

TR 86-53

THE CONTRIBUTION OF WILLIAM GURNALL (1616-1679)
TO THE PURITAN CONCEPT OF SPIRITUAL COMBAT, WITH
SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE ROLE OF FAITH

THESIS

Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
of Rhodes University
by

FREDERICK WILLIAM JAMES VAN ZYL

January 1986

--ooOoo--

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

'Truth reforms as well as informs.'

- William Jenkyn -

Acknowledgements.

I would like to thank especially:

Professor Calvin Cook, Head of Department of Divinity, for his unfailing Christian courtesy in our dealings. Also for his incisive suggestions and encouragement to think my subject through, and for so carefully editing the preliminary drafts. My debt to him is great.

Mrs Lorraine Kinsella, for so cheerfully and willingly typing one of the preliminary draft copies and then the final copy.

My wife, Mary, who was constantly on hand to urge me on when progress seemed painfully slow.

Style and Format.

The style and format has been particularly difficult to formulate, with many different variations in use today. I have made use of various sources including A Brief Guide issued by Rhodes and a number of suggestions by Professor Cook. In uncertain cases a style and format was formulated that seemed in keeping with the overall style of the thesis which would be easy to understand and follow. Consistency has been the overall aim. Short quotations within a sentence are indicated by the use of single apostrophes. Longer quotations or even short quotations I have wished to emphasize have been indented without any apostrophes or 'quotation marks'. In the case of direct speech within a quotation double apostrophes have been employed. The names of the Puritans mentioned have been underlined. Gurnall's spelling and format is not always consistent: sometimes he will speak of the 'word of God', then again of the 'Word of God', 'subtlety' or 'subtilty', 'counsel' or 'council' - having the same meaning in mind. Indented quotes do not always start with a capital letter, ie. Can it be said etc., but often with lower casing, ie. can it be said etc. because that is where I want the quote to commence.

ABSTRACT

The Central figure in this thesis is William Gurnall M.A. (Cambridge) who lived from 1616 to 1679. He was the Rector of the Lavenham Parish church for 35 years, 1644/45-1679. He was one of the few Puritans who remained in the Established Church after the 1662 Act of Uniformity had been promulgated. His 'The Christian in Complete Armour' is one of the greatest practical-pastoral works to come from the pen of any Puritan. It is firmly based on Calvinistic theological principles. While holding common beliefs in many areas, Gurnall nevertheless was at odds with his fellow Puritans over certain crucial issues that directly affected his attitude to the Puritan revolution. His analysis of the person, being, nature, wiles, strategies and weapons of the Christian's great enemy and description of the Christian's resources such as the role of the shield of faith in its multiple uses, which constitute an important contribution to pastoral theory and practice are shown to arise out of Gurnall's theological stance, his own personal history, the history of East Anglia and of Lavenham in particular; his reflections on the 'Days of Great Confusions' and his deep concern for the breakdown in orderly society and the decline of genuine piety in the church.

Basically we will concentrate on three issues:

- First. The real nature and locus of the Christian's spiritual warfare.
- Second. The means used for his investigation, namely, an examination of the person, power, methods and wiles of the Christian's great enemy and the vital role of the shield of faith.
- Third. His conclusions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
<u>SECTION I</u>	1
<u>INTRODUCTORY AND HISTORICAL</u>	
<u>BACKGROUND</u>	
<u>Chapter I. History of the text of 'The Christian in Complete Armour' and bibliographical comment.</u>	1
1. The title.	1
2. The author.	1
3. Publication and editions.	1
4. Bibliographical comment.	4
<u>Chapter II. Personal history of William Gurnall and his assessment of his age and time.</u>	5
<u>Introduction and setting.</u>	5
I. <u>Personal history of William Gurnall.</u>	6
1. <u>1616-March 1632.</u>	6
2. <u>1632-1639.</u>	7
3. <u>1639-December 1644.</u>	8
(a) Sudbury.	8
(b) Ordination.	10
(i) Order of the House of Commons, 1644.	10
(ii) Gurnall's letters to Sir Simonds D'Ewes.	10
(iii) Ordination registers.	10
4. <u>History of Lavenham.</u>	11
(a) <u>Lavenham and East Anglia.</u>	11
(b) <u>The parish.</u>	12

	Page
5. <u>1645-1679.</u>	13
(a) Rector.	13
(b) Sermons.	14
(c) Act of Uniformity, 1662.	14
(d) Death.	15
II. <u>William Gurnall's assessment of and attitude to the 'Days of great confusions' (I.110) and 'Trying times' (I.256) in which he lived.</u>	16
A. <u>Why did Gurnall preach on Ephesians 6:10-20?</u>	16
B. <u>How did Gurnall view his society, the church and age?</u>	18
I. <u>Gurnall set a high priority on an orderly society and government.</u>	20
II. <u>Gurnall was deeply aware of and concerned about the general unrest in the nation.</u>	21
III. <u>Gurnall was deeply concerned about certain issues in society.</u>	23
1. Social and moral breakdown.	23
2. The growth of atheism and blasphemy.	23
3. The growth of anti-clerical feelings.	24
4. The growth of Rationalism.	25
5. The possible resurgence of Roman Catholicism.	26
IV. <u>Gurnall was deeply concerned about the growth, power and influence of 'religious imposters'.</u>	27
1. They attacked the Sabbath.	28
2. They attacked the truths of the gospel and the ordinances.	28
3. They advocated a form of subjectivism.	29
4. They taught wrong doctrine.	31
5. The geographical location of these sectaries.	31
The Familists.	32
The Seekers.	32
The Quakers.	32
The Diggers.	33
The Ranters.	33
V. <u>Gurnall was deeply concerned about the state of the church.</u>	34
1. Gurnall's profound love for the 'Ark of God'.	34
2. Gurnall saw the hand of Satan behind the attacks on the church.	35
3. Gurnall lamented the decline in godliness.	35
4. Preaching was being attacked.	36

	Page
VI. <u>Gurnall lamented, above all, the divisions in the church.</u>	36
VII. <u>Gurnall's growing disillusionment with the Civil War and a military solution to the nation's ills.</u>	39
VIII. <u>Gurnall's possible monarchical leanings.</u>	41
<u>SECTION II</u>	45
<u>THE CHRISTIAN'S GREAT ENEMY:</u>	
<u>THE CHRISTIAN FOREARMED OR /</u>	
<u>PREPARATION FOR THE BATTLE AND</u>	
<u>THE BATTLE ITSELF</u>	
<u>Prologue and General Introduction to this great theme.</u>	45
<u>A. METHOD EMPLOYED</u>	47
<u>Firstly.</u> Pedagogical origin.	50
<u>Secondly.</u> Totally interlocking system of theology.	52
1. Diagnosis.	54
2. Utilization of theology in pastoral practice.	55
<u>B. PREPARATION FOR THE BATTLE.</u>	57
1. <u>Identifying the enemy.</u>	57
2. <u>The necessity of Scriptural knowledge.</u>	59
<u>Chapter I. The enemy's person and personality traits.</u>	61
1. <u>Some general remarks.</u>	61
(i) Gurnall's realism.	61
(ii) Gurnall's Biblical balance.	63
2. <u>Detailed evaluation.</u>	64
<u>Firstly: The enemy's person and being.</u>	65
1. The enemy's constitution and being.	65
2. Satan's relationship to these fallen angelic beings.	68
3. Satan's finiteness in relation to God.	69
Consideration 1. A derived power.	69
Consideration 2. A limited power.	69
(1) He cannot do what he will.	70
(2) He shall not do what he can.	71
Consideration 3. A ministerial power.	71

	Page
<u>Secondly: The enemy's evil and malicious nature.</u>	71
1. This apostate creature.	71
2. Satan's evil and malicious nature was revealed in countless, evil actions.	74
(i) Perverting the truth of God.	74
(a) Judgment.	76
(b) Emotions.	78
(ii) In defiling and disfiguring the Christian.	79
(iii) In promoting darkness.	80
<u>Thirdly: The enemy's aggressiveness, persistence and power.</u>	82
1. Names and appellations.	82
2. Satan's actions.	83
3. Satan's power.	85
<u>Chapter II. The enemy's methods and wiles.</u>	86
(A) <u>Satan's wiles.</u>	86
1. <u>Introductory - His wily cunning.</u>	86
(i) Superior intelligence.	87
(ii) Superior psychological insight.	87
<u>First:</u> In choosing the most advantageous season for temptation.	88
<u>Second:</u> In those stratagems he useth to deceive the Christian.	88
1. Gradualism.	88
2. Disguise.	89
3. Strategic withdrawal.	89
<u>Third:</u> In pitching on fit instruments ... to carry on (out) his designs.	89
2. <u>His wiles in action - some examples.</u>	90
1. The enemy troubled and vexed the Christian.	90
2. The enemy aggravated and exaggerated.	91
3. The enemy cavilled and confused.	92
4. The enemy disheartened and dispirited.	93
5. The enemy puzzled and perplexed.	97
(B) <u>Satan's darts.</u>	99
1. <u>Introduction.</u>	99
2. <u>The character of the 'fiery darts'.</u>	100

	Page
(i) Insubstantial.	100
(ii) Swift.	101
(iii) Secret.	101
(iv) Wound grievously.	102
(v) 'Fiery'.	102
3. <u>The enemy's darts in the form of temptation to pleasure.</u>	103
(i) First dart.	103
(ii) Second dart.	104
(iii) Third dart.	104
<u>Chapter III. The role of faith.</u>	105
<u>Introduction.</u>	105
(A) <u>Characteristic presuppositions of faith.</u>	106
I. <u>Faith defined.</u>	107
(A) <u>Justifying faith.</u>	108
1. The subject.	108
2. The object.	108
3. The act and ground.	109
(i) <u>The single act.</u>	109
(a) Knowledge.	109
(b) Assent.	109
(c) Conviction and confession.	110
(d) The warranty or ground of (a), (b) and (c)	110
(ii) <u>The continuous functioning of justifying faith.</u>	110
(B) <u>Two implied characteristics.</u>	111
(i) All-inclusiveness.	111
(ii) Multi-purposed.	111
II. <u>Faith was a grace.</u>	112
The place of understanding, conscience and will.	
III. <u>The pre-eminency of faith.</u>	114
1. Faith was the principle of our new life in Christ.	115
2. Because of '... God's aim and enquiry'.	115
3. Because it was so highly commended in Scripture.	115
4. Because of its relation to justification.	115
5. Because of its relation to and influence upon its sister graces.	116
6. Because of its ability to quench Satan's 'fiery darts'.	117
7. Because of its pre-eminency from the enemy's point of view.	118

	Page
IV. <u>Faith and naked reason.</u>	118
V. <u>The Christian's faith could be 'weak' or 'strong'.</u>	120
(B) <u>How faith functioned against the enemy.</u>	121
I. <u>The shield should be used actively.</u>	121
II. <u>How justifying faith ought to be employed.</u>	122
1. As a shield.	123
2. As a spiritual eye.	123
3. As an obedient servant.	128
4. As a trader.	129
5. As a physician.	130
6. As an advocate.	131

SECTION III

139

GURNALL'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE PURITAN CONCEPT OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE.

<u>Introduction.</u>	139
I. <u>The broader Puritan constituency.</u>	141
1. A holy commonwealth.	141
2. The coming millenium.	143
3. A holy war.	145
II. <u>Conclusion: Gurnall's contribution and perspective.</u>	151
1. The real locus of Christian warfare.	151
2. The real weapons on the Christian's spiritual warfare.	154
3. The role of the Christian minister as preacher-pastor.	155
4. Christian respect for authority.	161
5. The nation's spiritual, moral and social exhaustion.	162

BIBLIOGRAPHY

167

SECTION I

INTRODUCTORY AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDChapter IHistory of the text of 'The Christian in Complete Armour' and
bibliographical comment.1. The title.

In keeping with the tradition and practice of the 17th century, the title of Gurnall's work is long. It is at once descriptive, explanatory and encouraging:

The Christian in Complete Armour; A Treatise Of the Saints' War against the Devil: Wherein a discovery is made of that Grand Enemy of God and his People, in his Policies, Power, Seat of his Empire, Wickedness, and chief design he hath against the Saints. A Magazine Opened, From when the Christian is furnished with Spiritual Arms for the Battle, helped on with his Armour, and taught the use of his Weapon: together with the happy issue of the whole War.

2. The author.

The author is described as:

William Gurnall, M.A., of Emmanuel College, Pastor of the Church of Christ, Lavenham, Suffolk.

3. Publication and editions.

The work was originally published in three small quarto volumes, at three different times.

The first volume, containing his sermons on Ephesians 6:10-13 was published in 1655. The volume is dedicated to the inhabitants of Lavenham, whom Gurnall called '... my dearly beloved friends and neighbours'.¹

1. Ryle, J.C. A Biographical Account of the Author. Banner of Truth Trust edition (reprint of 1864 ed. Blackie and Son, Glasgow), 1964, xli.

By means of pithy language he also made it clear that volume one consisted of sermons preached by him in the parish church:

What I present to you, within this treatise, is a dish from your own table, and so (I hope) will go down the better. You cannot despise it, though the fare be mean, except you will blame yourselves who chose the cook.²

The first volume bears the imprint:

London, printed for Ralph Smith, at the Bible, in Cornhill, near the Royal Exchange, 1655.

The Dedicatory Epistle is dated January 1, 1655, and the sermons were preached ca. 1644-1655.

In the original publication this first volume consisted of:

The Introduction, Part First and Part Second: Directions First, Second and Third.

In the Banner of Truth Trust reprint of 1964, the original first volume runs from pages 1-274.

The second volume, containing his sermons on Ephesians 6:14-16 was published three years later, in 1658. It contains a Dedication to Thomas Darcy, esq., and Mrs Sisilia Darcy of Kentwell Hall, Suffolk. Mrs Darcy was apparently the only surviving daughter of Sir Simonds D'Ewes, Gurnall's patron.³ The Dedicatory Epistle is dated October, 1657.

In the original publication this second volume consisted of:

Part Second: Directions Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eight.

In the Banner of Truth Trust reprint of 1964, the original second volume runs from pages 275-123.⁴ These sermons were preached

2. Ryle, *ibid.*, xli.

3. His first name is sometimes spelt 'Symonds' or even 'Simond'. We will use the version 'Simonds' throughout.

4. Explanation of the page numbering when quoting from Gurnall. Confusion might arise from the fact that the original publications consisted of 3 separate volumes, while the Banner of Truth Trust edition consists of One Book divided into Volume First and Volume Second. The following will help:

<u>Original publications</u>	<u>Banner of Truth Trust reprint</u>
Volume one: Ephesians 6:10-13	= Volume First pp. 1-274.
Volume two: Ephesians 6:14-16	= Volume First p. 275 to Volume Second p. 123.
Volume three: Ephesians 6:17-20	= Volume Second pp. 124-600.

(2) Thus, when quoting from the BTT reprint, the numerals used will be as follows: (I.110) indicating Volume First and page 110, while (II.315) will indicate Volume Second and page 315.

ca. 1655-1658.

The third volume, containing his sermons preached on Ephesians 6:17-20, was published in the year of the Great Ejection, 1662. This volume is dedicated to Lady Mary Vere, Baroness of Tilbury. She is included in Anderson's 'Memorable Women of the Puritan Times', which was published in London in 1862. She was the wife of Horatio Vere, Baron of Tilbury. This Dedication is dated August 28, 1661.

In the original publication this third volume consisted of:

Part Second; Directions Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth.

In the Banner of Truth Trust reprint of 1964, the original third volume runs from pages 124-600. (See footnote 4 on page 2). These sermons were preached ca. 1658-1662.

The original three volumes must have had a reasonably good circulation. Within a few years five editions were printed. The fifth and last, while Gurnall was still alive, was issued in One Volume, Folio, in 1669. A sixth edition, also Folio, was issued soon after his death, in 1679.

Bishop Ryle points out that a number of Puritans highly commended the value of his work. These include Richard Baxter and John Flavel. Richard Cecil spent his last days reading from it. In the 18th century Augustus Toplady enjoyed it and John Newton said that if ever he were confined to one book beside his Bible, he would choose Gurnall's.⁵

The Banner of Truth Trust reprint of 1964, which is used in this thesis, was reprinted from the 1864 edition, published by Blackie and Son of Glasgow under the editorship of the Rev D. Dundas M'Isaac. The 1864 edition was prepared from the original first and fifth editions. The original text abounded in so many divisions and subdivisions as to prove confusing to any modern reader. In the 1864 edition, therefore, various methods were employed (ie. ornamental headings, varied styles of type and modes of numbering), in order to make it more understandable.

The punctuation was revised and improved and the Scripture references verified and where necessary corrected. Some editorial notes were added to explain obsolete or difficult 17th century terms, and allusions

5. Ryle, op.cit., xlii.

to ancient customs were also explained. In this study the work will be referred to as 'The Christian in Complete Armour.'

4. Bibliographical comment.

Because of the composition and editing of the 1864 edition, the 1964 reprint did not warrant any special critical treatment. Enquiries to Libraries both in the USA and the UK revealed that the only biographical material on Gurnall was the essay of Bishop J.C. Ryle, which precedes the actual text in the 1964 reprint. No thesis could be traced either, or other information. This has necessitated the use of secondary sources in 1) books and 2) periodicals.

Chapter II

Personal history of William Gurnall and his assessment of
his age and time.

Introduction and setting.

