

# OpenTheo

## **THE BOOKS OF HOMILIES: Book 2—XXI. An Homily against disobedience and willful rebellion: Parts 1 & 2**

May 9, 2021



### **Alastair Roberts**

For the Easter season, I am reading the Books of Homilies, using John Griffiths' 1859 edition ([https://prydain.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/the\\_two\\_books\\_of\\_homilies.pdf](https://prydain.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/the_two_books_of_homilies.pdf)).

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### **Transcript**

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An Homily against disobedience and willful rebellion. An Homily against disobedience and willful rebellion. And set earthly princes over particular kingdoms and dominions in earth, both for the avoiding of all confusion, which else would be in the world, if it should be without such governors, and for the great quiet and benefit of earthly men their subjects.

And also that the princes themselves, in authority, power, wisdom, providence, and righteousness in government of people and countries committed to their charge, should resemble his heavenly governance, as the majesty of heavenly things may by the baseness of earthly things be shadowed and resembled. And for that similitude that is between the heavenly monarchy and earthly kingdoms well governed, our Saviour Christ in sundry parables saith that the kingdom of heaven is resembled unto a man a king, and as the name of the king is very often attributed and given unto God in the holy scriptures, so doth God himself in the same scriptures sometime vouchsafe to communicate his name with earthly princes, terming them gods, doubtless for that similitude of government which they have, or should have, not unlike unto God their king. Unto the which similitude of heavenly government, the nearer and nearer that an earthly prince doth come in his regiment, the greater blessing of God's mercy is he unto that country and people over whom he reigneth, and the further and further that an earthly prince doth swerve from the example of the heavenly government, the greater plague he is of God's wrath and punishment by God's justice, unto that country and people over whom God for their sins hath placed such a prince and governor.

For it is indeed evident, both by the scriptures and by daily experience, that the maintenance of all virtue and godliness, and consequently of the wealth and prosperity of a kingdom and people, doth stand and rest more in a wise and good prince, on the one part, than in great multitudes of other men being subjects, and on the contrary part, the overthrow of all virtue and godliness, and consequently the decay and utter ruin of a realm and people, doth grow and come more by an indiscreet and evil governor than by many thousands of other men. Thus say the holy scriptures, Well is thee, O thou land, saith the preacher, whose king is come of nobles, and whose princes eat in due season, for necessity and not for lust. Again, a wise and righteous king maketh his realm and people wealthy, and, A good, merciful, and gracious prince is as a shadow and heat, as a defence in storms, as dew, as sweet showers, as fresh water springs in great droughts.

Again, the scriptures of indiscreet and evil princes speak thus, Woe be to thee, O thou land, whose king is but a child, and whose princes are early at their banquets. Again, when the wicked do reign, then men go to ruin. And again, a foolish prince destroyeth the people, and a covetous king undoeth his subjects.

Thus speak the scriptures, thus experience testifieth of good and evil princes. What shall subjects do then? Shall they obey valiant, stout, wise, and good princes, and contemn, disobey, and rebel against children being their princes, or against indiscreet and evil

governors? God forbid! For first, what a perilous thing were it to commit unto the subjects the judgment, which prince is wise and godly, and his government good, and which is otherwise, as though the foot must judge of the head, an enterprise very heinous, and must needs breed rebellion. For who else be they that are most inclined to rebellion, but such haughty spirits, from whom springeth such foul ruin of realms? Is not rebellion the greatest of all mischiefs? And who are most ready to the greatest mischiefs, but the worst men? Rebels, therefore, the worst of all subjects, are most ready to rebellion, as being the worst of all vices, and furthest from the duty of a good subject.

As, on the contrary part, the best subjects are most firm, and constant in obedience, as in the special and peculiar virtue of good subjects. What an unworthy matter were it, then, to make the naughtiest subjects, and most inclined to rebellion and all evil, judges over their princes, over their government, and over their counsellors, to determine which of them be good or tolerable, and which be evil, and so intolerable, that they must needs be removed by rebels, being ever ready, as the naughtiest subjects, soonest to rebel against the best princes, especially if they be young in age, women in sex, or gentle and courteous in government, as trusting by their wicked boldness easily to overthrow their weakness and gentleness, or at the least so to fear the minds of such princes, that they may have impunity of their mischievous doings. But, whereas, indeed, a rebel is worse than the worst prince, and rebellion worse than the worst government of the worst prince that hitherto hath been, both are rebels unmeet ministers, and rebellion an unfit and unwholesome medicine, to reform any small lacks in a prince, or to cure any little griefs in government, such lewd remedies being far worse than any other maladies and disorders that can be in the body of a commonwealth.

