

THE CATHOLIC.

QUOD SEMPER, QUOD UBIQUE, QUOD AB OMNIBUS CREDITUM EST.—WHAT ALWAYS, AND EVERY WHERE, AND BY ALL IS BELIEVED.

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THE CATHOLIC

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THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION DEMONSTRATED DIVINE.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL ; OTHERWISE CALLED THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS.

CHAPTER V.—If God, for the honor of his Religion, wrought such wonders, as those detailed in this chapter, by the mere presence of the Ark, is it unscriptural, or absurd with Catholics to believe that he may still, when he pleases, work such wonders with sacred things, appertaining to his church and worship? Where, in all scripture, do Protestants read that he will not, or cannot?

Chapter vi, verse 19.—“But he slew of the men of Bethshames, because they had seen the ark of the Lord.” That is, because they had looked into it with irreverent curiosity. The number of the slain is supposed by the learned to have been, by a mistake of the copiers, set down much greater than in the original text. From the whole context, we clearly see with what respect God, requires every thing appertaining to his worship to be kept by his creatures.

The golden images also of the *micæ* and *emeroids*, placed in the Ark by the Philistines, were not condemned nor rejected by the Deity; but were suffered to remain in it as a trophy and memorandum of his might, acknowledged even by his enemies.

Chapter vii, verse 6.—Here again we find the people of God fasting in order to appease his wrath.

Chapter viii, verse 7.—*Rejected, &c.* The government of Israel had hitherto been a *Theocracy*, in which God himself immediately ruled by laws which he had enacted, and by Judges extraordinarily raised up by himself; and therefore he complains that his people rejected him, in desiring a change of Government. D. B.

Chapter ix, verse 12.—*A Sacrifice.* The law did not allow of sacrifices in any other place, but at the tabernacle or temple, in which the Ark of the Covenant was kept. Samuel, however, by divine dispensation, offered up sacrifices in other places, for which dispensation this reason may be alledged, that the house of God in Silo having lost the Ark, was now cast off, as a figure of the reprobation of the Jews. Psalm. lxxvii, 60, 67. And in Cariathiarim, where the Ark was, there was neither tabernacle nor altar. D. B.

Ibid.—*The high place, EXCELSUM.* The *Excelsa*, or high places, so often mentioned in scripture, were places of worship in which were altars for sacrifice. These were sometimes employed in the service of the true God, as in the present case; but more frequently in the service of Idols, and were called *Excelsa*, which is com-

monly (though perhaps not so accurately) rendered *high hills*: not because they were always on hills; for the very worst of all such, which was that of *Zopheth*, or *Gehennem* (Jer. xix) was in a valley, but because of the high altars and pillars, or monuments erected there, on which were set up the idols or images of their Deities.

Chapter x.—In this chapter we admire Samuel's foreknowledge of what depended on the free will of the individuals, whose speech and actions the prophet foretells to Saul. And if such may be the knowledge inspired of the just here on earth, what must be the knowledge revealed of the saints in heaven?

Verse 3.—“Three men going up to God to Bethel; one carrying three kids, and another three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine.” The same allusion is here found, as in Anna's offerings, to the Jewish and Christian; or the bloody and unbloody sacrifices.

Verse ix.—“God gave unto him another heart.”—The heart of man is in the hands of God, who, without forcing the will, can turn it to whatever good he pleases.

Verse 25.—“And Samuel told the people the law of the Kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord.” This is another portion of the holy Scripture which is lost.

Chapter xii, verse 11.—*Jerobaal* and *Badan*, were Gideon and Sampson; called here Ba-Dan, because he was of the tribe of *Dan*. D. B.

Verse 16.—*Wheat Harvest.* At which time of the year it never thunders or rains in those countries.—Ib.

“And you shall know and see that you yourselves have done a great evil in the sight of the Lord, in desiring a king over you.” Because they preferred a fellow mortal for their supreme ruler, before God himself: *whereas*, said Samuel to them, *the Lord your God, was your King.*—V. 12.

Chapter xiii, v. 1.—*Saul was a child of one year*: that is, he was good and innocent, like a child of one year: and he continued such for two years. D. B.

Verse 13.—Saul's dread of the enemies, and distrust in the Lord, made him venture to offer up sacrifice in the absence of God's Pontiff, Samuel, foolishly presuming that he could propitiate the Deity by an act done against his ordinance; and therefore was he rejected.

