord and returned to depart, according to the word of the Lord." This was a remarkable work of God, demonstrating His authority over even the mightiest spirits, who often deem it intolerable to be contradicted in anything they have set their hearts on.

Rehoboam, a wicked man in the height of his pride and wrath, and with a formidable army at his disposal, was convinced to return and sit down quietly by the word of a humble prophet who spoke in the name of the Lord of Hosts. It serves as an example of the incredible influence God wields over the spirits of men, even the most powerful, who may consider it an affront to be opposed in their desires.

May a prophet of the Lord have access to His Majesty today, and convey that he must reconsider his course, recognizing the influence of misguided individuals around him. May he understand that there is a misunderstanding between him and his people, that our actions are in accordance with God's will, and that we do not seek to deprive

him of any legitimate authority granted by God or man, but only to preserve our rightful liberties. These liberties are as truly ours as the crown is his birthright, and we seek to peacefully enjoy the Gospel while serving the Lord and His Majesty in our own land.

Eleventhly, the providence of God in war is remarkable in its shifts from one place to another. The Lord of Hosts authorizes the sword to traverse from one land to another, and from one part of a kingdom to another. As seen in Ezekiel 14:17: "Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land, so that I cut off man and beast in it." The sword has already reached various parts of our land, even the farthest reaches such as Northumberland and Cornwall, akin to Dan and Beersheba in the land of Canaan. Justly, God could commission it to roam freely throughout, and to a large extent, this has already happened. It is devouring nearly all around us, and the guilt of the suffering our brethren have endured, the guilt of their blood, is upon the entire kingdom. The entire kingdom has not risen as one to prevent it, allowing our brethren in different regions to be consumed one after another. Some regions hope it will not reach them, while others hope to escape, and in the meantime, we permit our brethren to be plundered.

Jeremiah 12:12 states, "The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness" (referring to the countryside). "For the sword shall devour from the one end of the land to the other, no flesh shall have peace" (Jeremiah 25:15). The Lord instructed the prophet to take the cup of the wine of His fury and make all the nations to whom he was sent drink it. Other nations, such as France, Holland, and Germany, have been drinking from this cup for 24 years. Spain and Italy have also had their share, and Scotland experienced a portion of it. We feared it when it was close to us and, together, we cried to God, "If it be possible, let this cup of blood pass from us." In

His great mercy, God allowed it to pass, but it went to our brethren in Ireland, who continue to endure it. Whether God intends for us to drink the bitterest part remains uncertain. We should, as Christ did in His Agony (Luke 22:44), pray more earnestly, for it is a sorrowful thing for our spirits to be heavy, sluggish, and constrained in such a time as this.

Twelfthly, the Lord of Hosts' role in war includes imparting wisdom and counsel for its management, and He withdraws wisdom and counsel at His pleasure. As in 2 Samuel 22:35, "Thou teachest my hands to war, and my fingers to fight," and also in Psalm 144:1. Other generals may rely on their war councils to guide them, but the Lord of Hosts imparts all wisdom and counsel directly to those under His command. In this, we see a manifestation of God's glory. Isaiah 28:24-27 speaks of the Lord teaching farmers how to sow, plow, and thresh their crops, demonstrating His glory even more when giving wisdom to lead and organize armies. When the Lord chooses, He can withdraw counsel, confounding people's thoughts and stirring up confusion. He can turn their wisdom upside down, ensnaring them in the consequences of their own decisions.

This is what made David pray against Ahithophel's counsel in 2 Samuel 15:31: "O Lord, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness." The counsel advised attacking the army while it was weary and weak (2 Samuel 17:2). This war was brought upon David because of his sin, yet God answered David's prayer against Ahithophel's counsel. Similarly, a great Ahithophel gave counsel against our army recently, suggesting that they should come to the city or attack the army because it was divided and weakened. Remarkably, God turned this counsel into foolishness, and it became our safety and the source of their disgrace. In Isaiah 19:11, the text speaks of the princes of Zoan becoming fools, attributing this to the

Lord's act. Why is Zoan mentioned? Because it was Egypt's capital, where the great counsel of Egypt resided. In verse 14, the Lord is said to have mixed a perverse spirit among them, causing Egypt to err in all its work. To express this meaning, Jerome adds, "Not only drunken, but vomiting the fury of Dragons, the incurable fury of Asps." Isn't this like the vomiting of our adversaries today, who are intoxicated with malice and rage against us, even against Christ and His saints?

Thirteenthly, the spirit of valour and courage also comes from the Lord of Hosts. When the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson, Gideon, and other heroes of the Lord, they achieved great feats. Hebrews 11:33-34 reads, "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." It was through faith that they gained the valour and courage provided by the Lord of Hosts. Haggai 1:14 states, "The Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, and the spirit of Joshua, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people, and they came and did work in the house of the Lord of Hosts their God." This was a spirit suited for resisting their enemies and confronting danger.

God has stirred a spirit in many of our nobles, in our parliamentarians, and in some of our people. If such a spirit were stirred up in the remaining people, our task would be completed swiftly. It would be the most unworthy and dreadful thing ever to occur in this world if people now abandoned the nobility they have chosen for parliament and the ministers who have had the spirit to stand up for God and their liberties. Oh, that a spirit of indignation would rise up in the entire kingdom so that they would not allow themselves to be dispossessed of their religion, liberties, and estates by a group of vile men who have emerged among us.

Zechariah 10:3, 5 declares, "The Lord of Hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah, and has made them as His goodly horse in the battle. They shall be as mighty men who tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle." It appears that they dared to enter their towns and cities, which is why the text says they would tread them down like mire in the streets. They are vile and should be trampled down like mire in the streets. The spirits of those who seem most terrifying among us are lowly and base. What notable deeds have they ever accomplished? Have they ever stood before those who opposed them? Their courage consists of going to country houses in a lowly manner, pillaging and plundering. A spirit raised by God in the people would scorn to be dominated by men of such spirits as these. Moreover, just as God imparts a spirit of courage, He can also take it away at His discretion, as seen in Isaiah 19:16. "And in that day shall Egypt be like unto women, and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of Hosts, which He shaketh over it; and the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, everyone that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the Lord of Hosts." They may not admit their fear, but, as the verse says, "everyone shall be afraid in himself." If we could look into their hearts, we would see dread, trembling, and the fear of the Lord upon them. Psalm 76:5 states, "The stout-hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep, and none of the men of might have found their hands, at thy rebuke, O Lord, the horse and chariot are cast into a dead sleep." And verse 12 reads, "He shall cut off the spirit of princes, he is terrible to the kings of the earth; he shall wipe them off as a man will do a flower between his fingers, or as easily as a bunch of grapes is cut off from the vine."

Fourteenthly, the Lord of Hosts has absolute control over all weapons in battle, determining whether they prosper or fail according to His will. This surpasses all the generals in the world.

Isaiah 54:17 states, "No weapon formed against thee shall prosper." If anyone argues that this was a specific promise for that time, note what follows: "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord." Recently, we have experienced the fulfilment of this promise in our inheritance. The Sunday before last, we inherited this promise when 17 cannons were discharged by the adversary, and not one man was killed by them. How was this promise, "No weapon formed against thee shall prosper," fulfilled? The adversaries were angered, suggesting that perhaps the devil was in the gunpowder. However, it was God who was present, fulfilling His promise to His servants.

Fifteenthly, all success in battles comes from the Lord of Hosts, not from men, ammunition, or advantages. Ecclesiastes 9:11 states, "The battle is not to the strong." Psalm 33:17 says, "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy." Lastly, the entire battle belongs to the Lord when it is a just cause, as seen in 1 Samuel 17:47, "The battle is the Lord's."

Now you have seen what Scripture says about God's providence in battle. These are the summarized truths presented here, offering full and strong encouragement to those who fight the Lord's battles.

Now, if the question is asked, "Why does the Lord work in this way in armies?"

The answer is:

1. Because the lives of men are precious to Him. Within them, numerous souls are destined for eternity. If not even a sparrow or a hair from one's head falls to the ground without His providence, then certainly the lives of beings appointed for eternity are within His care.

2. Because of the significant consequences that wars entail. The fate of nations, the shifts of kingdoms—all are intertwined with them.

However, one may wonder, since God is indeed the Lord of Hosts, why do the adversaries of God's people sometimes prevail in battle?

1. It is often a form of chastisement for His people. At times, even Ashur is made into the rod of God's anger. As stated in Jeremiah 12:7, "I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies." Even those who are dearly beloved by God may be handed over to their enemies for the sake of chastisement. We must not assume, based on immediate outcomes, that God favours those who seem to be prevailing while rejecting those who appear to have the worst. Sometimes, for the purpose of chastisement, God brings the worst of humanity upon His people, as seen in Ezekiel 7:24: "I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses." The Lord has raised up some of the worst and vilest individuals on Earth against us, and they have occupied the homes of many of His saints, who are dearly beloved by God. It is akin to using the vilest, most wretched individuals as hangmen or the filthiest rags and cloths for scouring. This situation is indicative of our own impurity, for God has chosen such lowly individuals to discipline us.
2. God permits these occurrences because His people may not be sufficiently humbled. The lack of thorough humility before God led to the loss of forty thousand lives, as recounted in Judges 20, even though they had a just cause in that battle. A righteous cause alone is insufficient for safety in battle; there must be genuine humility before the Almighty God.

3. The adversary may prevail because the saints fail to rouse the Lord of Hosts through prayer. Psalm 59:9 implores, "Thou therefore, O Lord God of Hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen, be not merciful to wicked transgressors." Isaiah 51:9 echoes this call: "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient days, as in the generations of old." The Church implores God three times to awaken. God possesses the strength to aid His people, but sometimes His arm seems, for a time, to be asleep. Hence, the Church pleads repeatedly, "Awake, awake, O arm of the Lord, put on strength." In our times, we must reflect on past eras when God has revealed Himself as the Lord of Hosts and entreat Him to display the glory of this magnificent aspect of His nature, just as He has done in bygone generations.
4. Finally, God has numerous hidden providential purposes that eventually become clear to us, but for a time, they remain concealed. Consequently, the adversary is allowed to triumph. Psalm 46 addresses the fury of the adversary and this particular title of the Lord, and its title signifies secrets, alluding to the hidden counsels of God in times of war.

In conclusion, you have been presented with the doctrinal aspect of one facet of this glorious title of the Lord. The practical application is particularly relevant to us in these times.

Firstly, it is fitting for those in armies to be godly, as their supreme Commander is the Lord of Hosts. This Lord of Hosts is also known as the Holy One of Israel, and even in this verse, holiness is associated with His martial greatness. In Exodus 15, He is extolled as a man of war who triumphs over the enemy, and in verse 11, He is described as glorious in holiness. In Isaiah 6:3, when the Cherubims and



Seraphims magnify His glory, they cry out, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Hosts." It is noteworthy that God's holiness is linked with His title as the Lord of Hosts. Therefore, holiness and valor are not only compatible but mutually beneficial. The abominable maxim of Machiavelli that religion makes men cowardly is false; some of the bravest soldiers in history have been devoutly religious. Soldiers often strive to emulate their leader in various ways, even their habits. For example, Alexander the Great's soldiers considered it a mark of grace to tilt their heads to the side because Alexander did so. Therefore, to resemble the Lord of Hosts in His excellence and glory surely bestows honour upon His soldiers. Plutarch tells of a Theban Band of soldiers, called the Holy Band, who were highly esteemed and prosperous.

The Lord of Hosts, who is holy, takes delight in being among the godly and blessing them on their path. Deuteronomy 23:9 instructs, "When the host goes forth against the enemy, then keep yourself from every wicked thing." They must even avoid outward bodily uncleanness, carrying a paddle to cover it (verse 14). The reason for this is given as "For the Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp; therefore your camp must be holy so that He sees no unclean thing in you and turns away from you." While God regards the cause more than the instrument, He takes the greatest pleasure in using instruments that are prepared to give Him praise for His work.

One day, the world will realise that the strength of nations and kingdoms lies in the godly's connection to the Lord of Hosts. As Zachariah 12:5 prophesies, "And the governors of Judah shall say in their hearts, 'Our strength is in the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in the Lord of Hosts their God.'" We hope this prophecy will come to fruition. It has begun to be more evident in our time than in the days of our forefathers. Even those once considered hypocrites and

troublemakers are now recognised as a source of strength. Who has borne the burden of the great work in this state but the religious faction? Has it not been acknowledged in your city, even by prominent figures in the army, that the significant achievements in the army have been accomplished by those known as "Roundheads"? We hope that our governors will become increasingly convinced that their strength lies with these individuals. Revelation 17:14 declares, "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." The Lamb's companions are not merely called faithful but are called and faithful. In our army, there was an individual named Faithful who turned against us, but those with the Lamb are called and faithful. It is a blessed state of affairs when a kingdom's army can be likened to a heavenly host, as Luke 2:13 described. The Lord of Hosts, the God of Heaven, will certainly achieve great things with such an army.

Secondly, if God is the Lord of Hosts and this is one of His glorious titles, then the work of a soldier is a noble calling. Just as the institution of marriage is greatly esteemed because Christ uses it to symbolise the profound mystery of the Gospel—the blessed union between Himself and His Church—so too is the occupation of a soldier highly honoured. God Himself proclaims His glory through this title, the Lord of Hosts or the Lord of Armies. Psalm 24:10 affirms, "The Lord of Hosts is the King of glory." Surely, some of this glory must shine upon soldiers who serve under Him. The Romans held soldiers in high regard, and their Latin language uses the same word, "Miles," to refer to a soldier and a knight. The phrase they used to describe serving under a particular leader was "Mereri sub hoc vel illo duce." Consequently, a "miles emeritus" referred to an old soldier who had earned a reprieve. In any lawful service, you serve under the Lord of Hosts, but God acknowledges it more when the service

advances His glory and benefits His saints. The Chronicles or records of the Church's wars are referred to as "The Book of the Wars of the Lord," as found in Numbers 21:14. The Lord's name is closely associated with these wars. Young individuals who are willing to offer and risk their lives in this service honour themselves early on, and God and His people honour them as well. Mothers who may be hesitant to send their children, the fruit of their wombs, to this service should not be reluctant but should instead thank God for the opportunity their children have to stand up for God and His people. If, as previously mentioned, when God called for the fly and the bee, they came, then how much more should you and your children come when God calls, even loudly, for you to come and assist Him against the mighty?

When you are in the service, given its honourable nature, be cautious not to bring disgrace upon it as others have done. Of them, it can be said as it was of the children of Ephraim in Psalm 78:9, "The children of Ephraim being armed turned back in the day of battle; they kept not the covenant of God." The covenant of a soldier is akin to the Covenant of God. Hence, the oath a soldier took upon joining his captain was referred to by the Romans as "Sacramentum." Ephraim bore a brand of dishonour, as seen in Judges 12:4, "Ye fugitives of Ephraim." Do not let such a brand be associated with any of you, you fugitives from a certain county or town. Your General, the Lord of Hosts, deserves your utmost dedication. Plutarch recounts a story of Scipio Africanus, who showed a friend of his three hundred of his soldiers practicing their arms near the sea by a high tower. He said, "There is not one of all these, but if I were to command him to climb that steep tower and cast himself down into the sea from the top, he would readily do it." Will you not show even greater respect for your General, the Lord of Hosts, than any pagan would for their

commander? Be willing to risk your lives for Him; this is your honour, and He esteems it as such.

If, in this cause, you were to turn your backs on your enemies, how could you ever face your friends again? Psalm 69:6 advises, "Let not them that wait for thee, O Lord of Hosts, be ashamed for my sake." Take this verse with you into the army and pray to God, saying, "O Lord, grant that I may conduct myself in this great undertaking in such a manner that none of those who wait on the Lord, who have prayed for, and now await the salvation of God, may be ashamed for my sake."

I have read of one Abaga, a Tartarian, who employed an unusual method to turn cowards into brave soldiers. He made those who fled from battle thereafter wear women's clothing. I am not suggesting that such a brand of dishonour should be applied, but it is fitting that some mark or another should be associated with those who disgracefully abandon such a honourable task and noble cause as this.

Thirdly, if God is indeed the Lord of Hosts, then no war should be waged except for God and in accordance with His will; it must be commissioned by this great General. Going into battle without Him is perilous, but fighting against Him is futile. Psalm 20:5 states, "In the Name of the Lord will we set up our banners."

If anyone were to argue, "We fear that we are not proceeding with the commission of the Lord of Hosts because we are fighting against the King. Does God commission subjects to fight against the King?"

In response, the mere sound of these words can be highly influential, but when they are examined and applied to this matter, the truth is that they hold no weight for any rational person.

Firstly, it is not against the King; it is purely defensive, meant to protect our lawful liberties and estates, which we inherit just as truly as the King inherits anything he possesses. It is aimed at defending our Religion, which is our primary heritage. Natural law and Scripture instruct us to defend ourselves against violence and injustice.

God has not placed man and whole Kingdoms in a worse state than brute creatures, and yet they instinctively defend themselves against harm from man. While they were created for man, Kingdoms were not made for Kings; rather, Kings were made for Kingdoms.

