

Alas alas, thilke great citie that was clothed with bis and purple, and braile, and ouergilte with gold and precious stoness and pearle. For in one houre all these great riches shall be destroyed, than shall they sey that shall be damned with her. We haue erred fro the waye of trowth and rightwines, light haue not shined to vs, and the sonne of vnderstanding haue not resen to vs: we haue be made weery in euerych way of wickednes and of lust, and haue gone hard wayes, but the wayes of God we knew nought: what hath pride profited to vs, or the boast of riches what hath it brought to vs? All this is as a shadow of death, and we mow now shew no token of holynes: in our wickednes we be wasted away. Thinke therefore I read, that thou shalt yelde rekening of thy bayly. Here endeth the first part of this Sermon, and beginneth the second part.

**I**N which secod part with the helpe of God I will shew first, who shall clepe vs to this rekenyng. Afterward, to fore what iudge we shall rekyng: and last what punishyng shall be do to them that ben found false seruantes and wicked, and what reward shall be gyue to them that be founde good and true. For the first ye shall wetoen that there shall be twey domes. The first doome anone after the departyng of body and of soule, an this shall be speciall. And of this rekenyng or doome speaketh the Gospell of Luke. The second rekenyng or doome shall be anone after the generall resurrection, & shall be vniuersal. And of this is to speke in the Gospell. To the first euery man shall be cleped after other, as the worlde passeth. To the secunde shall come together in the stroke of an eye all mankynde. To the first, men shall be cleped with three sumners other Sergeantes: the first is sicknesse, the second is age, and the third is death: the first warneth, the second threteth, and the third taketh. This is a kyndly order, but otherwise it fayleth, for sume we seeth dyeth that neuer wist what was sicknes ne age, as children that ben sodenly slayne. And sume, ye the most part that deyeth now a dayes deyeth, byfore her kynde agee of death: therefore I say, that the first that clepeth to this speciall reckning is sicknes, that followeth all mankind, so that euery man hath it: and sum is sicknesse that sume men haueth but nought all. Yet the first sicknesse is double, for sume is withinne in the mightes of the soule, and sume is without in feblenes of the bodie that needis mo be stroyed, whan time by hem selfe is cause of corruption as Philosphie sayth, that thereby feblenes and sicknes. And so may we see hereby, though that a man shut out of the house of hys hart all maner of worldlie and fleshly thoughtes, yet vnneth shall a man for ought that he can doo, thinke on God onelic, the space of o Pater noster, but that some other thing that is passyng, entreth into the soule, and draweth her from contemplation. But O Lorde God, what seekenes is this, an heuie burden on the sonnes of Adam, that on fowle moock and fen of the world we may thinke long ynow. But on that the soule should most delectation haue by kinde, mow we nought thinke so little a space, but if the cokle enter among the whete. Of this seekenes speaketh Poule, where he sayth. I see a lawe in my limmes fighting agenes the lawe of my sprite, and taking me into the law of sinne. So that it fares by vs, as by a man that would looke ageyns the sun, and may nought do it long for nothing. And forsoth that is for no default that is in the sunne, for she is most cleere in her selfe, and so by reason best should be seyn, but it is for feblenes of mans eye. Ryght so, syth Adam our first fader was put out of Paradyse, all hys offspring haue ben thus sicke, as the Prophet seyth. Our fadres haue eat a bitter grape, and the teeth of the children be waxe an edge. The second sicknes, that is commune to all mankind, commyth of feblenes of the body: as hunger and thirst, cold and heate, sorow & werines, and many other as Job. 18. sayth. A man that is ibore of a woman, liuing a little while, is fulfilled with many miscafes. Yet there is other sicknes that cometh to some men, but not to all, as Lepyr, Palsey, Feuer, Dropse, Blindnes, and many other, as it was seyden to the people of Israell, in holy writ. But thou keepe the commandments that be writ in this booke, God shall echen the sicknes of thee and of thy seede, great sicknes and long abiding. Yet yee shall vnderfond, that God sendeth other while, such sicknes to good men, and other while to shrewes. To good men God doth it for two causes, and that is sooth. Officknes I wol to be vnderfond also, of all maner of tribulations. The first cause, for they shold alway euery know, that they haue none perfection of them selfe, but of God onely, and to echen theyr meekenes. And thus sayth Poule, least the greatnes of reuelacions rere me vp into pride, is giuen a pricke of my fleshe, the Augell of Sathanas to smite me on the necke, wherefore I haue thrise prayed God, that he shuld go fro me, and he answered me: My grace is sufficient to thee for vertue is fulfilled in sicknes, where on thus sayn the glose. The fend axing Job to be tempted, was herd of God, and nought the Apostle axing his temptation to be removed. God herd him that shuld be damned, and he herd nought him, that he shuld saue. For oft the sick mā axit many things of the leche, that he wol not geue him, & that is for to make him whole of sicknes. Also God sendeth Saincts oft sicknes & persecution, to giue vs sinfull wretches example of patience: For if he suffer his Saincts

