

Gods stede, by nomen God these three heryngs, & maketh men louen him and his lawes, more then Christ and Christes law, and dreden him also. And there as the people shulden yeelde to God their vowes, he sayth he hath power to affoylen them of their a-vowes, and fo this sacrifice he \*nemeth away from God. And there as the people shoulde cry to God in the day of tribulation, he letteth them of their cryeng to God and bynemeth God that worship. This day of tribulation is whan man is fallen thorowe sinne into the deuils seruice, and than we shulden cry to God after help, and axen forgeuenes of our sinne, and make great sorow for our sinne, and ben in full will to do so no more ne none other sinne, and that our Lord God wole forgeuen vs our sinne, & maken our soule cleane. For his mercy is endlesse.

But Lord, here men haue bynomen thee much worschyp: For men seyn that thou ne might not cleane affoylen vs of our sinne. But if we knowen our sinnes to priests, & taken of them a penance for our sinne gif we mowen speake with them.

A Lord thou forgave somtime Peter his sinnes and also Mary Magdaleine, and many other many sinfull men without shriuing to priests, & taking penance of priests for their sinnes. And Lord thou art as mighty now as thou were that time, but gif any man haue bynomen thee thy might. And we lewed men beleuen, that there nys no man offo great power, and gif any man maketh him selfe of so great power he \*heigheth himselfe aboute God. And S. Paul speakech of one that sitteth in the temple of God & highten him aboute God, and gif any such be, he is a falsē Christ.

But hereto seyn priests, that whē Christ made cleane leprous men, he bade them goe and shewe them to priests. And therefore they seyn that it is a commandement of Christ, that a man should shewen his sinne to priests. For as they seyn, lepre in the olde lawe betokeneth sinne in this new lawe. A Lorde God, whether thine Apostles knew not thy meaning as well as men done nowe? And gif they hadden yknow that thou haddest comāded men to shriuen them to priests, and they ne taught not that commandement to the people, me thinketh they hadden ben to blame: But I trow they knewen wel that it was none of thy commaundements, ne nedeful to heale of mans soule. And as me thinketh the lawe of lepre, is nothing to the purpose of shriuing: for priestes in the olde lawe hadden certain poynts and tokens to know whether a man were leprous or not: and gif they were leprous, they hadden power to putten them away from other cleane men, for to that they weren cleane, & then they hadden power to receiuen him among his brethren, and offeren for him a sacrifice to God.

This nis nothing to the purpose of shriuing. For there nis but one priest, that is Christ, that may knowe in certaine the lepre of the soule. Ne no priest may make the soul cleane of her sinne, but Christ that is priest after Melchisedekes order: ne no priest here beneath may wyit for certayne whether a man be cleane of hys sinne or cleane affoyled, but gif God tell it him by reuelation. Ne God ordeined not that his priestes should set men a penance for their sinne after the quantite of the sinne, but this is mannes ordinance, and it may well be that there cometh good thereof. But I wote well that God is much vnworshipped thereby. For men trust more in his absolutions, and in his yeres of grace, than in Christes absolutions, and thereby is the people much appaired. For now, the sorow a man should make for his sinne, is put away by this shrift: and a man is more bold to do sinne for trust of thys shrift, and of this bodilich penance.

An other mischief is, that the people is ybrought into thys beleefe, that one priest hath a greater power to affoylen a man of his sinne and cleannere, than another priest hath.

An other mischief is this, that some priest may affoylen them both of sinne and paine, and in this they taken them a power that Christ granted no man in earth, ne he ne vsed it nought on earth himselfe:

An other mischief is, that these priestes sellen forgeuenes of mens sinnes and absolutions for money, and this is an heresie ac-cursed that is yepeled simonie: and all thilke priestes that axeth price for graunting of spiritual grace, \*beth by holy lawes de-privied of their priethode, and thilke that assenteth to this heresy. And be they ware, for Helyse the prophet toke no money of Naaman when he was made cleane of his lepre, but Giesi his seruant: and therefore \* the lepre of Naaman abode with him and wyth his heires euermore after.

Here is much matter of sorow, to see the people thus far ylad away from God and worshupen a falsē god in earth, that by might and by strength hath ydone away the great sacrifice of God out of his temple: of which mischief and discomfort, Daniel maketh mention, and Christ beareth thereof witnes in the gospell. Who that readeth it vnderstand it. Thus we haue ytold apertie, how he that saith he sitteth in Christis stede, \*binemeth Christ his worship and his sacrifice of his people, and maketh the people worschep him as a God on earth.

Cry we to God, and knowledge we our sinnes euerichone to other as S. James teacheth, and pray we hartilich to God euerichone for other, & then we shulen hopen forgeuenes of our sinnes. For God that is endles in mercy sayth, that he ne wil not a sinfull

mans death, but that he be turned from his sin & liuen. And there-fore, when he came downe to saue mankind, he gaue vs a lawe of loue and of mercy: and bade, gif a man do a trespas, amend him priuilich: and gif he leue not his sinne, amend him before witnes: and gif he ne amendeth not, men should tel to the church: and gif he ne amendeth not than, men shuld shone his company as a pub-licane, or a man that is misbeleued, and this lawe was yfigured in the lawe of lepre, who that readeth it, he may see the sooth.