The Scriptures also support this. For instance, when Saul sought to harm him, David gathered 600 soldiers to defend himself. When the children of Benjamin and Judah came to him, the spirit came upon Amasai, who declared, "Peace be to thee, and peace be unto thy helpers, for thy God helps thee." What David did was supported by God.

Secondly, it is not against the King but for the King; it is intended to preserve the true Regal power within the King and his descendants. It aims to rescue him from the clutches of evildoers who are his greatest enemies. Scripture dictates that the wicked should be removed from the King's throne. Who should remove them? If the King were willing to do it himself, he would not allow them to reach his throne. However, when he permits them to come and remain there, they must still be removed. If a representative kingdom lacks the authority to remove them, then who does?

3. What has been done is not done against the King's power; his power is what the laws of the land invest in him. Scripture instructs us to be subject to the higher powers (Romans 13:1), but it does not tell us to be subject to the wills of those in the

highest positions. If we are subject either actively or passively to the laws of the country in which we live, we fulfil the very letter of the Scripture that commands us to be subject to the highest powers. Therefore, what has been done is not against the King. Although it may be against the personal command of the King, it is not against the legal power of the King. When we refer to a King, we mean such a man invested with regal power by the laws and constitutions of the country he reigns over. Now, if nothing is done against this power vested in him by the laws and constitutions of our country, then nothing can be said to be done against the King. People are greatly mistaken when they fail to distinguish between a man in authority and the authority of that man. A man in authority may command what authority itself does not command.

But can we go against the command of the King?

It is not against his authoritative command. Many, if not most, men make a mistake in thinking that the authoritative commands of the King primarily consist of his personal verbal commands. However, the truth is that his authority lies in his commands through his officers, seals, and courts of justice. We may appeal from his personal verbal command to his command in his courts of justice. Whatever is his command in one court of justice may be appealed from to a superior court and, ultimately, to the highest court, where we must abide.

But the King says that what has been done is against the law.

If, when the lowest court of justice determines something to be law, it is not the King's personal disagreement or declaration that it is not law that nullifies it, but rather the judgment of some higher court. Thus, if the highest court in the land, which is the Parliament, deems

something to be law, then the King's personal disagreement and declaration that it is not law cannot invalidate it.

But even though Parliament tells us that what they do is law, they do not show us where that law is written. Where can we find it?

We must understand that our Commonwealth is governed not only by statute law but also by common law. This common law is nothing other than right reason, as judged by judges appointed for this purpose by the law. It varies according to specific cases that arise. So, while some precedents and general principles of this law exist in writing, new cases may necessitate determinations based on the nature of those cases. These determinations, made by judges appointed for this purpose, become law, even if they were not written down before. Certainly, we are now faced with circumstances and events unprecedented in previous times. For instance, a King leaving his Parliament as ours has done or a King taking up arms, as he does now, are events of great consequence and rarity. These things have never occurred since England became a Kingdom, so we cannot expect to find precedents for the determinations that may arise in these cases. Yet, we must have some determinations out of necessity; otherwise, we will descend into chaos.

In this case, the determination of the highest court of justice in the Kingdom must be regarded as law. This is the method for resolving cases that arise in common law.

First, the determination must not be in conflict with any statute law, and the determination of Parliament is not in conflict with any statute law.

Second, it must align with general maxims of that law. One major maxim is "*Salus populi suprema Lex*," which means "The safety of

the people is the supreme law." Parliament's determination is in accordance with this maxim.

Third, when an inferior judge makes such a determination against a party who feels wronged, that party can appeal to the King's Bench. If, at the King's Bench, a decision is reached that the party believes is unjust, they have a writ of appeal to the nearest Parliament. Therefore, it is clear from the structure of our government that Parliament is the supreme judge of what constitutes "right reason" in cases of difficulty and controversy. Since this determination is not against any existing statute law and is consistent with accepted maxims of common law, it must be considered law, even if we do not find that case or determination written in any book previously.

This is necessary for satisfying people's consciences, ensuring that things are conducted in accordance with the constitution of our Kingdom's government. Therefore, in this, we do not sin against authority. If people's consciences are not satisfied in these matters, what should they do? Therefore, because what is urged upon people's consciences is the authority of man that we must obey, we can never satisfy our consciences until we understand what this authority of man is. We can only know this through the law of the Kingdom. It is crucial for people to understand the type of government they live under so that they can distinguish when they offend against authority and when they do not. This understanding will prevent them from being deceived, falling into traps, or engaging in dangerous actions merely under the name of authority.

However, it might be argued further, "Even if we grant that Parliament is the judge, how can it judge without the King? After all, Parliament consists of three Estates: the House of Commons, the House of Lords, and the King. How can we say that something is the



determination of Parliament when it is not the determination of the King?"

Indeed, for the creation of any statute or the passing of any bill, all three Estates of the Kingdom must come together. However, for determining what is law, both Houses can do so in the absence of or without the King's knowledge, as is commonly done. In cases brought before them for the punishment of wrongdoers, they do not seek the King's assent to join in their determinations but proceed as a court of justice themselves.

But what if authority is abused? Can we resist then? Is passive obedience required when active obedience cannot be given?

There is a significant distinction between commands that come from abused authority and commands that come from the wills of men in authority but are not derived from the authority of those men. Abused authority occurs when those who have the power to make laws create unjust laws. In this case, there is no recourse but passive obedience or leaving until a way can be found to rectify the abused authority. However, when men in authority command something based solely on their own will, which is not law, it is not the authority that commands it. In such a case, there is no resistance to authority at all, even if the commanded action is denied. In such cases, if we neither provide active nor passive obedience, we cannot be said to resist authority. Nevertheless, some respect should still be shown to their persons, both in words and actions, out of regard for their positions.

What about the Kings of Judah? Many of them acted contrary to what was right, yet we do not read that they were resisted, but rather obeyed.

1. They were resisted defensively, as seen in the case of David gathering 600 men to defend himself against Saul.
2. When Saul attempted to kill Jonathan, the people resisted him and would not allow it.
3. In 2 Kings 6:32, when the King of Israel sent a messenger to kill the Prophet, the Prophet, who was among the Elders of the people, called the King the son of a murderer and ordered them to shut the door on the messenger and hold him fast at the door. The previous translation had it as "Handle him roughly," even though he was sent by the King. The King himself was following, yet his messenger, acting on his command, had to be treated roughly. The Hebrew word is "תַּעֲנֶהוּ" (ta'anehu), which means "you shall oppress him." Arias Montanus translated it as "opprimet is," meaning "you shall use great rigor against him." It is a mistaken notion for people to think that the command of the King alone is enough to shield an officer from illegal and unjust acts. Not everyone is bound to obey just because a command comes from the King. If anyone does something unlawful, even if commanded by the King, they must be held accountable for it as if it were their own action. Therefore, Acts of Authority that emanate from the King are carried out by officers so that the subject may have someone to hold accountable in case of injury, as it is not appropriate to approach the King personally for every harm suffered by a subject.

These three examples are undoubtedly justifiable. And if we were to rely solely on examples, we would find that ten Tribes separated from Rehoboam because he followed the counsel of his young advisers, making their burdens heavy, even heavier than the burdens

imposed by his father. Indeed, God says that what happened was because of Him.

However, it is not a certain rule that all Kings should have precisely the same powers as the Kings of Judah. If, in some matters, they may have more power, it does not follow that because the Kings of Judah had a particular power, all Kings must have the same. If their examples are to be the rule for all Kings' powers, then their examples should limit the powers of Kings as much as they enlarge them. However, Kings would likely resist being limited by their own examples, so it is important not to insist too strongly on expanding their powers based on their own examples.

I will provide an example where the Kings of England would be unwilling to be limited by their own example, namely, the confinement of succession to the male heir. In the case of the Kings of Judah, only males inherited the throne, whereas in England, both males and females inherit. If the question arises as to why, in some countries, only males inherit, such as in France, while in others, females also inherit, like in England, or why some countries have elective monarchies, like Denmark, and others have hereditary monarchies, like ours, the answer would be that it is due to the diversity of the laws of kingdoms. Therefore, it does not follow that because some Kings in Scripture had certain practices, all Kings must adhere to them. Instead, the diversity of the power of Kings is determined by the diversity of the laws of different kingdoms. In the initial structure of a government, every country has the power to allocate different parts of government to the King, the Nobles, and the Commons as they see fit, depending on the specific needs of their country. Thus, we should not judge the power of all Kings based on the practices of a few in Scripture, but rather consider the powers of each King in the country where they reign. Civil government is a

matter left to the wisdom and justice of each country in establishing its constitution. Countries may grant different powers to various magistrates in accordance with what is best for the well-being of their nation. While the establishment of civil government is a divine ordinance, the specific form it takes can vary depending on the unique circumstances of each country. Therefore, we cannot argue that all forms of civil government are of divine institution, as no one would assert that they should be identical in every complete commonwealth. In contrast, because ecclesiastical government is spiritual and possesses spiritual efficacy, it is considered of divine institution and must be consistent across all places where complete churches exist.

But what should we say about the example of the Christians in the early days of the Church who endured much suffering under tyrants and did not resist?

The civil governments under which they lived granted those emperors the power to do as they pleased. They had no legal recourse as the laws of those countries were against them. However, our situation is different. The laws of our country are in our favour, and we seek only to maintain the liberties granted to us by law. We have legal means to protect our rights, which they did not have.

But above all objections, this one is most concerning to us: Does not the Scripture strictly charge us not to touch God's Anointed?

Firstly, this has nothing to do with the current situation of raising arms, as it is for the defense of ourselves, not an offense against God's Anointed.

However, to provide full satisfaction, I will address this objection in three ways: Firstly, we will examine the Scripture from which this

objection arises to see if it indeed carries the commonly assumed meaning. Secondly, I will show that anointing is not exclusive to Kings but applies to others as well. Thirdly, I will highlight the distinction between the anointing of Kings in the time of the Law and their anointing today.

Firstly, regarding the Scripture in question, it is found in 1 Chronicles 16:22 and Psalm 105:15, where the wording is the same. 1. Both passages refer to times before there were any Kings of Israel. 2. The anointing mentioned here evidently pertains to the people of God, the Church, the Saints. God gives a charge here that no one, not even Kings, should harm them. It is not implying that people should not touch anointed Kings, but rather that Kings should not harm those whom God has anointed. The Church of God, separated from the world and consecrated to God, is referred to as God's anointed. To make this clear, consider the context from verse 12 to verse 15: "When they were but few in number, few indeed, and strangers in it, they wandered from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another. He allowed no one to oppress them; for their sake he rebuked kings: 'Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm.'" To whom did God say this? He said it to Kings. Whom should they not touch? Not those who were few in number and wandered from one country to another. God's anointed ones, for whose sake Kings were rebuked, were not to be touched. Though the Kings and people of the world regarded them as ordinary, God considered them His anointed ones and would not allow them to be harmed. If Kings were to meddle with them to harm them, God would rebuke the Kings on their behalf. You can see how God rebuked King Nebuchadnezzar for their sake in Jeremiah 50:17. Even when their inheritance was merely touched, God declared in Jeremiah 12:17, "But if any nation does not listen, I will completely uproot and destroy it." In Isaiah 10:27, all of God's care for His people is attributed to their

anointment: "In that day their burden will be lifted from your shoulders, their yoke from your neck; the yoke will be broken because you have grown so fat." I believe that anyone who examines this Scripture, "Touch not my anointed," will see that it has been grossly misinterpreted and made to express the ideas of men rather than the intent of the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, for further clarification, it is not unique to Kings to be anointed. While it is true that Kings were anointed during the time of the Law, Priests were also anointed, Prophets were anointed, and other Magistrates and Captains of God's people were referred to as anointed ones.

Firstly, for Priests, in Numbers 3:3, it states, "These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the priests who were anointed." You are also aware that the Prophet Elijah anointed Elisha. In Zechariah 4:14, when speaking of Zerubbabel and Joshua, the text says, "These are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth." If we were to interpret the words to mean that God's anointed ones must not be touched, regardless of their actions, then Priests and Prophets, regardless of their actions, must not be touched, as they are just as much God's anointed as Kings. Even Captains and lower Magistrates must not be touched, as they are also God's anointed ones.

The third point concerns the difference between the anointing of Kings in the past, such as David and Solomon, and the anointing of Kings today. Back then, God personally chose them by revealing from Heaven that they should be Kings. It was God's direct selection, followed by the people's submission. But now, it is the people who first agree that a particular individual or family should be King, and then God confirms this choice or agreement. There is a significant

distinction between these two processes: firstly, God's choice followed by the people's affirmation, and secondly, the people's choice followed by God's confirmation. In the past, the Kingship was not established through a compact or covenant, but with us, and in many other cases, it was and is.

But what if a Kingdom is acquired through conquest, and the right to rule comes in that manner?

Those who argue for Kings using this justification do not fully understand the implications of their argument. If the only right to rule is based on conquest – whoever is the strongest at any given time has the right – then anyone stronger can claim the right. Such an argument lacks sound theological and political reasoning. What binds my conscience to submit to a ruler is the agreement, compact, or covenant made, not the mere fact of being the strongest.

This argument might apply to elective Kings, but what about hereditary Kings?

Hereditary Kings inherit no more authority than their fathers had, and their fathers had no more than their predecessors. Ultimately, you must trace the origins of this kingly power back to the first person who received it, and by whom was that person invested with this authority? It was by the people. What led people to acknowledge one particular individual or family over another? It was the agreement that existed between the people and that individual or family.

Now, let's address one more objection from Scripture: Some may argue that David's heart troubled him for merely cutting off a corner of Saul's robe because Saul was God's Anointed.

The straightforward consequence of this is that no private individual, especially in their own cause, may forcefully seize a King in an offensive manner, especially a King who was directly chosen by God. As for any further consequence relevant to our current discussion, let those who can find it in this passage present their argument.

But is this not a Popish doctrine that allows subjects to rise against their King in matters of religion?

Popish individuals and factions support various perspectives on this matter, depending on their immediate objectives. In their actions, they have both advocated for and acted against it, as it serves their interests. In recent times, they have sought to instill the belief in absolute royal power, asserting that everything belongs to the King, that his will is law, and that his commands must be obeyed without question, whether through action or submission. Prelates and supporters of the church hierarchy have propagated this doctrine extensively. To question it was dangerous, and failure to zealously support it could brand someone as an anti-monarchical Puritan.

The reason behind the Popish party's push for absolute and arbitrary royal authority is that, being a minority, they hope to gain the support of at least some monarchs. With a King who rules absolutely, they can then manipulate this power to eradicate the truth and promote Catholicism. By gaining even one King to their cause, they secure a substantial portion of the Kingdom. If this King converts to Catholicism, his absolute power effectively becomes the Pope's absolute power and the hierarchy's absolute power. If the King does not act as they desire, they can excommunicate him, effectively releasing their subjects from their allegiance. Following excommunication, according to one of Pope Urban's canons, individuals who zealously support the Catholic Church, their mother,



and happen to kill an excommunicated person, are not considered murderers. While these extreme teachings are practised, they reflect the Popish party's willingness to employ any means to achieve their ends.

Popish attempts to gain influence through political marriages or alliances may result in a potential advantage by leveraging the King's absolute power. Prelates have used this principle of absolute royal authority to reinforce their tyrannical power by instilling it in the ears and minds of the people. However, when the Papists see that there is no hope of converting or gaining an advantage through the King, they may adopt different doctrines, claiming that, in the interest of promoting the Catholic cause, subjects may rise against their King and kill him. We firmly reject this doctrine. We maintain that if authority is granted to Kings or other magistrates by law, even if it goes against our religion, our only recourse is to endure or flee until we can secure relief through legal means. However, if the King, motivated by his own will or influenced by others, seeks to deprive us of our religion and liberties through illegal means when we have legal protections, we may defend ourselves. In doing so, we are not resisting the authority of the King but rather the will of an individual.

Furthermore, to provide further clarity on this matter, which carries grave consequences if misunderstood: consider that if taking up arms to defend religion and liberties granted by law is considered treason or rebellion, then all the Reformed Churches are traitorous and rebellious. Haven't Reformed Churches in Holland, France, and Germany taken up arms for this very reason? Did Queen Elizabeth not come to the aid of the Dutch when they took up arms to defend their religion and liberty against their King, providing them with money, men, and ammunition? King James, in his response to Perron, defended the Protestants in France for their actions, stating

that their civil war did not constitute taking up arms against their King; it was merely a defensive stance. Did not our King Charles send aid to the Protestants in France when they defended their religion and liberty against their King on the Isle of Ree? Moreover, isn't the Prince of Aurania, commonly referred to as the Prince of Orange, the commander of the army of the States defending themselves against the King of Spain in his former territories? Our King has acknowledged the loyalty of our Scottish brethren, even though they took actions similar to ours, and even more substantial ones. At first, they were called traitors and rebels, as seen in the prayers that the Prelates distributed and commanded to be read in Churches. However, upon closer examination, they were recognized and referred to as loving and loyal subjects. We hope that, in time, we will receive similar recognition.

But if we take this stand for our liberties, won't it provoke the King and make him lose respect and trust in us?