Sometime between the years 1644 and 1655, the Rector of Lavenham parish church, William Gurnall '... Master of Arts, a learned, godly and orthodox divine',⁶ mounted his pulpit in SS Peter and Paul, and during the regular services of worship began preaching a remarkable series of sermons on the Apostle Paul's famous passage on Christian Warfare, namely, Ephesians 6:10-20.

Elsewhere in England the English Civil War between the forces of Charles I and Parliament was about two years old. The Long Parliament (Nov. 1640-49), was still in session. Archbishop William Laud, having been impeached by the House of Commons, was in the Tower of London; he was there from March 1645. Oliver Cromwell had been promoted to Lieutenant-General during 1644. In that same year the crucial battle of Marston Moor had taken place during the long evening of the 2nd July, victory going to the Parliamentary forces.

The 'New Model Army' would take shape in the early months of the new year of 1645. It would not be long before the more radical sectaries would be making their influence felt within the ranks of this army.

England was about two-thirds of the way through a period of financial hardship which professor Bowden has described as '... economically amongst the most terrible in English history'.⁷

6. This quotation is from the Order of the House of Commons ratifying Gurnall's appointment to the living and is dated '16^o Decembris, 1864, 20 Car.I. cf Ryle, *ibid.*, xxiv.

7. Thirsk, J. (ed). The Agrarian History of England and Wales, IV, (1500-1640). Cambridge University Press, 1867, 620-621, cf. Hill, C. The World Turned Upside Down. Penguin Books, 1975, 21, footnote 11.

Richard Baxter (1615-1691) was minister at Kidderminster; Thomas Manton (1620-1677) was in London, and John Owen (1616-1683) was Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University. Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680) had returned from Holland to form a gathered church in London in 1640, and in 1650 was appointed President of Magdalen College, Oxford. John Bunyan (1628-1688) was a sixteen-year old soldier in the New Model Army.

The execution of Charles I was only some 5 years off (30 January, 1649). The Act of Uniformity, by which some 1 500 to 2 000 ministers would be ejected from the Established Church, lay some 18 years distant (24 August, 1662).

I. Personal history of William Gurnall.

1. 1616-March 1632.

King's Lynn is a seaport on the coast of the English county of Norfolk. Its history dates back to Saxon times. Originally known simply as Lynn, it received a royal charter from Henry VIII in 1537, hence the changed name. At the start of the Civil War it declared for Charles I, but was captured by Parliamentary forces. Later it surrendered its privileges to Charles II in 1684, thus recovering its charter on the eve of the Revolution. The town ranked high amongst English seaports for many centuries.

If Gurnall was pro-monarchist, then King's Lynn with its royalist tradition may have influenced him.

It was in this seaport that Gurnall first saw the light of day in 1616. He was baptised in the twin-towered church of St. Margaret's (begun in the 12th century), on the 17th November of that same year. His mother's maiden name was Catherine Dressit. His father, Gregory Gurnall, appears to have been an important inhabitant of the seaport.

In the year in which William was born his father was an alderman, and eight years later, in 1624, he was the mayor of the borough, as it then was. His occupation is unknown. Only seven years later, on the 14th October, 1631, Gregory Gurnall died, leaving William fatherless at the age of fifteen. There appears to be some evidence that his mother remarried.⁸

8. Ryle, op.cit., xvii.

The records of the Grammar School in King's Lynn (established also by Henry VIII) disclose William's attendance until he went up to Cambridge. The Lynn Corporation apparently had two scholarships connected with the Grammar School at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. To one of these William was presented by the Corporation in December 1631, only weeks after his father had died. It was called the Lynn Scholarship or Mr. Titley's Scholarship, and had been endowed in 1595 by John Titley, a wealthy town merchant and former mayor, who left the town Corporation £130 with which to endow two scholarships for local scholars to Emmanuel.⁹

2. 1632-1639.

Nothing is known of Gurnall's stay at Cambridge, except what is stated in the College books: he graduated B.A. in 1635 and M.A. in 1639. He was never elected a Fellow and as the Lynn Scholarship was only tenable for 7 years, it is probable that he left Cambridge at the end of 1639.

Although his movements and experiences, while at University, are unknown, his preaching, as reflected in 'The Christian in Complete Armour', reflects the Puritan theology for which Emmanuel College became widely known during this period.¹⁰

The number of leading Puritan divines educated at Emmanuel reads like a Puritan Who's Who: Stephen Marshall (1594-1655), Jeremiah Burroughs (1599-1646), Thomas Shepherd (1604-1649), John Cotton (1584-1652), John Preston (1587-1652), Samuel Clark (1599-1683), Stephen Charnock (1628-1680), William Bridge (1600-1670), Ralph Cudworth (1617-1688), and many others.

Important events which coincided with his stay at Emmanuel included, inter alia, the savage punishment meted out in 1637 to critics of the State Church such as the lawyer William Prynne, the Rev Henry Burton and Dr John Bastwick, who were mutilated, heavily fined and imprisoned.

9. Lake, P. Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church. Cambridge University Press, 1982, 41.

10. The founder of Emmanuel College was Sir Walter Mildmay of Chelmsford in Essex, the College being founded in 1584. At St. John's and Queens', earlier Puritans such as Thomas Cartwright and Walter Travers had already blazed the trail. When Gurnall came up to Emmanuel the College was not even half-a-century old.

John Bastwick, a physician, had trained at Emmanuel. Also during Gurnall's stay there were disturbances in Scotland which arose from Laud's attempted imposition of Episcopacy and a Scottish liturgy on the Scots.

Also in 1637 John Hampden was responsible for increased tension between Charles I and his subjects over the vexed question of ship money. One of the King's perennial problems was lack of money, and one of the methods employed by the Lord Treasurer, Sir Richard Weston (Earl of Portland), to try and overcome this problem was by means of ship money. Originally it was an occasional tax on port towns in lieu of providing a ship for the Royal Navy. In 1635 it was extended to inland towns. It was repeated in the next few years and seemed set to become a tax not voted by Parliament. In 1637 Hampden and Lord Saye and Sele, together with other opponents of Charles I, brought a test case to court. By the narrowest possible margin the judges decided in favour of the legality of ship money. Almost the whole propertied class united against ship money. The moral victory was with Hampden, while the long-term effect upon Charles I was disastrous.¹¹

3. 1639-December 1644.

Ryle admits that he could find almost nothing relating to Gurnall's activities between 1639 when he left Emmanuel and 1644 when he was inducted to Lavenham.¹²

Ultimately, however, the good bishop did find one or two facts.

(a) Gurnall must have preached in a town called Sudbury (Suffolk), some time between leaving Cambridge in 1639 and commencing his long ministry at Lavenham at the end of 1644.

This fact emerges from a letter that Gurnall wrote to Sir Simonds D'Ewes, who was the Member of Parliament for both Sudbury and Lavenham. The letter is written in Latin and is dated July 24th, 1644 and is one of eight such letters written to D'Ewes, all in Latin.

11. In this regard see: Hill, C. The Century of the Revolution, 1603-1714. Abacus, 1978, 22, 24, 56-57.

12. Ryle, *op.cit.*, xxii: "After a good deal of troublesome research and investigation into the subject, I must honestly confess that I can find out nothing about it."

In this letter he stated that the people of Sudbury were creating difficulties about the prospect of his leaving them to go to Lavenham.

The circumstances were as follows. Sir Simonds D'Ewes, while being M.P. for Sudbury, was at the same time the patron of the living of Lavenham church and the chief proprietor of the parish. It appears that he presented the living to Gurnall at the request of the parishioners.

This appointment was ratified by the House of Commons. The English translation of Gurnall's letter reads as follows:

But alas! The knot which I left to be untied I found still more perplexed and involved, so that I appeared, like the ship of St. Paul, to have "fallen into a place where the two seas met". While my mind is fixed on Lavenham, there threatens a storm at Sudbury, which accuses me of being lured by a golden bait. But were I to refuse this Providence held out to me by your hands, I might, not unjustly, appear disobedient to God, and ungrateful to you who offer it to me.¹³

The people of Sudbury were apparently objecting to Gurnall's proposed move.

Gurnall then went on to say that he intended to consult certain ministers in his neighbourhood about the whole matter, adding:

If I must die, I could wish it should be in the hands of the most skilful physicians; if I must err, I should wish it be among men most famous for their learning and piety.¹⁴

The decision to consult other ministers indicates Gurnall's attractive characteristic of modesty. Bishop Ryle points out that a number of Puritan divines lived within twenty miles of Lavenham. He may have consulted some of them at an 'Exercise' or ministers' fraternal or visited them individually.¹⁵

They included such men as John Owen, Stephen Marshall, Matthew Newcomen, Edmund Calamy and others.¹⁶

13. Ryle, *ibid.*, xxvi.

14. Ryle, *loc.cit.*, xxvi.

15. One such 'Exercise' had been established at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, in an earlier period and ran for some 34-35 years (about 1580-1614).

16. Ryle, *op.cit.*, xxx-xxxii.

(b) The second piece of information that Ryle uncovered, suggests that Gurnall was probably ordained to the Christian ministry while at Sudbury.

(i) The Order of the House of Commons ratifying his appointment to Lavenham does not mention the need for ordination. This Parliamentary document assumes that Gurnall is both fit and able to be appointed, as '... rector and incumbent of the same church during the term of his natural life'.¹⁷ During this period a 'high view' of the ministry prevailed in Puritan circles. A man had to be 'fit' for such an office, in terms of his education, theological position, preaching and pastoral ability and personal godliness. He also had to be properly ordained. It is difficult, if not impossible, to see the Commons ratifying an appointment of a man to the position of rector who was as yet unordained.

(ii) From the letters that Gurnall wrote to D'Ewes, Ryle concluded that:

It seems to indicate that Gurnall was a minister at Sudbury before he was rector at Lavenham ... His expressions certainly seem to imply that he owed his ordination, by whatever hands he was ordained, to the interest of Sir Simonds D'Ewes.¹⁸

Gurnall, in fact said as much in the sixth letter dated January 6, 1645 '... so that my thanks are due to you, not only as patron, but as ordainer and instituter'.¹⁹

(iii) Ryle's third discovery was that Gurnall's name did not appear in the Ordination registers of the diocese of Norwich and Ely between the years 1639-1644. Both parishes of Sudbury and Lavenham fell into that diocese. From this Ryle concludes that Gurnall probably:

entered the ministry without receiving episcopal orders at all. Most likely he was set apart for the work as a presbyterian minister with the laying on of hands of the presbytery.²⁰

A strong argument in support of Bishop Ryle's suggestion is the fact that Gurnall submitted to the Act of Uniformity in 1662, signed the Declaration required by the Act on the 20th August, was ordained priest

17. Ryle, *ibid.*, xxiv.

18. Ryle, *ibid.*, xxvi.

19. Ryle, *ibid.*, xxvii.

20. Ryle, *ibid.*, xxii.

by the Bishop of Norwich (Reynolds) and on the 21st August went through the forms of episcopal institution to Lavenham on the presentation of Thomas Bowes, who was a connection of the D'Ewes family, on the 22nd August.

It seems reasonable to assume that he submitted to re-ordination because he had not been episcopally ordained in the first place.

4. History of Lavenham.²¹

(a) Lavenham and East Anglia.

Lavenham (also known as Laneham), was a town in the south-west corner of the county of Suffolk in East Anglia. Its history goes back to the Roman occupation.²²

In the 15th and 16th centuries Lavenham was an important clothmaking area to which the still existing weavers' cottages in Water Street bear witness. A significant number of Flemish weaver-immigrants settled in the town as early as the latter part of the 14th century.

The importance of weaving is clearly seen in the occupation lists of Norwich, the principal city of East Anglia, which ranked with Bristol, York and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, as one of the largest and most important provincial cities in the realm. In 1568 Norwich housed some 600 weavers. By 1570 this had declined to the exceptionally low figure of only 9, but by 1589 had risen quite sharply to 193.

John Patten refers to Lavenham's '... once mighty broadcloth industry'.²³

Comparing 47 towns in this larger community for the years 1500-1599, we discover that 40 of the towns had weavers, 34 had tailors, 22 had textile workers of some kind or another, 18 had drapers and 15 had practising clothiers.

Adding his own observation to this, Bishop Ryle confirms that, with

21. Some of the information was gleaned from: Patten, J. English Towns, 1500-1700, Studies in Historical Geography. Dawson-Archon Books, 1978.

22. Coins of many Roman emperors have been ploughed up, along with urns, graves and ovens. Lavenham is also mentioned in the Domesday Book.

23. Patten, op.cit., 30.

regard to Lavenham:

It once had a market; and before the invention of the steam engine, was famous for the manufacture of blue cloth and serge, for the better regulation of which, three guilds, or companies, of St. Peter's, Holy Trinity, and Corpus Christi, were established.²⁴

The Guildhall was once considered to be one of the finest half-timbered buildings in England. As trade declined the Guildhall was put to other uses: it became a prison and later a workhouse and almshouse, and in this present century was presented to the National Trust.

Viewing Lavenham within the wider East Anglican community, we learn finally that:

Although the character and landscapes of Norfolk and Suffolk have been relatively untouched by the effects of subsequent industrialization, from medieval times they made up a notably populous economically important and wealthy area. East-Anglia was one of the powerhouses of the pre-industrial English economy and was probably England's most modernised region. Cloth and other manufacturers flourished in the towns and in the countryside, which also had diversified its agricultural activity...

(The) East Anglia (community) comprised a coherent area undisturbed by the direct influence of London, in contrast with counties nearer the capital, like Essex or Middlesex. The capital's tentacles did however penetrate the coast of these counties; for example ... by drawing much of the East Anglian cloth into its centralised marketing system that dominated the nation's trade in textiles.²⁵

This then was the area in which William Gurnall was to minister for the next 35 years. While not in such close contact with London as Essex, for example, it was not a backwater.

(b) The parish

The living was a valuable one,²⁶ The church was one of the finest ecclesiastical buildings in Suffolk. It was located at the western end of the town and was built during the 15th and the early part of the 16th centuries. The cost was largely carried by the Earl of

24. Ryle, op.cit., xxviii.

25. Patten, op.cit., 245.

26. Ryle, op.cit., xxviii. Writing in 1864 Ryle makes the point that: "The tithes were commuted at £850 per year, with 140 acres of glebe attached to the rectory.... Allowing for the difference in the value of money two hundred years ago, the rector of Lavenham must have been comparatively well off",

Oxford and a wealthy clothier, Thomas Spring and his family.²⁷

The tower ultimately housed eight bells.²⁸ It was in this church that Gurnall took up his preaching and expository ministry immediately after his appointment upon the Order of the Commons, dated the 16th December, 1644.

5. 1645-1679.

(a) Gurnall spent the rest of his natural life at Lavenham, as Rector of the parish. His ministry of 35 years spanned some of the most stirring and momentous events in English history.

In 1645 he married Sarah Mott, daughter of the Rev Thomas Mott, Vicar of Stoke-by-Nayland located near the Essex border. His wife bore him 10 children, 8 of whom were still alive when he died. The fact that all 10 children survived to adulthood is an amazing record in an age when infant mortality was high.

The first child, a daughter Sarah (no doubt named after her mother) was born in 1646, the last, a boy named Leonard, was born in 1669, ten years before Gurnall died.

The first six children were all girls, the last four all boys. They were: Sarah (1645), Susannah (1650), Catherine (date of birth unknown

27. The de Veres, Earls of Oxford, were once the principal proprietors of Lavenham. In the reign of Elizabeth I and Edward VI, the then Earl of Oxford sold his property at Lavenham, together with the avowson of the living to Paul D'Ewes, esq., the father of Sir Simonds D'Ewes, the patron of Gurnall.

The church building itself was constructed of free-stone and ornamented with flint, a material often used in Suffolk churches because of the scarcity of stone. The church was 156 feet long, 68 broad, with the tower rising to the height of 141 feet, with a diameter of 42 feet.

The foundations of the tower were in fact laid in the lifetime of the second Thomas Spring who died in 1486, thus giving some idea of the antiquity of the whole building. During the lifetime of the third Thomas Spring the tower and chapel of the church were completed. The Springs had been granted a coat of arms, which appeared no less than 32 times around the top of the tower. The church complex was finished in 1525.

28. Blythe, R. Akenfield, Portrait of an English Village. Penguin Books, 1982 reprint, 86. Blythe suggests that: One of the finest bells in the world is in Suffolk. It is the Lavenham tenor which Miles Gray made in 1625. It is known as the sweetest bell in England.

and probably named after Gurnall's mother), Elizabeth (1655), Ann (also 1655), another sister whose name is unknown, Thomas (1659 and probably named after Gurnall's father-in-law), Joseph (1662), John (1664), and Leonard (1669).

Three of the girls married clergymen, Susannah, Catherine and Elizabeth. At least one son, John entered the ministry becoming Curate at Brockley after attending Christ's College.

If Gurnall's pithiness in his sermons is any measure the home must have been characterised by at least a measure of happiness and wit.

(b) Gurnall's sermons indicate a voracious reader. He was acquainted with classical authors such as Pliny, Cicero, Livius, Epicurus, as well as the church fathers, the Reformers and his contemporaries.

His sermons evidence very thorough preparation. A typical Puritan pastor, he took his responsibility as preacher and pastor with the utmost seriousness. His industry becomes apparent in his often rather complex arguments. Gurnall (as we shall see later) was never content simply to make hortatory statements or simple exhortations. He argued with syllogisms, and both from a major to a minor truth and from the minor to a major truth. He marshalled an astonishing variety of 'uses' and 'applications', all with different Christians in mind, who had dissimilar conscience problems. For every 'symptom' there was a 'cure', and often more than one. From his discernment of the needs of his people and from his knowledge of Scripture he erected an impressive pastoral theology.