But, whatsoever the prince be, or his government, it is evident that for the most part those princes whom some subjects do think to be very godly, and under whose government they rejoice to live, some other subjects do take the same to be evil and ungodly, and do wish for a change, if therefore all subjects that mislike of their prince should rebel, no realm should ever be without rebellion. It were more me that rebels should hear the advice of wise men, and give place unto their judgment, and follow the example of obedient subjects, as reason is that they whose understanding is blinded with so evil an affection, should give place to them that be of sound judgment, and that the worse should give place to the better, and so might realms continue in long obedience, peace, and quietness. But what if the prince be indiscreet and evil indeed, and it also evident to all men's eyes that he so is? I ask again, what if it be long of the wickedness of the subjects that the prince is indiscreet or evil? Shall the subjects both by their wickedness provoke God for their deserved punishment, to give them an indiscreet or evil prince, and also rebel against him, and withal against God, who for the punishment of their sins did give them such a prince? Will you hear the scriptures concerning this point? God, says the holy scriptures, maketh a wicked man to reign for the sins of the people.

Again, God giveth a prince in his anger, meaning an evil one, and taketh away a prince in his displeasure, meaning especially when he taketh away a good prince for the sins of the people, as in our memory he took away our good king Josias, king Edward, in his young and good years for our wickedness. And contrarily, the scriptures do teach that God giveth wisdom unto princes, and maketh a wise and good king to reign over that people whom he loveth, and who loveth him. Again, if the people obey God, both they and their king shall prosper and be safe, else both shall perish, saith God by the mouth of Samuel.

Here you see that God placeth as well evil princes as good, and for what cause he doth both. If we therefore will have a good prince either to be given us or to continue, now we have such a one, let us by our obedience to God and to our prince move God thereunto. If we will have an evil prince, when God shall send such a one, taken away, and a good in his place, let us take away our wickedness, which provoketh God to place such an one over us, and God will either displace him, or of an evil prince make him a good prince, so that we first will change our evil into good.

For will you hear the scriptures, The heart of the prince is in God's hand, which way soever it shall please him, he turneth it. Thus say the scriptures. Wherefore let us turn from our sins unto the Lord with all our hearts, and he will turn the heart of the prince unto our quiet and wealth.

Else for subjects to deserve through their sins to have an evil prince, and then to rebel against him, were double and treble evil, by provoking God more to plague them. Nay, let us either deserve to have a good prince, or let us patiently suffer and obey such as we deserve. And whether the prince be good or evil, let us, according to the counsel of the holy scriptures, pray for the prince, for his continuance and increase in goodness, if he be good, and for his amendment, if he be evil.

Will you hear the scriptures concerning this most necessary point? I exhort therefore, saith St. Paul, that above all things, prayers, supplications, intercessions, and giving of thanks be had for all men, for kings and all that are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceful life with all godliness. For that is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, etc. This is St. Paul's counsel, and who, I pray you, was prince over the most part of Christians when God's Holy Spirit, by St. Paul's pen, gave them this lesson? For sooth Caligula, Clodius, or Nero, who were not only no Christians, but pagans, and also either foolish rulers, or most cruel tyrants.

Will you yet hear the word of God to the Jews, when they were prisoners under Nabucodonosor, king of Babylon, after he had slain their king, nobles, parents, children, and kinsfolks, burned their countries, cities, yea, Jerusalem itself, and the holy temple, and had carried the residue remaining alive captives with him unto Babylon? Will you hear yet what the prophet Beruc saith unto God's people being in this captivity? Pray

you, saith the prophet, for the life of Nabucodonosor, king of Babylon, and for the life of Balthasar his son, that their days may be as the days of heaven upon the earth, that God also may give us strength and lighten our eyes, that we may live under the defence of Nabucodonosor, king of Babylon, and under the protection of Balthasar his son, that we may long do them service and find favour in their sight. Pray for us also unto the Lord our God, for we have sinned against the Lord our God. Thus far the prophet Beruc his words, which are spoken by him unto the people of God, of that king who was an heathen, a tyrant, and cruel oppressor of them, and had been a murderer of many thousands of their nation, and a destroyer of their country, with the confession that their sins had deserved such a prince to reign over them.

