

MEDITATION FOR

and vnto each one of our sowles? Finallie, what thing hath brought thee to be crucified vpon the tree of the crosse, there to stande so cruellie tormented from toppe, to toe, thy handes nailed, thy syde opened, thy members racked one from an other, thy bodie all of a gore bloude, thy vaines exhausted, & voide of bloud, thy lippes pale, and wanne, thy tonge bitter: to be shorte, all thy bodie wholie rente, and torne? What thing coude haue wrought such a most cruell fowle mangelinge, and boucherie of thee, as this was, but onely loue? O passinge great loue! O gracious loue! O loue, seemelie for the great vnspeakeable mercie, & infinite goodness of him, who is infinitlie good, and louinge, yea wholie loue!

Genes. 40.

Hauinge therefore so great, and so manie testimonies of thy loue (O my sweete Lorde, and Sauour) as these be, how can I but beleue, that thou louest me? Sith it is most certaine, that thou hast not changed that most charitable louinge harte, beinge now in heauen, which thou haddest when thou diddest walke here vpon the earthe? Thou art not like that cuppe bearer of kinge Pharao, who when he sawe him selfe in prosperitie, forgot his poore friendes, that he had left in prison: but rather the prosperitie, and glorie, that thou doest now enioye in heauen, moueth thee to haue greater pitie, and compassion, vpon thy children, whom thou hast left here in earthe. Now then, sith it is

certaine,

THVRSDAIE MORNINGE.

certaine, that thou louest me so much, as I see verie euidentlie thou doest, why do not I loue thee againe? Why do not I put my whole trust, and affiance, in thee? Why doe not I esteime my selfe verie happie, and riche, hauinge euen almightie God him selfe, so constanthe, & louinge a frynde vnto me? It is vndowtedlie a great wonder, that anie thinge in this life dothe make me carefull, and heauie, hauinge on my syde so riche, and so mightie a louer, throwghe whose handes all thinges doe passe.

THVRSDAIE
MORNINGE.

THIS daie (when thou hast made the signe of the Crosse, and prepared thy selfe hereunto) thou hast to meditate, and consider: Howe our Sauour was crowned with thornes: Howe Pilate said of him to the people, *ECCĒ HOMO*: Beholde the man: And how he bare the Crosse vpon his shouldres.

THE TEXT OF
THE HOLIE EVAN-
GELISTES.

Math. 25.
Marc. 15.



Ioan. 19.

WHEN our Sauour had bene thus whipped, and scourged, the souldiars of the president tooke him into the common haull, and there gathered about him the whole bade. And they stripped him, & put vpon him a purple robe, and platted a crowne of thornes, and put it on his head, and a reed in his right hande. And they bowed their knees before him, & mocked him, sayeing: Haill ô kinge of the Iewes: & they spitted vpon him, and tooke the reede he helde in his hande, and smote him on the head therewith. Then Pilate went forthe againe, and said vnto them: Beholde I bringe him forthe to you, that ye maie knowe, that I finde no faulte in him at all. Then

came

came Iesus forth, wearing a crowne of thornes, and a purple garmente. And Pilate said to them: Beholde the man. Then when the highe preistes and officers sawe him, they cried, sayeing: Crucifie him, Crucifie him. Pilate said vnto them. Take ye him, and crucifie him. For I finde no faulte in him. The Iewes answered, and sayed: We haue a lawe, and by our lawe he owght to die, because he made him selfe the sonne of God. Then when Pilate hearde that worde, he was the more afraied, and wente againe into the common halle, and said vnto Iesus. Whence art thou? But Iesus gaue him no answer. Then said Pilate vnto him. Speakest thou not vnto me? Knowest thou not, that I haue power to crucifie thee, and haue power to loose thee? Iesus answered: Thou couldest haue no power at all against me, except it were geuen thee from aboue: Therefore he that deliuered me vnto thee hath

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the greater sinne. Fro thenceforth Pilate sought to loose him. But the Iewes cried out, requiringe to haue him crucified, and their cries preuailed. And Pilate determined to accomplishe their requeste. And he let loose vnto them him, that for an insurrection, & murder, was cast into prison, whom they desired, and deliuered Iesus vnto them, to doe with him what they would.

Luc. 13.

Ioan. 19.

Luc. 23.