God forbid that we should take actions deserving the loss of His Majesty's favour and his trust in us. The prosperity of a kingdom is founded on princes ruling as fathers and subjects obeying out of love rather than mere obligation. King James, a renowned scholar with deep understanding, shared this belief. He believed that no king in France had better subjects than the Protestants who stood up to defend their liberties by force of arms. In response to Cardinal Perron, King James said, "I dare promise to myself that my most honoured brother, the King of France, will bear in mind the great and faithful service of those who, in matters of religion, dissent from His Majesty, as the only men that have preserved and saved the crown for the King, his father, of most glorious memory." He was convinced that his brother of France would consider the loyalty of his Protestant subjects, even though they differed in religion, to be more

reliable than that of his Roman Catholic subjects. These Roman Catholics, by secret actions, undermined his life, served a foreign sovereign, and, based on the maxims and rules published in favour of the Pope before a significant assembly of the Estates of Paris, were obliged to view him as an unlawful king. They were taught that Paul's commandment regarding submission to higher powers, which opposed their professed religion, was merely a provisional precept designed for times when they could cast off their yoke. Therefore, it is impossible for His Majesty's heart not to confide in us, even though we seek to maintain our lawful liberties. We are more trustworthy than any Papists. Moreover, consider King James's views on the Protestants in France. Towards the end of his response to Cardinal Perron, he noted, "During the minority of King Francis the second, the Protestants of France were only a refuge and succour to the Princes of blood when they were kept from the King's presence and driven from the Court." Given their significant and honourable service, it seems reasonable for the French King to hold the Protestants in grateful remembrance. Should Protestants be kept in the gracious remembrance of a Popish King, while Protestants defending their lawful liberties in a just manner are cast out of the heart of a Protestant King? This is unacceptable. Let's also recognise the fidelity of Protestants to their sovereign. Even amidst revolts and rebellions instigated by the Pope and a majority of the clergy, they stood by their King and upheld the Crown when it was on the verge of falling.

In contemporary times, the King of France has over thirty thousand Protestant soldiers in his employ for the defence of himself and his dominions, and he provides them with an annual stipend. Many of his chief commanders are Protestants, signifying his trust in their loyalty. Our King could similarly rely on the Parliament and those who support them. There is no doubt that even those close to His

Majesty believe in their hearts that no one would be more faithful and willing to risk their estates and lives to defend him and his legal authority than the Parliament and their adherents. Otherwise, they would never dare to push His Majesty towards actions that would so greatly alienate them. It is worth noting that when Parliaments were predominantly Papist and the Kingdom leaned Papist, no one would have dared to provoke such a Parliament and those who would have supported them. Their actions would have faced different consequences. Why were laws against Papists enforced so leniently, while not only the law but also the will against Puritans was pursued so zealously? The answer lies in the belief that Papists might cause harm, while Puritans were seen as unlikely to cause any trouble; they would endure and submit willingly. Hence, they could be treated harshly, while others needed to be dealt with more fairly. I am confident that if we could look into the hearts of many, we would find these thoughts within them. Indeed, Puritans have been taught to obey authority conscientiously, and although Princes may become angry with Puritanical preachers, they have done as much as anyone in the Kingdoms to ensure that people obey authority out of conscience. In contrast, others obey only out of necessity, serving Princes as they can serve themselves. They never taught obedience out of conscience to anyone's mere will. The extent to which obedience is due has been discussed earlier. Therefore, despite the bitter accusations against honest individuals under the names of Brownists and Sectaries, while Papists are seldom mentioned, we cannot help but believe that, deep down, many acknowledge that they are not the dangerous ones when it comes to resisting authority. It is impossible to think that a Brownist, who merely differs from us in matters of church discipline while sharing our doctrine and civil government, should not be allowed to reside in a Kingdom when a Papist can. Surely the consciences of the humble are as valuable to them as those of the mighty.

But it is said that a great part of the Army of the Parliament are Anabaptists.

There is no great fear they can do much harm, if there are 40 Papists to oppose one Anabaptist. However, it is certainly an unfortunate mistake to claim that there is even one Anabaptist in the Army. This is a misconception, much like many others. Anabaptists firmly hold the tenet that it is unlawful to take up arms on any occasion. Therefore, they are never found bearing swords or carrying cannons on their ships for self-defense.

But doesn't the King profess that he will maintain the Protestant Religion and govern only by the laws? Why should we trouble ourselves any further?

The Parliament has already provided an answer to the King's professions and protestations. It is more appropriate for the Parliament to respond than any individual. Nevertheless, I would like to say this: I pose a question to every individual's conscience to judge whether it is more likely for the King, with the Cavaliers currently surrounding him and the aid of incoming Papists who have been summoned, to maintain the Protestant Religion and government by the laws than it is for the King, along with his Parliament, to uphold the Protestant Religion and govern by the laws. Surely, we must abandon reason before we can entertain such a thought.

Furthermore, some may argue that we do not consider what is being done as the work of both Houses of Parliament because many members have left, leaving only a few remaining.

1. It is true that some have departed, but if you compare those who have left with those who remain, you can easily discern the

direction things would take if those who stay, along with the Kingdom, did not have the courage to stand up for what God, nature, and the laws of the Kingdom have ordained as their own.

2. The number of members who have left is not as large as claimed. If the majority disapproved of the actions of others, they could return and outvote them, securing what they desire.
3. When I hear of certain individuals leaving Parliament who should have stayed, it reminds me of what I have read about Aeneas Sylvius before he became Pope. He believed that a general council was superior to the Pope, and people were puzzled as to why so many left the council to align with the Pope. Aeneas Sylvius offered this explanation: the Pope had bishoprics, deaneries, prebendaries, and lucrative benefices to bestow, while the council had no such offerings. People could see where preferment was headed and where it was likely to go. In contrast, they have not witnessed offices and significant positions of preferment being distributed by Parliament.
4. Suppose more members have left than is currently the case. The Kingdom still has a Parliament in existence until both Houses agree to dissolve it. In such a case, either those who have left or those who remain constitute the Parliament. Those who have departed cannot claim it as their own, nor can anyone do so on their behalf. They remember how the Prelates were too audacious in nullifying the actions of Parliament because they were absent. Thus, those who remain are the Houses of Parliament, and if their decisions are not considered valid due to the absence of some members, then we may call into question all parliamentary decisions made in the past. Who knows how

many were present or absent when previous decisions were reached?

5. If a country were to select a representative body to elect a king over them, and the choice was made by that representative body, and later the country refused to obey, citing the scruple that many were not present when the choice was made, and some disagreed with it, would the King still consider it rebellion for those who, due to such concerns, refused to obey?

But even in the Houses, are not things carried on in a Faction? Are they not led by a few?

1. If there is this freedom to object against the highest Court of Judicature in a Kingdom, when can we have confidence in any determinations within any Civil Polity?
2. What is this but to accuse the entire Kingdom of foolishness for choosing some unfaithful individuals, and the Houses of Parliament of simplicity for being led by those who are unfaithful?
3. If something in favour of the King's prerogative were proposed by some and supported by others, would anyone dare to label such proceedings as factious? Then why, when something is proposed by some for the benefit of the Kingdom and supported by others, should it be subjected to such criticism?
4. There was more danger of faction in the Prelates' Convocations, where most of the members were Bishops and their supporters in servile submission to them. There is no such danger in either House of Parliament, where the members are not so distant

from each other, and there is no such dependence of one on the other.

5. Faction cannot be the action of a body that does not depend on another. It occurs among individual members of a body who separate themselves from it without justification, and tumultuously attempt to persuade others to oppose the body. In the past, not submitting to the illegal Canons, Decrees, Injunctions, and Orders of every Prelate, even in the paltry Commissary's court, was considered schism and faction. But who are the schismatics and factious individuals now? Even though there are Ordinances from the highest Court of Judicature in a Kingdom, these individuals seem to have forgotten the arguments they used to employ in their courts to persuade rural people to obey authority. They would ask, "What makes you wiser than the Governors of the Church?" Now they dare to act as if they were wiser than their own Governors.

If anyone were to argue that those who do not submit to the ordinances of Parliament cannot be considered schismatics because that would involve a separation from the Church, it should be noted that the House of Parliament may justifiably be designated as the Church, just as the Prelates, their Chancellors, Commissaries, and Officials did. Would they not acknowledge that the House of Parliament has as much authority to govern the Church as they themselves did? Surely, they would not openly admit it. Moreover, the Houses of Parliament are as legitimately part of God's Clergy, even without a single Prelate among them, as the Bishops or Ministers are. It is a proud claim on their part to assert that they are God's Clergy, signifying God's lot or Heritage, thereby distinguishing themselves from the people, whereas Scripture designates the people as God's Clergy, distinct from the Ministers. Never does Scripture



refer to Ministers, in distinction from the people, in such a way. Thus, in matters of Church government, as well as in Civil matters, people have been deceived.

But are not many, if not most of the House of Commons, men of modest social standing in comparison, and should the important affairs of the King and the Kingdom be managed by them?

1. If you wish to know why so many among the gentry in most counties throughout the Kingdom are so hostile, it is largely due to this objection. They envy the Parliament because they view themselves as equally good, if not superior, to many of its members, and wonder why they were not chosen instead. This pride and envy cause them to resent everything done by the House of Commons. They forget that the freedoms of themselves, their descendants, and the entire common populace of the Kingdom are upheld through the chosen members of that House, even if it has not currently included them. Moreover, many of them would rather enslave themselves and their descendants to those above them than not have their way with those beneath them. They wish to establish a system in England similar to that of France, where the gentry are subject to the nobility and courtiers, and all the rural folk, the peasants, serve as slaves. They live in wretched subjugation to the gentry there, who are generally Cavaliers.

There is no country in the world where countryfolk, known as the yeomanry, and even their farmers and laborers, enjoy the same degree of liberty and lifestyle as in England. In all other places, they live in miserable conditions compared to the English. They have no say in their government, no role in crafting or consenting to laws, but rather must accept them from others according to their whims.

However, in England, every freeholder has a say in the creation and approval of every law they are subject to and possesses their own property with as legitimate a title as any nobleman. Many of the proud gentry resent this freedom, which is why they hold such animosity towards those chosen by the common populace and their ordinances. But the commoners are beginning to realize this more than they have before and are wise enough to safeguard their rights more firmly than they used to.

2. Regardless of a person's social status before assuming power, it should not diminish their authority once they hold it. If a ruler is chosen from a modest background, as many have been, must they not be obeyed as a ruler, as was the case with Saul, Agathocles, and others? Would it not be considered a serious offense, even treason, for anyone to refuse obedience to a ruler on the grounds that when they and their family were chosen, perhaps neither they nor their family were the most qualified and capable candidates available? No, we are to accept the choice that has been made. Is not the same principle applicable here, albeit to a lesser degree? One is the supreme authority figure, the other is a member of the supreme Court of Judicature, responsible for overseeing all authority.
3. Furthermore, the honour of the members of the House of Commons relies heavily on the fact that, while individually some of them may not be of particularly high social standing, they represent entire shires, counties, and cities, which is not the case for the noblemen themselves. Each nobleman is there for himself and for the greater good of the Kingdom, as their wealth and status, inherited or otherwise, give them a deeper stake in the Kingdom's wellbeing than ordinary citizens.

4. Such is the structure of the Government of this Kingdom that the commoners, in choosing so many representatives, possess the power to temper both the nobility and monarchy within the bounds of statute law enacted by the three Estates and common law adjudicated by the courts empowered to do so by that law. Given that this power is granted by the Kingdom's governmental structure and aligns with the law of nature itself, both His Majesty and the nobility believe that, to the extent permitted by the laws of God and nature, the commoners will fervently uphold this power with all their might.

But what do the Lords and Commons want? Hasn't the King graciously agreed to almost everything they could desire? Why do they still resist as they do?

True, we acknowledge, with all due gratitude to God and His Majesty, for what he has already done. What benefits the Kingdom also benefit His Majesty. If it is a noble act for the King to grant his royal consent to these beneficial matters, then surely the Commons and Lords deserve praise for first preparing such good initiatives, voting for them, and presenting them to His Majesty for his royal approval.

But then you ask, "What more do they want? What are they still standing for?"

They want and are standing for something now, without which all that has been done amounts to nothing. All their efforts will be in vain, and they themselves will be rendered insignificant. So, it is not surprising that they, along with the Kingdom, are steadfast in pursuing it.

But what is that something?

It is that the responsibility for defending the King, the Kingdom, and the Parliament from the dangers posed by Papists and all Malignants should be entrusted to those they can trust. What is the point of enacting good laws? What is the purpose of having a Parliament if Papists, Prelates, Popish and Prelatical individuals, Atheists, and Delinquents—those who were so greatly dissatisfied—are left with the potential to gain power and dismantle everything? Our fears were well-founded, as we have seen come to pass. If we cannot have control over the military forces of the Kingdom, which is the only legally sanctioned means next to what we derive from natural law, to resist those who seek to undo everything, what good is it? Suppose a man is obligated to pay me a debt and also obliged to assist me in securing safe passage for both myself and my money to a certain location. If, on the agreed-upon day, he pays the debt down to the last penny but then I inform him of grave dangers along the way, where many individuals lie in wait to ambush me and steal my money, and I request his cooperation in providing the assistance needed to ensure my safe journey—for I must go. If he refuses and is only willing to provide assistance that I have good reason to suspect might be just as perilous as the threat posed by those who lie in wait for me, and perhaps I can even prove that some key individuals among those he proposes for my aid and safety are aligned with the very same group of individuals waiting to ambush me. Now, I ask you, what good does it do me that the debt has been paid in full if I must go and have no other means to protect myself except that which he denies me? Is it not the same as if he had refused to pay the debt? Do you think kind words would suffice for you in such a situation if he were to say, "I assure you, you will be safe," when I know with certainty that these individuals are in league with those lying in ambush for me? I have other individuals present who I know will be trustworthy and pose no threat to the opposing party, and I ask him to allow them to accompany me for my safety, but he refuses.

But, however, wouldn't it be better to consider peace, if there might be ways of reaching an agreement?

Peace is indeed a most beautiful and desirable thing. We earnestly desire to live in peace, serving God and the King in peaceful ways. God Himself knows that nothing would be more welcome to us than to serve God and the King in paths of peace. May God forbid that we do not demonstrate ourselves as children of peace in all our actions. We could deliver lengthy speeches praising peace, just like others. Even in the midst of all the noise of our weapons and the sounds of warlike instruments, peace remains in our thoughts and hearts. Just as faithful ministers, while proclaiming the terrifying warnings of God against impenitent sinners, seek the true peace of their souls, so does the faithful soldier, devoted to God and his country, although he holds the sword in one hand and fire in the other, but with this motto: *Sic quaerimus pacem*.

In response to this objection, I will first answer as a theologian, drawing from Scripture, and then we can consider a wise political perspective.

First, the Scriptures tell us in James 3:17, "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." Such a statement, were it not uttered by an Apostle, might be scoffed at by many profane and atheistic individuals among us. They might even dare to accuse James of being a Puritan for speaking in this manner. The Bible often links peace with truth, peace with holiness, peace with righteousness, and grace with peace. We must ensure that we seek peace in such a way that we also seek the God of peace and the Gospel of peace. A peace that would lead to conflict between the God of peace and us, or deprive us of the Gospel of peace, would be a dreadful peace. Let us not disrupt or disarrange the angelic doxology:

"Glory be to God on high, peace on earth, goodwill towards men." Let there be peace on earth in a way that brings glory to God on high and the goodwill (εὐδοκία) of our God towards us. Bernard says, "Placet ista distributio," meaning, "This distribution pleases me well"—that God should have glory, and we should have peace. Oh, that this angelic distribution of glory and peace might please us all! The truth is, peace is sweet, and those who are often thought to oppose it pray a hundred times more to the God of peace for peace than those who advocate it so fervently. Peace is to be obtained at any cost, but not at the expense of truth. If that's the price of peace, then it's too costly. We often say, "You can buy gold too dear." It would be a hard bargain if the glory of God, the freedom of His ordinances, which we now have the opportunity to enjoy, and the most religious faction in the Kingdom, were to be sacrificed for the sake of a supposed peace that, under such terms, surely wouldn't last long. This would make God our enemy, not only because His glory, truth, and saints are dear to Him, but also because the most religious faction has stood by the Parliament, risking their estates, lives, children, and servants for the safety of the King, Kingdom, and Parliament. The Parliament has never been more indebted to any faction in England than they are to this one now. Therefore, it would be a most terrible injustice if the Parliament were to abandon or sacrifice them to their adversaries, all for the sake of securing a false, uncertain, and dishonorable peace for themselves and others. It is unimaginable that such a thought could enter their minds. God would never allow such an injustice to go unpunished in this world without expressing His deep indignation against it.