And shall the old Christians, by St. Paul's exhortation, pray for Caligula, Claudius, or Nero? Shall the Jews pray for Nabucodonosor, these enemies and kings being strangers unto them, being pagans and infidels, being murderers, tyrants, and cruel oppressors of them, and the destroyers of their country, countrymen, and kinsmen, the burners of their villages, towns, cities, and temples? And shall not we pray for the long, prosperous, and godly reign of our natural prince, no stranger, which is observed as a great blessing in the scriptures, of our Christian, our most gracious sovereign, no heathen, nor pagan prince? Shall we not pray for the health of our most merciful, most loving sovereign, the preserver of us and our country in so long peace, quietness, and security, no cruel person, no tyrant, no spoiler of our goods, no shedder of our bloods, no burner and destroyer of our towns, cities, and country, as were those for whom yet, as ye have heard, Christians being their subjects, ought to pray? Let us not commit so great ingratitude against God and our sovereign, as not continually to thank God for this government, and for his great and continual benefits and blessings poured upon us by such government. Let us not commit so great a sin against God, against ourselves and our country, as not to pray continually unto God for the long continuance of so gracious a ruler unto us and our country. Else shall we be unworthy any longer to enjoy those benefits and blessings of God which hitherto we have had by her, and shall be most worthy to fall into all those mischiefs and miseries which we in our country have by God's grace through her government, hitherto escaped.

What shall we say of those subjects, may we call them by the name of subjects, who neither be thankful nor make any prayer to God for so gracious a sovereign, but also themselves take armour wickedly, assemble companies and bands of rebels to break the public peace so long continued, and to make, not war, but rebellion, to endanger the person of such a gracious sovereign, to hazard the estate of their country, for whose defence they should be ready to spend their lives, and being Englishmen, to rob, spoil, destroy and burn in England Englishmen, to kill and murder their own neighbours and kinsfolk, their own countrymen, to do all evil and mischief, yea, and more too, than foreign enemies would or could do? What shall we say of these men, who used themselves thus rebelliously against their gracious sovereign, who, if God for their

wickedness had given them an heathen tyrant to reign over them, were by God's word bound to obey him, and to pray for him? What may be spoken of them? So far doth their unkindness, unnaturalness, wickedness, mischievousness in their doings, pass and excel any thing and all things that can be expressed or uttered by words. Only let us wish unto all such most speedy repentance, and with so grievous sorrow of heart, as such so horrible sins against the majesty of God do require, who in most extreme unthankfulness do rise, not only against their gracious prince, against their natural country, but against all their countrymen, women and children, against themselves, their wives, children and kinsfolks, and by so wicked an example, against all Christendom, and against whole mankind of all manner of people throughout the wide world. Such repentance, I say, such sorrow of heart, God grant unto all such whosoever rise of private and malicious purpose, as is meet for such mischiefs attempted and wrought by them.

And unto us and all other subjects God of his mercy grant, that we may be most unlike to all such, and most like to good, natural, loving, and obedient subjects, nay, that we may be such indeed, not only showing all obedience ourselves, but as many of us as be able, to the uttermost of our power, ability, and understanding, to stay and repress all rebels and rebellions against God, our gracious prince, and natural country, at every occasion that is offered unto us. And that which we all are able to do, unless we do it, we shall be most wicked, and most worthy to feel in the end such extreme plagues as God hath ever poured upon rebels. Let us all make continual prayers unto almighty God, even from the bottom of our hearts, that he will give his grace, power, and strength unto our gracious Queen Elizabeth, to vanquish and subdue all, as well rebels at home as foreign enemies, that all domestical rebellions being suppressed and pacified, and all outward invasions repulsed and abandoned, we may not only be sure and long continue in all obedience unto our gracious sovereign, and in that peaceable and quiet life which hitherto we have led under her majesty with all security, but also that both our gracious Queen Elizabeth, and we her subjects, may all together in all obedience unto God the King of all kings, and unto his holy laws, lead our lives so in this world, in all virtue and godliness, that in the world to come we may enjoy his everlasting kingdom, which I beseech God to grant, as well to our gracious sovereign, as unto us all, for his son, our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God and King immortal, be all glory, praise and thanksgiving, world without end.

Amen. Thus have you heard the first part of this homily. Now, good people, let us pray.