And they tooke Iesus, and led him awaie. And he bare his Crosse, and came into a place, that was called Caluarie. And there followed him a great multitude of people, & of women, which bewayled, and lamented him. But Iesus turned backe vnto them, & said: Daughters of Ieruzalem, weepe not for me, but weepe for your selues, and for your children. For beholde, the daies wil come, when men shall saie. Blessed are the barren, & the wombes that neuer bare, & the pappes that neuer gaue sucke. Then shall they beginne
to saie

to saie to the mountaines: falle vpon vs: and to the hilles: Couer vs. For if they do these thinges to the greene tree, what shall be done to the drye?



MEDITATIONS
Vpon these pointes
OF THE TEXT.



OME forthe O yee daughters of Sion, and beholde kinge Salomon with the crowne, wherewith his mother crowned him at the daie of his espousels, and vpon the daie of the ioyefulnes of his harte. O my soule, what doest thou? O my harte, what thinkest thou? O my tounge, how is it, that thou arte become domme? What harte is not broken? What hardnes is not mollified? What eies can abstaine from teares, and lamentation, beholdinge such a pittiefull and dolefull sight, as this is? O my most sweete

Cant. 3. 11

Sauour, and redeemer, when I open myne eyes, and doe beholde this dolorous Image, which is here set before me, how is it, that my harte doth not euen cleaue and rente in sunder, for verie anguise, and grieve: I see the most tender head of my Lorde, and Sauour, pearced with crewel thornes, at whose presence the powers of heauen do tremble, and quake: I see his diuine face spitted vpon, and buffeted: I see the lighte of his goodlie brighte forehead obscured: I see his cleare eyes dimmed, or rather blinded with show-ers of bloude: I see the streames of bloude, tricklinge downe from his head: which faulle ouer his eyes, and stayne the bewtie of his diuine face. How happeneth it (ô Lotd,) that the cruell whippings thou diddest suffer before, and the death that ensueth, and the great quantitie of bloude that was so cruellie shed, did not suffice, but that the sharpe thornes also shoulde now perforce let out the bloude of thy head, which the whippes and scourges before had pardoned? If thou diddest receaue those reproches, and buffettes, to make satisfaction by them for such blowes, and buffettes, as I through my sinnes haue laid vpon thee, haddest thou not receaued enowghe of them al the nighre before? If thy death alone was sufficient to redeeme vs, what needed so manie kindes of most shamefull villanies, and reproches? To what ende were all these newe inuentions, and strange deuises of

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contemptes, and mockeries? Who hath euer hearde, or read of such a kinde of crown? or of such maner of tormentes? Out of what harte came this newe inuention into the world, that one punnishment shoulde serue in such wise, as both to tormente a man, and withall to dishonor him? Were not those cruell tormentes sufficiente, that had bene vsed in all former ages, but that they must also inuent these newe and strange punnishments at the time of thy most bitter passion? I see well (ô Lorde) that these so manifolde iniuries were not necessarie for my redemptiō, (for euen one onely droppe of thy most pretious bloude was sufficient for the same:) howbeit it was verie conueniente, that they shoulde be so manie, and so greate, that thou mightest thereby declare vnto me, the greames of thy loue: and by meanes of them lincke me vnto thee with chaynes, & fetters of perpetual bonde, and dewtie: and confounde the gaye braueries, and fonde shewes of my pride, and vanities: and teache me thereby to despise the pompe, and glorie of the worlde.

Wherefore ô my soule, that thou maist conceaue, and haue some feelinge of this so doleful passage, set first before thine eyes, the former shape of this Lorde, and withall the excellencie of his vertues: and then incontinentlie turne thy selfe, and beholde him in such pitiefull sorte, as he is here represented vnto vs. Consider therefore the

*The causes
why our
Saviour
would
suffer so
many folde
paynes, &
iniuries,
for our
redemption.*

greatnes of his former beawtie, the modestie of his eies, the sweetnes of his wordes, his awthoritie, his meeknes, his mylde behauour, and that goodlie countenance of his, so full of grauitie, and reuerence. Behold how humble he was towards his disciples: How faire spoken towards his enemies: How stowte towards the prowde: How sweete towards the meike: and how merciful towards al sortes of persons. Consider howe mylde he hath alwaies bene in sufferinge: how wise in answeringe: howe pittiefull in his iudgementes: how merciful in receauinge sinners: & how free, & bountiefull in perdoninge their offences.

