

nature; but there is a poison not mortal, the venom whereof may be expelled; that is *deadly poison*. Yet if there was but a little of this resident in the wicked tongue, the danger were less; nay, it is full of it, *full of deadly poison*.

Tell a blasphemer this, that he vomits hell fire, and carries deadly poison in his mouth; and he will laugh at thee. Beloved, we preach not this of our own heads; we have our infallible warrant. God speaks it. "The poison of asps is under their lips," saith the psalmist (Psalm cxi. 3). It is a loathsome thing to carry poison in one's mouth; we would fly that serpent, yet yield to converse with that man. A strangely hated thing in a beast, yet customable in many men's tongues. Whom poison they? First, Themselves; they have speckled souls. Secondly, They sputter their venom abroad, and bespurtle others; no beast can cast his poison so far. Thirdly, Yea they would (and no thanks to them that they cannot) poison God's most sacred and feared name. Let us judge of these things, not as flesh and blood imagineth, but as God pronounceth.

It is observable that which way soever a wicked man useth his tongue, he cannot use it well. *Mordet detrahendo, lingit adulando*: He bites by detraction, licks by flattery; and either of these touches rankle; he doth no less hurt by licking than by biting. All the parts of his mouth are instruments of wickedness. Logicians, in the difference betwixt *vocem* and *sonum*, say that a voice is made by the lips, teeth, throat, tongue.

The psalmographer on every one of these hath set a brand of wickedness. 1. The lips are *labia dolosa*; "lying lips," Psalm cxx. 2. The teeth are *frementes, frendentes*; "gnashing teeth." 3. The tongue *lingua mendax, lingua mordax*: (mendacious and mordacious). "What shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?" Psalm cxx. 3. The throat *patens sepulchrum*: "Their throat is an open sepulchre," Rom. iii. 13. This is a monstrous and fearful mouth; where the porter, the porch, the entertainer, the receiver, are all vicious. The lips are the porter, and that is fraud; the porch the teeth, and there is malice; the entertainer,