Gurnall also made use of such literary aids as analogies, similies, illustrations, metaphors and incisively pithy comments. He also showed a wide knowledge of historical events, persons, military events and armaments. He knew about magazines, the armourer's shop, fire-ships, military ranks, standards, artillery, pikes, colours, furbishing, scouring and oiling one's armour, muster-rolls, armour cap-à-pie, 'engines of war', the use of the sponge in cannon fire, short swords and so on.

(c) Perhaps the most unusual feature of Gurnall's ministry was his acceptance of the Act of Uniformity of 1662. Unlike the 1 500 to 2 000 fellow Puritan ministers of the gospel who could not accede to the Act's demands and were ejected, Gurnall conformed and remained at his ministerial

post.

While we do not know his ultimate reason for conforming there are a number of clues scattered throughout his exposition which offer some possible answers. These will be examined in the next section of this chapter, ie. II. Gurnall's assessment of and attitude to the 'Days of great confusions' and 'Trying times' in which he lived.

Not surprisingly his conformity drew a great deal of abuse. It did not apparently occur to those who abused him that they should accord him the same freedom of conscience as that upon which they had insisted when leaving the Established Church. A peculiarly difficult circumstance for him was the fact that his father-in-law, the Rev Thomas Mott, was one who chose to leave his church.

One such attack was published as late as 1665, originating from a quote by Bishop Kennet and recorded by Ryle. The foreword of this attack runs as follows:

Covenant Renouncers Desperate Apostates, opened in two letters, written by a Christian friend to Mr. W. Gurnall, of Lavenham in Suffolk, which may indefinitely serve as an admonition to all such Presbyterian ministers or others, who have forced their conscience, not only to leap over, but to renounce their solemn covenant obligation to endeavour a reformation according to God's words, and the extirpation of all prelatial superstitions, and contrary thereunto conform to those superstitious vanities against which they so solemnly sworn. Printed in Anti-turncoat Street, and sold at the sign of Truth's Delight, right opposite to Back-sliding Alley. 4to, 1665.²⁹

The reference to 'such Presbyterian ministers' seems to confirm that Gurnall was originally ordained as a Presbyterian minister, probably at Sudbury.

(d) William Gurnall died on October 12th, 1679 in his sixty-third year and was buried at Lavenham. The exact spot is unknown. A memorial slab in black marble was erected in the chancel to one of his daughters, Mary, wife of Mr Henry Broughton, and Gurnall is mentioned on the slab. The funeral sermon was preached by the Rev Mr Burkitt, who was the Rector of Milden, near Lavenham. Gurnall's wife, Sarah, survived him by 18 years and was buried at Lavenham on September 7th, 1698. The exact place of her grave is also unknown.

29. Ryle, op.cit., xxxii.

II. William Gurnall's assessment of and attitude to the 'Days of great confusions' (I.110) and 'Trying times' (I.256) in which he lived.

Though we have relatively little information about Gurnall himself, the case is different when we examine his assessment of and comments about the historical, theological and political events of his lifetime and ministry. Scattered throughout Vols. I and II (of the 1964 Banner of Truth Trust reprint), are some 65 to 70 references to such events. For someone living in rural Lavenham, he showed a surprising degree of knowledge and insight into public affairs and events. He may have gleaned some of this information from his patron, Sir Simonds D'Ewes, who was a leading M.P. and a Parliamentary antiquary.³⁰

A. Why did Gurnall preach on Ephesians 6:10-20?

Gurnall did not answer that question in such a manner as to enable us to draw a categorical conclusion. There are however a few suggestive possibilities which may point us in a general direction.

It is first of all helpful to recall that the Puritans often chose to expound passages that were in keeping with what they considered to be the prevailing Providential winds of the day. Great disasters such as the Plague that struck London in 1603, again in 1625 and 1636, and with greater intensity still in 1665, as well as the Fire of London in 1665-66, were all used as starting points from which to address the nation. Did the Civil War and national upheaval prompt him to expound this particular passage of Paul in Ephesians which deals likewise with warfare and conflict?

Unlike many Puritan divines,³¹ Gurnall makes no attempt to equate Parliamentary actions or the New Model Army with God's cause. Nowhere

30. The dates and divisions mentioned on pp. 1-3 have a bearing on what follows. There are occasions when, for example, Gurnall refers to a national event in such general terms that one realizes that he had a definite incident or person in mind, but he does not specify what or who it is. By placing his remarks in the period when it was preached, ie. in the period 1644-1655 or 1658-1662 we may reach some accuracy on the event or person he had in mind.

31. See: Liu, T. Discord in Zion, The Puritan Divines and the Puritan Revolution 1640-1660. Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1974. Particularly chapter 1 'A glimpse of Zion's Glory'.

for example, did he in allegorical fashion draw a parallel between the Christian's warfare with the great enemy, and the Parliamentary army's conflict with Charles I.

On the contrary, he went out of his way to emphasize where the real conflict (in his opinion) lay. In his very first Epistle Dedicatory, which was addressed 'To my dearly beloved Friends and Neighbours, the Inhabitants of Lavenham' (I.1) he pointed to the fact that '... many thousands have been sent to the grave in a few late years among us by the sword of man'. (I.3) He then applied this sad truth about the Civil War in a specifically spiritual manner. The havoc of the Civil War, as terrible and bloody as it was, would be sport and child's play in comparison to the war between the saint and Satan. (I.2) He proposed to tell them about '... a spiritual war ... (and that) ... The stage whereon this war is fought, is every man's own soul'. (I.3)

Later with even greater clarity he dealt with 'The Sin of Ministers who Stir up Strife', and roundly accused those who preach strife and contention from the pulpit as abusing the gospel of the Prince of Peace. They ought to be blowing a trumpet of retreat '... from the bloody fight wherein their lusts had engaged them against God and one another'. (I.547)

From the context it is clear that he is referring to their physical participation in the Civil War.

That this is so is confirmed when he went on to add pertinently: 'Indeed there is a war they are to proclaim, but it is only against sin and Satan.' (I.547)

Gurnall it seems, is using the role of ministers in the Civil War as an illustration of misdirected efforts. They are fighting the wrong war against the wrong enemy and with the wrong weapons.

In the light of these statements of Gurnall, as well as (as we shall see) his profound concern for the nation and especially God's church, it is not unreasonable to suggest that he preached on this passage because he wanted his flock to realise just where the real and ultimately decisive conflict lay, ie. in the spiritual and not in the physical or political realm.

This fact will be one of the main emphases of this thesis.

Many Puritan divines, as well as Puritan gentry, M.P.'s and London merchants were so strongly 'Millennarian' in their views that they viewed the battles between Royalist and Roundhead as the ultimate and final battle between God's forces and Satan's forces, and expected the establishment of Christ's reign to follow from the final Parliamentary victories.

Gurnall may have wished to redress this imbalance by distinguishing between the two wars. That he preached from this passage over a period of more than 12 years and seems to have been increasingly disillusioned with the breakdown in law and order, consequent upon the Civil War, suggests that Gurnall did not identify the two struggles, but as a pastor was concerned that his people understood the true nature of the conflict in which they were engaged.

B. How did Gurnall view his society, the church and age?

How did Gurnall view the century? And how did his own views govern his assessment of and actions within society, particularly in the light of his puzzling decision in 1662?

His overall attitude expressed in passages referring to contemporary times was one of profound distress and dismay. He was distressed about the breakdown in law and order in society, about the bloodshed in the Civil War, about attacks from sectaries on the church from without and the destructive divisions between Christians within the church.

One of the few positive statements is found in Vol. II, p. 409. He begins with his usual unhappy note, but ends more positively. It is noticeable that he made this statement during the period 1658-1662, which saw the restoration of the monarchy:

Such dismal days of national confusion our eyes have seen, when foundations of government were destroyed, and all hurled into military confusion ... And certainly this (prayer) hath been the engine, that hath been above any instrumental to screw up this poor nation again, and set it upon the foundation of that lawful government from which it was so dangerously slid. (II.409)

The following elements make up this statement:

- (a) There was a time when there was a lawful government in the land.
- (b) The foundations of this lawful government were shaken and 'destroyed'.
- (c) Upon this destruction of lawful government the nation was hurled

into military confusion.

(d) The nation slid dangerously off its foundation of lawful government.

In trying to analyze this statement we are faced again with the fact that Gurnall does not clearly and unambiguously state who the parties are of whom he is speaking. On the other hand, the mere fact that he does not do so, when he obviously had something definite in mind, is in itself significant. Did he not feel free to state when and where the 'foundations of government were destroyed and hurled into military confusion'? And did he not feel free to state clearly who was involved in setting the nation 'upon the foundation of that lawful government from which it was so dangerously slid'? Was this because the majority of his hearers had strong pro-Parliamentary feelings and viewed the events in England from 1640 onwards in a different light? It is very probable that Gurnall, in this passage in II.409, was thinking of the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II rather than Parliamentary rule.

Furthermore, that this is the 'lawful government', from which the nation had so dangerously slid when the foundations of government were destroyed (the execution of Charles I) and 'all hurled into military confusion' (the Civil War). If this interpretation is correct, then it may throw some light on the puzzling case of a Puritan pastor remaining within the Established Church during the Great Ejection of 1662.

An extremely important fact to keep in mind, when examining his words and motives, is that a very large percentage of the English population saw society and church as deeply inter-related. It is not for nothing that Gurnall speaks of '... days of great confusion in the Christian world'. (I.110)

His fears were integrated fears. A political threat was not confined to the political arena, it also constituted a threat to the church. Consequently, the breakdown in 'lawful government' in society, in defying God's appointed magistrates, etc., also threatened the church. It threatened the unity of the church, the preaching of the Word, the dispensing of the Ordinances and the future of the gospel itself. The church was part of the fabric of society; tear and rend that fabric

and the church is also implicated. Conversely, tearing the unity of the church only perpetuated the already chaotic state in the nation.

G.R. Cragg writes:

It was generally believed that the life of the community was indivisible, and since the church was the religious expression of the corporate life, its unity was the condition of the nation's solidarity and strength. To allow cleavage in the church was to encourage weakness in the state.³²

Did Gurnall therefore see in a restored monarchy the healing of a broken and injured society, which in turn would help to bring healing to a splintered church? And did he perhaps feel that by joining those ministers who left the Established Church in 1662 he would only perpetuate the already existing divisions in the church and even rend the church still further? The case for such a probability rests on cumulative impressions rather than conclusive facts.

To the marshalling of these cumulative impressions we now turn.

I. Gurnall set a high priority on an orderly society and government.

High on Gurnall's priorities for the 'Commonwealth' was an orderly society based on the Puritan doctrine of 'calling'. God called each person to occupy a certain position in society in accordance with their gifts, talents and training. Gurnall stated it as follows:

That it should be the care of every Christian, to stand orderly in the particular place wherein God hath set him. (I.279)

It was the Devil's purpose to draw men and women out of their proper 'calling' and so cause anarchy in society. The Christian was related to a threefold society, namely, the church, commonwealth and family. Leaving aside the church and family for the moment, Gurnall pointed out that the commonwealth consisted of '... magistrates and people'. (I.279)

In 17th century terminology the word 'magistrate' included persons holding public office, such as, for example, the members of the Privy Council and even the Sovereign. There was a clear distinction between '... the magistrate's business (and) the subjects'. (I.280) This was

32. Cragg, G.R. Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution, 1660-1688. Cambridge University Press, 1957, 31-32.

because their 'calling' was different. As he lamented: 'O what a quiet world we should have, if every thing and every person knew his own place!' (I.281)

Having laid down his doctrine, Gurnall proceeded to draw out a crucial principle:

We are to pray for magistrates that they may rule in the fear of God, but if they do not, we may not step upon the bench and do his work for him. God requires no more than faithfulness in our place. (I.282)

But it was precisely because subjects had often 'stepped up onto the bench' of the magistrate's to attempt work foreign to them, and to which God had not appointed them (ie. 'called' them to), that England was in such a turmoil. If men, said Gurnall, had kept to their original place and calling, then:

we should neither have seen such floods of sin, nor miseries as this unhappy age has almost been drowned with. (I.281)

He then asked: 'How came many in our days to fall from their steadfastness, but by breaking their order?' (I.282)

Changes that might be the 'breaking of order' between 1655-58 included: Penrroddock's Rising, Cromwell dissolving the First Protectorate Parliament, the appointment of Major-Generals, the establishment of the Second Protectorate Parliament, the offer and rejection of the monarchy by Cromwell, his installation as Lord Protector and the dissolving of the Second Protectorate Parliament.

While we cannot tell who Gurnall had in mind, in a sense it does not matter: what is important is that he had a definite view of a stable society in mind based on the 'calling' of men to be 'magistrates', and even if their authority were to break down, then the common people, the subjects were not to usurp it. Gurnall had an idea in mind, a principle which he felt should always be observed.

II. Gurnall was deeply aware of and concerned about the general unrest in the nation.

Early in his preaching career he revealed his unease. In a sermon preached ca. 1644-1655, he said:

We live in days of great actions, deep counsels, and plots on all side, and a few ... know these mysteries of state. (I.85)

Soldiers were not being paid their wages. (I.270) It was a fickle and unsettled age: 'Never was there a more giddy age than ours.' (I.298)

He lamented the:

bloody wars of late ... (the) days of great confusions in the Christian world ... the church ... swallowed up ... by the fury of men. (I.110-111)

He pondered the:

unhappy change, God knows it is; to have war, pestilence, and family removed, and to be left swollen up with pride, error, and libertinism. (I.426)

Nowhere did Gurnall see the Civil War in a positive providential light. On the contrary, he viewed it as having done great harm and damage to the church, a position quite different from many other divines and certainly at odds with Cromwell's outlook.

This great upheaval in society is supported by Christopher Hill:

From, say, 1645 to 1653, there was a great overturning, questioning, revaluating, of everything in England ... Men moved easily from one critical group to another, and a Quaker of the 1650s had far more in common with a Leveller, a Digger or a Ranter than with a modern member of the Society of Friends.³³

Later he adds:

Again and again in spiritual autobiographies of the time we read of men who passed through Presbyterianism, Independency and Anabaptistry before ending as Seekers (Webster and Clement Writer), as Ranters (Salmon, Coppin, Coppe, Clarkson and Francis Freeman) or as Quakers (Dewsbury, Howgill and Thomas Taylor).³⁴

Gurnall's deep unrest showed in his rising distress that the Puritan party was beginning to disintegrate into a hundred factions. Revolutionary dog ate revolutionary dog. He would have agreed with the sentiments expressed by Stephen Marshall, who, preaching in 1652 before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London, revealed how deeply divided the Puritan Commonwealth had become:

Every man is at warre with every man, every man is an enemy to every man ... but still the confused noise goes on ... we are not willing to hear of agreement,

33. Hill, C. The World Turned Upside Down, Radical Ideas During the English Revolution. Penguin, 1975, 14.

34. Hill, *ibid.*, 190-191.

he is almost an enemy, who would labour pacification or reconciliation. The Lord have mercy on us.³⁵

III. Gurnall was deeply concerned about certain issues in society.

1. Social and moral breakdown.

Liberty is the Diana of our times. O what apologies are made for some suspicious practices! - long hair, gaudy garish apparel, spotted faces, naked breasts ... Yea, many are so fond of them, that they think Christian liberty is wronged in their censure. (I.428)

He attributed this widespread moral breakdown to '... a nourishing of the flesh'. (I.82)

While he did not specify any definite social group or sect, he unquestionably had in mind men and women who distinguished themselves by their outrageous behaviour and dress: the Ranters most closely resemble the description above. The Ranters did not have a leader which the Quakers, for example, had in George Fox. It is also doubtful if there ever was a so-called Ranter Organisation. Nevertheless, there were enough men and women with avant garde and permissive inclinations and practises to call such a term into existence.

2. The growth of atheism and blasphemy.

There were many:

apostate professors of our days (who have run) over to the devil's side, (and turned) blasphemers, worldlings, and atheists. (I.260)

He doubted if there were ever '... more atheists ... in England ... than in the compass of a dozen years past'. (I.467)

So serious was this 'atheism' that the Blasphemy Ordinance of May 1648 was promulgated; it carried the death sentence for anyone denying the Trinity. In more genteel and sophisticated circles it was fashionable to despise religion and considered 'intellectual' to espouse some form of atheism (rather like the intelligensia in France after the French Revolution). A very powerful force in this regard may have been Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan.

35. Liu, op.cit., 146-147, footnote 1.

Over twenty years later the great John Owen still expressed the same concern. Preaching on the 22nd December 1681, he was convinced that England was still filled with open sin and rebellion against God:

Oh, poor England From the height of profaneness and atheism, through the filthiness of sensuality and uncleanness, down to the lowest oppression and cheating, the land is filled with all sorts of sin.³⁶

Blasphemy, like atheism, became a positive mark of many of the sects and socio-religious-political movements, and was widespread throughout society in general. So widespread in fact that within a short space of time two Blasphemy Ordinances were passed: the first (already mentioned) in May 1648, and the second termed the Blasphemy Act of 9th August of 1650. The latter was directed specifically against the Ranters who advocated blasphemy as a symbolic expression of freedom from moral restraint.

