

The example of Peter slaying Ananias and Saphira falsly wratched of the papists.

fore the secte of the Apostles: & it was denided vnto euery one as he had neede thereof. But a certaine man Ananias with Saphira his wife solde a piece of land, and kept back a part of the price of the field, his wife being priuy vnto it, and bringing a certaine part thereof, he laid it at the feete of the Apostles. But Peter saide vnto Ananias: Ananias, why hath Satan tempted thy hart that thou shouldest lye vnto the holy ghost, to keepe backe a part of the price of the land: Did it not whilist it remayned, remayne vnto thee: and being sold, was it not in thine owne power? why hast thou concealed this thing in thine hart? Thou hast not lye d vnto me, but vnto God. And when Ananias heard these wordes, he fell downe and gaue vp the ghost, & great feare came on all them that heard these things. And the young man rose vp and tooke him vp, and carried him out and buried him. And it came to passe about the space of iij. houres after, that his wyfe came in being ignorant of that which was done. And Peter sayd vnto her, Tel me woman, sold ye the land for so much? And she sayd, yea for so much. But Peter saye vnto her, why haue ye agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lord? Behold, the secte of them which buried thy husbande are at the doore, and shall carry thee out, And straight way she fel downe before his feete, and gaue vp the ghost, and the young men entring in, found her dead and they carried her out, and buried her by her husband. And great feare came on all the church, & all those which heard these things. It is meruaile y any man that is wise, will say that by this processe Peter slue Ananias or his wife. For it was not his act but y act of God, who made a wedding to his sonne, & sent his seruant to cal them, that were bidden vnto the wedding, and they would not come. The king then sent forth his seruantes, to the outcozners of the hic wayes, to gather all that they could find, both good and euill. And so they did. And the maryage was full furnished with gesses. When came in also the king to view and see them sitting. Among whom he perceaued there one sitting hauing not a wedding garment, and sayth vnto him, friend how camest thou hither? And he being dumme, had not a worde to speake. Then said the king to the seruantes, take and binde him hand and foote, and cast him into the outward darcknes, there shall he weeping and gnashing of teeth. Many there be called, but few chosen. &c.

Peter not the cause of the death of Ananias and Saphy- ra.

It is manifest, that this wedding garment is charitie, without which, because Ananias entred into the maryage of Christ, he was geuen to death, that by one many might be informed to learne & vnderstand: that they which haue sayth & not charitie, although they appeare to men to haue yet it can not be priuy to the spirit of God, that they doe sayne. Such there is no doubt, but they shall be excluded fro the maryage of christ, as we see this here exemplified in the death of Ananias & his wyfe by the hand of God, & not by the hand of Peter. And how should Peter the haue iudged Ananias (albeit he had iudged him) worthy of death by the rigour of the old law? For why, by the law he had not bene guilty of death, for that part, which they fraudulently & dissemblingly did reserue to themselves. Yea and if they had staines much from an other man, which was greater nei ther yet for hys lie committed, he had not therfore by y law of iustice bene found guilty of death. wherfore if he did not condene hym by y law of iustice, it appeared that he condened him by the law of grace and mercy, whiche he learned of Christ. And so consequently it folloeweth much more apparent, that Peter could not put him to death: Further- moie to say that Peter put him to death by the meece motion of his own will, and not by authoritie of the old law, nor by the new, it were derogatory and slanderous to the good fame and name of Peter. But if Peter did kill hym, why then doth the Bysshop of Rome which pretendeth to be successor of Peter, excuse himselfe and his priestes from the iudgement of death agaynst heretiques and other offenders, although, they themselves be consenting to such iudgements done by laymen? For that which was done of Peter without offence, may reasonably excuse him and his fellow priestes from the spot of crime. Actes. 5. It is manifest that there was another which did more greuously offend the Ananias, and that Peter rebuked him with moie sharpe wordes: but yet he commanded him not so to be put to death. For Simon Magus also remaying at Samaria, after that he belened and was baptised, he ioyned himselfe with Phillip: And when he sawe that the holye spirit was geuen by y Apostles (saying they: handes vpon me) he offered the mony, saying geue vnto me this power, that vpon whome I shall lay my hand, he shall receaue the holye Ghost. To whom Peter answered: Destroyed be thou and thy money together: And for that thou supposest the gifte of God to be bought with money, thou shalt haue neyther part nor fellowshipe in this doctrine. Thy

The wedding garment what it is. The death of Ananias and his wife, what information it giueth to the church,

Peter not the cause of Ananias death.

