

towards our fellow-creatures, and a cruel fondness to become the executioners of God's justice. Why God executed this punishment upon Canaan rather than any of his brethren we know not, if it be not that he only was then born; but we can render probable reasons why he executed it upon him rather than upon Ham or his whole seed. The crime of Ham was very heinous, if all circumstances be considered, especially that he had very lately seen the whole world desolated for sin, and that his brethren could not move him to repent, or join with them in making reparation for his guilt. To pass such a crime, without exemplary chastisement, could not fail to be very detrimental to an infant world. Ham therefore is punished. The wisdom of God however judged that no personal punishment was adequate to the crime; therefore to affect him more deeply, and also for the greater terror of others, *he is punished in his seed.* But that God might mix mercy with such a judgment, one branch only of Ham's seed is punished, while the other three are suffered to escape. That God meant to restrain the curse to Canaan's family is sufficiently evident from this, that though it is thrice repeated, yet it is never applied to Ham, who committed the crime, and in whose loins the other brothers were, but to Canaan only. Why then should you, Reverend Sir, act so malevolent a part towards mankind as to curse whom God hath not cursed?

As to Canaan's bearing the punishment of his father's Sin, I need not trouble myself to vindicate to you the justice of God in that matter; for you know he had guilt of his own which deserved all that severity and greater. But let us suppose, for a moment, that the Negroes are included in Canaan's curse, yet your conduct is, in my opinion, as defenceless as before. It does not appear to me that these words, "Curse be Canaan, a servant of servants shall be unto his brethren," ever authorised a son of Noah to enslave another. They are indeed prophetic of what would eventually happen to the race of Canaan, and they vindicate the providence of God for suffering them to be enslaved, and for letting loose wicked men upon them rather than upon others; but they conferred no authority upon the race of Shem or Japheth to enslave them. The reason is, that no prophetic threatening alters the path of man's duty in the least from what it was before, or implies a command to him for accomplishing the threatening. Hence, whatever was the duty of Shem and Japheth to Canaan before Noah cursed the last, continued to be so still. They had no right to say, "Our father hath, by the spirit of prophecy, cursed Canaan, therefore, though we were till now bound to love him as our brother, yet henceforth, we may treat him as a brute." But rather "Our brother is doomed to severe punishment! But, thanks to God! we are not appointed the executioners, nor commanded to withdraw our fraternal affection from him, and alter our conduct towards him; we are left at liberty, as formerly, to protect him, as far as we may, from all oppression, and especially from such as may wickedly pretend authority from our father's prophecy, to enslave him." To illustrate what I have asserted, let us compare this threatening with others: God says, "The wicked shall be turned into Hell." Does this threatenize you and me to slaughter every wicked man we see, that we may fulfil his word? No; we are rather to endeavour their reformation. God doomed his own Son to the Cross: But had any man a right to crucify him for all that? Christ said to the Pharisees, "I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city." Was it therefore no sin to persecute the Apostles of Christ? But, lest you should pretend that these instances are not parallel, I shall produce others, in all respects similar to that under consideration. They shall be taken from Jacob's benediction: see Gen. xlix. "Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitation. Curse be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath for it was cruel; I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." Did this curse confer the smallest degree of authority upon the other tribes to persecute and scatter those of Simeon and Levi? By no means: Why then should you think that Noah's curse could justify any man for enslaving the race of Canaan? Again, said Jacob, "Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path." Did this prediction entitle that tribe to deal deceitfully with their brethren, or to disseminate poison among them? Or, would it justify the other tribes in cutting them off utterly? Once more, "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf, in the morning he shall devour the prey," &c. Did these words really empower the Benjamites to eat the flesh of their brethren, or to imitate any of the rapacious qualities of the wolf? Or, did they constitute their brethren a society of hunters for clearing the country of the ravenous Benjamites? No such thing. God reserved to himself the sole power of fulfilling