The persistence of blasphemy throughout English society was however so common and pervasive that the Ordinance of 1648 proved unenforceable. In a section of his work preached between 1644 and 1655 Gurnall testified both to the prevalence of blasphemy and the unenforceability of legislation against it:

It is sad that blasphemy against God should not bear an action, where blasphemy against the king is indicted for treason. (I.298)

3. The growth of anti-clerical feelings.

From the latter part of the 16th century onwards the so-called 'common people' (usually referred to as the 'meaner sort'), as well as the aristocracy held the clergy in increasing contempt.

Evidence is found in the iconoclastic waves which periodically surfaced in society. In the late 1630's and 40's altar rails were pulled down, altars desecrated, statues on tombs destroyed, ecclesiastical documents burnt, and pigs and horses baptised. The tithes and patronage system was resented. The poorly educated and ill-equipped clergy, still to be found in many parishes, also elicited antagonism. In

36. Toon, P. God's Statesman, The Life and Work of John Owen, Pastor, Educator, Theologian. The Paternoster Press, 1971, 159.

many areas, particularly in Wales and some of the remoter counties in the North of England, many parishes were vacant. This, in turn, gave rise to unordained 'mechanick' preachers who were often violently anti-clerical and could sweep a community into accepting the same sentiments. Such powerful movements as the Quakers, who rejected all ordained clergy, added fuel to the fire.

Once again Gurnall was deeply distressed about such developments:

What reproaches are the faithful ministers of the gospel laden withal! I call heaven and earth to witness whether ever they suffered a hotter persecution of the tongue than in this apostatizing age. (I.49)

This was preached ca. 1644-1655. But years later, in the period 1658-1662, he struck the same note when he said:

When were people's affections more withdrawn from their minister? (II.257)

4. The growth of Rationalism

Gurnall was aware of the increasing growth of 'rationalism' in such socio-political movements as the Diggers as well as in the more academic Socinianism. He says quite specifically:

To name no more, the Socinian, he folds himself up in his own proud reason ... He must have a religion and Scripture that fits the model (of) his own reason ... A modern divine (whom he does not identify, but was probably John Owen.³⁷) saith, "Most heresies have sprung either ... from pride, Aetian ignorance, or the Arian sophistry of reason." (II.225-226)

Gerard Winstanley, the prominent Digger-Leveller leader, believed that 'Reason' pervaded the universe and lived supremely in man. In 1653 a 'Life of Socinus' was published and John Owen was commissioned by the Council of State in March 1654 to refute it, as well as the views of John Bidle, the father of English Unitarianism.³⁷ (same as below)

The Ranters bluntly called God 'Reason'. It is useful to remember that the terms 'Arian', 'Socinian' and 'Unitarian' were sometimes used interchangeably.

37. Owen's book was entitled Vindiciae Evangelicae (1655), and is to be found in his Works, Vol. XII. The Banner of Truth Trust edition of his Works, 1966. See also: Toon, op.cit., 95, footnote 4.

5. The possible resurgence of Roman Catholicism.

Preaching ca. 1644-1655, Gurnall revealed a deep concern lest 'the bloody wars of late' would enable the 'popish and profane crew' to exploit the situation in the country. And, he added, the possibility of such a resurgence would enable them to turn their:

fury against Christ's little remnant ... Neither are they so crest-fallen, but that they can hope for such a day, yea (they) take up some of those joys aforehand, to solace themselves, while the rest follow. (I.110)

This was not the first or the last time that Gurnall revealed a deep concern over the possible consequence of the Civil War.

As we shall see, he believed that many in the Establishment became apostate because of these military upheavals. (I.260) Such a view of the Civil War makes one wonder about his commitment to the Parliamentary cause.

It also makes the possibility that he became increasingly pro-monarchical easier to accept.

As a good Protestant Gurnall was in fact only one of the many thousands who feared Roman Catholicism and its possible resurgence.

The Pope had never relinquished his right to depose monarchs; specifically none of Pius V's successors had cancelled the Bull Regnans in Excelsis of 1570, which had formerly deposed Elizabeth I and absolved her subjects from allegiance to her. While the real threat may have been exaggerated, there were nevertheless a series of plots that fanned these fears. And while Gurnall did not go into specifics, he might have had some of the following incidents in mind.³⁸

38. The Ridolfi plot of 1571 to depose Elizabeth I; assassination plots linked with Throckmorton and Babington in the 1580's, and the Gunpowder plot of 1605. A further conspiracy was believed imminent from 1640-43, allegedly confirmed by the Irish Rebellion of 1641. In the Winter of 1641-42 an hysterical fear swept the country at the prospect of a RC uprising. Queen Henrietta protected Roman Catholics at court. By 1640 nearly one in every five Peers at court was a Catholic, and in 1637, a Papal Agent was received for the first time since the reign of Bloody Mary.

IV. Gurnall was deeply concerned about the growth, power and influence of 'religious imposters'.

Both the nation at large and individual congregations had been invaded by religious imposters:

let loose in so great a measure to deceive the nation ...
What, no sooner an imposter come into this country, and
open his pack, but buy all his ware at first sight! (I.190-191)

They were nothing but '... grievous wolves'. (I.189)

Who were these imposters? Gurnall mentions specifically The Family of Love (I.82, I.486 and possibly I.451) and the Quakers (II.225). No less culpable were the Socinians (II.225) and those who held to Pelagianism. (I.190)

It is clear however that he had other groups and movements in mind, for many of the words and phrases he uses seem clearly derived from the theological presuppositions which undergirded such movements, such as, the Anabaptists, Seekers, Diggers, Levellers, Grindletonians (part of the Familist movement) and Ranters.

There was enormous cross-fertilisation of political, philosophical and religious ideas and beliefs in the 17th century in English society. Contributing to this mobility was the movement of large numbers of soldiers across great tracts of land during the Civil War. So-called 'masterless' men roamed the country, looking for work:

masterless men were no longer outlaws but existed in alarming numbers - 13,000, mostly in the North, a government enquiry calculated in 1569; 30,000 in London alone, it was guessed more wildly in 1602.³⁹

Clothiers, stocking-knitters, iron-masters, etc. could all use casual labour. The early Familists had been weavers, basket-makers, musicians, bottlemakers, joiners, and had survived by travelling from place to place, taking with them wherever they went their religious views. The Ranters too were probably migratory craftsmen. The economically and agriculturally disastrous years between 1620 and 1650 would only have accelerated such shifts in the population.

Gurnall was very much aware of this mobility when he said accurately

39. Hill, op.cit., 39, footnote 3,

enough:

But this is a small fault in our loose age, or else so many seducers - whom I may call spiritual rogues and vagrants - would not be suffered to wander like gypsies up and down, bewitching poor simple souls to their perdition. (I.298)

A number of these groups and movements had stongholds not very far from Lavenham; their proximity may had increased Gurnall's fears.

If he feared that the Civil War, which like a flame was '... every day ... coming nearer and nearer to ourselves' (I.426), then we may believe that he was deeply troubled by 'sectaries' not many miles from his beloved flock.

What did these 'religious imposters' proclaim and advocate?

1. They attacked the Sabbath.

They:

decry Sabbaths (I.190), (and) ... Thou seest some turn their back on the public assemblies, under a pretense of sinful mixtures there that would defile them. (I.451)

Amongst these were the Diggers and the Familists. Samuel Rutherford, for example, accused John Saltmarsh of the Familists, of denying the keeping of the Sabbath.

In a strikingly symbolic action (the implications of which they could not have been totally aware of at the time), a group of poor men gathered at St. Georges Hill, just outside London, on Sunday the 1st April, 1649 and began to dig up the waste land there. This was one of a number of such Digger actions for which the Sabbath was apparently quite deliberately chosen.

The Ranters were violently opposed to all forms of Christian worship, whether Episcopal or non-conformist; their stance included a refusal to honour the Sabbath.

2. They attacked the truths of the gospel and the ordinances.

Satan, through these imposters:

hath sadly corrupted the truths of Christ; brought a disteem on ordinances ... so that ... the womb of the gospel is become in a great measure barren. (I.110)

In particular, every ordinance was being questioned or disowned:

One will not sing; another will not have his child baptised;
a third will not have any water baptism; nor supper neither;
a fourth bungs up his ear too from all hearing of the word,
and would have us expect immediate teaching. (I.304)

Likewise 'Singing of Psalms hath been a duty owned and practised by many, who have now laid it down.' (I.303)

The refusal to have children baptised is no doubt a reference to the Anabaptists of a more radical hue, as well as to Baptists like John Bunyan. The term was also used in a more generalised pejorative sense. The profound anti-clericalism and anti-ecclesiastical attitudes of such groups as the Familists and Quakers included a denial of any form of water baptism whatever.

To the Lord's Supper were opposed, the Quakers, Diggers and Ranters. The Quakers recognised no Christ but within; no Scripture to be a rule and no ordinances. John Bunyan lists Quaker beliefs in the early Fifties in his Works and includes an item relevant to this point: '... (4) Christ's flesh and blood is within the saints'.⁴⁰

The Digger, Gerard Winstanley, held that holy communion was not a sacrament but consisted merely of eating and drinking in any house in a spirit of love and harmony.

The Ranters despised ordinances and maintained that they no longer needed any help from such outward forms as preaching or communion.

How deeply Gurnall felt about such attitudes can be judged from his remarks, preached ca. 1658-1662:

And this is a gospel prophecy concerning the last days;
where ... we may take notice of the folly and pride of
those that cast off public ordinances ... Now cast off
the worship of God Himself, and communion with his church
both on earth and in heaven. (II.392-393)

3. They advocated a form of subjectivism.

Early on in his ministry and preaching Gurnall hinted at this when he said that some of the religious movements bung up their ears '... from all hearing of the word, and would have us expect immediate teaching'. (I.304)

40. Hill, *ibid.*, 237, footnote 24.

He was referring to an immediate revelation of the truth to a man in his spirit by the Holy Spirit, a position similar to Quakerism. Later he named them:

Thus the Quakers, they have their skulking hole to which they run from the Scripture, at whose bar they know their opinions would be cast (down) undoubtedly and therefore (they) appeal to another where they may have a more favourable hearing - the light within them, or, in plain English, their natural conscience; a judge which is known too well to be corrupt and easily bribed to speak what the lusts of men will oft have him do. Ah, poor creatures, what a sad change have they made! - to leave the word that is ... an inflexible rule of faith ... to trust the guidance of themselves to themselves, a more ignorant, sottish, unfaithful guide than which the Devil could not have chosen for them. (II.225)

He brought a similar charge against the Familists on the subject of prayer:

The Spirit doth not so pray in him as that the Christian doth not exercise his own faculties in the duty, as the Familists fondly conceive. (II.486)

The familists believed that only the Spirit of God within a believer could properly understand Scripture; the Quakers went a stage further and denied that the Bible was the Word of God. Every man in the world had the Spirit of God within him and was capable of receiving immediate revelation from God.

A typical visit of a group of northern Quakers occurred in Oxford in June 1654. Elizabeth Fletcher and Elizabeth Holmes, tried to convince the students of the unchristian nature of academic studies and that they needed only the 'inner light' imparted by the Holy Spirit. Miss Fletcher felt called to be a living witness and testimony to the students after the style of the OT prophets. Accordingly she walked partially naked through the streets proclaiming that the terrible day of the Lord was at hand. The students drove her into the grounds of St. John's College, where they pumped water over her and her friend. Undaunted, they visited an Oxford church the next Sunday and interrupted the service. They were severely punished by John Owen, who was vice-chancellor of the University, not for being Quakers, but because their behaviour incited civil disorder and was aimed at the

downfall of the University.⁴¹

This advocacy of a form of subjectivism included a growing emphasis upon dreams, visions, prophesying and the appearance (inevitably) of so-called 'Messiah's'. The Fifth Monarchists in the 1650's made use of the 'prophecies' of Merlin, Mother Shipton, the Sybylline prophecies, Nostradamus, Paracelsus and astrologers. Astrological almanacs were in wide use. Many Anabaptists, Ranters and Quakers also practised a concomitant form of faith-healing.

4. They taught wrong doctrine.

One particularly striking example of Gurnall's insight concerned the doctrine of sin. He reported that:

they (undisclosed) can now do that which we call swearing, lying, yea, what not, without being bearded and checked by an imperious conscience; yea, they assert that there is no sin to any but him that thinks so. (I.467)

A fellow-countryman, Thomas Collier, writing in the same period, 1657, gave a clue about whom Gurnall had in mind:

any that know the principles of the Ranters' may easily recognise that Quaker doctrines are identical ... Both would have ... no law but their lusts ... no sin but what men fancied to be so, no condemnation for sin but in the consciences of ignorant ones.⁴²

5. The geographical location of these sectaries.

Notions already detailed were propagated by men such as Winstanley, John Lilburne, Lawrence Clarkson, George Fox, John Saltmarsh, William Erbury and others.

Gurnall's knowledge of sectarian teaching and practice came from the presence of local members of such sects who lived near his parish, as well as from the abundance of books and pamphlets the sects published during this period. A further source was the testimony of other Puritan leaders like John Owen, Stephen Marshall, Matthew Newcomen, Thomas Young

41. Toon, op.cit., 76, footnote 4. It is significant that John Owen saw in the religious disorder the seeds of disorder in society. This parallels Gurnall's own linkage of these issues.

42. Hill, op.cit., 67.

and others, who lived at one time or another within 20 miles of Lavenham. To understand Gurnall's position towards the sectaries we need to look more closely at them.

The Familists. Their origin was probably due to the teaching of Henry Niclaes, born in Münster in 1502. He was very likely an eyewitness to the uprising in that doomed city which took place in 1534. Familism took root in England as the result of the labours of an itinerant joiner of Dutch origin, Christopher Vittels. The 'chief' Familist in England by 1648, by which time Gurnall had been at Lavenham for four years, was a Yorkshireman John Saltmarsh. Another important person in the movement (who also espoused Antinomianism) was John Everard (ca. 1575-1650). Familism apparently had a continuous existence from the time of Elizabeth I.⁴³ By 1581 the movement had gained power and influence in the eastern counties.⁴⁴ From 1584 they were numerous in the diocese of Ely and in East Anglia.

The Seekers. Their leaders were William Walwyn, Roger Williams, John Saltmarsh (also a Familist), John Webster, Clement Writer, William Erbury and possibly Lawrence Clarkson.

Seekers were found in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cumberland and Westmoreland. But, they were also found (as in the case of the Familists) in the diocese of Ely. In the 1640's Ely became a Seeker centre, when it was for some time the headquarters of William Erbury. Ely is only 30 miles from Lavenham. The Seeker community at Ely was therefore already well established by the time that Gurnall took up his ministry in 1644.

The Quakers. Their main leader was of course George Fox (1624-1691). Other leaders included: William Deusbury (also spelt Dewsbury), Francis Howgill, Thomas Taylor, James Naylor and Samuel Fisher.

The Quakers started probably as early as 1646 in the north, notably in Cumberland. When they turned south in 1654 they made considerable progress in Cornwall, Wales and amongst the weavers of Gloucestershire. By 1656 they were in the south-west counties, and had penetrated to

43. Lake, op.cit., 297, footnote 25.

44. Knappen, M.M. Tudor Puritanism. University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Edition, 1965, 372.

Kingston near London. By this time Wellingborough in Northamptonshire, some 65 miles from Lavenham, had become a Quaker centre. Also, by 1656 they were rapidly expanding in the southern and eastern counties. During this time a Quaker community was established at Colchester in the county of Essex, just over the border from Suffolk and no more than 15-20 miles from Lavenham.

The Diggers. Their main leaders included Gerard Winstanley, Lawrence Clarkson, John Lilburne and 'physical force' Levellers such as Major Francis White and Captain William Bray.

Between 1649-1653 the movement established itself at St. George's Hill outside London, as well as in Lancashire, Buckinghamshire, Northumberland, York and such southern counties as Cornwall, Somerset, Kent, Middlesex, Bedfordshire, Surrey and Berkshire, and in the midlands of Leicester.

The nearest communities of any significance to Lavenham were Wellingborough in Northamptonshire and Barnet in Hertfordshire.

The Ranters. While there was no apparent 'leader', many contributed to the movement and its ideology. These included Lawrence Clarkson, Joseph Salmon, Richard Coppin, Abiezer Coppe, Francis Freeman, William Erbury, Alexander Agnew, Jacob Bauthumley, John Pordage, Thomas Tany and Thomas Webbe.

While the Ranters were never as organised a group as the Quakers, there was especially between 1649-1651, a group which held similar views to such an extent that their contemporaries could call them by name 'Ranters'. At one stage they were also known as 'Coppinites' or 'Claxtonians'. They could be found in Coventry, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, West Riding, Lancashire, Cumberland, Westmorland and further south in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, and even as far south as Cornwall. The nearest points to Lavenham were Huntingdonshire, Wellingborough in Northamptonshire and Wells in neighbouring Norfolk.

At their high point (1649-1651), they were known for their high spirits, lascivious songs, bawdy and uninhibited dancing, and rejection of all moral restraints. Believing that to the pure all things were pure, they licensed the grossest of sins. In his Ranter period Lawrence

Clarkson taught that:

there is no such sin as drunkenness, adultery and theft in God ... Sin hath its conception only in the imagination What act soever is done by thee in light and love, is light and lovely, though it be that act called adultery ... No matter what Scripture, saints or churches say, if that within thee do not condemn thee, thou shalt not be condemned.⁴⁵

It is possible that the Ranters learnt many of their views from the Family of Love or Familist sect.

