

The Wicked mans Portion.

OR

A S E R M O N

(Preached at the *Lecture* in *Boston* in *New-England* the
18th day of the 1st Moneth 1674. when two men
were executed, who had murdered
their Master.)

Wherein is shewed

*That excesse in wickedness doth bring
untimely Death.*

By *INCREASE SHELTON*, Teacher
of a Church of Christ.

Prov. 10. 27. *The fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years
of the wicked shall be shortned.*

Eph. 6. 2, 3. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother (which is the first
Commandment with promise) that it may be well with thee,
and thou mayst live long on the Earth.*

Pana ad paucos, metumina omnes.

B O S T O N,

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they who have taken away the lives of others by violence, shall themselves dy a violent and bloody death. Joab murdered Abner and Amasa, and He (though an old man) dyed before his Time, He that had shed the blood of others, his own blood was shed for it at last. Joash conspired against Zachariah and stoned him with stones, and afterwards, *His own servants Conspired against him and slew him.*

Many other Instances are recorded in the Scripture, and in humane writings all confirming the Truth of this. Yea God from Heaven doth usually Pursue this sin, with speciall signal Testimonies of his Righteous displeasure. Hence the Lord hath strange wayes to discover this sin. Rather then the *Murderer* shall not be found out, the Heaven shall reveal his iniquity and the Earth shall rise up against him. How often have the fowls of Heaven, and the dumb creatures of the earth brought Murder to Light?

Plutarch.

The story is ancient and famous concerning *Bessus* who had murdered his own Father; and sometime after the swallows making a noise in the chimney as it is the manner of those birds to doe, His guilty Conscience was afraid they had told of him, whereupon he goeth to kill the swallows, and being asked the reason, why (saith he) the swallows doe nothing but say *Bessus hath Killed his Father, Bessus hath Killed his Father*, whereby he was suspected, and upon examination confessed the fact.

Clarke Exam-
ples Vol. 1.
p. 230.

It is also storied of a souldier belonging to King *Pyrrhus*, that being slain, a dog which he had, could by no means be enticed from the dead body, but the King coming by, he fawned upon him as it were craving help at his hands, whereupon He caused all his army to pass by in order, and when the *murderers* came the dog flew fiercely upon them, and then fawned upon the King, the souldiers hereupon examined, confessed the *Murder*, and received condign Punishment. Many other Instances to this Purpose I could produce, but I forbear.

Again, *Rebellion* is a Crime which they that are guilty of, are *wicked overmuch*. When Inferiours shall wickedly rise up against superiours. When Subjects shall in a way of Rebel-

Rebellion rise up against the Authority which the Lord hath set over them, such often dy before their Time, Hence Christ saith, *All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword* Math. 26. 52. that is to say they that take up the sword in a way of Rebellion against Lawfull Authority. That Doctor Gamaliel in the speech he made in the Council taketh notice of two examples concerning this. Acts. 5. 36, 37. *Theudas boasting himself to be somebody, to whom a number of men, about four hundred joyned themselves, was slain, and all as many as obeyed him were scattered, and brought to nought, after this man rose up Judas of Gallilee, and drew away much People after him, he also perished, and all even as many as Obeyed him were dispersed.* So when Servants shall rise up in Rebellion against their Masters, it is a wicked thing. wherefore even Jezebel could say, *Had Zimri Peace who slew his Master* 2. Kin. 9. 31. After he had slain his Master had he peace in his own Conscience? Did he Prosper after that day? Did not the hand of God follow him till he himself was slain? *Had Zimri Peace who slew his Master?*

So when children shall rebell against their Parents, their wickedness is excessive & great. And such Children doe usually dy before their Time, witness the fifth Commandment where it is said, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy dayes, may be long upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* Therefore they that break this Commandment may expect that their dayes shall not be long, but they shall dye before their Time. We see it in Absolom, He was a rebellious Child, and what came of him? was he not hanged at last? and three darts thrust through his heart while he was yet alive. And Travellers report that in the same Place where Absolom was buried, there is now a vast heap of stones, which is come to pass by this meanes, it is Customary for every one that passeth by that Place, to throw a stone upon Absolom using these words, *Thus shall it be done to the son that rebels against his Father, Thus shall it be done to the child that riseth up against his Parents.*