Actes. 3.

hart is not pure before god, therefore repēt thee of thy wickednesse, and pray vnto God that this wicked thought of thy hart may be forgeuen thee: for y perccuue thou art cū in the bitter gall of wickednes and bande of iniquitie. Be- holde here the greuous offence of Symon Peters hard & sharp rebuking of him, and yet therupon he was not put to death. wherby it appeareth that the death of Ananias aforesaid, proceeded of God and not of Peter. Of all these things it is to be gathered seing the iudgements of death are not grounded vpon the expresse and playn scriptures, but onely vnder the shadow of the olde law: that they are not to be obserued of Christians because they are contrary to charity. Ergo y bishop of Rome approuing such iudgements, alloweth those that are contrary to the law & doctrine of Christ, as before is sayd of warres, where hee aproueth & iustificth that which is contrary to charity. The order of Priesthood, albeit it doth iustifie the iudgements to death of the laity, wherby offenders are condēd to die, yet are they themselves forbidden to put in execution the same iudgements. The priestes of the old law being vn- perfect, when Iulius said vnto the concerning Christ (whō they had accused worthy death) take hym vnto you and according to your law iudge him, answered: that it was not lawful for them to put to death any man.

wherby it appeareth that our priestes being much moie perfect, may not lawfully geue iudgemēt of death against any offenders: yet notwithstanding, they claime vnto the the power iudicial vpon offenders: Because say they, it belongeth vnto them to know the offences by the auricular confession of the offenders, and to iudge vpd the same being knowne, and to ioyn diuers penances vnto y parties offending, according to the quantitie of their offences committed, so that y sinner may make satisfactio say they vnto God for the offences which he neuer committed. And to confirme vnto the this iudicial power, they alleage y scriptures in many places, vnto that to serue their purpose.

First they saye that the Bishopp of Rome (who is the chief priest and iudge among them) hath ful power & authoritie to remit sinnes, wherupon they say, that he is able fully & wholly to absolue a man a poena & culpa, so that if a man at the time of his death had this remission: he should straight waies flie vnto heauen without any paine of purgatory. The other Bishops (as they say) haue not so great authoritie. The priestes constituted vnder euery Bishopp, haue power, say they, to absolue the sinnes of the that are confessed, but not all kind of sinnes: because there are some grieuous sinnes reterued to the absolutions of the Bishops, and some againe to the absolution onely of y chief and high Bishopp. They say also that it beloueth the offenders, for the necessitie of their soule health, to call to remembrance their offences, and to manifest the same with all the circumstances thereof, vnto the priest in auricular confession, supplying the place of God, after the manner of a Iudge: & afterwarde humbly to fulfill the penance entoynd vnto him by the priest for his sinnes, except the sayde penance so entoynd, or any part thereof be released by the superioz power. All these things (say they) are manifestly determined, as wel in y decrees, as decretals. And although these things haue not expressely their foundation in the playne and manifest doctrine of Christ, nor any of y Apostles: yet the authors of the decrees and decretals concerning this matter, haue grounded the same vpon diuers places of the scriptures, as in y proces of Christ in y Gospell of Saynt Mathew y xvi. chapter. wherupon they ground y popes power iudicial, to surmount the powers of other priestes, as where Christ sayd vnto his disciples: who do men saye that I am? And they answered: some saye that thou art John Baptist, some Elias, & some Jeremy, or one of the Prophets. To whom he sayde: but who saye you that I am? Symon Peter makinge answer, sayde: Thou art Christ, the sonne of the liuing God. And Iesus answered and said vnto him: Blessed art thou Symon the sonne of Ionas, for flesh & blond hath not opened this vnto thee: but my father which is in heauen. And I say vnto thee: y thou art Peter, & vpon this rocke will I build my church: and hel gates shall not preuaile against it. And I will geue thee the keyes of the kingdome of heauen. And whatsoeuer thou shalt binde vpon earth, shall also be bound in heauen: and whatsoeuer thou shalt lose vpon earth, shall bee losed also in heauen.

Out of this text of Christ, diuers expositiois haue drawen diuers errors. For when Christ sayd: And I say vnto thee, that thou art Peter, and vpon this rocke will I build my Church: Some therupon affirme, that Christ meant he would builde his Church vpon Peter by authoritie of that text, as it is writte in y first part of y decrees, Dist. 19. cap. Ita dominus noster. The exposition hereof, is ascribed

Ioh. 18.

Like a pul- led Henne.

Math. 16.

The Popes vsurped power falsly founded vpon scriptures.

Dist. 9. cap. Ita Domini noster.