V. Gurnall was deeply concerned about the state of the church.

At this point we arrive, in many ways, at the heart of his distress and dismay; the other issues were bad enough, but the state of the church touched the core of his real concern.

1. Gurnall's profound love for the 'Ark of God'.

The 'Ark' he said, was being shaken. (I.49) His choice of such a symbol was not accidental. It symbolised for him the presence of God with his people. The Ark in the OT was the locus - in the Tabernacle and Temple - of God's presence and the atonement made for the people.

So deep was Gurnall's love for God's church that he dared to use our Lord's words on the Cross when speaking about the 'religious imposters' and others who attacked her:

Father, forgive them. They are cutting off their right hand with their left; they are making themselves and the nation naked. (I.49)

Later he returned to the same symbol. The:

chief fear of a gracious heart is for the ark, lest it should fall into the enemies' hand ... lest the city of God, his church, be trod under the feet of pride. (I.110)

God's church is '... Christ's little remnant ... Christ's sheep'. (I.110)

Such tender and sensitive descriptions of the church could be multiplied.

45. Hill, op.cit., 297, footnote 25.

2. Gurnall saw the hand of Satan behind the attacks on the church.

This facet is really part and parcel of his total exposition on the issue of spiritual conflict and warfare. While his exposition focussed largely on the individual's warfare, he did not neglect the wider arena of the church's spiritual warfare. From his earliest years at Lavenham until the last sections of 'The Christian in Complete Armour' was published, he was aware of Satan's onslaught against the Ark. The following quotations will substantiate this:

ca. 1644-1655. Satan:

design(s) to disturb the peace of the church ... sending in grievous wolves. (I.189)

ca. 1655-1658. Satan:

gather(s) together arguments enough to make them scruple ... (so that) ... every ordinance hath had its turn to be questioned, yea, disowned, some by one, some by another. (I.304)

Satan brings into the church a '... dividing, quarrelling spirit contrary to the gospel'. (I.548)

ca. 1658-1662. Satan laboured to draw away the affections of the people from their pastor, in that way he would soon catch the sheep and scatter them. (II.257) Satan had gained a great advantage by introducing:

irreligion and atheism ... (into) ... most families - to harden their hearts to such a degree as renders them almost impenetrable. (II.387)

3. Gurnall lamented the decline in godliness.

Many were:

degenerating from the power of holiness ... How low is the power of holiness sunk among us, to what it was but in the last generation! ... surely we may see a judgement to be coming by the low fall of the power of godliness. (I.425-426)

Referring to a national covenant taken and then broken, he added:

What interpretation could a charitable heart make, of our putting ourselves under the bond of a covenant, to endeavour for personal Reformation, and then national, but what we meant in earnest to be a more righteous nation than before? (I.426-427)

This had even been reported and known in:

foreign parts, (so) that our neighbour-churches were set a wondering to think what these glorious beginnings might ripen to. (I.427)

As this was preached ca. 1644-1655, Gurnall was probably referring to the acceptance of the Scottish Solemn League and Covenant by Parliament in September of 1643. If this was the case, then in his mind the declension was only made worse. The nation took an Oath before God; the breaking of that Oath meant that '... our present state must needs be nigh unto cursing'. (I.427)

4. Preaching was being attacked.

Preaching, which held such a central place in Puritan theology and pastoral practice, had fallen on bad times. It was less esteemed than had been the case. Some, who formerly had trembled at it, now came '... to mock at, or quarrel with it'. (I.49) Prophecy (ie. preaching) was despised (I.190); hearers bunged up their ears '... from all hearing of the word'. (I.304)

At the same time:

hucksters and quack-salvers ... that have privily brought in damnable doctrines, and leavened so great a lump of people in the nation with sour and unsound doctrine. (II.257)

Two recent scholars, C. Hill⁴⁶ and Peter Toon⁴⁷ corroborate this assessment.

VI. Gurnall lamented, above all, the divisions in the church.

His feelings on this issue were deep and tender. Early in his ministry, ca. 1644-1655, he spoke of '... the divisions of the godly' in the same context as '... the bloody wars of late years'. (I.110)

46. Hill, op.cit., 94: 'The 1640's and 50's were indeed the great age of 'mechanick preachers' - laymen like Bunyan interpreting the Bible according to their untutored lights with the confidence and excitement of a new discovery.'

47. Toon, op.cit., 69, footnote 4: 'One of the earliest attacks in the two revolutionary decades against the claim of the Universities to be the proper training ground for ministers of religion came from the 'mechanick' preacher, Samuel How, in his widely read and several times reprinted book, 'The Sufficiency of the Spirit's Teaching without Humane learning'. (1640) A typical sentence reads: "If a man have the Spirit of God, though he be a Pedler, Tinker, Chimneysweeper, or Cobler, he may by the help of God's Spirit give a more public interpretation than they", (ie. men trained at the Universities). This emphasis was taken up and developed by radicals of all types'.

If we take the two Civil Wars to have fallen between 1642 and 1648, then his phrase 'of late years' can at the very least refer to 1648, which would then dovetail with the period in which it was preached.

Furthermore, he continued:

O sirs, what a sweet silence and peace there was among Christians a dozen years ago. Methinks the looking back to those blessed days in this respect - though they had also another way their troubles, yet not so uncomfortable, because that storm united, this scatters the saints's spirits. (I.189)

To what period of a 'dozen years ago' did he look back when there was this 'sweet unity'? If the phrase 'of late years' can be dated ca. 1648, the 'dozen years' mentioned in (I.189) brings us to 1636, when Gurnall was still at Emmanuel, and would indicate that even in his student days he was aware of the beauty of unity among Christians (and the threat of disunity). Ten years or more later, he could still recall it. He calls them 'blessed days', and says that during that period 'a storm' united them, while at the same time of his preaching (ca. 1644-1655) another storm was scattering.

The first 'storm' can reasonably be taken as referring to Archbishop Laud's reign from 1633-1645. Laud's persecution had driven both conformist and non-conformist Puritans into each other's arms. Laud had harried the ministers who were in livings, as well as the 'Lecturers' who were not. He had ordered the ministers to spend more time on catechising than preaching, and he even harried Protestant refugees from Europe out of the country.

Christopher Hill suggests that:

The Laudian clergy went out of their way to drive the men of property and the Puritans into one another's arms.⁴⁸

The second 'storm' which scattered and destroyed this 'sweet' unity undoubtedly referred to the Civil War(s), which had had the terrible effect that '... now they that loved so dearly, are ready to pluck one another's throats out'. (I.189)

There was, he concluded, not '... a flock, a congregation hardly, that hath not this scab (ie. of division) among them'. (I.189)

48. Hill, op.cit., The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714, 86.

Of great importance for our purpose of assessing his perception of his time, was the fact that Gurnall viewed the Civil War in a profoundly negative light. He was not simply negative about its political or economic results, but specifically about the destruction of the unity amongst the 'godly'. This distress revealed something of his priorities: he valued Christian unity above all else, and deplored anything that harmed it. Was there ever, he asked '... less love, charity ... amongst Christians than now?' (I.290)

On the contrary, there was the very real danger of Christians:

perishing in the fire of contention and divisions, which a perverse zeal in less(er) things hath kindled among us. (I.290)

The very existence of the church now had begun to trouble him deeply. He had just spoken of Christians perishing in the fire of contention, and added that these contentions, divisions, fighting and wranglings 'prophesy sadly' for the church.

The:

storms which have been of late years upon us ... (ought to have united Christians) ... to ply their oar and lovingly row all one way. (I.487).

Instead Christians were '... a scuffling in the ship', (I.487)

Besides decreased love and a bleak future for the church, there could be even worse consequences: '... truly we are more like(ly) to drive Christ from us than invite him to us'. (I.487)

In the midst of this Biblical thinking and preaching Gurnall gave a very rare glimpse of his own personal feelings, and of his own personality, which in turn throws more light on his refusal to leave the Established Church in 1662:

I love, I confess, a clear and still air, but, above all, in the church among believers. (I.550)

Here was an irenic pastor, preacher and churchman. We find a significant number of references to the characteristics and consequences of such divisions in the section preached ca. 1658-62.

In a section in which he dealt with Satan's hindrances in the Christian's prayer-life, Gurnall employed such a large number of words and phrases, that one can only conclude that they reflected

something of the increasing bitterness throughout the land between Christians. For example, no longer were the differences simply 'differences of judgment among Christians', personal animosity now entered the picture. Christians increasingly had a '... great distaste one to another, as exulcerates them into wrath and bitterness'. (II.337) He thanked God that the sword of the Civil War '... is at last got into its scabbard of peace'. (II.337) Yet, the divisions only got worse. They were now characterised by:

malignity ... dropped into these church-contentions...⁴⁹
 grudges, animosities ... an implacable spirit of re-
 venge and malice ... uncharitable jealousies, bitterness,
 wrath and revenge, left behind upon our hearts. (II.337)

The worse the divisions became, the more Gurnall, the irenic pastor, longed to see unity and peace preserved. Is it going too far to suggest that there was no better way for him to achieve this than by remaining in the Established Church in 1662; for to go out would only perpetuate the bitterness and divisions. The possibility of such a conclusion is strengthened when, in a longish passage, he pointed out that God required '... a joint service of his people in communion together (in order to) ... preserve love and unity in the church', (II.392-393) For God '... dearly loves oneness and unity among his people ... (because) ... God is One'. (II.393)

It is typical of Puritan thinking that the reason given for such unity is a theological truth, and not one of pious nostalgia. God, in the Trinity, is a profound Unity. God's people, who are hidden with Christ in God through the Holy Spirit, ought therefore to show forth the same unity. God's church ought to reflect the Trinity.

VII. Gurnall's growing disillusionment with the Civil War and a military solution to the nation's ills.

In a passage preached ca. 1655-1658, Gurnall revealed that he had once hoped for better things. Looking back 15 years he said:

O who can think what a glorious morning shone upon England in that famous parliament begun in 1640, and not weep again to see our hopes for such a glorious reformation, that opened with them, now shut up in blood and war, contention and confusion. (I.557)

49. The phrase 'church-contentions' may be a reference to the Presbyterian-Independent struggle during this period.

Like many others he saw in the Long Parliament of November 1640, the beginnings of 'a glorious revolution', which included the continued purging of the Established Church of 'popish remnants'.

A decade-and-a-half later he could only weep at the outcome:

dissensions ... sad miseries ... blood and war, contention
and confusion ... miseries too like the fire and brimstone
that fell from heaven upon those unhappy cities of the plain
(Sodom and Gomorrah). (I.557)

Like an unceasing dirge Gurnall returned again and again to the harmful impact and consequences of the Civil War upon the nation, and especially the nation's spiritual life.

The 'bloody wars of late years' had exacerbated '... the popish and profane crew's' fury against the church. (I.110) The 'storm' from these wars had scattered the saints' spirits. (I.189) The 'miseries' of war' had shed 'rivers of blood', ruined cities and towns, made families 'fatherless and husbandless'. (I.426)

Such a time as this had caused the professing part of the nation to:

grow looser, more proud, covetous, contentious, wanton
in their principles, and careless in their lives. (I.426)

Even the cessation of war has resulted in '... little cause to boast of our peace'. (I.426)

Significantly, the bluntest accusation fell into the section preached ca. 1644-1655:

These times of war and confusion have not made so many broken
merchants as broken professors (of the faith) ... apostate
professors. (I.260)

Many whose graces had been admired had run over to the Devil's side and turned:

blasphemers, worldlings and atheists ... Never was this
spiritual falling sickness more rife. (I.260)

O England! England! I fear some sad judgment or other bodes
thee! (I.485)

So deep was the impact of the Civil War with its ruinous consequences upon the nation and especially the church, that many years later he could still say:

Such dismal days of national confusion our eyes have seen,
when foundations of government were destroyed and all hurled
into military confusion. (II.409) Preached ca. 1658-62.

To stress a point made already and which is one of the central themes of this thesis: Gurnall did not just condemn the Royalists and Charles I; neither did he laud or exonerate the exploits of the parliamentary forces or those of the New Model Army.

VIII. Gurnall's possible monarchical leanings.

Notwithstanding Gurnall's delight in the establishment of the Long Parliament in 1640 (I.557), he nowhere appeared anti-monarchical in his preaching. Many were hostile to Charles I without being at the same time in principle anti-monarchical. Oliver Cromwell was after all offered the crown in 1657. As the ills of the nation compounded, especially after Cromwell's death in 1658, many looked across the channel in the hope that Charles II would restore England to order and stability.

Furthermore, what emerged in Gurnall's thinking was not merely the possibility of monarchical rule - given the right person and circumstances - but also the fact that he saw a great deal of authority tied up in the person of the king. And 'authority' was in essence the basic quarrel between Charles I and Parliament:

Good subjects (Gurnall said in a section preached either during or immediately after the Civil War, ca. 1644-58), follow their calling, commit state matters to the wisdom of their prince and his council. When wronged they appeal to their prince in his laws for right; and when they do offend their prince, they submit to the penalty of the laws, and bear his displeasure patiently, till humbling themselves they recover his favour, and do not, in a discontent, fall into open rebellion. (I.135)

A further fascinating corollary must now be mentioned. At approximately this time Gurnall received - via a letter from the M.P. of Sudbury and Lavenham, Sir Simonds D'Ewes - an order to preach before the House of Commons. In his reply, dated October 30, 1648, Gurnall declined the request, pleading his:

many infirmities (which so) oppress me, that I can scarcely, without danger to my health, remain a short time in the open air. Much less therefore could I undertake so long a journey in so winterly a season.⁵⁰

If Gurnall, in the extraordinary quote given in I.135, was already

50. Ryle, op.cit., xxviii.

doubting the legality of a subject's right to open rebellion against his prince, then such a request from the Commons could have proved an embarrassment and the genuine problem of ill-health a convenient excuse to avoid such an order.

Gurnall went on to emphasize two reciprocal duties. A person is not:
 a good subject, that is all for what he can get of (out of) his prince, but never thinks what service he may do for him. (I.138)

Likewise:

Art thou a magistrate? ... Thou hast thy prince's sword put into thy hand. Be sure thou use it. (I.138)

He reminded his hearers that Christ was a Prince to whom we must bring unfeigned honour, and then drew this parallel:

Loving princes take great content in the acclamations and good wishes of their subjects as they pass by. A vivat rex - long live the king - coming from a loyal breast, though poor, is worth more than a subsidy from those who deny their hearts while they part with their money. (I.139)

In the revolutionary, anti-monarchical atmosphere of the day, Gurnall's 'vivat rex' is unusual to say the least.

Public worship involved public prayer, which in turn involved the prince or king:

the people of God, wherever they live, have to pray for good magistrates, especially kings and princes ... O, pray for kings and princes; for, as they carry the keys of the church doors, so God carries the key that opens the doors of their hearts at his pleasure. (II.398)

But what, we may ask, was the point of exhorting his people to do this, when there was no king ruling England? Or was he indirectly encouraging his people to pray for the restoration of the monarchy, for it was precisely during this time (ca. 1658-1662), that the possibility of recalling Charles II was being discussed and was ultimately brought about in 1660.

Note too in this quotation that Gurnall once again links 'authority' with monarchy in the phrase 'as they carry the keys of the church doors.'

In the same vein he added:

It is bad enough for a subject not to keep the king's laws, but far worse for him to presume to mint a law of his own head. The first is undutiful, but the latter is a traitor. (II.544)

The nation, he said (preaching 1658-62) had once again been set:
upon the foundations of that lawful government from which it
was so dangerously slid. (II,409)

Bearing in mind that the monarchy was restored in 1660, it is difficult to see what else he could be referring to by 'lawful government' if he did not mean the monarchy of Charles II.

The fact that Gurnall was probably increasingly turning pro-monarchy fits into the flow of that time (ca. 1658 onwards, and even earlier!). As far back as 1642 some were already showing concern over the disorder throughout the country. Perhaps Gurnall had the same feelings as Richard Dowdeswell, of whom Christopher Hill says:

The royalism of Richard Dowdeswell, agent to Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, Mrs. Prestwich tells us, stemmed from concern for social order, not from a positive loyalty to King.⁵¹

Another man who showed deep concern was Gurnall's patron Sir Simonds D'Ewes, of whom Hill writes:

When war came both (Sir John) Potts and D'Ewes chose the side of Parliament, but the latter too reflected that "all right and property, all meum et teum, must cease in a civil war, and we know not what advantage the meaner sort also may take to divide the spoils of the rich and noble amongst them, who begin already (1642) to allege that all being of one mould there is no reason why some should have so much and others so little".⁵²

And earlier even than that the radical Henry Marten had consistently brushed aside the fears of men like Edmund Waller and Sir Simonds D'Ewes that to invoke the warlike energies of the common people in the struggle against Charles I would threaten destruction to all property and social distinction.⁵³

What was Gurnall's contribution to the ecclesiastical religious scene from 1644 onwards till the end of the Civil War and the restoration of the monarchy?⁵⁴

51. Hill, The World Turned upside Down, op.cit., 22-23, footnote 18.

52. Hill, ibid., 23, footnote 20.

53. Pennington, D. and Thomas, K. Puritans and Revolutionaries, Essays in Seventeenth-Century History presented to Christopher Hill. Quotation from: Williams, C.M. The Anatomy of a Radical Gentleman: Henry Martyn. Oxford, 1978, 129.