When thou hast thus beholden our Sauour, and delighted thy selfe with beholdinge such a perfect forme, turne thyne eies, & beholde him in this pitiefull plight, wherein he is here set out to the worlde, clad in most scornfull raiment with an olde purple garmente, holdinge a reede in his hande in steede of a royall scepter. Beholde that horrible and paynefull diademe of thorne on his head, those hollowe & wanne eies, and that dead countenance. Beholde that strange forme of his, wholie disfigured, and begored with bloude, and defyled with the spittle, which they had besmured all ouer his face. Beholde him in all partes, both inwardelie, and outwardelie, his hart pierced with sorrowes: his bodie full of woundes: forsaken of his owne disciples:

persecuted

persecuted of the Iewes: scorned of the souldiers: contemned of the Bishoppes: baselie reiected of the wicked kinge: accused vniustely: and vtterlie destitute of the fauour of all men.

And thinke vpon this, not as a thinge past, but as a thinge presente: not as though it were an other mans payne, but as though it were thyne owne. Imagine thy selfe to be in the place of him, that suffereth: and thinke with thy selfe what a terrible paine it would be vnto thee, if in so sensible and tender a parte as the head is, they shoulde fasten a number of thornes (yea and those verie sharpe) which shoulde pearce euen to the sculle. But what speake I of thornes? If it were but one onelie pricke of a pynne, thou couldest hardlie abyde the paine of it. And therefore thou maist well thinke what a fore greuous paine that most tender, and delicate head of our Sauour felte at that time, with this strange kinde of tormente.

Wherefore o brightnes of the glorie of the father, who hath thus cruelly delte with thee: O vnspotted glasse of the maiestie of almightie God, who hath thus wholie bespotted thee: O Riuer that flowest out of the paradice of delightes, & with thy streames reioycst the Citie of God, who hath troubled these so cleare, and sweete waters: It is my sinnes (o Lorde) that haue so troubled them, and my iniquities haue made

*Our synnes
were the
only cause
of all our
Saviours
paines.*

*2. Paral.
29.*

them so muddie. Alas poore wretche, and miserable caitife, that I am. Woe is me: how haue my sinnes bespotted myne owne soule, seinge the sinnes of others haue here so fowlye bespotted and troubled the verie cleare fountaine of all bewtie? My sinnes O Lorde, are the thornes that pricke thee: My folies are the purple, that scorne thee: My hipochresie, and fayned holines, are the ceremonies, wherewith they despise thee: My gaie garmentes, & vanities, are the crowne, wherewith they crowne thee. So that I O Lord am thy tormentor, and I am the verie cause of thy paines, and greiffes. The kinge Ezechias purified the temple, that had bene prophaned by wicked persons, and commaunded that all the filthe that was therein shoulde be cast into the riuer of Cedron. I O Lorde am this liuely temple, that is prophaned by the diuells, and defyled with infinite sinnes: and thou art the cleare riuer of Cedron, that doest with thy runninge streames susteine all the bewtie of heauen. In this riuer O Lord are al my sinnes drowned: In this riuer are my iniquities washed awaie: in somuch as by the merite of that vnspeakeable charitie, and humilitie, with which thou hast humbled thy selfe, to take vpon thee al my sinnes, thou hast not onelie deliuered me from them, but also made me partaker of thy graces, and treasures. For in takinge vpon thee my deathe, thou hast geuen me thy life: in takinge vpon thee my

heshe,

heshe, thou hast geuen me thy spirite: and in takinge vpon thee my sinnes, thou hast geuen me thy grace. So that (O my mercifull redeemer,) al thy paines are my treasures, and riches: Thy purple clotheth me: thy crowne honoreth me: thy strokes bewtifie me: thy sorowes comforte me: thy ang-wishes susteine me: thy woundes heale me: thy bloude enricheth me: and thy loue makethe me dronke. And what wonder is it, if thy loue make me dronke, seinge the loue thou barest towardes me, was able to make thee also dronken, and to leaue thee like an other Noe to appeare dishonored, and naked, to the open sighte of the worlde? The purple of burninge loue causeth thee to susteyne the purple of shame, and reproche: the earnest zeale thou hast of my profit, and furtherance, causeth thee to be contente to holde this reede in thy hande: And the cōpassion thou hast of my losse, & damnation, moueth thee to beare this dolorous crowne of ignominie vpon thy head.