Chapter xiv, 42.—*Jonathan was taken.* Though Jonathan was excused from sin, through ignorance of the prohibition; yet God was pleased on this occasion to let the lot fall upon him, to shew unto all, the great obligation of obedience to parents and princes.—D. B. Jonathan, besides, was in this instance a striking emblem of the Saviour, whom, though innocent, his heavenly father had doomed to death, by the incurring of which doom, he had routed the enemy, and saved his people.

Chapter xv, 3.—*Slay both man and woman, child and suckling.* The great master of life and death, (who cuts off one half of mankind whilst they are children,) has been pleased sometimes to ordain that children should be put to the sword, in detestation of the crimes of their parents; (for he visits, as he declares, the sins of the parents upon the children, to several generations) and that they might not live to follow the same wicked ways. But without such evident ordinance of God, it is not allowable in any way, how just soever to kill children. D. B.

Verse 22.—“And Samuel said: Doth the Lord desire Holocausts and victims; and not rather that the

voice of the Lord should be obeyed? For obedience is better than sacrifice; and to hearken, rather than to offer the fat of rams. [Verse 23.]—Because it is like the sin of witchcraft to rebel; and like the crime of idolatry to refuse to obey. For as much therefore as thou hast rejected the word of the Lord; the Lord hath also rejected thee,” &c.

Yet Saul believed in the Lord, and sought to honor him; though in his own way, and contrary to the Lord's injunction. How then can those be excused, who breaking from the unity of the church, and thus rending the external of God's worship, as Saul did the Prophet's garment—verse 27, 28—venture to set up an unbidden, nay, a forbidden way of their own of honoring God, as all schismatics and heretics do; *rejecting the word of the Lord*, spoken to them by his chosen organs; the pastors of his universal church, whom he commands us to hear and obey, as if they were himself addressing them.—Luke x, 16.

This sin of thus rebelling against the lawful authority is declared by Samuel to be like *the sin of witchcraft*; and their disobedience, like *the crime of idolatry*; because in both they turn away from God; in the one case, to seek help from the Devil, since refused by God; and, in the other, to worship the adversary, since their offerings, like those of Saul, are made in contradiction to God's precepts, and in defiance of his prohibitory mandate.

Chapter xvi, 14.—“And the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul; and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.” In Saul is found the emblem of the Jewish, in David that of our Saviour's Sovereign jurisdiction. On their Saviour's appearance, as their appointed successor, in authority, *an evil spirit* is allowed by God to trouble the *Jewish rulers* as it had done Saul, their prototype, inciting them to make away with the chosen descendant of Isai, the Bethlehemite, in the vain hope of thus preserving their own temporal consequence and dominion. “What do we, (said they) for this man doeth many miracles? if we let him alone so, all will believe in him; and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation.”—John xi, 47, 48. In this they spoke prophetically true; for the Romans did come and take away their place and nation, and succeeded to all the spiritual rights and jurisdiction of the synagogue, which it had deliberately made over with its promised and long looked for Messiah to the Romans in the person of their representative Pontius Pilate; and those Romans after unconsciously avenging Messiah's wrongs, destroying the Jewish city and temple, and scattering all over the world the self-anathematized remnant of the Judaical race, became the chosen people of the predicted Saviour, whose church among the Gentiles, no longer confined to one particular nation, but embracing all, is therefore styled *Catholic*, or universal, and *Roman*, from its earliest origin; Rome having become the Jerusalem of the Gentiles,—all which change was most clearly foretold by the prophets, and particularly by Malachy, the last of their number.—Ch. i, 11.

Verse 20.—“And Isai took an Ass laden with bread and a bottle of wine, and a kid of the flock; and sent them by the hand of David his son, to Saul.” The ass bore that *bread*, or him, who called himself *the living bread which came down from heaven*, on his solemn entry into Jerusalem. It was then, *by the hand of the real David*, brought to Saul whom the evil spirit was troubling at the time; that is of the Jewish authorities whom the Devil was then instigating to put the Christ to death. *The bottle of wine* together with the *bread*, indicated Messiah's sacrifice, in which Aaron's represented by *the kid*, found its entire fulfilment.

Verse 23.—Nothing could free Saul from the evil spirit, but the sound of David's harp; and nothing can scare away the troubling spirit of sin from Jew or Gentile, but the harmonious sounds of the Saviour's precepts and doctrine.