54. For further evidence of a rising tide of royalism see:

Liu, Tai. Discord in Zion, 55 and 158.

Hill, C. The World Turned Upside Down. 347.

Fraser, Antonia. King Charles II. Macdonald Futura Publishers, First Contact edition, 1980, 164-187.

Basically his contribution was to place clearly before his flock and fellow ministers where the real warfare between Good and Evil was taking place. It was a call to return to Biblical priorities. This assessment will form a separate chapter at the very end of Section III. Before we reach that point however, we must examine Gurnall's teaching on spiritual warfare because this emphasis lies at the heart of his pastoral concern that his flock should fight the real battle at the right place and with the right weapons.

SECTION II

THE CHRISTIAN'S GREAT ENEMY:
THE CHRISTIAN FOREARMED OR /
PREPARATION FOR THE BATTLE AND
THE BATTLE ITSELF.

Prologue and General Introduction to this great theme.

William Gurnall's contribution to this particular theme of spiritual combat and warfare is not solitary. Within the ranks of Puritan literature there are a number of similar works. These include the following:

The Combat between Christ and the Devill: William Perkins (1558-1602).

The Christian Warfare. Published in the early part of the 17th century and by 1643 was already in its 4th edition: John Downname.

The Whole-Armour of God or the spiritual furniture which God hath provided to keep safe every Christian souldier from all the assaults of Satan. Published in 1616: William Gouge (1575-1653).

Christ's Combate and Conquest: or, The Lyon of the Tribe of Judah, Vanquishing the Roaring Lyon. Published in 1618: Thomas Taylor (1575-1632).

The Soules Conflict with itselpe, and Victory over itselpe by Faith. Published in 1635: Richard Sibbes (1577-1653).

The Breast-Plate of Faith and Love. Published amongst his sermons in 1630: John Preston (1587-1652).

A Childe of Light walking in Darkness, et.al., Published as part of a series of sermons in 1636: Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680).

Precious Remedies against Satan's Devices. Published in 1652: Thomas Brooks (1608-1680).

The Pilgrim's Progress and The Holy War. Published respectively in 1678 and 1682: John Bunyan (1628-1688).

A Treatise of Satan's Temptations. Published in 1677: Richard Gilpin (1625-1700).

The Wiles of Satan, The Spiritual Chemist. Published in 1666: William Spurstowe (1605-1666).

With the possible exception of John Bunyan, Gurnall's work is perhaps the greatest of the practical treatises from the pulpit of a Puritan preacher. This in itself would make it a work of formidable value. It also has the advantage of being published in the aftermath of the

Civil War with the important perspective that that brought.

Gurnall's value further lies in being an excellent example of the manner in which the Puritans treated the subject of spiritual warfare. He is sharp, shrewd and discerning. He displays profound pastoral understanding of the struggles of the man in the pew. He is compassionate. He orders his thinking and his exposition. He is (as we shall see) concerned about priorities. He is extremely realistic. Christian warfare involves a violent struggle. Consequently he is faithful in portraying this fact to his flock. He does not mislead them.

Gurnall's value also lies in the fact that he (like his fellow Puritans) approached this subject in both a theological and pastoral manner. He never merely exhorts or falls back upon hortatory preaching. His whole approach is based on a thorough exegesis which in turn leads him to think in terms of theological presuppositions, upon which he then bases his practical and pastoral counsel. Like a good military commander he thinks in terms of both strategy and tactics.

--ooOoo--

A. METHOD EMPLOYED

What was Gurnall's overall method in approaching this subject of spiritual warfare and combat?

Like his fellow Puritans, Gurnall did not indulge in mere hortatory preaching, writing or pastoring. He did exhort and challenge and warn, but never just as a rhetorical exercise. Neither did he direct an onslaught directly upon the emotions of the Christian soldier. Emotions were involved, but they were always subservient to theological and biblical truths. The horses of emotion were always to be harnessed to the theological chariot.

The Puritans, of which constituency Gurnall was a part, believed in the importance of approaching the entire Christian life through a reasoned exposition of Biblical truths, based upon proper exegesis, which would then be applied in a practical manner to a specific pastoral situation by means of what they called 'Uses'.

It was essential that the two occurred together; the 'Doctrine' always preceded the 'Uses'. The 'Uses' always built upon the 'Doctrine' initially laid down. Practical advance in the Christian's life could only take place from a previously established theological platform. The idea that a Christian soldier could enter into spiritual combat without a beachhead of theological truths and Biblical presuppositions would have scandalized the Puritans.

Unlike the emotional and flowery ('embroidered') preaching of the Victorians and post-Victorians, the Puritans, while full of disciplined emotion, built their preaching and constructed their sermons on the basis of statement (ie. doctrine), argumentation, demonstration, logical deduction and succeeding steps of reasoning, all in turn firmly rooted in Biblical exegesis and principles, or what they described as 'The Analogy of Faith'.

It is important to remember that the Puritans of the 17th century were the theological grandchildren of the Reformers of the 15th and 16th centuries. The historical circumstances were different but the theological

bloodline was unmistakable. Their presuppositions about the Christian Faith in terms of theological principles and practices come directly from the Reformers and their theological milieu.

What was true of the Reformer's thinking in terms of presuppositions is also true of the Puritan's methodology in preaching. Basic to both was their employment of a discursive reasoning style within a framework of an argument based in turn on Biblical and theological presuppositions.

Thus, for example, they constantly employed syllogisms, or arguments from a major to a minor point, or minor to major point.

Example of the use of a syllogistic argument. Vol. II.179.

In his Direction Ninth - the Christian's helmet - Gurnall gave the Christian some directions on 'How to strengthen our hope'.

Do not rest until you are sure that the conditions of the Covenant of Grace had been:

wrought in thy own soul, and art able to say thou art this repenting and believing sinner ... (until you have a) warrant to hope assuredly for life and salvation in the other world. (II.178-179)

Gurnall then cast this into a syllogism by pointing out that:

We read in Scripture of a threefold assurance. (1) An assurance of understanding, Col. ii.2. (2) An assurance of faith, Heb. x.22. (3) An assurance of hope, Heb. vi.11. (II.179)

His final aim was to strengthen the Christian's hope. He then proceeded to cast this threefold assurance into a syllogism:

Major premise: I know for certain that the word of God teaches that the sinner who repents and believes shall have the hope that he will be saved.

Minor premise: The Scriptures assure me that I am such a sincerely repenting and believing sinner.

Conclusion: Therefore, having repented and believed I have the assurance and hope that I shall certainly be saved.

Earlier on in Direction Ninth, Gurnall stated it in even stronger terms, when he declared:

Now hope of the right make, is a rational, well-grounded hope. (II.163)

He does not mean 'rationalistic', for he added:

There is no Christian, be he never so weak in grace, but

hath some reason bottomed on the Scripture ... for the hope he professeth. (II.163)

Example of a major to a minor argument.

Addressing himself to non-Christians, Gurnall urged them to close with Christ. But perhaps (and here Gurnall the pastor is revealed!) some poor sinner was so overwhelmed with his own unworthiness that he found it well-nigh impossible to believe:

but it cannot enter into thy heart to think that ever such great things as are promised should be performed to such a one as thou art. (II.53)

So, what should the non-Christian do? Gurnall did not browbeat the non-Christian with exhortations to believe blindly. He said in effect; stop, put your mind and reason into full gear and argue with yourself:

And therefore fall to work with thy soul, and labour to bring it to reason in this particular, for, indeed, nothing can be more irrational than to object against the reality and certainty of God's promises. (II.53)

Thus, the non-Christian should argue and reason on the basis of God's promises. And how should he argue? From a major to a minor truth:

Labour to get a right notion of God in thy understanding, and it will not appear strange at all that a great God should do great things for poor sinners. (II.53)

If, he continued, a beggar should promise you a thousand pounds a year, you might very well impatiently ask, in the light of his condition, where he thought he would get that amount of money from:

But if a prince should promise more, you would listen after it, because he hath an estate that bears proportion to his promise. God is not engaged for more by promise than infinite mercy, power, and faithfulness can see discharged. (II.53)

Example of a minor to a major argument.

Gurnall seemed particularly fond of this method. Here, he suggested, is a Christian '... in an hour of desertion and temptation'. (II.20)

What often happened in this situation is that the Christian's sense of the grace of God '... may disappear, as stars do in a cloudy night'. (II.20)

How ought the Christian to react to such a situation? He should put faith to work, for faith, said Gurnall:

makes a discovery of the rich mercy in Christ to poor sinners, and calls the soul to look up to it, when it hath lost sight

of his own grace. (II.21)⁵⁵

And how should the Christian now employ faith?

Faith should begin by considering the world of men, parents and masters round about him. If there were at this level parents who showed much love to their children, and masters who showed kindness to their servants, then was it so hard to imagine, at an infinitely higher level, that God could show mercy and kindness to those he had saved in Christ? Could you not, faith should argue:

expect to find as much mercy at God's hands as thou canst look for at a man's? ... and so long as we have not lost the sight of God's merciful heart, our head will be kept above water, though we want the evidence of our own grace. (II.21)

There are a number of reasons why Gurnall (and his fellow Puritans) adopted this methodological approach.

Firstly, the tradition of scholastic disputation still flourished as the basic means of instruction at Oxbridge.

In England the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge did not arise from Cathedral schools, as for example did the University of Paris. Nevertheless they were part of the European revival of learning which by 1500 had become institutionalised in the foundation of over seventy Universities throughout Europe.⁵⁶

The basic framework of learning involved instruction in at least seven subjects: The 'Trivium' - Grammar, Rhetoric and Dialectic (Logic), and the 'Quadrivium' - Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy. This basic framework of instruction was also followed at Oxford and Cambridge.

This is confirmed by William Harrison in his 'Description of England'

55. It is always important to check the context in which Gurnall uses the word 'sinner'. This is also true of the other Puritans. Gurnall normally uses it to describe the non-Christian. However he also uses it in relation to the Christian! The non-Christian is a sinner-outside-of-a-state-of-grace; the Christian is a sinner-in-a-state-of-grace.

56. Sylvester, D.W. Educational Documents 800-1816. Methuen Educational Paperbacks, no date of publication given, 52.

written for Holinshed's 'Chronicle' first published in 1577 and then enlarged for a second edition in 1587. Harrison studied at both Oxford and Cambridge. He says, inter alia:

These professors in like sort have all the rule of disputations and other school exercises, which are daily used ... and such of their hearers, as by their skill shewed in the said disputations, are thought to have attained to any convenient ripeness of knowledge, are permitted solemnly to take their ... degrees.⁵⁷

But was this approach supported by the Puritans? For an answer we turn to one of the early Puritans, Laurence Chaderton (ca. 1536-1640). He came up to Christ's College, Cambridge in 1562 and ultimately became a Fellow. In 1584 he became the first Master of the new Puritan foundation of Emmanuel College, retiring finally in 1622. He spent, therefore, his entire life in the nurturing of young preachers. He was a prolific preacher, 'lecturing',⁵⁸ at St. Clement's in Cambridge for about fifty years, resigning his post only in his eighties. Chaderton drew up a list of requirements for the sound preaching of the Scriptures. He first emphasises the necessity of a knowledge of Hebrew and Greek.

He then continues:

The second is the art of rhetoric which teacheth truly to discern proper speeches from those which are topical and figurative. The third is the art of reasoning called logic; which teacheth to find out the matter and the whole sense that is expressed in the words and to frame and gather necessary arguments and conclusions, as well as for the proof of true as for the disproof of false doctrines and that by the diligent searching and judging every argument by itself and the right disposition thereof in propositions in sylogisms, in method and due order.⁵⁹

This then was the pedagogical world in which Gurnall and his fellow Puritans were taught and trained as ministers of the gospel.

57. Sylvester, *ibid.*, quotation from Harrison, W. Description of England, Book II, Chapter 3, 1587, page 149 in Sylvester.

58. From time to time the Puritan pastors were prohibited from preaching. Their well-off patrons got around this by instituting 'Lectureships' in many congregations. For all practical purposes 'lecturing' and 'preaching' were the same, but the former term was not as offensive to the authorities as the latter.

59. Lake, *op.cit.*, 37.

Secondly, a further reason why they constructed their sermons on the basis of reasoned exposition, in which they argued from point to point, was because of their belief in a totally interlocking system of theology.

Gurnall's theology was a complete, diffuse, integrated and harmoniously interrelated system, rather than an episodic or semi-episodic theological system in which truths were viewed as unrelated or only partially related. A man's training or theological milieu may unconsciously influence him so that he may not always see doctrinal interrelations where they do in fact exist. The danger of such a position - in preaching particularly - is that a preacher may end up emphasizing certain truths in virtual isolation from other truths. The Puritans avoided this pitfall because of their presupposition that theology was a priori a unity, and must always be treated as such, in thinking, disputation, preaching and pastoral counselling.

These truths, they maintained, were so interlocked that you could and should preach arguing from theological point A to point B, and then from point B to point C, and so on. Theology ought to shape the sermon and not vice versa.

A good example of this was Gurnall's description of the influence of faith '... upon all her sister-graces'. (II.16)

Another good (and famous) example is the 'Golden Chain' of Description of Theology of William Perkins published in 1592 and included in this text: see page 53.⁶⁰ It is basically self-explanatory and shows in a striking and visible way the thinking of the Puritans with regard to the unity of truth and theology and practical application.

60. For the 'Golden Chain' see: Breward, Ian. The Work of William Perkins. The Sutton Courtenay Press, Part II, Chapter 2, A Golden Chain or the Description of Theology, 1970 edition, 169 and following pages.

Perhaps one or two comments regarding the practical and pastoral out-working of such an interrelated theology may be helpful at this point.

It is generally conceded that the Puritans were superb pastors of their flocks and 'curers' of conscience problems. Men and women would travel miles to find an answer to their problems. One reason was because Puritan theology and preaching had a deep pastoral dimension that spoke to them in their need.

Patrick Collinson says, for example:

Cooper of Lincoln (Bishop Cooper) believed that gentlemen and gentlewomen would come six or seven miles to a conference (ie. a 'preaching' conference) who would hardly travel one (mile) to a learned man's sermon.⁶¹

1. Diagnosis. The Puritan pastors had a reputation for diagnosing spiritual ills and cases of conscience correctly and then being able to apply the correct spiritual medicine. The successful diagnostician does not isolate individual symptoms. Rather, he has the ability to view the various symptoms as a unity and then diagnose the illness.

It was this mental and theological habit that enabled Puritan pastors to trace the relations of various sins to issues of conscience and guilt; the relation of sins of commission and omission; the reality of real sin and real guilt as over against false guilt arising from a 'melancholy humour'; the reality of real sin and guilt as over against false guilt arising from unbiblical 'legalism'; the relation of to the moral law, judgement, to forgiveness, to justification, to sanctification and so on, and these in turn to mind, heart and will; the origin of sin, ie. whether, for example, the blasphemous thoughts that suddenly enter our minds originate from within ourselves (thus raising the validity of our experience of regeneration), or whether they must be viewed as 'flaming darts' shot into us from without by the Christian's great enemy (thus acting as a confirmation of our regeneration!)

61. Collinson, op.cit., 175. By 'learned' he probably meant a preacher who displayed his intellectual ability in rhetorical skills, but did not really touch the people's hearts.

2. The utilization of theology in pastoral practice.

The Puritans did not avoid theology in case it 'obscured' the gospel or 'confused' people. On the contrary they deliberately utilised Biblical doctrine and theology in order to reach sinners more effectively, and in order to pastor and counsel needy Christians more effectively.

Some examples will verify this assertion.

The first comes from William Bridge (1660-1670), more or less a contemporary of Gurnall. In a series of sermons preached on Psalm 42:11 at Stepny, London, he deals with the Christian suffering from spiritual depression in a Fourth Sermon - 'A Lifting up in the Case of Great Sins'. Sometimes a Christian is discouraged by his 'greater' or 'grosser' sins. He may even feel that his sins are worse than those of a non-Christian because:

they grieve the Spirit more, they dishonour Christ more,
they grieve the saints more, they wound the name of God more. 62

Nevertheless, the Christian need not fall into despair. Why not?

Bridge's answer rests on a thorough-going, theologically integrated grasp and application of the atonement. He says:

The thing is true, though the expression is strange; Christ was made sin for saints, therefore their sin shall not hurt them. It agrees not with the justice of God to exact the payment of one debt twice. Now the Lord Jesus Christ has not only been arrested, but has been in gaol for the debt of the saints and people of God, and he has paid it to the utmost farthing. 63

Bound up in Bridge's pastoral counselling is: (i) A specific understanding of the atonement of Christ, (ii) God's justice, (iii) God's judgement on sin, and (iv) God's gracious forgiveness that cannot be recalled or negated once it has been extended to the sinner.