O Lord, withstand the cruelty of all those which be common enemies as well to the truth of thy eternal word, as to their own natural prince and country, and manifestly to this crown and realm of England, which thou hast of thy divine providence assigned in these our days to the government of thy servant, our sovereign and gracious Queen. O most merciful Father, if it be thy holy will, make soft and tender the stony hearts of all those that exalt themselves against thy truth, and seek either to trouble the quiet of this realm of England, or to oppress the crown of the same, and convert them to the knowledge of

thy Son, the only Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ, that we and they may jointly glorify thy mercies. Lighten, we beseech thee, their ignorant hearts to embrace the truth of thy word, or else so abate their cruelty, O most mighty Lord, that this our Christian region, with others that confess thy holy gospel, may obtain by thine aid and strength, surety from all enemies without shedding of Christian blood, whereby all they which be oppressed with their tyranny may be relieved, and they which be in fear of their cruelty may be comforted.

And finally, that all Christian realms, and especially this realm of England, may by thy defence and protection continue in the truth of the gospel, and enjoy perfect peace, quietness and security. And that we, for these thy mercies, jointly altogether with one consonant heart and voice, may thankfully render to thee all lord and praise, that we, knit in one godly concord and unity amongst ourselves, may continually magnify thy glorious name, who, with thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, art one eternal, almighty, and most merciful God, to whom be all lord and praise, world without end. Amen.

As in the first part of this treaty of obedience of subjects to their princes, and against disobedience and rebellion, I have alleged diverse sentences out of the holy scriptures for proof, so shall it be good, for the better both declaration and confirmation of the said wholesome doctrine, to allege one example or two out of the same holy scriptures of the obedience of subjects, not only unto their good and gracious governors, but also unto their evil and unkind princes. As King Saul was not of the best, but rather of the worst sort of princes, as being out of God's favour for his disobedience against God, and sparing in wrong pity the King Agag, whom almighty God commanded to be slain according to the justice of God against his sworn enemy, and although Saul of a devotion meant to sacrifice such things as he spared of the Amalekites to the honour and service of God, yet Saul was reprov'd for his wrong mercy and devotion, and was told that obedience would have more pleased him than such lenity, which sinful humanity, saith Holy Chrysostom, is more cruel before God than any murder or shedding of blood, when it is commanded of God. But yet, how evil soever Saul the King was, and out of God's favour, yet was he obeyed of his subject David, the very best of all subjects, and most valiant in the service of his prince and country in the wars, the most obedient and loving in peace, and always most true and faithful to his sovereign and lord, and furthest off from all manner rebellion.

For the witch, his most painful, true and faithful service, King Saul yet rewarded him not only with great unkindness, but also sought his destruction and death by all means possible, so that David was feigned to save his life, not by rebellion nor any resistance, but by flight and hiding himself from the King's sight, which notwithstanding, when King Saul upon a time came alone into the cave where David was, so that David might easily have slain him, yet would he neither hurt him himself, neither suffer any of his men to lay hands upon him. Another time also David entering by night with one Abisai, a valiant

and fierce man, into the tent where King David did lie asleep, where also he might yet more easily have slain him, yet would he neither hurt him himself, nor suffer Abisai, who was willing and ready to slay King Saul, once to touch him. Thus did David deal with Saul his prince, notwithstanding that King Saul continually sought his death and destruction.

It shall not be amiss unto these deeds of David to add his words, and to show you what he spake unto such as encouraged him to take his opportunity and advantage to slay King Saul as his mortal enemy, when he might. The Lord keep me, saith David, from doing that thing, and from laying hands upon my Lord, God's anointed. For who can lay his hand upon the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? As truly as the Lord liveth, except that the Lord do smite him, or his days shall come to die, or that he go down to war, and be slain in battle, the Lord be merciful unto me, that I lay not my hand upon the Lord's anointed.

These be David's words, spoken at sundry times to diverse his servants, provoking him to slay King Saul, when opportunity served him thereunto. Neither is it to be omitted and left out, how, when an Amalekite had slain King Saul, even at Saul's own bidding and commandment, for he would live no longer now, for that he had lost the field against his enemies the Philistines, the said Amalekite making great haste to bring first word and news thereof unto David, as joyous unto him for the death of his mortal enemy, bringing great haste to bring first word and news thereof unto David, as joyous unto him for the death of his mortal enemy, bringing great haste to bring first word and news thereof unto David, as joyous unto him for the death of his mortal enemy, bringing great haste to bring first word and news thereof bringing with all the crown that was upon King Saul's head and the bracelet that was upon his arm, both as a proof of the truth of his news, and also as fit and pleasant presents unto David, being by God appointed to be King Saul his successor in the kingdom. Yet was that faithful and godly David so far from rejoicing at these news, that he rent his clothes, wept, and mourned, and fasted, and so far off from thanksgiving to the messenger, either for his deed in killing the king, though his deadly enemy, or for his message and news, or for his presents that he brought, that he said unto him, How happened it that thou wast not afraid to lay thy hands upon the Lord's anointed to slay him? Whereupon immediately he commanded one of his servants to kill the messenger, and said, Thy blood be upon thine own head, for thine own mouth hath witnessed against thyself in confessing that thou hast slain the Lord's anointed.