In terms of true wisdom in civil governance, these four factors must be considered:

1. The potential advantages of treaties for the adversaries must be carefully assessed. We read in Daniel 8:25 that through peace, many can be destroyed. Under the guise of peace, the most bloody and cruel wars that England has ever witnessed may be incited. Many people are delighted when they hear the word "peace," without realizing the bloody and cruel designs that may be hidden beneath it and promoted by it. They may assume that those who do not immediately embrace the treaty, even when it's highly disadvantageous, are bloodthirsty and love war. In reality, they might be trying to prevent the cruel shedding of blood and the horrors of war as much as possible, knowing that it is likely to follow if the adversary is granted the advantage they seek, even if onlookers do not perceive the cunning behind it.
2. Great care must be taken in formulating propositions and conditions for peace. We find in 1 Samuel 11:2 that when the men of Jabesh Gilead sought to make a covenant with Nahash, he told them that he would make a covenant with them on the condition that he could gouge out all their right eyes and bring reproach upon all Israel.
3. It is essential to establish a peace that can be trusted, where you are not left at the mercy of your adversaries as to whether they will honour the conditions or not. You must avoid weakening your ability to uphold what your agreement binds you to, especially when dealing with Papists, whose principle is that no faith should be kept with heretics, and leagues may be broken for the Catholic cause. If your peace undermines your capacity to defend your rights, what assurance can you have in your peace even for a single month?

4. Given the current circumstances, great care must be taken to ensure that the hearts of the people who have demonstrated their commitment, risking their lives and depleting their resources, are not disheartened. If Parliaments ever need the support of the people again, they may not find them standing by their side. There may arise situations where the people's support is needed in the future, just as it is now. Otherwise, their privileges may quickly erode, their authority may be overwhelmed, and they may be reduced to nothing. We are aware of how swiftly authority can be disregarded when power is not accompanied by authority.

But do our adversaries grow stronger than us? If so, it is futile for us to resist.

It is impossible to conceive that they should, unless the Kingdom is so deluded as no Kingdom has ever been on the face of the earth. Here's why:

1. How can people of understanding, who have estates in the Kingdom and descendants to live here, imagine that the Kingdom would be better governed by the King with those Cavaliers around him than by the King with his Parliament?
2. If the Parliament is overpowered and undermined now because they have acted according to their consciences for the good of the Kingdom, won't all future Parliaments be subject to the same fate?
3. If these individuals prevail, isn't there a danger that things will be done as they please? If they gain power, who knows if they will presume to impose their own laws on us, contrary to the King's wishes? The King currently forbids plundering, and yet



don't they plunder as they please? If they gain full power, what won't they do then?

These considerations are so apparent that hardly anyone can be considered a thinking person without pondering them. How then is it possible for the Kingdom not to rise in indignation against these individuals who have risen up to cause such destruction and havoc in the Kingdom? Although they have not yet stirred in many places, hoping for some other solution, if they see no alternative, it is inconceivable that this spirit of indignation will not spread throughout the Kingdom. People will not allow themselves to be swayed so unworthily from their religion, their liberties, and their estates. They will not abandon those they have chosen and entrusted with their properties, freedoms, and lives—those who have been so faithful, expending their energy in tireless labour day and night, depleting their estates, and risking their lives for them. Therefore, it cannot be imagined that the adversaries could ever gather more strength than us.

2. Even if they were more numerous, given their vile and wicked nature, their notorious blasphemy and cursing, they need not be greatly feared. Plutarch tells of a certain Cyneas who discussed the Epicurean beliefs, which held that the gods did not care about or pay attention to human actions, and that the only happiness was to live in pleasure, just as the gods did. Fabritius, upon hearing this, exclaimed, "May the gods grant that Pyrrhus and the Samnites hold such beliefs as long as they have wars against us." He supposed that if they held such vile beliefs and thought so little of the gods, they could never prosper or achieve great deeds. We dare not say this about our adversaries, and we pray that if possible, they may see how they fight against God, and their hearts may be changed. However, we hold the belief

that, as long as they remain wicked and blaspheme God's name as they do, they are not to be greatly feared. The wrath of the Almighty will pursue them.

3. Lastly, even if they were to outnumber us, if our cause is Christ's (which is clear to us, for our consciences tell us that we do not desire, and we do not seek to wrong any living person, let alone our King), then we have Christ with us. As Antigonus once said to his soldiers when they claimed that their enemies outnumbered them, "Why, how many do you count me for?" So, in this case, I may say, "How many do you count Jesus Christ for?" If He is not with us, then let us surrender everything immediately.

Well, but for the moment, there is a terrible disturbance in the Kingdom, and people's estates are being consumed in the extreme cost of these Wars. What do we think will be the outcome of all this?

It is true that when a bone is dislocated, there is much pain, but if there is no effort made to set it right, the very act of setting it will cause even more pain. There is indeed much disturbance, but it is merely the outbreak of what has been brewing in the plots and secret machinations of our adversaries for a long time. Once, Lysonder said that if the lion's skin is not enough, we must help it with the fox's. Contrary to this, our adversaries attempted to use the fox's cunning and, failing, have now put on the lion's appearance. It is fortunate for us that these things are coming to light when there is still a chance to resist them. Our condition was just as perilous, although not as troublesome, before. Now, our disturbance is merely the noise of resistance, a deluge of evil that was threatening to overwhelm us. Surely, a wise person should not be averse to stopping the floods that

are rushing in, simply because the act of stopping them creates a commotion.

2. However, it is important to consider who has been responsible for this disturbance. Puritanical preachers are being accused. Similarly, Elijah was seen as the troublemaker of Israel. Amos was said to speak words that the land could not tolerate. Paul was called a pestilent fellow and an agitator. They accused the Apostles of turning the world upside down. In his time, Luther was referred to as the "Tuba Rebellionis," the very trumpet of rebellion. But if people do not close their eyes and ears, they will realize that the cause of our disturbance has been the pride and cruelty of the Prelates, who imposed illegal measures on our brethren in Scotland and on us. Is it not as clear as daylight that the disturbance began with their imposition of their own Service Book? Have they and their preachers not sought to instil principles into kings that everything belongs to them to dispose of as they please? That they are bound by no laws? This doctrine was condemned by the heathens. Trajan, the Emperor, when appointing a Pretor and giving him a sword, would tell him to use the sword against his enemies in just causes. If the Pretor himself acted unjustly, he was to use his power against him too.

As for ministers and conscientious people, they have also been accused as troublemakers. Similarly, in primitive times, if there were troubles in the regions where Christians lived, they were accused as the cause of all, and the cry was, "Christianos ad Leones," bring forth the Christians to the lions. Now, it's "the Roundheads, the cause of all." People who examine the situation and are not consumed by malice wonder how such an apprehension could arise. They suffer the wrongs but are blamed for the Kingdom's trouble. Due to their sufferings, they are more visible to people than others, and when

people are enraged, they attack those closest at hand. Indeed, they will not yield to illegal things beyond the authority others have over them. Who, with a spirit of a true man in them, would?

But these individuals are not friends of the King.

Certainly, those who obey to this extent cannot be considered enemies of the King without extreme malice. They pray more for the King than anyone else and do more for him and his cause, in the right way, than anyone else. Who has risked so much of their estates to bring Ireland under the King's rule as those who are called "Roundheads"? Is it not true that a few of these individuals in the City of London have contributed more of their wealth for the King's service in this matter, to secure his lawful inheritance and that of his posterity, than all those thousands who are currently with the King in his Army? In the past, who were the people most willing to part with their wealth to assist the Parliament and to recover the Palatinate but these individuals? Nevertheless, God sees now, and the world sees, that they are ill-rewarded for their efforts at this time.

No, no, God, and we hope in time, man also will discover our other troublemakers of the Kingdom rather than these. The Lord judge between us and our adversaries in this matter.

Regarding the great cost and expense the Kingdom is in:

1. We must understand that those who have done the least in this regard complain the most. You do not hear those on whom the weight and burden of the work has fallen making such complaints about the cost.
2. It is better to risk half than lose everything. In this case, the saying "Dimidium plus toto" is true: if we are too sparing now, it

is the only way to lose everything. It is better to have a piece for sure than, by trying to keep everything, end up losing it all. If we try to keep everything, we may quickly lose it all, as many have done. They have kept their estates only for the plunderers. Indeed, we would be better off with less, as our own with freedom, than having more with bondage at the will of others.

Times of extreme danger are not the time to complain about expenses. If a man's house is on fire, wouldn't it be absurd for him to complain about the cost of breaking the tiles to put out the fire? Everything is at stake, isn't the very life of the Kingdom in danger? It is time for us to have our hearts lifted above these things. Let us be careful that our covetousness does not lead to our downfall. If our enemies find treasure with us, how justly can they mock and ridicule us?

When Constantinople was taken in 1453, according to Turkish history, it was lost due to the citizens' covetousness. The citizens were wealthy with gold and silver when it was captured but refused to pay the soldiers who should have defended them. As a result, their enemies reveled in their riches. A similar story is told about Heidelberg, which was taken by their enemies not many years ago for the same reason.

God has been gracious to us with many mercies, and He has even more abundant and glorious mercies in store for us that will surely outweigh all our expenses many times over. We would be unworthy of our liberties and the Gospel if we valued them so lightly as if they were not far above all the costs we have incurred or are likely to incur.

We may think these expenses are significant, but there is not a single year in which our neighbours in the Low Countries do not bear much

greater costs than we have in this expensive year. All our extraordinary expenses are less than their ordinary ones.

However, even though it is undeniable that God approves of these wars, wouldn't it be wiser in prudence for me not to be directly involved in them? If I am seen to be on one side, I may be ruined if the other party prevails. But if I am not seen to be involved, or even if I do something for that party, the Parliament is unlikely to do me significant harm.

It is true that the leniency of the Parliament on one side and the cruelty of the other party on the other side have been a great disadvantage to the former and an advantage to the latter. How many delinquents who have been accused and brought up at great expense to the country have left in triumph? But anyone who falls under the power of the other party must either submit or face ruin, and even submission may not spare them. How much blood has been recently shed by them, even in cold blood? But how unreasonable it is to reason this way: "The Parliament is more just and gentle, the other side more cruel and malicious, therefore I will abandon the Parliament and align myself with the other party." God will judge these evil thoughts of yours, and you may be mistaken. In your attempt to save your estate, you may prove false to the Parliament, and your estate may not be as safe as you think. It is possible that when these plunderers come to you, and you tell them you are for the King and not a Round-head, they may reason with you, saying, "If you are truly for the King, you should be willing to use your estates to help him." They may reason you out of all you have, and you may be deceived by revealing that you are not a Round-head. Regardless of what you are, if they prevail, your goods will be treated as Round-heads. They may appear somewhat civil now and then, but if they gain power, they will label your goods as they please. Platina tells us

that when the citizens of Pavia in Italy were in discord due to the faction between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, the Ghibellines enlisted a supporter named Facinus Cajus to assist them, promising him the goods of the Guelphs for his service. However, once he entered the city and gained the upper hand, he spared neither side's goods. The Ghibellines complained that their goods were also ruined, but he replied that they themselves were Ghibellines, while their goods were Guelphs. You may perhaps support the King, but your goods will be considered Round-heads.

Job 27:8 asks, "What hope hath a hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?" Even if men gain what they desire through hypocritical means, what good is it when God takes their soul away? How miserable it will be for them when God curses them in the present, and when their souls are taken away in the end. What hope can they have then? It is just that God's curse should pursue those who act for their own advantage.

Ro. Hoved, folio 438, reports of the Brabanters called Rutters that they would serve any side for wages. Therefore, they were called by Howden "Nefando gens," and he said they were cursed in the Lateran Council.

In conclusion, there is nothing required of you in this service by both Houses of Parliament that you cannot undertake with a clear conscience, as commissioned by the great General, the Lord of Hosts. Therefore, do not be discouraged by words such as, "Will you fight against the King?" If you fight against the King, whom do you fight for? Surely it must be for his enemies. And who are they? You know, and the whole world may know, that you fight for none other than the Parliament and the Kingdom. Can the Parliament and the Kingdom be considered enemies of the King? How can they be under

his protection if they are his enemies? And if the King were to withdraw his protection from them, what do you think would happen? No, certainly, upon closer examination, you will see that there is no such situation. No, this business does not harm the King. The men who plunder and commit violence everywhere, making a spoil of this Kingdom and Ireland, all in the name of the King, are the ones who wrong the King. They present him to the people as if he were another Maxentius, who reduced the City of Rome to a state where the lives of citizens were safer in the forest of thieves than in their own homes. In his speeches to his soldiers, he frequently used the words, "Fruimini, dissipate, prodigite," which mean "Enjoy, riot, spend." These men do everything in their power to make people wonder whether the relationship between King and people can ever be broken. Can kingly power be such an indelible mark on any person that nothing can ever remove it? Does a compact and covenant not mutually bind? Are they not likely to harm the King more than anyone else? If such thoughts have arisen among the people, what could have caused them except the open violence and outrages committed by these men in the name of the King? If it were as they say, if people believed these men, it might lead to troubling thoughts, such as, "Could we be in a worse condition under anyone else?" Has God bound us so that once a supreme ruler is acknowledged, they must always be acknowledged, regardless of what they do against us, even to our destruction? Where in the Scripture does it say so? It would take a very clear Scripture to tie us to such a fate, to bear such intolerable burdens, to witness our ruin and the ruin of our wives and children before our eyes. We must not resist those who have high power. True, as long as they act within their authority or as long as they have it. But could they not possibly be relieved of it? Resisting priests is condemned in Scripture. Does that mean nothing can ever remove a priest from his priestly office and negate my acknowledgment of his priestly power? Did our



forefathers give away all power so that we do not even have the benefit of the Law of Nature to defend ourselves? Has God created such a difference between one person and another that one can plunder, destroy, and do as they please, while entire kingdoms lie subjugated to them without protest, without any action to defend themselves? Has God made the entire world subservient to the desires of twenty or thirty men? Nature has not created such distinctions between people; they are made of the same substance as we are. God has not revealed through His prophets that any family should be exalted above others or that any individual should hold absolute power. What currently differentiates one person from another is the result of some being set up by others, whether one family or another, or one person rather than another. But could it be possible that any Commonwealth would set itself up for its own destruction? When men maintain due order, or when they do not presume so audaciously to use the name of the King in committing such violence and outrages, these kinds of reasonings would not arise in the hearts of people. Therefore, woe to those who cause such dangerous offenses. May the Lord deliver us, and may the Lord deliver His Majesty from these men and from the fearful scandals they cast upon him. It is a dangerous temptation for princes to have such an apprehension instilled in them that, regardless of what they do, whatever kingdoms they plunder and violence they commit, they will still retain what they had and be acknowledged as they were. A land is in a dire state when these thoughts apply to its ruler and simmer in the hearts of its people. For our part, we will charge the perpetrators of violence and plunder among us and our brethren in Ireland as the culprits. Therefore, we believe that the best service we can render to the King is to rescue him from these malevolent men, so that his throne may be established in righteousness and his crown may flourish upon him and his descendants.

I have spoken these things out of a sense of my duty to God and the Kingdom, fully aware that if some do not explain these matters to satisfy the ignorant, the doubtful, and those with erroneous consciences, they will be guilty of betraying themselves, their brethren, their posterity, their religion, and their liberties.

Now, having attempted to clarify that what we do, we do by commission from the Lord of Hosts, the way is open to draw soul-sustaining, supporting, and satisfying comfort from this glorious name of God. It is as comforting as it is glorious to the Church of God. We need not fear wars, the strength of enemies, the roar of cannons, the clatter of weapons, the beat of drums, or the neighing of horses, as long as God, our God, is the Lord of Hosts.

Now, I will fulfill what I promised: to show you this name of God inscribed upon the Mercy Seat. Xerxes used to pitch his tent on high and stand watching his army in battle to encourage them. Our great General stands on high, watching over his people in their battles. Let them look up to Him, and there is enough encouragement to fill any heart in the world. This title is an exceedingly vast treasure of comfort and encouragement, as seen in Deuteronomy 30:3-4: "Hear, O Israel, you approach this day to battle against your enemies; let not your hearts faint, fear not, do not tremble, neither be terrified. Why? For the Lord your God is He that goes with you to fight for you." If this much encouragement comes from God merely going with us to fight for us, imagine the encouragement from all the various ways God reveals Himself in battles as this Lord of Hosts. In Psalm 46:7, it is said, "The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." And in verse 10, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted." Find peace in this. If any distracting, sinking, or discouraging thoughts arise in your hearts, silence them with this: "The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

Luther used to say to those around him in times of turmoil, "Come, let us sing the 46th Psalm. It is a Psalm most suitable to be sung often in these times." Isaiah 51:12 asks, "Who are you that you should be afraid of a man?" Surely, you do not understand your privilege, and you do not know the interest you have in the Lord of Hosts, if you fear a mere mortal. Therefore, it follows in verse 15, "I am the Lord thy God that divided the sea; the Lord of Hosts is His Name."

But you may say, "Ah! If only we knew for certain that the Lord of Hosts were on our side, that He was with us, then we could truly comfort ourselves in these times of war. But that is the very question that troubles our hearts due to our lack of assurance."

First, even if you do not know for certain that you have a special interest in Him, it is a great comfort to know that everything in war is under His control. Even if He were a stranger to you, and you to Him, suppose you were sure that nothing would happen in all these tumultuous times of war without the consent of the wisest, holiest, and most merciful person in the world, a person possessing all the wisdom, holiness, and mercy that all people in the world ever had. Even though you have never seen this person, wouldn't it still be a source of comfort to know that everything was entrusted to this individual's discretion, and no blow would be struck, and no harm would come to anyone without this person issuing commissions? Certainly, it would greatly calm our hearts. However, that everything is under the control of the Lord of Hosts, whose holiness, wisdom, and justice are infinite, is far better, even if we do not yet know the extent of our special relationship with Him.