Gurnall, faced with much the same problem tackled it in much the same manner. Here is a Christian confronted with his mountainous sins (as

62. Bridge, W. A Lifting up for the Downcast. The Banner of Truth Trust, First Paperback edition, 1961, 68.

63. Bridge, *ibid.*, 69

he saw them). At this point:

Satan comes full mouth against the believer with this objection, "What! Such a wretch as thou find favour in the eyes of God?" (II.108)

Do not, Gurnall advised, hunt introspectively in your emotions and conscience for relief. Utilise your God-given faith:

faith is provided with a more particular evidence, for the vindication of the justice and righteousness of God in this his pardoning act. And this is founded on the full satisfaction which Christ hath given to God for all the wrong the believer hath done him by his sin. Indeed, it was the great undertaking of Christ to bring justice to kiss mercy, that there might not be a dissenting attribute in God when this vote should pass, but the act of pardoning mercy carried clear, nullo contradicente - without a dissentient voice. Therefore, Christ, before he solicits the sinner's cause with God by request, performs first the other of satisfaction by sacrifice. He pays and then prays for what he hath paid - presenting his petition in the behalf of believing sinners written with his own blood, that so justice might not disdain to read or grant it. (II.108)

B. PREPARATION FOR THE BATTLE

1. Identifying the enemy.

Gurnall was convinced that before any Christian stepped onto the battlefield, he should have a detailed 'identikit' of the enemy commander he was about to face.

Only if he were armed with a knowledge of the enemy's personality, attributes, methods, wiles and strategies could he hope to be victorious. (Hence the detailed description of the enemy in Chapter I of this present Section II, to which we will come).

Gurnall gave two reasons why the Christian should be suitably armed:

First, the danger, if unarmed. The enemy is no mean contemptible one, no less than the Devil, set out as a cunning engineer by his wiles and stratagems. Second, the certainty of standing against all his wits and wiles, if we be thus armed. As there is no standing without armour, so (there is) no fear of falling into the Fiend's hands if armed. (I.71)

He then stressed the importance of being able to identify the enemy as well as some of his stratagems.

(i) Firstly, because the enemy:

hangs out false colours, and comes up to the Christian in the disguise of a friend, so that the gates are opened to him, and his motions received with applause, before either be discovered. Therefore he is said to "transform himself into an angel of light", 2 Co. xi.14. (I.75)

The Devil drove Christians from one extreme to another, often without them realizing it. Thus:

He conveys libertinism, by crying up the Spirit. He decries and vilifies the Scripture, by magnifying faith. (I.75)

(ii) Because the enemy's approach was often so soft and subtle that only those schooled in the art of this kind of identification and Biblical discernment could detect his approach. Gurnall described this as:

his gradual approaches to the soul. When he comes to tempt, he is modest, and asks but a little ... (because) ... he should be denied if he asked all at once. (I.76)

Preaching about Eve, he said:

. he digs about and loosens the root of her faith, and then the tree falls the easier (with) the next gust of temptation ... Many have yielded to go a mile with Satan, that never intended to go two; but when once on the way, they have been allured farther and farther, till at last they know not how to leave his company. (I.77)

(iii) Because he made use of others to lay his traps so that he could retreat even further into the background:

He, as the master-workman, cuts out the temptation, and gives it shape, but sometimes he hath his journeymen to make it up; he knows his work may be carried on better by others, when he appears not above board himself ... Satan sent the apple by Eve's hand to Adam. Delilah doth more with Samson than all the Philistines' bands. Job's wife brings him the poison, "Curse God and die." (I.78 and I.82)

(iv) Because the enemy introduced doctrinal heresy. He used an Arius, but was '... too wise to stuff their discourses with nothing but heterodox matter'. (I.80) On the contrary, a few drops of truth are mingled with error '... yet with such art as should not easily be discerned'. (I.80)

(v) Because:

As a general walks about a city, and views it well, and then raiseth his batteries where he hath the greatest advantage, so doth Satan compass and consider the Christian in every part before he tempts. (I.85)

(vi) Because:

He is but an ill fencer that knows and observes nothing of his enemy's play. (I.84)

(vii) Because the enemy was particularly subtle and able to arouse intense feelings of guilt through the Christian's conscience. And if the Christian could not identify the real source of these attacks of 'guilt' his life would be one long misery. Most beasts had a direct motion that showed the direction in which they intended to go, but:

the serpent goes askew, as we say, winding and writhing its body; (so) that when you see a serpent creeping along, you can hardly discern which way it tends. Thus Satan in his vexing temptations hath many intricate policies, turning this way and that way, the better to conceal his design from the saint. (I.86)

He concealed his attack, for example, behind the supposed 'work of the Holy Spirit'. Satan knew that:

an arrow out of God's quiver (so-called) wounds deep;
and therefore, when he accuseth, he comes in God's name.
(I.86)

(viii) Because, once you unmasked the enemy, much fear of him vanished:

Labour therefore to get a right understanding of Satan's power, and then this lion will not appear so fierce. (I.145)

Satan's power was:

a derived power. He hath it not himself, but by patent from another, and that no other but God ... It is a limited power ... he cannot do what he will, and he shall not do what he can ... It is a ministerial power ... appointed by God for the service and benefit of the saints. (I.145-147)

2. The necessity of Scriptural knowledge.

The Christian's training ground for spiritual conflict was God's Word:

If this foundation-stone be not laid, faith's building cannot go on ... the promise (in the Scriptures) is this pilgrim's staff with which it (he) sets forth. (II.6+8)

Provide yourself:

with Scripture answers to Satan's false reasonings ... He is wily. Thou hast need be wary ... not thy own resolution, but the divinity of Scripture-arguments, that can preserve thee, or prostrate thy enemy. (II.264)

This Scriptural knowledge was both notional⁶⁴ and experiential:⁶⁵

Hide the word in thy heart. This was David's preservative. "Thy word I have hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee, Ps. cxix.11." It was not the Bible in his hand to read it; not the word on his tongue to speak of it, nor in his head to get a notional knowledge of it; but the hiding it in his heart, that he found effectual against sin ... It is not meat in the dish, but (in the stomach, that nourisheth; not physic (medicine) in the glass, but taken into the body, that purgeth. (II.269)

64. 'Notional' refers to intellectual knowledge in which the Christian's mind is fully utilized.

65. 'Experiential' refers to the warm, affectionate and loving emotions the Christian experiences in his walk with God.

Gurnall does not oppose the notional and experiential aspects of knowledge. Neither does he by-pass the place of notional knowledge: he is simply pointing out that to stop with the Bible in the hand or head is not enough. There must be meat in the dish (notional knowledge) before it can be eaten; but to leave the meat in the dish and not eat it (nourishing or experiential knowledge) defeats the whole object for which the meat has been provided.

The notional is of the utmost importance:

A pilot without his chart, a scholar without his book, and a soldier without his sword, are alike ridiculous. But, above all these, it is absurd for one to think of being a Christian, without knowledge of the Word of God and some skill to use this weapon. (II.194)

How the experiential flows from the notional and doctrinal, Gurnall illustrated from Tertullian:

I remember Tertullian speaking of some heretics as to their manner of preaching, saith, "persuadendo docent, non docendo persuadent" - they teach by persuading, and do not by teaching persuade, that is, they woo and entice the affections of their hearers, without convincing their judgement about what they preach. (I.293)

For Gurnall and his Puritan colleagues persuasion in the realm of emotions had to follow on from the Scriptures, not precede it.

Chapter I

The enemy's person and personality traits.

The portrait that Gurnall painted of the Christian's great enemy, the Devil, covered an enormous range of facets, characteristics and activities. It was distinctly Biblical and theological, but with many pastoral implications. He makes use of figures of speech, analogies, examples, illustrations and military images usually linked with some Scriptural truth.

1. Some general remarks.

(i) Gurnall's realism.

Like a good military commander he marshalled all the facts to put into the hands of the Christian soldier. He must know what a powerful enemy he faced. He neither trivialized nor overdramatised, he sought to warn the Christian, not frighten him. Gurnall never so exaggerated the Devil's cunning and power so as to leave the Christian soldier in despair. Demoralised troops could not fight well. To raise their morale he repeatedly reminded the Christians of the power of God and the riches of his grace.

Gurnall understood Satan to be a real person with a real personality endowed with immense, supernatural power. Evil too, was real, particularly as embodied in the person of the enemy.

At the same time he retained the Reformation hermeneutic: literal where literal, poetic where poetic, imagery where imagery was obviously intended, allegory remained allegory, and personification remained personification, figurative language was to be understood as it was originally intended, figuratively. Yet, spiritual truth embodied in the figurative language could also be true and literal.

When Gurnall depicted Satan as an archer, he did not mean this literally in the sense of material arrows; the 'darts' or arrows that he shot were to be understood figuratively, but nevertheless as very real. They

were powerful thoughts, impressions, accusations, and temptations that he shot into the Christian's mind.

It will perhaps be useful at this point to add that such Biblical realism has not always prevailed in the history of the Christian Church. Popular thinking in Medieval and Renaissance painting, is a case in point. Gurnall demythologised the crass and horrific imagery that turned Satan and his minions into caricatures.

Perhaps the most apposite illustration for our purpose (because it involves the concept of spiritual warfare) is 'Knight, Death and Devil' engraved in 1513 by Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528).⁶⁶

Such a departure from the Biblical hermeneutic had two results. The realm of Christian warfare (while not denying the invisible aspect), nevertheless became identified in the popular mind with that which was substantial and empirical (that which can be observed and tested materially); demons and angels of darkness actually materialised and became tangible. Demons could take on human or animal forms, ie. the guise of a big, ugly man dressed in black, or a handsome soldier, or someone dressed as a Moor, or they could manifest themselves as oxen, horses, dogs, cats and so on.

66. Dürer was the greatest printmaker of his day and had a wide influence on 16th century art through his woodcuts and engravings. He was an admirer of Martin Luther, but like Erasmus he never broke away from the Roman Catholic Church, and remained essentially a Renaissance humanist. He was deeply influenced by medieval theology and this comes out in his 'Knight, Death and Devil'. The knight embodies the Renaissance ideal of the noble, aesthetic and heroic soldier. Under the hand of Dürer this knight becomes a Christian soldier steadfast on the road to the New Jerusalem.

What is important for our purpose is the overwhelmingly physical impact, particularly of the Devil immediately to the right of the right-hand back leg of the horse, as well as the hideous horsemen trying to cut him off from the right-hand side from the front.

Satan is portrayed in grotesque terms. This Devil carries a pike, wears a boar's head and has bat's wings, with a tail emerging from behind and below the wings. Two goat's ears emerge from beneath the boar's ears, and the top part of his head is dominated by a large, curved and formidable looking horn. It is a portrayal based on medieval hermeneutics, overlooking the figurative characteristics applied to Satan in Scripture.

Thus, you could never be quite sure that the person you were conversing with (especially a stranger), was not perhaps a demon in disguise.⁶⁷

While not denying spiritual warfare in the invisible realm, there was undeniably a powerful stress laid upon spiritual warfare taking place on the level of the materialistic and physical. From a Biblical perspective Gurnall saw that demons and evil beings did not materialise, in the medieval sense, and that they could not be fought on an empirical level, ie. on an observable, physical and experimental level. This (ie. the medieval view) was to relocate Christian warfare from where it really took place, namely, in the spiritually invisible realm. It was therefore a shift from Biblical reality to a realm of unreality.

A second consequence involved the portrayal of Satan and his demonic angels. Satan and his demons were portrayed in the most gross, physically grotesque and repulsive terms. The serious danger was that it obscured the real, deeper nature and being of the enemy and his fallen angels. A medieval man or woman would be confronted by supernatural beings who launched direct, physical attacks upon one; beings that ate your flesh and drank your blood and tore you apart. The real cunning of the enemy and his wiles in attacking the mind, emotions, conscience and will of the Christian was obscured. His manipulation of our imaginations where he seduced and deceived more often than not remained unexposed. The medieval demons were also portrayed as being all-powerful as they attacked even Christians, and the saints were pictured as virtually helpless, anxious and distraught. The consequence of such a portrayal was to lead people to the wrong illusory battlefield, obscure the enemy's cunning and tactics, and finally leaving them feeling helpless, - because they had been issued with the incorrect information and weapons.

(ii) Gurnall's Biblical balance.

The contrast in the teaching of Gurnall could hardly have been more striking. His was a balanced, Biblical portrayal of the Christian's enemy and those under his authority.

67. Cohn, N. Europe's Inner Demons. Paladin, 1976, 70. Prof. Cohn quotes extensively from Dialogus Miraculorum by Caesarius of Heisterbach, a German monk who entered the monastery of Heisterbach in the year 1200 and died ca. 1240-1250.

The enemy, he reminded the Christian:

is no mean contemptible one ... (he is full of) ... ingenuity and acuteness of wit ... the Devil is a very subtle enemy ... Satan was too crafty for man in his perfection, much more now in his maimed estate ... he hath increased his craft ... he hath subtlety enough to do others hurt. (I,71)

Nevertheless, he deliberately set out to encourage Christians. He said:

The Apostle begins his speech with the word of encouragement to battle: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord." (I.11)

As a pastor Gurnall knew how dispirited Christians became in warfare:

A soul deeply possessed with fear, and dispirited with strong apprehensions of danger, is in no posture for counsel ... therefore the apostle first raiseth up their spirits. (I.11)

That Gurnall not only maintained Reformation hermeneutics, but also the Biblical balance of the Reformers, can be seen from the following:

Item: Satan was a great and powerful adversary. He is not to be mocked or ridiculed or caricatured. If there were any weakness in the Christian's armour, he would find it, however small, and fire his darts through that opening:

A dart may fly in at a little hole, like that which brought a message of death to Ahab, through the joints of his harness, and Satan is such an archer as can shoot at a penny breadth. (I.58)

Item: Nevertheless:

Take heart therefore, O ye saints, and be strong; your cause is good, God himself espouseth your quarrel, who hath appointed you his own Son, general of the field, called The Captain of our Salvation, Heb. ii.10 ... he never lost (a) battle even when he lost his life.(I.16-17)

And what proof do I have that he will continue to help me, even if I stumble?

God loves his saints as the purchase of his Son's blood. They cost him dear, and that which is so hardly got shall not be easily lost. He that was willing to expend his Son's blood to gain them, will not deny his power to keep them. (I.29)

2. Detailed evaluation.

While there is unavoidably some overlap between topics in this section, we shall consider the enemy's nature, and in a later section his methods.

In this more detailed section we will deal with the enemy's person, nature, personality traits etc. under the following headings and sub-headings.

Firstly: The enemy's person and being.

1. The enemy's constitution and being.
2. The enemy's relation to other fallen angelic-beings, demons and so on.
3. The enemy's finiteness, in relation to God.

Secondly: The enemy's evil and malicious nature.

Thirdly: The enemy's aggressiveness, persistency and power.

Firstly: The enemy's person and being.

1. The enemy's constitution and being.

To start with, Gurnall unquestionably believed that Satan was a real person with a real personality. And by 'personality' we should not understand a being with a material or physical body, although angels (of which order Satan is one), did possess what he called 'substance' and did exist in a localised form.

He accepted the Biblical account of Satan as a created being of the angelic order, of great beauty, power and brilliance. The words that he used to describe Satan, particularly the proper nouns, all point to his belief that Satan was a personality with definite traits and possessed of great self-awareness, self-consciousness and intelligence.

Satan was not an unconscious spiritual force or power. Because he was a person he could think, plan and plot; tempt, ambush and deceive; he could make trouble, lie and seduce; he was filled with hatred towards God and could incite men to blasphemy, murder and despair. These were not the actions of an evil 'Force':

The Devil's nature shows his power; it is angelical....
he is an angel still, and hath an angel's power. (I.140-141)

The Devil lost, indeed, by his fall, much of his power in relation to that holy and happy estate in which he was created, but not his natural abilities. (I.141)

According to Gurnall the composition of an angel's being or nature was immaterial. By this he did not mean that angels were made of a substance which rendered them perpetually and permanently invisible (except to God), or that they lacked definite form. Rather (and here he follows a common procedure of defining in terms of negatives), they were not limited by '... a fleshly part'. (I.140) They did not have a body of bones, blood and tissue; a physical body liable to disease, weariness and limitations to '... clog ... (or)... retard their motion'. (I.140)

This made it impossible to fight the enemy with carnal, physical weapons such as cannon and sword. The spiritual warfare the Christian engaged in should essentially take place in the invisible realm of the spirit, heart and mind. This concept of warfare led Gurnall increasingly to reject the view that the Parliamentary forces were in fact fighting God's war in their clash with the Royalist forces. That was not, he taught his people, where the real battle was being waged. Such views increasingly put him at odds with many of his fellow-Puritans.

The essential feature of both good and evil angels was that they were 'spirits'. This was also true of 'devils', or as we would translate today 'demons'. Gurnall used the words 'essence', 'substance', and 'nature' interchangeably when speaking of their basic being;

Sin did not alter their substance, for then, as one saith well, that nature and substance which transgressed could not be punished. (I.177)

Furthermore, 'spirit' was not to be understood adjectively, ie. a spirit of uncleanness, a spirit of impurity, thus defining 'spirit' simply in terms of certain qualities and no more. He used the word substantively, ie. a created being possessing a separate, individual and independent existence with a recognisable personality. Note again his statement '... Sin did not alter their substance'. (I.177)⁶⁸

68. The following passages confirm and elaborate Gurnall's basic views expressed above:

The Devil he said '... is a spirit; that is, his essence is immaterial and simple, not compounded, as corporeal beings are, of matter and form'. (I.177)

The demons were of '... spiritual substance, not qualities, or evil motions, arising from us, as some absurdly conceived'. (I.177)

They were '... entire spiritual substances, which have, every one, proper existence'. (I.177) That is to say, their beings are composed of one substance or essence only, ie. a 'spiritual substance', which Gurnall does not define any further.