*Our Savi-
ours pay-
nes are
our treasu-
res, and
riches.*

OF THOSE WORDES
OF THE GOSPELL, ECCE
*Homo: Beholde the
man.*

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WHEN they had thus crowned, & scorned our Saviour, the Iudge tooke him by the hande, in such euill plight as he was, and leading him out to the sighte of the furious people, said these wordes vnto them: *E c c e H O M O*, Beholde the man. Which is as much as if he had saied: If for enuie yee seeke his deathe, beholde him here in what a pitieful and dolefull case he is. A man vndowtedlye not to be enuied, but to be pittied. If you were afrayed least he shoulde haue become a kinge, beholde him here so wholie disfigured, that scarcely he seemeth to be a man? Of these handes so faste, and stronglie bounde, what cause is there, why ye shoulde feare? Of a man in this wise so fore whipped, and scourged, what would ye require more?

By this maist thou vnderstande (o my soule) in what a lamentable case our Saviour was at his goinge out of the iudgement hauled, seinge that euen the Iudge himselfe verelie beleued, that the pittiefull case in which he was, mighte haue sufficed to mollifie, and breake the vnmercifull cruell hartes of his enemies. Whereby thou maist well perceauie, what a dangerous, and vnseemelic thinge it is for a Christiā, not to haue

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compassion of the most grieuous, and bitter paines, & sorowes, of our sauour: seinge they were so great, that they were able (as the Iudge was perswaded) to mollifie those most sauage and cruell stony hartes of the Iewes. Where loue is, there is also sorowe. How can he then saie, that he loueth our Saviour Christe: that beholdinge him tormented in this most pittiefull, and dolefull plight, hath no compassion of him?

And if it be so wicked a thinge not to haue compassion of our Saviour Christ, what a haynous matter is it to encrease his paines, and martirdomes, and to adde thereunto sorowe vpon sorowe? Suerlie there could not be anie greater crueltie in all the worlde, than after that the Iudge had shewed our Saviour Christ vnto them so pittiefullye berayed, for his enemies to answer with such cruell wordes: *Crucifige: Crucifige: Crucifie him: Crucifie him*: Now if this was so great a crueltie in the Iewes, what a crueltie is that in a Christian, who in his deedes and workes saith euen as much as the Iewes did, althowgh he expresse it not in wordes. For dothe not S. Pawle saie? *That he that sinneth, crucifieth the sonne of God againe*. For so much as towching his parte, he doth a thing whereby he would binde him to dye againe, if his former death had not bene sufficient. How is it then (o Christian) that thou hast thy harte, and handes, readie bent, to crucifie our Lorde & redeemer, so often

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who so
loueth
Christ taketh
greefe
& compassion
of his bitter
paynes, &
sorowes

Heb. 6.
The wretched
Christians do
as it were
crucifie
Christ againe
by their euill
and unmercifull
workes.

tymes in this wise with thy sinnes? Thou oughtest to consider, that like as the Iudge presented that so pittiefull forme to the Iewes, supposinge there was none other more effectuell meane, to withdrawe them from their furie, than that dolefull sight: euen so the heauenlye father presenteth that same dolefull sight daily vnto all sinners: meaninge thereby, that in verie dede there is none other more effectuell meane to withdrawe them from sinne, than to set before them this so pittiefull a forme. Make accompte therefore, that euen now the heauenlie father laieth also the same pittiefull forme of his most deere, and onelie begotten sonne before thy face, and that he saith vnto thee: *ECCE HOMO: Beholde the man.* As though he shoulde saie: Beholde this man, in what a dolorous case he standeth, and remember withall, that he is God almighty, and that he standeth in this most dolefull, and lamentable plight, as here thou seest him, not for anie other cause, but for the verie sinnes of the worlde. See into what plight God is brought by the sinnes of man. Consider, how necessarie it was to satisfie for sinne. And consider also, how abhominable and horrible a thinge sinne is in the sight of almighty God: seinge it so disfigured his owne onelie sonne to destroy it. Consider moreover, what a sore reuenge almighty God will take of a sinner, for such sinnes as he himselfe committeth,

How abominable thinge sinne is, in the sight of God.

lithe

lithe he hath so sharpelie punnished his owne most dearlie beloued and innocent sonne, for the sinnes of others. Last of all, consider the rigour of the iustice of almighty God, and the fowle stayninge malice of sinne, which appeareth so dreadfullie euen in the verie face of Christ the sonne of God. Now what thinge coulde possiblie be done of greater efficacie, both to cause men to feare God, and also to abhorre synne?