But Lord God, he that sitteth in thy stede, hath vndo thy lawe of mercy and of loue, Lord, thou biddest loue enemies as our self: as thou shewest in the gospell, there as the Samaritane had mercy on the Iewe. And thou biddest vs also prayen for them that cur-sen vs, and that defamen vs, & pursuen vs to death. And so Lorde thou didst, & thine apostles also. But he that clepeth himselfe thy vicar on earth, and head of thy church, he hath vndone thy lawe of loue and mercy. For gif we speaken of louing our enemies, he teacheth vs to fight with our enemies, that Christ hath forbidden. He curseth and desireth vengeance to them that so doth to hym. Gif any man pursueth him, hee curseth him, that it is a sorowe a Christen man to hearen the cursinges that they maken, and blas-phemies in such cursing. Of what thing that I know, I may beare true witnes.

But gif we speake of louing of our brethren, this is vndone by him that sayth he is Gods vicar in earth. For Christ in the gospell biddest vs, that we shoulde clepen vs no father vpon earth: But clepen God our father, to maken vs loue pestilich together. And he clepeth himselfe father of fathers, & maketh many religions, & to euerich a father. But whether is loue and charity encreased by these fathers and by their religions, or els ymade lesse? For a Friar ne loueth not a monke, ne a secular man neither, nor yet one friar a nother that is not of the order, and it is againward.

A Lord, me thinketh that there is litle perfection in these reli-gions. For Lorde, what charity hauen such men of religion, that known how they mown againstand sin, and fleen away fro their brethren that ben more vncūning then they ben, & suffren them to trauelen in the world withouten their coscell as beastes? Tru-lich Lorde, me thinketh that there is but litle charity, and then is there litle perfection. Lorde God, when thou were on earth, thou were among sinfull men to drawn them from sin, & thy disciples also. And Lord, I trow thou ne grautest not one mā more künning then an other al for himselfe, and I wote wel that lewdmē that ben laborers, ne trauel not a lonlich for himselfe. Lord our beliefe is, that thou ne wer not of the world, ne thy teaching neither, ne thy ser-uautes that liueden after thy teaching. But all they forsaken the world, and so euery christen man must. But Lorde, whether thou taughtest menne forsake their brethrens companie and trauell of the worlde, to liuen in ease and in rest, and out of trouble and anger of the worlde, by their brethrens trauell and so forsaken the world?

A Lord, thou ne taughtest not a mā to forsaken a pore estate and trauel, to ben afterward a Lord of his brethren, or ben a lords fellow and dwelling with Lords, as doth men of these new reli-gions. Lord thou ne taughtest not men of thy religion thus to for-sake the world, to liuen in perfection by them selfe in ease, and by other mens trauell. But Lorde they sayen they ben ybound to thy seruise, and seruen thee both night and day in singing their pray-ers, both for themselfe and for other men, that done them good both quicke and dead, and some of them gone about to teach thy people when they hauen leisure.

A Lord, gif they ben thy seruantes: whose seruantes ben we that cannot preyen as they done? And when thou were heere on earth, for our nede thou taughtest thy seruantes to preyen thy father priuilich and shortlich: And gif there had beene a better maner of praying, I trowe thou wouldest haue taught it in helpe of thy people. And Lorde thou reouest hypocrites that preyen in long preyer and in open places, to ben yholden holy men. And thou seyest in the gospell, wo to you Pharisees hypocrites. And lord thou ne chargedest not thy seruantes with such maner seruice: But thou seest in the gospell, that the Pharisees worshopē thee with their lippes, and their hart is farre from thee. For they \*chargen more mens traditions than thy commaundements.

And Lord, we lewed men han a beleefe, that thy goodnesse is endles: and gif we kepen thine hestes, than ben we thy true ser-uautes. And though we preyen thee but a litle & shortlich, thou wilt thinken on vs, and grauten vs that vs nedeth, for fo thou be-highted vs somtime. And Lord I trowe, that pray a man neuer fo many quaint prayers, gif he ne kepe not thine hests he is not thy good seruant. But gif he keepe thine hestes, than he is thy good seruant, and so me thinketh. Lorde that praying of long prayers ne is not the seruice that thou desirest, but keeping of thine hestes: and than a lewd man may serue God as wel as a man of religion: though that the Plowman ne may not haue fo muche siluer for his prayer, as men of religion. For they \*kunnen not so wel prei-sen their prayers as these other chapmen: But Lorde our hope is, that our prayers be neuer the worle though it be not fo wel solde as other mens prayers.

Lorde, Ezechiel the Prophet sayth that whan he spake to the people

\* Nemeth, that is, taketh.

Against auricular confession.

Sinnes forgiuen without shrift. \* Heigheth, that is, exalteth.

Obiection of the priestes to maintain shrift. Answer to the obiection.

Penance for sinne, is mans ordinance and not Gods.

Mischiefes that come by auricular confession.

Popish priestes charged with Simony.

\* Beth, that is, bec.

\* Bynemeth, that is, taketh away.

The Pope breaketh the lawe of loue, & mercye.

The Pope would be a father, but he beareth no loue.

To forsake the world is not to liue in ease from company.

True seruice of God standeth not in long prayer, but in keeping Gods commaundements.

\* Chargen, that is, they care for.

\* Behited, that is, promised.

\* Kunnen, that is, they can.