Secondly, although you may not know your specific connection to the Lord of Hosts, your hearts can find solace and comfort in the fact that the cause itself has a profound place in the very heart of the Lord

of Hosts, and therefore it will prosper regardless of your personal knowledge. The satisfaction your soul finds in this is a compelling sign of your connection to this God.

Thirdly, let me tell you how you can determine whether you have any special connection to this Lord of Hosts or not, using the Scripture from Psalm 84:3, which says, "O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God." Here, we have these two titles, "Lord of Hosts" and "my God." The question revolves around the link between these two titles. In this case, it's "my King" that stands between them. So, if you can say, "O Lord of Hosts, my King," you need not stop there but can confidently proceed to the other title, "my God." If you can, from the sincerity of your heart, say, "O Lord, you know that our souls' desires are for you to rule over us. Oh, when will we hear that blessed declaration, 'The Kingdoms of the earth are the Lord's and his Christ's, and He shall reign forevermore!?' Oh, may your Kingdom come more powerfully in our hearts and become more evident in the Church and the State! The main reason (as you know) why we are willing to risk ourselves as we do, endure any hardships, and part with our possessions is so that Antichrist may never rule among us again, and so that we and our descendants may be under the reign of Jesus Christ. Surely, this is the voice of those who have the Lord of Hosts as their God. It is an eternal principle: If He is your King, He is your God.

Now, for the full comfort and encouragement that the Church of God can derive from this glorious name, let us consider the Relationship that the Church has with the Lord of Hosts, and the Relationship that the Lord of Hosts has with the Church.

First, the Church is the City of the Lord of Hosts. It is not merely God's City, but it is His City, as indicated in Psalm 48:8: "As we have

heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts." We can confidently say, "This City of London is the City of the Lord of Hosts." There are precious saints here, many of them, and it has recently done admirable things for the honour of the Lord of Hosts. Therefore, undoubtedly, the Lord of Hosts will defend it. If there is any city under heaven that can be called "The City of the Lord of Hosts," it is undoubtedly the City of London. However, we must understand the city here in a spiritual sense, as is common in Scripture. We know that when an army is dealing with a city that is part of the general's domain, then if there is any power in the general or his army, they will use it to the fullest extent to either defend or conquer that city. For instance, consider the city of Breda in the Low Countries: when it was besieged, it was quickly captured by the army of the Prince of Orange because that city belonged to the prince and was his rightful inheritance. He had a special interest in and care for that city. Surely, the Lord of Hosts, while His watchful eye is over towns, countries, and walled cities, is most attentive to His Church. If He has any power within all the armies in heaven and on earth, it will be used to defend and provide for this city. This is why Solomon's prayer in 1 Kings 8:44 mentions praying towards the city the Lord has chosen when the people go to battle, signifying Jerusalem, the city God chose, which is a type of every Church in the time of the Gospel.

Second, the Church is the Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, as Isaiah 5:7 states: "For the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel." Surely, God will not allow wild beasts and boars of the field to devour and desolate His vineyard. A general will take great care to keep enemies out of productive territories, but he will be especially vigilant in protecting his own vineyard. Consider how reluctant Naboth was to part with his vineyard in 1 Kings 21:2-3, even though King Ahab coveted it: "God forbid that I should give the inheritance

of my fathers unto thee." God's vineyard is beloved to Him and is precious. As seen in Isaiah 27:3, "I, the Lord, keep it; I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it; I will keep it night and day."

Third, it is the Mountain of the Lord of Hosts, as mentioned in Zechariah 8:3. In this regard, God declares Himself to be very jealous for it: "Thus says the Lord of Hosts, 'I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy; I was jealous for her with great fury.'" The reason for this is given in the latter part of verse 3: "Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth, and the mountain of the Lord of Hosts, the holy mountain." It is as if the Lord is saying, "Are they coming to harm My mountain, My holy mountain, My Church? Fury immediately wells up in the face of God. As seen in Isaiah 31:4, when the Lord comes to fight for Mount Zion, He comes forth like a young lion roaring on its prey. God is willing to leave heaven to fight for His Church. Will you not leave your shops and houses?"

Fourth, the Church is the house of the Lord of Hosts, as indicated in Haggai 1:14, where it says, "They did work in the house of the Lord of Hosts." This typifies God's Church. A general will fight to protect his own house; it would be a sign that the enemy had prevailed if he came and plundered the general's own house. Because of this reference to the Church as God's house, we have the expression in Psalm 24:9-10, "Lift up your heads, O you gates! Even lift them up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory." You know that when a prince returns to his own house, the grand gates are thrown wide open; when other people come, they use the smaller entrances. However, when the prince himself arrives, everything is opened wide.

Fifth, the Church is the place of the name of the Lord of Hosts, as stated in Isaiah 18:7: "To the place of the name of the Lord of Hosts, Mount Zion." God's name holds great value and significance to Him. It is a remarkable privilege granted to His Church that it is the chosen place where He sets His name. Exodus 20:24 and Nehemiah 1:9 express the importance of esteeming and seeking this place highly. God Himself places great worth on this place, and He will protect it.

Sixth, the Church is the place of the glorious reign of the Lord of Hosts, as found in Isaiah 24:23: "The Moon shall be confounded, and the Sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem before his Elders gloriously." God has a more magnificent and glorious kingdom yet to be established in His Church than ever before. This kingdom's brilliance will eclipse all the glory of the world, and it will be the Lord of Hosts who reigns in this manner. Certainly, all the hosts of heaven and earth will exert their strength in defending and providing for this place of His glorious reign, led by their great General.

Seventh, the Church is the people of the Lord of Hosts, as seen in Zephaniah 2:10-11: "This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the Lord of Hosts. The Lord will be terrible unto them." In their pride, they exalt themselves and speak ill of the saints, as if they were a group of feeble men. They fail to recognize that they are the people of the Lord of Hosts. Therefore, God threatens them, declaring that He will inspire terror in them.

So, you have the Church's relationship with God, revealing Himself through the name "The Lord of Hosts." Yet, consider further the relationship that God has with His people through this name:

1. The Lord of Hosts is the portion of His Church, as stated in Jeremiah 10:16: "The portion of Jacob is not like them; he is the former of all things. The Lord of Hosts is His name." Therefore, if there is anything in The Lord of Hosts that can benefit them, they can rightfully claim it because God, The Lord of Hosts, is their portion. They can make use of everything in Him for their good.
2. He is their Redeemer, as mentioned in the text: "Our Redeemer, The Lord of Hosts is His name." The Lord takes on the role of redeeming His people under this title, specifically so that the multitude, greatness, and fury of their enemies do not deter them. Their Redeemer is not feeble; He is The Lord of Hosts, and He is entirely trustworthy. He is also the Holy One of Israel.
3. He is the advocate and thorough advocate of His people's cause. In Jeremiah 50:34, it is said, "Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of Hosts is His name. He shall thoroughly plead their cause, that He may give rest to the land and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon." God has already begun to plead the cause of His people, demonstrating Himself as The Lord of Hosts. However, He has not yet fully advocated for their cause as He intends to. When He does, He will grant rest to the land and trouble the inhabitants of Babylon. This work will come at a high cost to the inhabitants of Babylon. They are currently more troubled than they have ever been among us. They have caused distress to the saints, and now God is causing distress to them. Though they may try to defend themselves by amassing armies, The Lord of Hosts will disquiet them and provide rest for His people. There is still a rest reserved for the people of God, even in this world.



4. The Lord of Hosts is the Husband of His Church, and this is the most intimate and sweet relationship of all. Isaiah 54:4-6 states: "Fear not, for you will not be ashamed; neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame; for you will forget the shame of your youth and will not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore. For your Maker is your Husband, the Lord of Hosts is His name." The Lord consoles the Church, which may feel like a poor, forsaken widow, grieved and rejected by all. Yet, God declares that He has taken her when she was forsaken to be His spouse. He has married her to Himself. Therefore, there is no need to fear, for He is the Lord of Hosts, the God of the whole earth. Surely, a General with a human heart will fight for his spouse. He will not allow his spouse to be violated before his eyes. Consider what Ahasuerus said about Haman, "Will he force the Queen before my face?" Vile men have arisen who seek to violate the Church, the spouse of the Lord of Hosts. Do you think He will allow this before His gaze? Will not all the armies in heaven and on earth come together to fight for her deliverance?

Now, if all these things are as I have presented them, we have good reason to calm our hearts amid our fears and distractions. We should stand firm and witness the salvation of God, the salvation that this Lord of Hosts is working for us. My purpose has been to help you expand your faith's focus and diminish the object of your fear. Surely, if the Lord of Hosts has such a close relationship with His Church, and the Church has such a relationship with Him, He cannot help but be greatly angered by anyone who would harm His Church. I will share a striking expression of His anger towards such individuals, as found in Isaiah 3:15: "What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord of Hosts." God here expresses His anger, saying, "I am the Lord of

Hosts, and you dare to do this? What do you mean? It's as if when we're angry with someone who we see doing something against our interests or the interests of those close to us in a foolish manner, we say, "What do you think you're doing? Are you mad? Do you understand what you're doing? Do you know who these people are that you're abusing in this way?"

From all these gracious expressions of the Lord of Hosts for the comfort and encouragement of His people, we learn from Isaiah 8:12-13: "Say not, A confederacy, to them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread." The name of God is a powerful antidote to drive fear out of the hearts of even the weakest. Based on what we've seen in this title of God, we can confidently say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, fear not," as we find in Isaiah 35:4. Women and all those who are naturally fearful must be cautious of sinful fear. The fearfulness of women clinging to their husbands, children, and friends, crying out when they should be engaged in this service, wandering about wringing their hands and making mournful cries, can do much harm and significantly hinder the work that the Lord is undertaking. Women should take care not to be hindrances; instead, they should learn to exercise faith and courage to support their husbands, children, and friends in the Lord of Hosts' work. Consider the Scripture in 1 Peter 3:6: "You are the daughters of Sarah, as long as you do well and are not afraid with any amazement." You all desire to be counted as the daughters of Sarah. Notice how the Holy Spirit emphasizes not being afraid with any amazement. While it is natural to feel some fear, grace must keep it from becoming overwhelming.

Why is this emphasized in this way?

Just as Abraham is highly praised for his faith, and we are called the children of Abraham through faith, it appears that Sarah, his wife, during the difficulties Abraham faced, was not a hindrance but a help to him. She did not exclaim, "Why are you leaving your father's house and all your relatives to wander in a foreign country amidst dangers and hardships?" No, she was more of an aid and encourager. Peter, addressing Christians in troubled and perilous times, tells them that they would truly demonstrate themselves as the daughters of Sarah if they possessed a spirit similar to Sarah's—fearless and not prone to hinder themselves, their husbands, or anyone else in the Lord's service. If God calls you or them to endure suffering, you must not pull back due to fear but press on with undaunted courage. Then, indeed, you are the daughters of Sarah.

And so, in these times that demand everyone to rise above sinful fears, women should consider these three points.

First, the very first time anyone spoke to God and addressed Him as the Lord of Hosts, it was a woman—Hannah. In 1 Samuel 1:11, she made a vow and said, "O Lord of Hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, &c."

Secondly, one of the principal Psalms that greatly magnifies this title, the Lord of Hosts, is a Psalm intended for musical instruments that virgins and women played. It is titled "A Song upon Alamoth," as found in Psalms 46. The Hebrew word "Alamoth" comes from a root that means "to hide." This is because virgins used to be modestly covered and hidden, hence "Alamoth" signifies virgins and is used here for the musical instrument they played. Virgins and women, it seems, used to sing this Psalm and play it on their instruments. Their hearts were supposed to be in tune with what they sang and played. Here, they joyfully proclaim, "The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God

of Jacob is our refuge" (verse 7). They repeat it again, "The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge" (verse 11), among other similar passages—all pointing in this direction.

3. The most courageous expression of a strong, valiant spirit, triumphing over enemies in battle, comes from a woman, Deborah, in Judges 5:21. She says, "O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength." Essentially, she is declaring that though the enemy comes with great strength, it is like mere dirt in the streets to her. Her soul rises above it. Where can we find a more heroic expression of an elevated spirit, either in Scripture among the Lord's valiant ones or in human history among great captains and conquerors? I cannot help but repeat it: "O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength." Therefore, women should not complain so much about their weakness as to use it as an excuse for their sinful fears. I will share a notable saying from another woman mentioned in ecclesiastical history, Julitta. While many remarkable things are recorded about her, this particular saying to her female acquaintances stands out: "Cease to accuse the fragility of the feminine sex. Are we not made of the same substance as men? We are made in God's image just like they are. God did not use inferior material to create women as a sign of weakness. We are bone of His bone, which signifies that we must be strong in the living God. If the spirit of the Lord of Hosts is with you, even you can intimidate your enemies. You can prepare for your defense in such a way that your lives are not easily taken, and the loss of each of yours will cost the life of at least one of them. You can put shame upon them, for if such a spirit is within you, they will flee before women, as their spirits are base and vile."

4. If God is the Lord of Hosts, and His providence works remarkably in wars and battles, then there must be a specific purpose to every war and battle. This great Lord of Hosts does not engage in warfare without reason; there is always a significant aim, especially when He intervenes in an extraordinary manner, as He undoubtedly does in our present wars.
  
5. We should not merely listen to or discuss wars as if they were mere news but pay attention to God's purpose in them. We should consider what He is aiming to achieve, what His intentions are, how He brings His own plans to fruition, and how He advances His glory through them. Whoever lives to see the outcome of these great disturbances and warlike commotions among us will witness that God had a hand in them to accomplish great things. The mercy He intends for us is worth all the trouble and even the most precious blood that has been shed. God has many promises to fulfill for His churches, many prophecies to bring to pass, many glorious declarations to make, and many blessings to bestow upon His saints. These upheavals among us will pave the way for all of it.

We have received many blessings from God without cost, and the mercy that is yet to come may be of a higher nature. Therefore, God intends that it may come at a greater cost, perhaps even the cost of many lives. However, we or our descendants will see that when it comes, it will be worth all the sacrifices. The Lord of Hosts had profound intentions for the good of England when He allowed these civil wars to occur among us. Although it is a severe judgment, it may lead to the greatest mercy. It is our duty to diligently observe how God works in His providence to achieve such ends.

6. God is the Lord of Hosts. Therefore, we should understand that the peace we have enjoyed, along with its comforting fruits, comes from the Lord of Hosts, who has all power to either prevent or bring about war as He pleases. He alone has kept us from experiencing the horrors that others have endured. We have not been drenched in blood, and our garments have not been stained with it like those of our brethren. We have enjoyed our homes, beds, tables, wives, children, and all the comforts for our souls and bodies. Micah 4:4 says, "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid." Why is this so? The following words provide the answer: "The mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it." The vines and fig trees under which we have sat have not been barren; we have not only found shade but also much comfort from their fruit. It was the Lord who promised Israel that their enemies would not desire their land when they went up to Jerusalem to worship. What a mercy it is for us to be like Gideon's fleece—dry when all around us has been wet, not with dew but with blood! These early days of war have shown many countries and counties in England the blessing that peace was, which they never truly understood before. Peace is indeed sweet and good, but let us be cautious not to buy our peace at too high a price.

7. This name of God reminds us that during times of war, it is essential for all people to seek reconciliation with this God. When we go to war against our enemies, we must ensure that God is not our enemy as well. If He is, all our armies and military might will be of little use. Let us be wise and make peace with Him through sincere humility before Him and genuine repentance. Concerning the first, we are reluctant to humble ourselves before our enemies, thinking it to be shameful. However, let us not hesitate to humble ourselves

before this God, for it is a source of true glory. While building fortifications is commendable, it will be of little use without accompanying acts of humility. Isaiah 22:11-12 says, "Ye made a ditch also between the two walls for the water of the old pool, but ye have not looked to the maker thereof. And in that day did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping and to mourning, and behold, joy and gladness, killing oxen and drinking wine." This was revealed to me by the Lord of Hosts. "Surely this iniquity shall not be purged till you die," saith the Lord of Hosts. Notice that the phrase "the Lord of Hosts" is mentioned three times in that verse, emphasizing its significance. We should humble our hearts under the mighty hand of God, especially because our adversaries are so proud and blasphemous. There is no better strategy of war than this—to humble ourselves before the Lord when we hear of their pride and blasphemies. We should strive even more to sanctify the name of this holy God, whose name the angels proclaim as "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord of Hosts" (Isaiah 6:3).

In addition to our humiliations, let us add reformation and turn to this God. In times of war, it is undoubtedly perilous to carry or shelter traitors against the Lord of Hosts among us, as indeed all sins are. What acceptance or success can we then expect from Him? Recall the trouble caused in the camp by the accursed thing of Achan; it made the children of Israel flee before the men of Ai. If any accursed thing, though concealed, can create such turmoil in the camp, how much more accursed are traitorous officers?

Hosea 12:5-6 says, "Even the Lord God of Hosts, the Lord is His memorial; therefore turn thou to thy God."