It seemeth hereby, that almighty God hath shewed him selfe towards man, as a good louinge mother is wont to doe towards her wicked dawghter, that seeketh lewde meanes to plaie the harlot. For when neither wordes, nor punnishment be able to diswade her from her wicked diuelish purpose, she turneth her rage against her owne selfe, she beateth her owne face, and teareth her hayre, and when she is thus disfigured, she setteth her self before her dawghter, that thereby she maie vnderstande the greatnes of her offence, and that at the least for verie pittie, and compassion of her mother, she maie be moued to leaue her wicked purpose.

Now it seemeth that almighty God hath vsed the verie same remedie here for the chastisinge of men, settinge before them his owne diuine Image: to witte, the face of his owne most deerlie beloued sonne, so euill vsed, & disfigured: to the end, that whereas

they had bene so manie tymes admonished and rebuked by the mowthes of his Prophetes, and yet woulde not forsake their wickednes, they might at the least be moued for verie compassion to forsake the same, beholdinge that diuine forme of our Sauour Christ in such pittiefull wise disfigured for their synnes. So that before he laid his handes vpon men, but now he came to laie them vpon him selfe: which trulie was the last refuge that coulde be deuised, to withdraue men from sinne. And therefore as it hath bene at all times accompted a verie great wickednes to offende almighty God, so now after that he hath taken such a shape vpon him to destroye sinne, it is not onelye a great wickednes, but also a verie great ingratitude & horrible crueltie to offende him with anie deadlye sinne.

If thou wilt continewe in the contemplation of this point, (besides that thou mayst learne hereby to abhorre sinne) thou mayst also take great courage to put thy whole trust & affiance in almighty God, by consideringe this verie dolefull forme of our Sauour Christ, the which as it is of great force to moue the hartes of men, euen so hath it no lesse force, but rather farre greater, to moue the harte of almighty God. And therefore thou must thinke, that what dolefull forme our Sauour toke at that tyme vpon him, in the sight of the furious people, the verie same he presenteth

now

now before the diuine eyes of his most pittiefull and mercifull louinge father, so freshe, and in such bleedinge wise, as it was that verie same daie. Now what image and forme can there be of greater efficacie to pacifie the eies of the heauenlie father, than the pale, and wanne countenance (so pittiefullie disfigured) of his onelie begotten sonne. This is the golde propiciatorie: This is the rainbowe of diuers colours, placed amonge the clowdes of heauen, with the sight whereof almightie God is pacified. With this, were his eies fed: With this, was his iustice satisfied: Here was his honor restored: Here was such seruice done vnto him, as was answerable, and seemlie vnto his diuine maiestie.

Tell me now then, o thou weake, & mistrustfull man, if the shape, and forme of our sauour Christ was such at that tyme, that it was able, as the Iudge verelie beleued, to mitigate the cruell eies of such enemies, how much more able is it to pacifie the eies of the most mercifull heauenlie father? especially consideringe that whatsoever our sauour there suffered, was for his honor, & vnder his obedience. Compare then eies, with eies: person, with person: & thou shalt see, how much thou art more assured of the mercie of the heauenlye father, by presentinge vnto him this dolefull forme of our Sauour Christ, than Pilate was of the mercie of the Iewes, whē he shewed our Sauour

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thus pittiefully disfigured vnto the. Wherefore, in all thy praiers, and temptations, take this Lorde for thy sheilde, and buckeler: set him betweene thee, and almightie God: and presente him before his diuine maiestie, sayenge: ECCE HOMO: *Beholde the man:* I haue here (ô Almighty God) the man, whom thou hast so manie yeares sought for, to be a meane betwene thee, and sinners. I haue here the man, whose iustice is such, that it answereth thy goodnes in euerie poynte. I haue here the mā. who is so much punished, as our sinnes and offences required. Wherefore ô most mercifull louinge Lorde, looke mercifullly vpon vs, I most humblie beseech thee. And that thou mayst so doe, fixe thyne eies vpon the face of thy Christ. And thou (ô our sweete Sauour, & mediator) cease not to presente thy selfe before the eies of thy father for vs. And forsomuch as thy loue towards vs was so great, that thou wouldest offer vp thy bodie to the tormentors to be tormented for our sakes: vouchsafe (o Lorde) with the same loue, to present it vnto the heauenlie father, beseeching him, that it maie please him, for thy sake to pardon vs all our sinnes, and offences.