This example, dearly beloved, is notable, and the circumstances thereof are well to be considered, for the better instruction of all subjects in their bounden duty of obedience, and perpetual fearing of them from attempting of any rebellion or hurt against their prince. On the one part, David was not only a good and true subject, but also such a subject as both in peace and war had served and saved his prince's honour and life, and delivered his country and countrymen from great danger of infidels, foreign and most



cruel enemies, horribly invading the king and his country. For the witch David was in singular favour with all the people, so that he might have had great numbers of them at his commandment, if he would have attempted anything.

Besides this, David was no common or absolute subject, but heir apparent to the crown and kingdom, by God appointed to reign after Saul, which as it increased the favour of the people that knew it towards David, so did it make David's cause and case much differing from the case of common and absolute subjects. And, wittnes most of all, David was highly and singularly in the favour of God. On the contrary part, King Saul was out of God's favour for that cause which is before rehearsed, and he as it were God's enemy, and therefore likened war and peace to be hurtful and pernicious unto the commonwealth, and that was known to many of his subjects, for that he was openly rebuked of Samuel for his disobedience unto God, which might make the people the less to esteem him.

King Saul was also unto David a mortal and deadly enemy, though without David's deserving, who by his faithful, painful, profitable, yea, most necessary service, had well deserved, as of his country, so of his prince. But King Saul far otherwise, the more was his unkindness, hatred, and cruelty towards such a good subject both odious and detestable. Yet would David neither himself slay nor hurt such an enemy, for that he was his prince and lord, nor would suffer any other to kill, hurt, or lay hand upon him, when he might have been slain without any stir, tumult, or danger of any man's life.

Now let David answer to such demands as men desirous of rebellion do use to make. Shall not we, specially being so good men as we are, rise and rebel against a prince hated of God, and God's enemy, and therefore like not to prosper either in war or peace, but to be hurtful and pernicious to the commonwealth? No, saith good and godly David, God's and such a king's faithful subject, and so convicting such subjects as attempt any rebellion against such a king to be neither good subjects nor good men. But, say they, shall we not rise and rebel against so unkind a prince, nothing considering or regarding our true, faithful, and painful service, or the safeguard of our posterity? No, saith good David, whom no such unkindness could cause to forsake his due obedience to his sovereign.

Shall we not, say they, rise and rebel against our known mortal and deadly enemy that seeketh our lives? No, saith godly David, who had learned the lesson that our Saviour afterward plainly taught, that we should do no hurt to our fellow subjects, though they hate us and be our enemies, much less unto our prince, though he were our enemy. Shall we not assemble an army of such good fellows as we are, and by hazarding of our lives and the lives of such as shall withstand us, and withal hazarding the whole estate of our country, remove so naughty prince? No, saith godly David, for I, when I might, without assembling force or number of men, without tumult or hazard of any man's life, or shedding of any drop of blood, have delivered myself and my country of an evil

prince, yet would I not do it? Are not they, say some, lusty and courageous captains, valiant men of stomach and good men's bodies, that do venture by force to kill or depose their king, being a naughty prince and their mortal enemy? They may be as lusty, as courageous as they list, yet, saith godly David, they can be no good nor godly men that so do, for I not only have rebuked, but also commanded him to be slain as a wicked man, which slew King Saul mine enemy, though he, being weary of his life for the loss of the victory against his enemies, desired that man to slay him. What shall we then do to an evil, to an unkind prince, an enemy to us, hated of God, hurtful to the commonwealth, etc.? Lay no violent hand upon him, saith good David, but let him live until God appoint and work his end, either by natural death, or in war by lawful enemies, not by traitorous subjects.