Zechariah 1:3 adds, "Say to them, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts." Here we encounter this name of God three times, as an exhortation for us to return to Him. Let us all recognize, especially those in service in the army, that the great General, the Lord of Hosts, calls us to return to Him and promises to return to us. As if He were saying, "You have been very sinful and wicked; your consciences cannot deny it, and I am aware of it. Yet, return to me now, and I assure you that despite all you have done, I am here ready and willing to return to you. Everything will be forgiven as if it had never been committed. Surely there is no greater courage than that of a spirit cleansed from the guilt and filth of sin."

8. This name of God reminds us of our duty to pray fervently to Him in times of war and to depend entirely on Him for success because He is the Lord of Hosts.

Regarding the first point, where should we seek light but in the sun, water but in rivers, heat but in fire? Similarly, where should we seek valor and victory but in the Lord of Hosts? The pagans used to offer sacrifices to God in times of war. Hence, a sacrifice is called "hostia" because they offered it when going against their enemies. Saul considered it a challenging matter to go to war without first offering a sacrifice (1 Samuel 13:12): "Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord. I forced myself therefore and offered a burnt offering." When Jehoshaphat heard of an army advancing against him, he sought the Lord before going into battle (2 Chronicles 20:3). He dedicated his entire self to this, as the words indicate.

Moses lifting up his hands in prayer and Joshua extending his hands in battle create a victorious army. "Our Prayers are our Guns," says



Luther. Prayer has achieved remarkable feats in battles. The praying Christians in Marcus Aurelius' army were known as the "thundering Legion." Sozomen and Nicephorus tell us that Theodosius, through prayer, turned the weapons of his enemies against themselves. I am certain that it has accomplished similarly great feats. One of the most extraordinary victories ever recorded is found in Numbers 31:8. The Israelites slew five Kings of Midian, all the males, and all the women who had known a man. They burned all their cities, captured six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, seventy-two thousand cattle, sixty-one thousand donkeys, and thirty-two thousand virgins. What makes this battle so astonishing is that, in the midst of this great victory, the Children of Israel did not lose a single man, as the text clearly states in verse 49: "Thy servants have taken the sum of the men of war which are under our charge, and there lacketh not one man of us." Notice what they did before going into battle in verse 6: "The holy instruments and the trumpets sounded in the hands of Eleazar the Priest." It was an ordinance of God that the priests should sound the silver trumpets when going into battle (Numbers 10:9), and this was observed here with astonishing results. An army of prayers is as potent as any army of men; in fact, one praying person may achieve more than many fighting men. Elisha had his spiritual sword to slay, just like Jehu and Hazael (1 Kings 19:15-17). When Elijah believed there was no hope, God instructed him to anoint Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha. It was as if God was saying, "I have armies in the field. Whoever escapes Hazael's sword will be slain by Jehu, and whoever escapes Jehu's sword will be slain by Elisha." How would Elisha slay them? Through his prayers. They can reach and cut down their adversaries from a great distance. Psalm 76:2-3 is worth noting: "In Salem also is his Tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion, there brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield and the sword and the battle." Where does He break them? In Salem, in Zion, where His Tabernacle is, in the congregation of saints who

pray. It is reported that when the King of Sweden set foot in Germany, he immediately fell to prayer to the Lord of Hosts, and great things were accomplished in a short period. In this, God's servants have the advantage over their adversaries; they can pray to the Lord of Hosts, whereas their enemies cannot. The enemies may blaspheme, but they cannot pray. This provides a great morale boost in battle for soldiers who have knowledge of God, knowing that they go forth with the blessing of prayers and constant prayers ascending to heaven on their behalf. During the significant battle near Banbury on October 23rd, when many ran away, those who remained fought with courage and shouted, "Now for the fruit of prayer, Now for the fruit of prayer." Their spirits were lifted to extraordinary heights, and they prevailed mightily, slaying nearly ten enemies for every one of them. Therefore, let us be encouraged to pray. While our brethren fight the enemy in battle and risk their lives for us, we must strive with God in prayer. We should increase our earnestness, not content with our ordinary prayers. Great things are happening in the world, and the outcome of these wars has a significant impact. Anyone who is part of a church or commonwealth and does not have a heart for prayer is unworthy. Now we need genuine praying Christians. Anyone can sin and provoke God's wrath, but only men and women of exceptional character can pray, those who have an interest in the Lord of Hosts. In Solomon's prayer in 1 Kings 8, he prayed against enemies three or four times, and yet he lived in a time of peace. If that was the case, how much more now, when we have such fierce enemies among us.

And as we must pray, so we must trust; we must rely upon this Lord of Hosts in all our warlike undertakings. Psalm 20:7 says, "Some trust in horses, some in chariots, but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God." He is our strength, our fortitude, our shield, our buckler. "Cursed be the man that makes flesh his arm." Our

adversaries come out against us with swords and cannons, but while means must be used, let us go forth against them in the name of the Lord of Hosts. In 1 Chronicles 5:18, we read of the sons of Reuben, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, who were valiant and skilled in war, with an army of forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty. Yet, they did not trust solely in their strength or skill. In verse 20, it is stated, "They cried unto the Lord, and He was entreated of them because they trusted in Him." To our cries to God, we must add dependence on God; we must cry to God in a manner that acknowledges that our strength and help come from Him. A notable saying attributed to Herod by Josephus, although from the mouth of Herod, is fitting for any godly Christian commander: "Some may say, our cause is just, but we are few and weak. Where truth and justice are, there is God, and where God is, there lacks neither multitude nor fortitude." Origen observed, and others have noted, that God never employed horses in all the victories He granted His people to take possession of the Promised Land. While the adversaries had horses and chariots, the people of God had none. Even if our enemies were to outnumber us in horses (which we hope they won't), we should look to God, for we may possess the Promised Land without horses. After all our efforts, we must ultimately submit everything to the Lord of Hosts. A valiant commander, Joab, made a courageous statement in 2 Samuel 10:12: "Be of good courage, let us play the men for our people and for the cities of our God, and the Lord do what seemeth Him good."

From this glorious name of God, we learn how perfectly fitting it is for those who have a special relationship with this God, who call Him their God and Father, to have spirits filled with courage and fortitude. Such a spirit befits the servants and, even more so, the children of such a God to whom they belong and whom they serve. God delights in seeing His spirit reflected in those who belong to

Him. He is a God of wisdom who takes pleasure in seeing the brilliance of His wisdom shine in the spirits of His saints. He is an infinitely holy God who delights in the radiant holiness of His people. Being the Lord of Hosts, He rejoices in seeing a spirit of valour and magnanimity in them. What captain or renowned soldier would not be pleased to see his children and allies, those who claim an interest in him, display valour? It is reported that Manlius Torquatus, after his son overcame the enemies of the Romans with great valour and personally killed a prominent enemy in single combat, sought out his father, the General of the Army, bearing the spoils of his enemies and exclaiming, "Father, behold the cause for which I may be considered your son." If we possess a spirit of courage befitting our Father, we may approach the Lord of Hosts with more comfort and a better reception, being acknowledged as His children. Otherwise, we would dishonour Him.

Alexander the Great reportedly told a soldier in his army who shared his name but was a coward that he must either change his name or become valiant. If Alexander considered it a disgrace for someone sharing his name to be a coward, he would have found it even more disgraceful for one of his own blood, his own child, to be a coward. How unworthy it would be for the son of such a valiant warrior as the King of Sweden to possess a low, feeble, and cowardly spirit! Such a child would bring shame to his father, and merely mentioning his father's name would be a disgrace. Christians, do you not profess God to be your Father? Do you not acknowledge that your Father is the Lord of Hosts? Where is your spirit of magnanimity and fortitude, of courage and valour, befitting the children of such a glorious Father, the Lord of Hosts? If you belong to the right lineage, you must be generous; it is impossible for you not to possess some spark of His spirit. If you have low, unworthy, sensual, and cowardly spirits, you are not begotten of Him. God has no children who do not

reflect some aspect of every excellence that such creatures can possess.

Now, this is the question: Do you possess the spirit of this great God? The spirit of the Devil, though proud, is ultimately cowardly. If you resist the Devil, he will flee from you. The truth is, all people in the world have base spirits, but God's children have a different spirit.

God raises all His children to be soldiers. In heaven, there are only those who were trained as soldiers and brought up in military discipline. Many nations raise their children to be soldiers, teaching them martial skills from a young age. The Parthians teach the use of the bow, the Scythians teach the use of the dart, and the Germans teach the use of the spear. All of God's children are members of the Church militant, and it is fitting for them to be skilled not only in the use of spiritual armour but also in physical combat. Who is more suitable to be used in the battles of the Lord than those who have the greatest stake in the Lord? Who is better prepared to risk their bodies in battle than those who can offer their bodies willingly to the flames in times of peace?

In Isaiah 13:3, soldiers chosen by God for His battles are referred to as His sanctified ones, an honourable title for soldiers. Those who are sanctified by His Spirit, set apart for Him eternally, are the most suitable to be God's sanctified ones, chosen for such service. The bravery of the Gauls was admired by the Romans, and it stemmed from their belief in the immortality of the soul, instilled in them by their Druids. Those most fitting to risk their lives in battle are those who can see beyond life, beyond the shores of mortality, to the promise of eternal life and glory. In these times, all the saints, especially, should be filled with spirit, strong in the might of the Lord, because Jesus Christ is soon to overthrow that great enemy,

the man of sin, and in His conquest, He is said to come with His garments dipped in blood (Revelation 19).

Now, the true spirit befitting one who has the Lord of Hosts as his Father is:

1. A spirit that refuses to be base; it will not become a slave to the Devil or any of its own or others' lusts. It deems itself too noble for sin. Just as a soldier with a spirit in him will scorn drudgery, considering it beneath him, so does the one with the true spirit of a soldier who has gained victory over himself. In this aspect, every soldier of the Lord of Hosts possesses a spirit superior to the world's most renowned soldiers like Alexander, Pompey, Themistocles, and so on, who were all enslaved to their own lusts.

And although he is willing to serve people under God, he will never be a slave to their lusts but will uphold the liberty of a man and a Christian for himself and future generations.

Philo Judaeus reports of a heathenish people who, in their wars, used only this expression to inspire their soldiers: "Estote viri, libertas agitur" – "Be men, your liberty is at stake."

But what is this bondage that the spirit of a Christian will not, and should not, bear?

There is a natural slavery that, as a man, he should not and will not subject himself to, which can be seen in these three things:

1. Giving up his own ownership of what he possesses, so that whatever God and nature have granted him is not truly his own but entirely subject to another's will.

2. Submission to a government to which he has never consented either personally or through others, and one that is not bound by the Word of God or the laws of nature.
3. Being in a condition where, no matter what service he renders, he will receive nothing by way of justice, but solely out of favour. This kind of servitude is intolerable to an honourable spirit.

As a Christian, he will not subject his conscience to anyone but reserves it to pay homage to God.

A spirit of the right kind, even though it anticipates dangers in the cause of God, can and does courageously face them. Esther's words reflected the bravery of her spirit, though she was a woman: "If I perish, I perish." Yet it was the result of fasting and prayer. Indeed, this is the way to acquire genuine courage.

Similarly, we find this spirit in the three children in the Book of Daniel (Chapter 3). They fearlessly declared to Nebuchadnezzar: "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. Behold, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us out of thine hand, O King. But if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship thy golden image which thou hast set up." The famous statement by Paul also embodies this Christian valor when it was prophesied that he would be bound in Jerusalem. Many of the saints wept, but Paul said: "I am not only ready to be bound at Jerusalem but to die for the name of Christ." Similarly, the expression recorded of Ignatius in an epistle to the congregation of Trallis is famous in this regard: "Let the fire, the gallows, the devouring of wild beasts, the breaking of bones, the pulling asunder of my members, the bruising or pressing of my whole body, and the torments of the devil or hell itself come upon me, so that I may win Christ Jesus." Here was someone who had the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts within him.

Luther also had a similar spirit when he declared that even if all the tiles of the houses in the city of Wormes were devils, he would go there, knowing he was called by God to bear witness to the truth.

This resoluteness of spirit manifests itself in perilous times, in a willingness to join our brethren in challenging tasks that involve much risk and hardship. A person with a truly courageous spirit will not see their brethren engaged in arduous tasks and leave them to fend for themselves. They are reluctant to abstain from involvement, even if it means avoiding trouble for themselves. You cannot compel such individuals to do so. To such individuals, it may be aptly said as Moses said to the children of Gad and the children of Reuben in Numbers 32:6: "Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here?" Why should they face dangers and endure hardships while you sit comfortably? You may have excuses and justifications, but I say to you today what Moses said to them in verse 23: "If ye will not join with your brethren, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out."

3. A spirit of courage, the spirit of a true soldier of this Lord of Hosts. When hardships and troubles arise, it has the strength to endure them. As 2 Timothy 2:3 states: "Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Many may appear resolute before troubles arrive, but when they do, they cannot withstand them. "Romanū est fortia pati," a saying of Mutius Scaevola, implies that it is characteristic of Romans to endure hardships. More accurately, it is characteristic of Christians to endure hardships. If you are overly delicate and unable to endure, you are not fit to be a Christian, as Tertullian stated: "Nimis delicatus es," you are too delicate.



The eagle exemplifies the nobility of its spirit by not making noise when hungry, unlike other birds that vocalize their hunger. Similarly, it is not befitting a soldier to complain about cold, the lack of a meal or two, or rough lodging, and so on.

This strength of spirit does not lead to repentance for his engagements or actions when he encounters troubles and severe afflictions, as it does for the cowardly spirit of a base person. An apt Scripture to illustrate this point is Exodus 13:17, where God says He wouldn't lead the Israelites through the land of the Philistines, which was nearby, lest they might repent when they see war and return to Egypt. God perceived their low and feeble spirit; even though they suffered under Egypt's bondage, cried out for deliverance, and God had miraculously freed them, they were quick to regret their decision when faced with danger. They would long for Egypt again. Their history in the wilderness confirms this, as they frequently complained and expressed a desire to return to Egypt, especially when informed by the spies about the formidable children of Anak they would have to fight against. When they reached the borders of Canaan, they were discouraged and contemplated appointing a captain to lead them back to Egypt. These people possessed poor and unworthy spirits. Consequently, God swore that none of them would enter Canaan, except for Caleb and Joshua, described as men of a different spirit. Similarly, in our time, despite previously groaning under bondage, nearly losing our liberties, religion, and estates, with the persecution of ministers and oppression, when God miraculously intervened, many are now wavering. Some are longing for the past, preferring their former state and complaining about the drumbeats, cannon fire, and warlike noises they hear.

2. This strength of spirit supports him through the most severe afflictions, preventing him from seeking deliverance by

forsaking God's cause or resorting to deceitful means. Just as Paul, in Acts 16:35-37, insisted that the magistrates of Philippi come themselves to release him from prison rather than sending officers, he demonstrated his noble spirit by demanding an honourable means of deliverance. Every true soldier of Christ shares this sentiment: if God has allowed me to suffer affliction, temptation might present a backdoor escape, but a courageous spirit would never entertain such a thought. Instead, it insists that the Lord personally come and free them.

Fourthly, a spirit befitting the child of this great Captain seeks to accomplish great things for God and enjoy great blessings from Him, even if it entails significant troubles and afflictions, rather than settling for small, easy, and safe achievements. Sometimes God has important, glorious blessings to bestow upon His churches, but great difficulties must be overcome to attain them. Individuals with low and feeble spirits deem these tasks beyond their capabilities and do not invest much effort in them. They prefer to satisfy themselves with smaller, simpler things that offer comfort and avoid immediate risks. In contrast, those with a raised spirit possessing courage and magnanimity rejoice in God's greatness. As Isaiah 13:3 expresses it: "I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones, even them that rejoice in my highness." When God has lofty goals, these sanctified and mighty individuals find joy in His greatness. This stands in contrast to the spirit of Issachar described in Genesis 49:14-15. Issachar is likened to a strong donkey crouching down between two burdens. He saw that rest was good and the land was pleasant, so he bowed his shoulder to bear and became a servant to tribute. He was unwilling to jeopardize his peace, preferring to live in the countryside, tend to his cattle, and live quietly, even if it meant paying high taxes and servility. He avoided disturbances and was content with servitude. This characterised a low and base spirit, and

his descendants often displayed unworthiness and wickedness. It is evident from the division of the land of Canaan that Issachar's inheritance fell in Galilee (Joshua 19:18-23). Galilee was generally looked down upon, with people questioning whether anything good could come from there. As is often the case, the descendants of those with servile spirits tend to be unworthy and corrupt.

Fifthly, difficulties do not discourage courageous men; they actually invigorate their spirits. They embrace challenging tasks even more fervently upon hearing of the difficulties involved. As Alexander once remarked when facing great danger, "Here is periculum par animo Alexandri," which means, "Here is danger worthy of Alexander's spirit."

A noteworthy example of this can be found in the story of David in 1 Samuel 18. Initially, when Saul's servants suggested that David might become the king's son-in-law, David seemed troubled and unenthusiastic about the idea. However, when they added the condition that he must bring back a hundred Philistine foreskins, a task fraught with difficulty and danger, David's perspective changed. Saul had proposed this condition as a trap, hoping that David would be killed in the process. Nevertheless, in verse 26, when Saul's servants presented this challenge to David, he was pleased with the prospect of becoming the king's son-in-law under such a condition that allowed him to display the excellence of his spirit. A base and timid spirit would have preferred receiving such an honour without any challenging conditions. It is said of lions that their spirits are such that if they find prey killed by someone else, they will not touch it. They seek to make their own kills and do something themselves, or else they are not satisfied.