HOW

HOW OUR SAVIOUR CARRIED THE CROSSE VPON *his shoulders.*

§. III.

NOW when Pilate sawe that all those extreme punnishes that had bene so cruelly executed vpon that most innocent lambe, were not able to assuage the furie of his ennemies, he entered forthwith into the iudgement halle, and sat him downe in his tribunall seate, to geue finall sentence in that cause. The Crosse was in the meane tyme prepared and made redie at the gate, and that dreadfull banner was hoysed vp on highe in the aier, whiche threatened the terror of a most cruell death to our Sauour. Now when that sentence was geuen, and published, althowghe it was of it selfe both vniust, and cruel, yet did his ennemies adde an other further crueltie vnto it: to wit, they laid vpon those tender shoulders, that were so pittiefullie rent, and torne, with vnumercifull whippes, and scourges, the heauie tree of the crosse. All which notwithstanding, our most mercifull Lorde, and Sauour, refused not to carrie that heauie burthen, (wherevpon were laied all our sinnes,) but

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Genes. 22.

*These two
vertues,
loue, and,
iustice, did
put the
sonne of
God vpon
the crosse.*

embraced the same with an vnspeakeable great charitie, and obedience, for the verie loue he bare vnto vs. And so he went on his waie as an other true Isaac, with the crosse vpon his shoulders, to the place of his sacrifice. The cariadge was deuised betwene twoe. The sonne carried the woode, & the bodie, that should be sacrificed: & the father carried the fier, and the knife, wherewith the sacrifice shoulde be made. For truelie it was the fier of loue, which he bare towards mankynde, and the sharpe knyfe of the diuine iustice, that put the sonne of God vpon the crosse. These two vertues contended together within the heauenlie fathers breste, each one demaunding his right. Loue requested him to pardon mankynde: and iustice required that sinners might be punnished. Wherefore, to the ende that men might be pardoned, and sinne punnished, a mean was founde, that an innocent (to witt the sonne of God) shoulde die for all mankynde. This was the fier, and knife, that the Patriarcke Abraham carried in his handes, to sacrifice his sonne. For it was the loue of our saluation, and the zeale of iustice, that caused the heauenlie father to offer his owne most deerlie beloued sonne to the crosse.

Now goeth the sweete innocent Iesus forwardes on his waie, with that so heauie dolorous burthen vpon his weake, and torne

shoul-

shoulders, great multitudes of people followinge after him, & manie a pittiefull and sorowfull woman accompanieng him with grievous teares, and lamentations. What stonie harte had bene able to absteyn from most bitter weeping, beholdinge the kinge of angells to goe thus faintlie, with such a great, and waightie burthen: his knees trembling vnder him: his bodie crouching vnder the crosse: his modest eyes, and face, all blouddye: with that dolorous garlande of thorne vpon his heade: & besides all this, annoyed with those most shamefull opprobrious exclamations, and outcries, wich they gaue out in the waye against him?

But now in the meane tyme (O my soule) withdrawe thine eyes a little while fro this cruell sight, and hye thee with quicke speede, with heauines of harte, and greater store of teares trickeling downe by thy cheekes, towards the howse of the blessed virgin Marie. And whē thou art come thither, cast thy selfe downe at her feete, and speake these wordes in most dolefull, and lamentable wise vnto her. O Ladye of angells, and Quene of heauen! O gate of paradise, and aduocate of the worlde! O refuge of sinners, and health of the iust! O ioye of the Sainctes, and teacher of vertues! O mirror of cleannes! O patterne of patience, and example of all perfection! Woe is me (O blessed ladie,) woe is me, why am I

*The so-
rowfull
sydinges
hereof to
the blessed
virgin
Marie.*

preserved aliue, to see this present howe!
How can I liue, hauinge now seene with
myne eies that dolefull sight, which I haue
seene! What neede more wordes? Alas
deere virgine, and most blessed mother:
I haue left thy onely begotten sonne, my
sweete Lorde and Sauour in the cruell
handes of his malicious enemies, with a
crosse vpon his shoulders, wherevpon he
shalbe crucified.