to haue such tribulation in this world, and they thankin him thereof, much more wretchis that God fendeth not the hundred aparty of their sorowe, shulden beare it meekely sith we haue disferued a thousand so much as they haue. Whereof, Tobie Tobie. 2. that one day whan he was wery of byrying of poore men, the which shulden haue ley vnburyed, and haue be etene of houndis, and foules, as caraynes, of other vnreasonable bestes, whan for werynesse he had leide him to reste, through Goddis sufferance the swallowes that bredden aboute on his hous, madden ordure into his eyen, and he wexer blind. Thus it is writ of this temptation forsoth: Therefore God suffered to come to him, that to them that comen after, shuld be geuen ensample of pacience, as by the temptation of holie Job. For sith from his childhood, euermore he drede God, and euer kept his hestes: He was not agreued ayenst God that the mischiese of blindness fell to him: but vnmoueable dwelled in the dread of God, thanking him all the dayes of his life. Lo that holy writ sayth expressly, that God suffered this holie man to haue that sicknes, to geue them that shuld come after him ensample of pacience. Also other while, God sendeth syckenes and tribulation to wicked men, and for two causes. First for that they shoulde rather drede God, and leaue their sinne. As it is writ: their sicknes hath bene multiplied, and after they haue hied to Godward. For we see oft men in sicknes know their God, that neuer would haue turned to him while they had bene whole. Also God sendeth them sicknes oft to agast other men, leit they follow their sin. As the sickenes of kyng Antioche, whome God smote with such a sicknes, that wormes fell out of hys body while he lyued, in so farforth, that he stanke so foule, that his frends were so wearye of it, that they might not suffer it. And at the last, when he him selfe might not suffer his owne stinch, then he began to know himselfe, and sayd: It is rightfull, to be subiect to God, and a deadly man not to hold himselfe onely euen with God, and the story saith he asked mercie of God, and made a vowe to God, that he would make the Citie of Ierusalem free, and the Iewes to make them as free as the men of Athens: and that hee would honour Gods temple wyth precious ary, and multiply the holy vessels, and finde of his owne rent and spenses pertainyng to the sacrifice. And he would become a Iew, and go ouer all the lond to preach Goddes might. And yet God gaf him not such mercy as he desired. And I trow certain that it was for good. In as much as God knew he would not afterward hold his couenant, or els for he axet it too late. What mede was it for him to forsake his wickednes, whan hee was vnmightie to doo good or euill. Neuertheles, I trow he was not dampned, in as much as he had such repentance, for repentance in this life come neuer too late if it be trow. But by thys vengeance that God tooke on thys king, shoulde men see, what it is to be vnobedient to God. And also it is to take heede, that whan euer sicknes commeth, euer it sheweth, that hee that suffereth this deadly, shall nedes dye. For though he may skape of his sicknes, yet hee may not skape death. And so thou must needs come giue rekenyng of thy bayly. The second somnour that shall clepe thee to this particuler doome, is elde or age. And the condition of him is this, though that he tarie with thee, he will not leue thee, till he bring thee to the thirde, that is death. But there be many that though they haue this somnour with them, they take none hede, though they see ther heare here, her back crook, her breth synke, her teeth fayle, her yea derk, her visage riuely, her crene wexit heuy to her. What meneth all this, but that age summeth to the dome.

But what more madhead may be than a man to be cleped, and drawe to so dreadfull a rekenyng there, where but he answereth well he forgeteth both body and soule to damnation for euer? If seing a litle wordly merris on the way, he thinketh so mekill theron, that he forgetteth who draweth him, or whether he draweth. So doth he that is smiten with age and liketh so on the false world is wealth, that he forgetteth whether he is away: Therefore sayth an holy Doctour, that among all abusions of the world most is of an old man that is obstinate: for he thinketh not on his outgoing of this world, ne of passing into the lyfe that is to come: he heareth messengers of death, and he leueth hem not, and the cause is this, for the threfold cord that such an old mā is bounden with, is hard to breke. This cord is custome, that is of three plights, that is, of idel thought, vnhoneft speach, and wicked dede: the whiche if they groweth in a man from the childhood into mans age, they maketh a treble cord to bynde the old man on custome of sinne. Therefore sayth Esay breake the bondes of sinne. Thinke herefore whofoeuer that thou be that art thus summed, that thou might not scape that thou ne shalt yeld the rekenyng of thy bayly.

The third somner to this rekenyng, is death. And the condition of him is, that whan euer he come, first, other the secod, other the last houre he ne spareth, neither power, ne yough, ne ha drede, no thretning, ne he ne taketh hede of no prayer, ne of no gift, ne he graunteth no respit, but withouten delay he bringeth forth to the dome. Therefore seyth Sainct Austen. Well ought euery man drede the day of his death. For in what stete a mans last day findeth hym, whan he dyeth out of this world, in the same stete he

Math. 27.

3. sumners,  
Sicknesse.  
Age.  
Death.

Job. 14.

Deutero.

Corinth. 12.

Antioche.

The second  
somner,  
Properties  
of death.

Esaye.

The third  
somner  
definitio  
mortis.  
Augustinus.