Sisthly, a spirit of courage and true valour not only has the capacity to endure suffering, but also the willingness to do so. It is even uplifted and glorified by sufferings, regarding them as great riches when endured for a just cause. When we sit comfortably at home, dining on various dishes, sleeping in soft beds with drawn curtains, we pity the soldiers who are out in storms, lying on cold ground, drinking water, and often going without bread. Yet their warlike spirit surpasses these comforts; they can rejoice in their hardships as much as we do in our abundance. They believe their lives are more meaningful because they serve the public and have opportunities to make a difference in their generation. In contrast, those who stay at home, living in ease and luxury, doing nothing, appear insignificant in comparison. True soldiers thrive in the midst of war's hardships; they love to live and die in such conditions. The Apostle, a genuine soldier of Christ, declared in Romans 5:2, "We glory in tribulations." Moses esteemed "the reproach of Christ" as greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt (Hebrews 11:27). Ignatius boldly stated that he would rather be a martyr than a monarch. When he heard his bones crunch between the teeth of wild beasts, he said, "Now, I begin to be a Christian." Tertullian challenged the persecutors, stating, "Your cruelty is our glory." Many martyrs prepared for their sufferings with joy and gladness, much like brides preparing for their bridegrooms. The wounds they received in Christ's cause yielded more glory than blood; they adorned them and enhanced their beauty. They believed it was better to lose for God than to gain for themselves. They regarded the part of their possessions given up for a good cause as the best part of their wealth. They considered themselves richer in that loss than in what they retained. As Hebrews 10:34 says, "They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods." The reason for all this is that their spirits transcended earthly comforts; their happiness did not depend on them. They found joy even in parting with them because of the divine principle of holiness instilled within them.

Seventhly, a spirit of true courage has all its fears eclipsed by the fear of God. It fears nothing except God Himself and uses the fear of God to counteract all other fears. One person fears poverty, but I fear the God of heaven; another fears disgrace, but I fear the God of heaven; another fears imprisonment, but I fear the God of heaven; another fears death, but I fear the God of heaven. It sanctifies the Lord of Hosts and makes Him the sole object of fear and dread. Cornelius, a soldier and centurion of the Italian band, is commended for his fear of God in Acts 10:2. It is a peculiar commendation for a soldier to be praised for fear, but it is specifically the fear of God. This divine fear dispels all ignoble fears, allowing him to fear nothing else except to be feared by his enemies.

Ninthly, he reserves all his valor for the Lord of Hosts; he has no valor at all for sin. When it comes to sin, he is extremely cautious, and his heart trembles at the very temptation to it and its initial stirrings. In this regard, he may appear cowardly to the worldly. Others may have enough spirit and courage for sin (if we can call it courage), but none for God. This individual's valor is entirely dedicated to God. In matters concerning himself, he is quite pliable and exhibits little spirit. However, when it concerns God's cause, his heart surges with resolve. This is where you can truly test him. Many people have quick tempers and become resolute when it comes to their own interests. If they are thwarted in their desires, they can be quite determined, seemingly unmatched in their resolution. They persistently pursue their goals, seemingly as if no one else possesses such unwavering determination. However, when it comes to God's cause, they lack such determination and courage; they are far from being resolute and steadfast. They do not stand valiantly for the truth, as Jeremiah mentions in Chapter 9, verse 3. Our wisdom, if we possess any mettle or courage, lies in not squandering it on petty and unworthy matters, such as our personal concerns. Instead, we should

reserve it for God. God may call us to tasks that require all the mettle and courage in our hearts, even more than we currently possess. When soldiers have only a small amount of gunpowder and fear an enemy, they do not squander it frivolously; they keep it until it is needed. They do not know what they might require it for. Do not be too quick to ignite; if you face opposition, reserve the vigour and vitality of your spirit for God's cause, for upholding His truth and purpose.

Lastly, he would rather die honourably than live ignobly. It is the mark of a valiant individual to either live honourably or die valiantly. Cyrus once said, and it was a true statement, "One of the two he will have; the world cannot hinder him." As things stand now, if we risk our estates and lives to preserve religion and liberty for ourselves and our posterity, God may, and we hope He will, grant us both our lives and our faith, as well as the ability to enjoy them with comfort and honour. Even if we were to lose our estates and lives, assuming the worst, we would lose them honourably. The loss would be preferable to the "enjoyment" (if we can call it that) we might have if we risk nothing now. What will our lives be worth if we outlive our religion and liberty? If those are gone, what value will our lives hold? When liberty is lost, our lives will hardly be worth the consideration of human lives, let alone Christian lives. One must be very fond of life to desire it under such terms. We read of Anchises, the father of Aeneas. When Aeneas offered him a chance to save his life in a way he deemed dishonourable, Anchises responded, "God forbid that I should outlive Troy." If Troy is destroyed, what is the worth of my life? If we outlive our religion and liberty, will our lives be worth picking up from the streets? Consider all these factors, and you will see that such a spirit truly befits our relationship with the Lord of Hosts. If we possessed such spirits, how comfortably could we navigate our pilgrimage? We could overcome all difficulties and

opposition, emerging victorious. The world and the devil would be reluctant to engage with us, and we would free ourselves from many temptations. We would honour our faith and serve God abundantly, ultimately securing an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. An army of such soldiers would be the most glorious sight in the world. We read of the sun standing still once, and it was to witness the valour of Joshua, that brave soldier, and to illuminate his conquests. If it were to stand still again, it would likely be to admire such a magnificent sight.

Let the contemplation of our God's glory in His name teach us to give glory to Him for all the good we receive through armies. It all comes from Him. Recently, He has been exceptionally gracious to our army. He has truly revealed Himself as the Lord of Hosts in the battle at Keynton. This was the testimony of both generals and soldiers alike: "Never has there been less of man in such an endeavour, but never more of God." The Lord was seen on the mount; He demonstrated that He would not help us through sheer numbers. Instead, He manifested His power through the Spirit descending mightily upon a remnant, a mere fraction compared to our adversaries. When the adversaries believed and even proclaimed that the day was theirs, God swiftly turned the tide with His mighty hand. Oh, how free God's grace has been to us in this! The scripture in Jeremiah 51:5 has been fully realised for us: "Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of Hosts." Even though our land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel, the fullness of sin within us has not diminished the fullness of grace in God towards us. The Lord is God; the Lord is God; He is the Lord of Hosts. Holy and revered is His name.

There have been times when the Lord has dealt differently even with His own people. To illustrate the fullness and generosity of God's

goodness to us in preserving us from being delivered into the hands of wicked men, I will recount instances of God's severity in this regard towards His own people, who were just as deserving of His mercy as we are. We must not assume that every specific case applies only to us in a general sense. Reflecting on the severe afflictions the Church endured in the past highlights God's goodness in preventing such calamities among us. Thus, it cannot be said that our situation is exactly the same as theirs.

Not long after God had delivered His people from their captivity, fulfilling numerous gracious promises, they returned and rebuilt the Temple and the walls of Jerusalem. There was a glorious reformation, and the Lord's work prospered despite many significant challenges. However, after some time, when Antiochus rose against them, God allowed him to prevail exceedingly in his military campaigns. In Daniel 8:9, it is written, "And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land." This pleasant land refers to Judea, which indeed was a delightful region. The word also signifies beauty, glory, and ornament, indicating its special status, especially since the worship of God had recently been restored there. Yet Antiochus came against it, growing mighty for a time, although initially, he was but a little horn. He was a younger brother and had been a prisoner in Rome not long before. But having gained his freedom and some authority, he unleashed his fury, particularly against the people of God.

In verse 10, it states, "And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them." Here, the Church is referred to as the host of heaven. Despite the world's contempt, the Lord of Hosts regards His Church as the host of heaven. Yet Antiochus grew great against it.



While we are fortunate to have many godly and faithful individuals in our midst through God's mercy, we do not presume to give them the title God gives His people: the host of heaven. Nevertheless, God permits the enemy to prevail against this host and, in His mercy, grants them a great deliverance. Indeed, He allows the adversary to cast down some of the host and stars to the ground and trample upon them. The more prominent individuals are, the more enraged he becomes. If they are like stars in this heavenly host, and if he can reach them, he pulls them down and tramples upon them.

Consider the fury of our adversaries against the most distinguished ministers of our kingdom! They are furious because they cannot have them, and if they could, what havoc would they wreak? What one Antiochus did there, many atheists and Papists would gladly do among us if they had the power. However, the Lord of Hosts delivers us mercifully from them. In verse 11, Antiochus magnifies himself even against the Prince of the Host, against the Lord of Hosts. What tremendous rage, even against God Himself! What dreadful blasphemies are uttered against this Prince of the Host of His people! Although He magnifies Himself and blasphemes, He can never prevail against the Prince of this Host. Yet for the time being, He is allowed to take away the daily sacrifice and cast down the place of His sanctuary. In verse 12, we read, "And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground, and it practised, and prospered." This greatly troubled the people of God, as expressed in verse 13. One saint inquires of another with hearts heavy with sorrow, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot?"

Here, you can see that for anyone to oppose God's worship is to oppose God Himself. Proud and malicious adversaries, especially, aim at this. God permitted the adversary to prevail even in this matter. God took action against His people for their transgressions, and an army came upon them. The text even states that an army was given to him against the daily sacrifice due to their transgressions. Antiochus would not have been able to amass such an army had it not been for the transgressions of God's people. God was so provoked by their transgressions that He allowed this army to rise against them, casting down the truth, practicing deceit, and prospering in their efforts.

We have reason to examine our own hearts and acknowledge that our transgressions are as great as those charged against them. Yet, despite God's chastisement, which included raising an army against us (many of whom were Papists and blasphemers), we have reason to believe that they would take away the daily sacrifice, destroy much of the sanctuary that has already been built, and cast down the truth to the ground. However, God's infinite goodness prevails. He has not allowed them to do so. He has turned the rage of man to His praise, worked marvelously for us, and delivered us from their power. While many of our brethren endure hardships, we still have the opportunity for the daily sacrifice and the sanctuary, that is, the true worship of God among us. The truth is preached in our congregations, upheld in its beauty and excellence, and not cast down to the ground. They have indeed attempted, but by God's mercy, they have not prospered. This is the work of the Lord of Hosts, and His glorious name should be magnified by us forever.

Furthermore, to highlight God's mercy towards us and give glory to the Lord of Hosts, consider what the Holy Spirit says in verses 23, 24, and 25 of this eighth chapter regarding God's judgment against

His people for their sins, which He has not executed against us, as it is evident today. When transgressors reach their full measure, a king with a fierce countenance will arise—one of extreme boldness and daring, a prince who will undertake reckless deeds that few rulers in the world would dare to attempt. If any of his nobles or others come before him and speak anything contrary to his plans, he will look at them with a fierce countenance, revealing the extreme fierceness of his spirit. This is why his name was changed from Epiphanes to Epimanes due to his fierce cruelty. In addition to his fierceness, he will be cunning and understand dark sentences. Through his wit and subtlety, aided by those around him, he will interpret dark sayings in such a way that many will wonder, for no one could have imagined that such interpretations could be drawn from these passages. By doing this, he will be able to give an appealing appearance to the foulest things.

Moreover, his power will be mighty. God will allow him to amass great strength, not of his own accord. As the text says, although it may not be apparent how he could raise such power on his own, he will possess substantial power, whether through money, ammunition, strength from foreign princes, or, as some believe, even power granted by God Himself, surpassing his own abilities. If the power against the Church is more God's than the adversary's, then the power for the deliverance of the Church must also be attributed more to God than to us. However, I interpret the former sense to be the Holy Spirit's intended meaning in this passage. It follows that he shall prosper and practice; he will not merely consult, deliberate, or delay but take action, thereby achieving success. The word used is "faciet," meaning he will do something. The prosperous outcome of war often depends greatly on taking decisive action.

Alexander was asked, "How did you accomplish such great things in so little time?" He replied, "By not neglecting any advantage." I have come across the story of Charles, the son of Charles Duke of Anjou, who was King of Sicily and Jerusalem. He was known as Carolus Cunctator, meaning Charles the Delayer. However, not in the same sense as Fabius, who was also called Cunctator and was the Shield of Rome in his time. Fabius earned this name because he waited for opportunities to arise, whereas Charles, on the other hand, would delay until opportunities were lost. Antiochus was not such a "Cunctator" who waited until opportunities were lost; he took action and prospered. When he saw that delaying and gaining time could be advantageous, he would seek to postpone and prolong time as much as possible. There's a famous tale about Pompilius, who was sent by the Senate of Rome to Antiochus to convey the Senate's message that he must not go to Egypt. Antiochus asked for time to deliberate, but Pompilius drew a circle around him with the staff in his hand and told him that he must not step out of that circle until he had given a definitive answer, either "yes" or "no." Antiochus tried to delay with compliments, but Pompilius rejected his compliments and demanded a swift answer, warning him of the consequences if he didn't comply. Swift decisions can be of immense advantage in many significant worldly matters, particularly when dealing with cunning adversaries who seek to exploit opportunities.

The text further states that Antiochus "shall destroy wonderfully." He shall plunder and devastate rich and fertile lands, leaving them impoverished and miserable. Those who knew the land in its abundance and prosperity just a few weeks earlier will be astonished by the desolation he leaves behind. Furthermore, he shall "destroy the mighty and the holy people," which means that even valiant and godly individuals will fall before him. In verse 25, it is mentioned that "through his policy, he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand."

He will employ any deceitful methods, cunning schemes, and false strategies at his disposal to gain advantages. He shall be greatly pleased when these tactics succeed, magnifying himself in his heart. When he gains an advantage through false promises, protestations, or any other means, it will please him immensely, and those around him will seek to elevate his stature. By promoting a false sense of peace, he shall destroy many:

1. By promising peace through peace treaties, people will assume that all is well, and they will be caught off guard when he attacks unexpectedly, resulting in the destruction of many.
2. By promoting a sense of peace through his apparent prosperity, people will believe he is the better choice for safety and security, and they will join him, contributing to his cause. They will believe that aligning with him will protect their lands and estates, leading to the destruction of many.
3. "In pace," as Calvin interprets it, suggests that he will withdraw quietly and in a non-hostile manner, wearing down his adversaries' forces through a strategy of attrition. He will gain time and advantages while seemingly remaining quiet. Even during this silent phase, he shall destroy many. Ultimately, he shall "stand up against the Prince of Princes," refusing to acknowledge the majesty and power of God. He will oppose the ways of divine providence, even when they are against him, blinded to the reality. Nevertheless, the text asserts that he "shall be broken without hand," implying that God will break him in a manner unknown to us when all other means and human efforts fail, causing fear that everything will be ruined and miserable.

We complain much about the hardships we endure, but our sufferings do not compare to what the people of God, who are so dear to Him, endured in those times. Our sins cry out for similar miseries, but it is God's grace that preserves us from such dreadful calamities. It is from the Lord of Hosts that we are shielded from these terrifying evils.

Some may question whether we are in danger of suffering like the Jews did under Antiochus. If bloodthirsty Papists and cursing, blasphemous Cavaliers were given free rein, our miseries could soon parallel or surpass theirs. Many of them have gathered together, and their rage has reached alarming levels. It is solely due to the great Lord of Hosts that they have not overwhelmed us with a deluge of the most horrifying woes and dreadful miseries ever to befall any Christian nation on Earth. But thanks be to the Lord, who has not allowed us to become prey to their cruelty. Let the crown of all our mercies, especially the great mercy in the recent battle, be placed upon the head of this glorious Lord of Hosts. In 2 Samuel 12:27-28, when Joab fought against Rabbah and the victory was nearly won, he sent for David to come and take the city so that David could receive the glory. The crown, made of gold and precious stones, would be placed upon David's head. While God has used instruments in this great work, and they deserve honour, let the ultimate glory be given to the Lord of Hosts.

In a treatise by Plutarch about the evils of self-glorification, there is a remarkable story about a man named Pytho. He had slain a formidable enemy of the country named Cotys. While the officials were vying to honour him, Pytho said to them, "These things some of the gods have done; as for us, we have merely lent our hands to this work." Indeed, the General and many of our captains and soldiers have acted valiantly, but it is equally true that they have merely lent

their hands to this work. The Lord of Hosts has accomplished this great feat for both them and us. If we wish to show our respect for the General and honour him as he deserves, especially in this matter, we should do so by speaking well of him in the presence of the Lord of Hosts and by praying earnestly for him.

Among the Romans, it was customary to hold solemn processions for many days after a victory, offering prayers and sacrifices to their gods on behalf of their General. The practice was to send letters adorned with laurel to the Senate after a victory, requesting that they decree solemn supplications for the General. In conclusion, the glory of this great achievement should not rest with anyone but should pass through all to our mighty Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts. Let us adopt the doxology of the angels from Isaiah 6:3 for today: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Hosts. The whole earth is full of thy glory." May our streets, congregations, families, and hearts be filled with the glory of this Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Hosts.