2. *When a man shall multiply Transgression then he may be said to be wicked overmuch.* when he shall commit the same sin
over

over and over again. Once is too much, but many Times is *overmuch* indeed. Ecclesi. 8. 12. *Though a sinner do evill an hundred times.* Alas there is many a sinner that hath done so, He hath made himself drunk *an hundred Times,* He hath been unclean and abominable in the sight of God *an hundred Times,* He hath lyed against his conscience *an hundred Times,* then *he hath been wicked overmuch.* So when a vile creature shall adde *sin to sin,* as the Prophet complaineth of them, Isai. 30. 1. When he shall adde new transgressions to old sins, sins of age to sins of youth, later to former iniquities. What saith the Scripture? 1 Pet. 4. 3. *the Time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings &c.* Therefore when a sinner shall adde new debts to the old score, it is *more than sufficeth,* that is to say, He is *wicked overmuch.*

3. *They that are incorrigible in the wayes of sin, are wicked overmuch.* Who sin against all meanes that can be used to reclaim them. There are such sinners as do despise all meanes, they will take no warning. Though God himself speaketh to them by awfull Providences, taking some and hanging them up before their eyes, yet they will go on still in their trespasses. And though they that are the Lords vicegerents on earth, do establish and execute severe and righteous Laws, and put sin and sinners to shame, yet they still continue to transgress against the Lord. This doth evidence a desperately wicked man. It is spoken concerning a man that is beyond measure wicked, that he doth *run upon the thick bosses, of the Buckler of the Almighty* Job. 15. 26. What is the Buckler of the Almighty? It is the Word of God, And what are the thick *Bosses* of that Buckler? They are the threatnings and sanctions annexed to that Word. When sinners shall transgress in a Land wherethere are Laws established and regulated according to the Word of God, and those Laws faithfully executed, they *run themselves upon the thick Bosses of the Buckler of the Almighty,* and therefore are desperately wicked. And there are that sin against the light of the Gospel and reproofs administred in the Word and
Name

Name of God: such are *wicked overmuch*, and have cause to fear that they shall *dye before their Time*. witness that awfull scripture Prov. 29. 1. *He that being often reprov'd hardneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.* And there are that despise reproofes, instructions, admonitions, exhortations, privately administered in Families, by masters, Parents, such are also *wicked overmuch*, and do often *dye before their Time*. Witness the sons of Eli, of whome it is said, *they hearkned not to the voice of their Father, because the Lord would slay them* 1 Sam. 2. 25. Doth thy Father give thee good counsel? but wilt thou not harken to him? This is a sign, that *the Lord will slay thee*. Remember those proud and profane young men, the sons of Eli, they regarded not what their Father said to them, and therefore they dyed before their Time. This cometh of not harkning to the voice of a Father.

5. *They that mind nothing but this world and the vanities analysts thereof are wicked overmuch.* Even they that live like Athuits without God in the world. And this last Particular suits with the scope of this Context. For as they are *righteous overmuch* who under pretence of Religion neglect their particular Callings, so they are *wicked overmuch* who neglect duties of Religion, out of respect to the world. There are that live in a continual neglect of God & of their own souls and Salvation. Hence no prayer it may be not so much as in the Family, no reading of the Scriptures, no Meditation, no self-examination. How do men live as if there were no world but this, as if there were no God to serve, and they had no souls to save? Certainly, all such are *wicked overmuch*.

And thus have wee done with the second thing propounded in order to the clearing of the *Doctrine* before us. Wee come to the third Particular, *viz* to enquire into the Reasons of this *Doctrine*, why God in his Providence doth oftentimes so dispose as that an untimely death shall be the portion of him that hath been *wicked overmuch*?

For Answer, we shall onely mention two Reasons, breifly.

1. *The Lord doth this that he may manifest his righteous Reas.*
dis.

וְיָמֵן לֵאמֹר
significat, ne
nimium com-
movere ne-
gotiis seculi,
ne nimis &
immodicus
esto in illis
perpetuis im-
mensus, & ni-
aliam unquam
animo pre-
quicto cogi-
tans, ut con-
tra ab illis pla-
ne te te aver-
tere est nimis
justum esse.
Mercer in Lo-
cum.