Now what vnderstandinge is able to com-
prehende how deeply these sorowfull
newes pearced the most tender harte of that
most blessed virgin? Here her soule begane
to waxe fainte. Her face, and all the partes
of her vnspotted maydenlie bodie were
couered all ouer with a deadlie sweate,
which might haue sufficed to ende her life,
sauinge that by diuine dispensation, she was
reserued for greater angwishes: and so con-
sequetlie for a greater crowne, and rewarde,
in the kingdome of heauen.

Now the holie virgin walkethe towards
her sweete sonne and the great desire she
hath to see him, restoreth vnto her againe
the force, and strengthe, which sorrowe,
and greife, had taken awaie. She heareth a-
farre of the clashinge of armour, the
crowpes of the people, and those most
shamefull exclamations, & outcries which in
most dispirefull wise were thundered by
his outragious cruel enemies against him.
And incontinetlie she seeth the glisteringe

speares,

speares, and halbardes, which were holden
vp a loft. She fyndeth in the waye the drop-
pes & traces of bloude, whereby she might
easelie trace him, which waie he had gone,
and she needeth none other gwide to con-
ducte her vnto him. She approcheth nearer,
and nearer, vnto her deerlie beloued sonne:
She openeth her eies, which were verie sore
dymmed with sorowfull weeping, to proue
whether she might see him, whom her
soule so excedinglie loued. O what a
strange combatte was there now of feare,
and loue, in the dolorous harte of the most
blessed virgin Marie! In one respect she
had a desier to see him, and in another she
was vnwillinge to see him thus miserablie
and most cruelly disfigured. At the lengthe,
when she was come where she might see
him indeede, then those two lightes of hea-
uen, doe beholde one an other, and their
hartes embrace sweetly together by meanes
of their eies. Howbeit the sight of one an
other in this dolefull wise was a verie great
corrie to bothe their afflicted soules. Their
tongues were domme, so that neither of
them both for a while spake one worde:
but the natural affection of that most sweet
sonne, spake priuely to the heauie hart of
the most blessed virgin, and saied vnto her.
Why comest thou hither my doue, my
beloued, and my deere mother? Thy sorowe
increaseth myne, and thy tormentes do aug-
ment my paines, and be a great torment

Genes. 8.

vnto me. Departe my deere mother: departe I beseech thee, and returne home againe to thy howse. For it is not seemelie for thy virginall shamefastnes, and puretie, to be here in the companie of murderers, and theeues. And if it would please thee so to doe, it would certainly aswage both thy sorrowe, and myne. And I will remaine here to be sacrificed for the world. For this office appertaineth not to thee, but vnto me, and thy innocencie deserueth not this torment. Returne therefore my doue to the arcke, vntill such time as the waters of the floude do cease: for so much as here thou shalt finde no place, where thou mayst rest thy feete. There mayst thou attende to thy accustomed diuout praier, and contemplation. And there by liftinge vp thy soule in godlie meditations aboue thy selfe, thou shalt passe ouer more easely this thy dolefull sorowe and greiffe.

Nowe this beinge saide, the sorowfull heauie harte of the holie mother made answer to her sonne, & saied vnto him. Why doest thou commaunde me to doe thus my deere sonne? Why wouldest thou haue me to depart awaie from this place? Thou knowest (O my Lord God) that in thy presence each thinge is lawfull vnto me, and that there is non other Oratorie but where thou arte. How can I then departe awaie from thee, vnles I shoulde departe from my selfe? This greife and sorrowe so pos-

tesseth

tesseth my harte, that trewlie I can not thinke vpon anie other thinge. I can goe no whither without thee, neither can I seeke, or receaue comfort of any other, but of thee. Vpon thee is fixed all my whole harte. Within thee haue I made my habitation. And my life wholie dependeth of thee. Seinge therefore thou hast vowcheffed for the space of nine monethes to inhabite within my bowels, and to take my bodie for thy dwelling place, why maye not I for these three daies take thy bowels for my habitation? If thou wilt thus receaue me within thee, when thou art crucified, then shall I be crucified with thee: & when thou arte buried, then shall I be buried also together with thee. With thee woulde I drinke of the gaule, and vinegar. With thee woulde I suffer vpon the crosse. And with thee would I yeeld vp my ghost.

Such wordes as these spake the blessed virgin in her dolefull harte as she went. And after this sort, she passed ouer that painfull, and ircksome waie, vntill she came to the place of the Sacrifice.