And thus, you have had one aspect of the glory of this great name of God explained and applied.

If you will grant me a little more time, I will provide you with a glimpse of the other aspect of this glorious name and bring this to a conclusion.

God is the Lord of Hosts in terms of the absolute command he holds over all creatures. He has all creatures in heaven and on earth under his authority, just as a General has his soldiers. The angels are his Hosts. In Psalm 68:17, it says, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai." In Hebrew, the word "chariot" is in the singular to signify the joint service of all the angels; they are like one chariot, even though there are many thousands, or, as we have it here, Myriads of

thousands. Among these soldiers, there is never any mutiny; their harmony is most blessed, and their union is firm and indissoluble. In English, the phrase "twenty thousand, even thousands" can be translated as "Myriads of thousands." The word "angels" used here is not found elsewhere in Scripture in that sense. It comes from the Hebrew word "Shanah," which means "to second" or be next to God. They are the chief princes, the nobles of God's court, as mentioned in Daniel 10:13 when referring to Michael as one of the chief princes. The Seventy translates the word as "the cheerful ones" who willingly, freely, and joyfully serve this Lord of Hosts in his wars. They derive it from the Hebrew "Shaan," which signifies tranquillity and joy, as in Sinai, where God was with ten thousand of his holy ones when he gave the Law, as mentioned in Deuteronomy 33:2. Similarly, in Zion, the angels, God's Hosts, make it as dreadful to all her enemies as those angels who appeared on Mount Sinai made it to the people. Daniel 10:20 mentions that an angel told Daniel he was to return to fight with the king of Persia. God has his angels stand against the great princes of the earth, and they go forth to fight with them, often delivering terrible blows when least expected.

The stars in heaven are also the Hosts of God, as stated in Judges 5:20: "They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." The waters are God's Host; they drowned Pharaoh in the Red Sea, and in Judges 5:21, the River Kishon swept away the mighty Host of Sisera. The winds are the Hosts of God, as mentioned in Psalm 148, along with hail, snow, fire, vapor, beasts, and creeping things. Livy reports that in the Battle of Cannae, the winds raised dust in the eyes of the Romans, hindering their vision during the fight. The locusts are also God's Hosts, as stated in Joel 2:25. Consider the great Host God gathered against Pharaoh: frogs, flies, lice, and caterpillars. They were all God's armies against him. God



gave commission to fire, and it burnt up Sodom; he gave commission to the earth, and it swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

The main point I intend to convey through this is to reveal the glory of God in this title of his, derived from this consideration.

1. God is glorious in this that He has an exceedingly great army. The greatness of an army is the glory of a general. Now, God's army, composed of His angels that surround Him, is truly immense. In Daniel 7:10, it is said, "Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." Even an army of locusts, in Joel 2:25, is called a great army. Therefore, the host of angels should be esteemed as a truly great army.
2. His army is exceedingly strong and powerful. This, too, is a source of glory for a general. God, by sending just one of His captains from heaven, was able to slay one hundred and eighty-four thousand of Sennacherib's forces in a single night, as recorded in 2 Kings 19:35.
3. He has multitudes of armies. It is the glory of a great prince to have many armies in the field at once, one in one place, another in another place, thus encircling his adversaries with multiple armies. The Lord of Hosts has armies in the heavens, armies in the air, armies in the seas, and armies on the earth, dispersed in every country. The whole world is filled with the multitudes of the Lord's armies.
4. All these armies of the Lord are always ready. They are prepared armies, always on standby, ready to act upon receiving the word. They are in battle array, perpetually armed and prepared to execute the will of their general. No prince or commander can

claim to have their armies constantly ready; often, when they have need of them, much time is wasted in assembling troops and providing them with arms.

5. God's armies unfailingly achieve His intentions. They always prosper in their battles and are never defeated, accomplishing precisely what God sends them for. Psalm 148:8 states, "Fire, hail, snow, vapour, stormy wind, fulfilling his word." Many mariners may neglect to fulfil God's word, but when God has them at sea, He sends stormy winds, and they fulfil His word upon them. Psalm 103:21 says, "Bless ye the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." Many people, who consider themselves great, often act as if they are above God's commandments. In contrast, the angels that excel in strength obey His commandments, attentively listening to hear what God has to command them and readily obeying. This applies to all of God's hosts, for as it follows in verse 21, "Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure." They are ever ready to serve their Lord, even to the point of self-sacrifice. The command of a general in an army is potent; he can prevent his army from engaging in pillage if he chooses. Plutarch, in the life of Pompey, recounts an incident where Pompey, upon learning that his soldiers were unjustly committing acts of violence, had all their swords sealed with his seal, making it so that no one dared to break the seal without permission. He did more than simply command them not to pillage; he exercised control over their weaponry.
6. Moreover, God compels His enemies to fight for Him and can turn their weapons against themselves, a power beyond that of all other captains and generals in the world. Sozomen and

Nicephorus recount a great work of God in the defence of the righteous Emperor Theodosius, where a mighty wind caused the arrows of his enemies to be redirected upon themselves. Claudian also mentions this event, saying, "Oh, thou beloved of God, for whom even the skies and the wind fight!" There are no creatures other than devils and humans that willingly and faithfully fight for God. Even these, God can compel to fight for Him, whether they desire to or not, even when they appear to be fighting against Him. Just as many people who claim to defy the devil are still his slaves and do his bidding, many whose hearts and actions oppose God are used by God to fight for Him and accomplish His purposes.

7. The glory of God's infinite wisdom is evident in all His armies, as He places them in perfect order and guides them to maintain their ranks consistently. If we could perceive the order and radiant wisdom within it, we would be astounded by its brilliance. In Joel 2:7, it is said of the locusts, "They shall march every one in his ways, and they shall not break their ranks; neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path." Organising and guiding such vast multitudes of armies is infinitely beyond the skill of any earthly commander. When David meditated on the glory of God in His works, as seen in Psalm 104:24, he couldn't contain his awe and exclaimed, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches." Let our thoughts be lifted when we contemplate the riches of God's wisdom displayed in the marshalling of all His armies. Certainly, if we were to delve into this and let our minds dwell upon it, it would dispel our atheistic thoughts. How could anyone deny the existence of God when such admirable art and skill is evident, even in the works of nature, which they themselves do not

comprehend? If a person were to witness a vast army marching in perfect order, could they genuinely believe that these soldiers fell into this formation purely by chance as they gathered together? It would surely convince them that skilled commanders had orchestrated this military precision. Similarly, the same conviction of a wise God must be established when we consider the order in which all creatures are arranged.

8. God sustains all these armies daily at His own expense, a practice that He has maintained since the beginning of the world. They rely entirely on Him, yet they do not burden Him in the slightest. He remains as rich as ever, with the capacity to support them all, and even many thousands more if He so desires. Surely, this is a great God.
9. God is capable of imbuing even the tiniest creature with as much power as He pleases, elevating it above its natural abilities, so that even the weakest and most insignificant creature can become irresistible. This is why God has often used humble means to humble the power, arrogance, and pride of the mighty of the Earth. Consider how Pharaoh was struck with terror by something as inconsequential as flies. It is noteworthy that, after the plague of hail, Pharaoh only promised to let Israel go (Exodus 9:28), but when confronted with God's army of flies, he urgently ordered their release (Exodus 10:8). However, the most striking example of this is found in Joel 2:2, where God speaks in high terms of His mighty army. In truth, this "mighty army" was composed of locusts and caterpillars. In verse 2, He calls the day of their arrival "a day of darkness, of gloominess, a day of thick darkness." He refers to them as "a great people and a strong" in verse 3, adding, "there hath not been ever the like." Verse 3 continues, "A fire devoureth before them, and behind

them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness, yea, and nothing shall escape them." In verse 4, God describes them further: "The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses, and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array." Some interpret these verses to refer to the Babylonians, but upon closer examination, it becomes clear that they are describing locusts and caterpillars. Therefore, the expressions used here are metaphorical throughout: "as horses," "as a strong people in battle array." In verse 6, it is foretold that "Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness." Even those with audacious and brazen foreheads in their wickedness, those who did not fear the mighty God, will tremble before the locusts. God will instill such terror in these seemingly insignificant creatures that all faces shall grow dark with fear, appearing swarthy from dread. Verse 7 continues, "They shall run like mighty men, they shall climb the wall like men of war," and in verse 8, it is said that "when they shall fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city, they shall climb up upon the houses, and enter in at the windows." Furthermore, verse 10 foretells, "The earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining." Such terror shall accompany them that it will seem as though the sun and moon have lost all their light, as if earthquakes are occurring wherever they go. Verse 11 adds, "And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army," just as commanders speak with authority before their armies. The Lord takes pride in leading such an army, for, as the verse continues, "his camp is very great and strong that executeth his word: for

the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" All of this refers to the army of locusts and worms, as indicated in verse 25: "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you." If God can elevate locusts and worms to such a terrifying army, then how much more terrifying can He make all His other great hosts? Surely, this God is a glorious Lord of hosts.

10. This great General is the source of strength for all His armies, and He possesses infinite strength within Himself alone, surpassing the power of all His armies in heaven and on earth. The power of His hosts is but a fraction of the power He imparts to them. In contrast, among humans, the strength of a captain or general relies on the soldiers in the army, not the other way around. While their wisdom and courage are invaluable, their strength is vested in the army. If the soldiers abandon them or falter, what can the general do? However, with God, it is different. He provides all the strength, sustains it, blesses it, and it operates only through the power of His might. If all the forces of His creation were combined into one, God still possesses infinitely more power within Himself, and He can accomplish infinitely more through His word alone in an instant than they can achieve as long as the world endures. How great indeed is this God, this Lord of hosts!

To summarise briefly:

1. Who wouldn't fear this God, then? As stated in Job 13:11, "Shall not his excellency make you afraid?" A significant portion of His excellence lies in His name; it should instill a reverential fear in our hearts. Psalm 76:4 declares, "Thou art more glorious and

excellent than the mountains of prey. The stout-hearted are spoiled: At thy rebuke O God of Jacob, the chariot and the horse are cast into a dead sleep." Consequently, verse 7 concludes, "Thou, even thou art to be feared, and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?"

2. Therefore, it is undoubtedly wise to be on God's side, to align with His party. This is the strongest side and will certainly emerge victorious. It is safest and most honourable to unite with the Lord. Recall Christ's words to His disciples for encouragement against fear: "I could pray to my Father, and he would send me twelve Legions of Angels." In Psalm 27, David, though alone, considers himself safe with the Lord of Hosts. He declares, "Though an Host shall encamp against me, my heart should not fear; Though War should rise against me, in this will I be confident" (verse 3). In what? Verse 1 provides the answer: "That the Lord is his light, his salvation, and the strength of his life." If we are with the Lord, we can be certain that we will have more with us than against us. 2 Chronicles 32:7-8 affirms this truth: "Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the King of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him. With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God, to help us, and to fight our battles." The people rested upon Hezekiah's words. Here, faith finds a firm foundation. If we contemplate God solely in His role as the Lord of Hosts, we need never fear a shortage of soldiers, for all creatures in heaven and earth are His trained, armed soldiers, and He Himself is infinite. How fortunate we would be if, in all our difficulties, we could exercise faith in the Lord of Hosts, considering Him in this light!

Now, you may wonder, "This Lord of Hosts is indeed a suitable object of faith, but haven't we greatly provoked Him to come against us? Are we not fearful that He is now manifesting His wrath?"

I will give you one text of Scripture in such a case as this when your provocations of Him weigh heavily upon you. It is as sweet, full, and encouraging as any I know. Zechariah 1:17. The Lord had declared in the beginning of the chapter that He had been sorely displeased with their fathers (verse 2). It becomes evident from verses 3 and 4 that they were no better than their fathers. In verse 12, it is mentioned that the Lord of Hosts had been indignant with Jerusalem for seventy years. So, even at that present moment when the Prophet addressed them, it seemed that God's indignation was evident against them. However, to break their hearts and elevate their faith, observe what a gracious promise comes to them, even now, in verse 17: "Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, My cities through prosperity (or through good, as the word is in Hebrew) shall yet be spread abroad, and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem." Notice that there are four "yets" in this verse, and they are very gracious: "Cry yet," "shall yet be spread," "shall yet comfort," and "shall yet choose Jerusalem." All these blessings are bestowed by the Lord of Hosts, even though He was sorely displeased and provoked to indignation. We have sinned—cry yet. We have provoked wrath—shall yet be spread. We are miserable wretched creatures—shall yet comfort. We are unworthy—shall yet choose. Oh, the free grace of our God to His people! Troubled, distressed soul, look up to Him, as He reveals Himself through this glorious name. Cry out to Him using this name: "Lord, You command Angels, heavens, earth, and seas. Now let Your power work for the good of my soul. Give a heavenly command to this disordered heart of mine to yield and submit to You, to these lusts that rise against You, so that they may be subdued and even destroyed. Lord, in any



difficulties we find ourselves in, let us not be discouraged. We may not see how Antichrist will be brought down, but Revelation 18:8 says, 'Her plagues shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.'

Furthermore, it is most honourable to align with, to be under this General. Soldiers often boast of the power, greatness, and magnificence of their General and consider it an honour. The people of God have infinite reason to boast about the Lord of Hosts, under whose banners they fight. He is their praise and glory. Psalm 148 shows God gloriously surrounded by His Hosts. The conclusion in verse 14 reads: "He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the Lord." This means that He not only serves as the object of praise for His saints, but also His saints take pride and honour in serving under such a Commander. There are two Captains in the world under whose command all people serve: the Lord of Hosts and the Devil. The Devil also has his armies fighting for him, including the Dragon and his Angels. All wicked individuals are under his command and fight for him. His primary lieutenant is Antichrist. It is no dishonour to abandon these commanders and seek refuge under the banners of the Lord of Hosts.

Let us honour the Lord of Hosts by being willing to be placed wherever He pleases, by accepting any rank or position He appoints, and by holding our positions steadfastly. If God places us in the forefront where the battle rages hottest, let us not complain. The greater the struggle, the greater the reward. We must not choose our own positions. Unlike the angels, all other creatures are passive to the work of the Lord in ordering them. We should be active in freely surrendering ourselves to His orders, be content with them, and

maintain our ranks. It is easy to maintain rank while marching, but not so when the battle begins.

Finally, how awe-inspiring must this glorious name of God be to all ungodly individuals who persist in enmity against such a God? Isaiah 45:9 declares, "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth." How greatly indignant must God be toward those who dare to resist such a glorious Majesty? God can merely speak to any part of your body, and it will cause you to cry out in anguish and agony. Your life will become more bitter than death. God can give a command to the next morsel of bread, and it will choke you and send you down to hell.

God Himself is against you; He opposes you in all His attributes. The sharp edge of His infinite justice is aimed at your heart. All of God's creatures are armed and ready to act against you, and they would attack you if God but gave the command. The angels are prepared, saying, "Lord, shall one of us go and remove that wretch who dares to blaspheme Your name, to raise himself against You?" It's like what Abishai said to David in 2 Samuel 16:9: "Why should this dead dog curse my Lord the King? Let me go and take off his head." The air asks, "Lord, shall I convey infection into his body and poison him?" The water asks, "Shall I stop his breath?" The fire asks, "Shall I seize and burn him?" The earth asks, "Shall I open up and swallow him?" The beasts of the field ask, "Shall we run upon him and tear him?" Your food and drink ask, "Shall we choke him or harm him?" You are surrounded by God's hosts on every side, just as in 1 Chronicles 13:14 when Judah looked back and saw the battle in front and behind, and they cried to the Lord. Look around, O distressed soul, and see the hosts of the Lord before and behind you, and cry to the Lord. Surely there is no creature near you that you shouldn't regard with a trembling heart; you never know if it might be sent by God to cut you

off and take you to your own place. Without doubt, some creature or another will soon come upon you and be an instrument of God's wrath if not prevented by your repentance. When God awakens a guilty conscience, every creature becomes terrifying to it, and the wrath of God is seen in the face of every creature. Cain cried out, "Everyone that meets me will kill me." Why? Who was there in the world to kill him? Not many besides his father and mother, yet he thought everyone would kill him, especially if it was some extraordinary work of God in the heavens, seas, or elsewhere, such as extreme thunderstorms and tempests. How terrifying such things are to a conscience like Caligula's and others! The prophet Elisha prayed to God to open his servant's eyes to see God's hosts around them to deliver them from fear. My prayer is that God would open your eyes so that you may see God's hosts surrounding you, causing you to fear. If your eyes were open, it would be like what happened to those who came against Elisha; when their eyes were opened, they found themselves surrounded by enemies in Samaria. Certainly, as long as God is your enemy, all creatures in heaven and earth are your enemies. Therefore, consider how powerless you are to oppose this glorious God. Lay down your weapons of enmity, lament your desperate folly, and make it your highest priority in the world to reconcile with Him. God still offers you mercy, just as Alexander did to those he waged war against while the lamp was still burning. If they waited until it went out, only bloodshed was expected. The lamp of your life is still burning; come in so that your soul may live. There is no resisting this God; He will receive glory from you despite your heart.

FINIS.

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## **MONERGISM BOOKS**

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