Thus would godly David make answer, and St. Paul, as ye heard before, willeth us to pray also for such a prince. If King David would make these answers, as by his deeds and words recorded in the holy scriptures indeed he doth make, unto all such demands concerning rebelling against evil princes, unkind princes, cruel princes, princes that be to their good subjects, mortal enemies, princes that are out of God's favour, and so hurtful or like to be hurtful to the commonwealth, what answer, think you, would he make to those that demand whether they, being naughty and unkind subjects, may not, to the great hazard of the life of many thousands, be so hurtful to the commonwealth? What answer would David make to their demand, whether they may not attempt cruelly and unnaturally to destroy so peaceable and merciful a kingdom, that they may not be so hurtful to the commonwealth? What, I say, would David, so reverently speaking of Saul, and so patiently suffering so evil a king, what would he answer and say to such demands? What would he say, nay, what would he do to such high attempters, who so said and did, as ye before have heard, unto him that slew the king his master, though a most wicked prince? If he punished with death, as a wicked doer, such a man, with what reproaches of words would he revile such? Yea, with what torments of most shameful deaths would he destroy such? Hell-hounds rather than evil men, such rebels, I mean, as I last spake of. For if they who do disobey an evil and unkind prince be most unlike unto David, that good subject, what be they who do rebel against a most natural and loving prince? And if David, being so good a subject, that he obeyed so evil a king, was worthy of a subject to be made a king himself, what be they who are so evil subjects, that they will rebel against their gracious prince worthy of? Surely no mortal man can express with words, nor conceive in mind, the horrible and most dreadful damnation that such be worthy of, who, disdain to be the quiet and happy subjects of their good prince, are most worthy to be the miserable captives and vile slaves of that infernal tyrant Satan, with him to suffer eternal slavery and torments.

This one example of the good subject David, out of the Old Testament, may suffice, and for the notableness of it, serve for all. In the New Testament the excellent example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of our Saviour Christ, doth at the first offer itself.

When proclamation or commandment was sent unto Jury from Augustus the Emperor of Rome, that the people there should repair unto their own cities and dwelling places, there to be taxed, neither did the Blessed Virgin, though both highly in God's favour, and also being of the royal blood of the ancient natural kings of Jury, disdain to obey the commandment of an heathen and foreign prince, when God had placed such a one over them.

Neither did she allege for an excuse that she was great with child, and most near her time of deliverance. Neither grudged she at the length and tediousness of the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, from whence and whither she must go to be taxed. Neither repined she at the sharpness of the dead time of winter, being the latter end of December, an unhandsome time to travel in, specially a long journey, for a woman being in her case.

But all excuses set apart she obeyed, and came to the appointed place, where at her coming she found such great resort and throng of people, that, finding no place in any inn, she was fain after her long, painful, and tedious journey, to take up her lodging in a stable, where also she was delivered of her blessed child, and this also declareth how near her time she took that journey. This obedience of this most noble and most virtuous lady to a foreign and pagan prince doth well teach us, who in comparison to her are most base and vile, what ready obedience we do owe to our natural and gracious sovereign. Howbeit, in this case, the obedience of the whole Jewish nation, being otherwise a stubborn people, unto the commandment of the same foreign heathen prince, doth prove that such Christians as do not most readily obey their natural gracious sovereign, are far worse than the stubborn Jews, whom yet we account as the worst of all people.

But no example ought to be of more force with us Christians than the example of Christ, our master and saviour, who though he were the son of God, yet did always behave himself most reverently to such men as were in authority in the world in his time. And he not rebelliously behaved himself, but openly did teach the Jews to pay tribute unto the Roman emperor, though a foreign and a pagan prince, yea himself with his apostles paid tribute unto him. And finally, being brought before Pontius Pilate, a stranger born and an heathen man, being lord president of Jewry, he acknowledged his authority and power to be given him from God, and obeyed patiently the sentence of most painful and shameful death, which the said judge pronounced and gave most unjustly against him, without any grudge, murmuring, or evil word once giving.

There be many other examples of the obedience to princes, even such as be evil, in the New Testament, to the utter confusion of disobedient and rebellious people. But this one may be an eternal example, which the Son of God, and so the Lord of all, Jesus Christ, hath given to us his Christians and servants, and such as may serve for all, to teach us to obey princes, though strangers, wicked and wrongful, when God for our sins shall place such over us. Whereby it followeth unavoidably, that such as do disobey or rebel against

their own natural gracious sovereigns, howsoever they call themselves, or be named of others, yet are they indeed no true Christians, but worse than Jews, worse than heathens, and such as shall never enjoy the kingdom of heaven, which Christ by his obedience purchased for true Christians, being obedient to him the king of all kings, and to their prince, whom he hath placed over them.

The witch kingdom, the peculiar place of all such obedient subjects, I beseech God our heavenly Father, for the same our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake, to grant unto us, to whom with the Holy Ghost be all Lord, honour, and glory, now and for ever. Amen.