Finally, and very important '... They are, though entire spiritual substances, yet finite, being but creatures'. (I.177)

It is noteworthy that Gurnall did not propound a metaphysical definition of this basic 'substance' of which angels consist. As is usually the case with the Puritans he remained silent where Scripture was silent. Never content with only doctrinal definitions, Gurnall drew certain conclusions from these doctrinal premises. His overall conclusion was a warning to the Christian not to take Satan and his servants lightly. Christian, he warned '... What a dreadful enemy we have to grapple with'. (I.177)

Gurnall's conclusions were formidable.

First. They had fallen from their first state, but nevertheless '... they excel in knowledge all other creatures ... because, as spirits, they come nearest by creation to the nature of God who made them'. (I.177-178)

Their 'subtilty' is too much for mortal men, including the saints, if we had not God to play our game for us. (I.178)

In using the word 'subtilty' Gurnall probably meant, not only their superior intellectual endowment, but also their ability to employ that intellect with great cunning and shrewdness.

Second. '... As spirits, they are invisible, and their approaches also'. (I.178) This was a logical sequence of being non-material, and was one of their most dangerous traits '... They come, and you see not your enemy'. (I.178)

Third. '... As spirits, they are immortal'. (I.178) Of other enemies you may hear the good news that they have breathed their last, but, '... devils die not, they will hunt thee to thy grave, and when thou diest they will meet thee in another world, to accuse and torment thee there also'. (I.178) He was speaking here of the non-Christian.

Fourth. '... As spirits, they are unwearied in their motions'. (I.178) Powerful in intellect, invisible, immortal, - now also, unwearied and apparently indestructible (short of a direct intervention by God who made them and can destroy them). The Christian's warfare was unceasing because his enemies never tired, '... the Devil's spirit is never cowed, nor (is) he weary of doing mischief ... he hath never stood still since first he began his walk to and fro the world'. (I.178)

2. Satan's relationship to these fallen angelic beings.

The Christian's chief enemy was Satan. But the Christian also had to battle with evil beings who fell under Satan's command and leadership:

These powers of hell are that party of angels, who for their mutiny and disobedience were cashiered (out of) heaven ... (and) ... ever since ... do mischief to the children of men, especially travelling in Heaven's road. (I.141)

In this section Gurnall used the terms 'devils', 'spirits' and 'party of angels' interchangeably.

How many were there?

There are devils enough to beleaguer the whole earth; not a place under heaven where Satan hath not his troops ... yea, for some special service, he can send a legion to keep garrison in one single person, as (in) Mark v; and if so many can be spared to attend one, to what a number would the muster-roll of Satan's whole army amount, if known. (I.141)

Over all these 'troops' Satan was commander-in-chief.

Furthermore this army had its own order and its own ranks. As anti-type of the order in heaven, there was a demonic hierarchy:

That there is an order among the devils cannot be denied. (I.130). Their unity and order makes their number formidable. We cannot say that there is love among them ... yet there is unity and order as to this - they are all agreed in their design against God and man: so their unity and consent is knit together by ... hatred. (I.141)

Furthermore, as princes had:

their ministers of state whom they employ for the safety and enlargement of their territories (I.131),

so the enemy had:

his, who propagate his cursed designs; (and) therefore we read of 'doctrines of devils', 2 Cor. xi.15. (I.131)

And like every prince he had a large empire, which included the fallen angels and sinful men. (I.133)

Finally, the enemy's rule over his minions was total and complete:

Satan fights not against Satan. Did you ever hear of any mutiny in the Devil's army? Or, that any of those apostate angels did freely yield up one soul to Christ? There are many, yet but one Spirit of wickedness in them all. (I.141-142)

3. Satan's finiteness in relation to God.

Gurnall's robust pastoral instinct then took over; where he sketched such a daunting picture, he went on to include, as one of his 'Uses', the following:

Use Third. To the saints; be not ye dismayed at this report which the Scripture makes of Satan's power. (I.145)

Why not?

Labour therefore to get a right understanding of Satan's power. (I.145) The want of this consideration (ie. that his power is limited) loseth God his praise, and us our comfort. (I.147)

The Christian, Gurnall admitted, was full of fear from what he had just heard, namely, that the enemy was a great and powerful prince.

The Christian:

trembles ... (is) beset with fears of his power ... (is) troubled ... buffeted ... (is) robbed of much of his joy ... (is) melancholic. (I.145-147)

As when faced with a lion, a man's first reaction might be paralysis. Only if the Christian realised that the lion was not as powerful as he originally thought, would he gain fresh courage.

But how could a Christian come to understand that Satan was not as powerful as he first appeared to be?

Three considerations (which) will relieve you when at any time you are beset with fears of his power. (I.145)

Consideration 1. Satan's power was a derived power.

The enemy's power was not self-originated or self-derived:

He hath it not in himself, but by patent from another, and that no other but God. (I.145)

Two consequences flowed from this doctrinal truth.

(1) If Satan's power were a derived power, then it could never ultimately hurt the Christian, '... Would thy Father give him a sword to mischief thee his child?'. (I.145)

(2) If you found yourself in a position where you were buffeted by Satan and persecuted by men, then remember that '... it is God who gives them both power'. (I.146)

Consideration 2. Satan's power was a limited power.

This followed logically and theologically from the first consideration.

God did not allow Satan to possess a power equal to his own:

Satan's power is limited, and that in two ways - he cannot do what he will, and he shall not do what he can. (I.146)

(1) He cannot do what he will.

His desires are boundless ... which his cankered malice stirs him up to wish. (I.146)

Satan passionately desired to attack and harm God, God's unfallen angels and God's children. But God had tied him to a:

length of his tedder, to which he is staked, and cannot exceed. (I.146)

(i) Because God had staked him he could not hurt God or injure God in any way:

he cannot hurt the being of God ... (and) ... if God be safe, then thou also, for thy life "is hid with Christ in God". (I.146)

The syllogism present in this argument was:

Major premise: God, and all those hidden with Christ in God, are safe from Satan.

Minor premise: The Christian is hidden with Christ in God.

Conclusion : The Christian is safe from Satan.

(ii) Furthermore, Satan could not:

hinder those purposes and counsels of God he knows. (I.146)

He knew, for example, of the coming of Christ, but though he had tried, he could not hinder it. In terms of argumentation, there was here an underlying argument from a major proposition to a minor proposition.

Major truth: Because his power is limited, Satan could not hinder that greatest of all events, the coming of Christ to earth.

Minor truth: If God did not allow him to hinder such a great event, how much less will he allow Satan to hinder God's plan for our mere human lives. (I.146)

(iii) Gurnall concludes:

Satan cannot ravish thy will. He cannot command thee to sin against thy will. (I.146)

(2) He shall not do what he can.

Satan may wish to harm the Christian, but God restrained him:

God ever takes him off before he can finish his work on a saint. He can, if God suffers him, rob the Christian of much of his joy, and disturb his peace by his cunning insinuations, but he is under command ... When Satan finds the good man asleep, then he finds our good God awake; therefore thou art not consumed. (I.147)

Consideration 3. Satan's power was a ministerial power.

Satan's power was ultimately '... appointed by God for the service and benefit of the saints'. (I.147)

The Christian might stain himself most with sin during times of peace and prosperity, but God used the Christian's enemy to purge him from these stains:

As we do with our linen, the spots they get at our feasts are taken out by washing, rubbing and laying them out to bleach. The saints never ... recover their whiteness to such a degree as when they come from under Satan's scouring. (I.147)

This, indeed, is love and wisdom in a riddle, but you who have the Spirit of Christ can unfold it. (I.148)

Secondly: The enemy's evil and malicious nature.1. This apostate creature.

Satan's original state was that of:

a noble creature whom God had set on the top, as it were, of all creation, nearest to himself, (and) from whom God had kept nothing but his own royal diadem ... this peer and favourite in the court. (I.179)

Satan was thus an angelic being of unsurpassed power, position, intelligence, beauty and holiness.

Without speculating about the cause that took place in Satan's nature which led him into sin, Gurnall stated simply that he made a '... bold and blasphemous attempt to snatch at God's own crown'. (I.179) His rebellion was aggravated by the fact that it was '... without any cause or solicitation from any other'. (I.179)

The violent clash was the outcome of a change in Lucifer, so deep and radical, as to constitute apostasy. Gurnall referred bluntly to Satan as '... this apostate creature'. (I.132)

Apostate because he withdrew from one position and occupied the very opposite. From being nearest to God (I.179), and from knowing God's holiness in a profoundly, personal manner, Satan so far apostasized that he now knew nothing but complete surrender to evil.

He was called:

by way of eminency in sin 'The Wicked One', Mat. xiii.19. As God is called the Holy One, because none (is as) holy as the Lord; so the Devil (is called) the Wicked One, because he is a none-such in sin. (I.179)

Satan is unique because he is the only being in creation that has known total and complete holiness (outside of God's perfect holiness), as well as total evil and depravity. Indeed:

this paints the Devil blacker than the thoughts of men and angels can conceive. (I.179)⁶⁹

Inseparably linked with this act of apostasy was the fact that Satan had:

proclaimed war against God, and he brings thee, by sinning, to espouse his quarrel. (I.182)

69. Complementing Gurnall's thinking, Dr J.I. Packer adds the following in a recent book. Under the sub-heading of Satan's mentality, Dr Packer says: 'The mentality of Satan is a mystery whose depths we can never fully plumb: not just because Satan is an angel, while we are men, but also because Satan is purely evil, and we cannot conceive what pure evil is like. No man is so far gone in sin that no vestige of goodness or truth remains in him; no man is wholly motivated by hatred of others; no man has literally no aim in life save to wreck and destroy the creative achievements of another ... Though in fallen man God's image is spoiled at every point, so that nothing a man does is ever entirely right and as it should be, none of us is purely evil, and we simply cannot imagine a being who is purely evil ... But Scripture clearly means us to believe in a Satan, and a host of Satanic myrmidons, who are of quite unimaginable badness - more cruel, more malicious, more proud, more scornful, more perverted, more destructive, more disgusting, more filthy, more despicable, than anything our minds can conceive.' cf. Packer, J.I. God's Words: Studies in Key Biblical Themes. Inter-Varsity Press, 1981, 87-88.

In keeping with our overall thesis, we note once again that Gurnall located the real warfare of the Christian, not with another Christian, but between Satan and God. At the same time Satan also wars constantly against the Christian:

Satan is carried out with boundless rage against man, especially the saints, and would not, if he could, leave one of Christ's flock alive ... Such is the height of his malice against God, whom he hates with perfect hatred; and, because he cannot reach him with a direct blow, therefore he strikes him at the second-hand through his saints. (I.180)

Satan's minions shared their master's malice:

And this is the worst that can be said of these wicked spirits, that they maliciously spite God, and in God the glory of his mercy. (I.181)

This 'revenge' against God takes yet another malicious turn: not only did the enemy tempt the Christian, in order to revenge himself against God through striking at his creation (man), but when the Christian refused to fall for the temptation, Satan, by sleight of hand, tried to make the Christian believe that these appalling temptations, desires and blasphemies arose out of his own heart.

Thus:

the humble Christian is prone to fear the worst of himself, ... (and) ... is ready to charge himself with those brats that should be laid at another's door - Satan's, I mean. (II.99)

Far from these 'brats' having arisen from within the Christian's bosom, they were:

sent from Satan by way of revenge for the soul's revolt from him. (II.100)

Dr Packer corroborates this view:

Let us be clear on this, Satan hath no constructive purpose of his own; his tactics are simply to thwart God and destroy men.⁷⁰

Satan had known only holiness and love and obedience to God. Henceforth he would know only evil, malice, hatred and rebellion. He had known order and beauty. Henceforth he would promote only disorder, chaos and anarchy. He had known the great acts of God in creation.

70. Packer, *ibid*, 91.

Henceforth his passionate desire would be to 'create' such acts of destruction that would result in men being perpetually at war, killing each other and ravaging the earth. In heaven he had known harmony and trust between God and his angelic beings and servants. Henceforth his single-minded aim would be to bring disharmony and distrust in man's relationship with his fellow man and God.

Satan was:

wise only to do evil. (I.153) Remember he is wicked, and
can come for no good. (II.73)

His fallen nature made it impossible for him to do any good whatsoever. As God could do no evil, so Satan could do no good.

2. Satan's evil and malicious nature was revealed in countless, evil actions.

Gurnall portrayed the enemy as unceasingly active in tempting and attacking people whether they were Christians or not. We now turn to some of these actions.

(i) Perverting the truth of God.

Early in his exposition of 'The nature of the war, and character of the assailants' (I.112), Gurnall laid down that '... Satan labours to corrupt the mind with erroneous principles'. (I.188)

Such efforts had serious consequences for both the Christian and the non-Christian.

The non-Christian

Gurnall considered this aspect of Satan's activities important enough to put into a doctrinal statement. '... Ignorance above other sins enslaves a soul to Satan'. (I.161)

To darken the truth, either with ignorance or by means of 'erroneous principles', kept a man from God's truth and ultimately from God himself.

Knowledge:

is the Key, Lu. xi.52; Christ the Door, Jn xv. Christ opens heaven. Knowledge opens Christ. (I.161)

The opposite was as true:

First. Ignorance opens a door for sin to enter.

Second. As ignorance lets in sin, so it locks it up in the soul, and the soul in it. Third. As it locks it up, so it shuts all means of help out ... (the way to heaven) ... cannot be found in the dark ... Such a one lies in Satan's inner dungeon, where no light of conviction comes. Darkness inclines to sleep; a blind mind and a drowsy conscience go together. (I.161-162)

Gurnall described the release this knowledge of Christ brought in lyrical language:

If Christ has won thy heart, He will be true to thee, and be at all the cost to bring thee out of thy prison-house also, yea, take the pains to come for thee himself, and bring with him those wedding garments in which he will carry thee from thy prison to his Father's house with joy, where thou shalt live, not only as a subject under his law, but as a bride in the bosom of his love. And what can be added to thy happiness more?' (I.160)

As the enemy's aim was to keep the non-Christian ignorant, and thus in spiritual darkness, so the Christian minister's task was to dispel that ignorance and darkness. He could do this by using Biblical knowledge as a sword:

Now, in order to the discharge of this your public trust, I shall point ... at two duties incumbent on you both ... one to be performed in your study, the other in your pulpit. First duty. In your study acquaint yourselves with the word of God ... Second duty. In the pulpit use no other sword but this, and handle it faithfully. (II.283-285)

Draw thou therefore this sword ... out of thine own fine scabbard, and strike with its naked edge. This you will find the only way to pierce (your) people's consciences. (II.285-286)

The Christian.

As with the non-Christian, so with the Christian Satan endeavoured to '... corrupt the minds of men, especially professors (believers) with error'. (I.188)

Gurnall stated a number of premises regarding the nature of the enemy. Prominent among them was the premise that the Devil was a :

Lying Spirit ... (I.177) ... (again) ... He is called "the father of lies" as those who found out any art are called the father of it. (I.179)

As God was (so to speak) the creator and founder of truth, so the Devil was the creator and founder of all untruth. Gurnall gave prominence to the fact that the Devil 'invented' sin. As with the author of sin, so with his minions:

These apostate angels are the inventors of sin - the first that sounded the trumpet of rebellion against their Maker. (I.179)

In acting out his 'Lying Nature' and seeking to corrupt and confuse the Christian concept of truth, Satan worked even harder than he did when seeking to overcome the non-Christian, because success against the Christian harmed the church and blotted God's name in a particularly grave manner. Therefore Christian '... Wait conscionably on the ministry of the word'. (I.191)⁷¹ The Christian needed to wait in this manner upon the Scriptures, because of the enemy's anxiety to obscure truth for the Christian. The enemy had both a negative and a positive method:

Satan, commonly stops the ears from hearing sound doctrine (the negative), before he opens it to embrace corrupt (doctrine, ie. the positive aspect). (I.191)

The consummate deceiver and perverter of the truth knew that he might be recognised by the Christian if he made a frontal attack, so:

He hangs out false colours and comes up to the Christian in the disguise of a friend. (I.75) ... He silvers his tongue with fair language. (I.75)

Gurnall gave examples that varied from Christian to Christian.

(a) Judgment.

Approaching the Christian as a 'Friend', he:

corrupts some in their judgment, by offering them so-called ... special gospel truths ... new light ... (He is like) ... a cunning chapman (ie. pedlar) (who) puts off his old ware (errors I mean that have lain long upon his hand), only turning them a little after the mode of the times, and they go for new light. (I.75)

Satan dressed up old heresy as valuable new insight into the gospel; thus deceived the Christian rejoiced in his apparently new and unique understanding of certain gospel-truths. Such 'new truths' or 'new light'

71. The word 'conscionably' is rarely used today. It means to act conscientiously or with scrupulous care.

abounded among many movements of his own day like the Quakers, the Ranters and some of the Fifth Monarchists. Christopher Hill gives a striking example of what Gurnall must have had in mind.⁷² As time proceeded his views changed radically and 'mysteries' were opened to him.⁷³

Again, the enemy laid so much emphasis on faith and its importance and centrality in the individual Christian's experience, that ultimately the Christian would look less and less to the objective standard of the truth in the Scriptures. '... He decries and vilifies the Scripture, by magnifying faith'. (I.75)

His cunning lay in redirecting the Christian's spiritual eyesight. He did not make a frontal attack upon Scripture, for that would fail. It was really a matter of balance. The enemy simply tilted the emphasis towards the importance of faith and kept the pressure applied there. The Scriptures were not discarded as a basis of authority; they were just progressively neglected. Without realising it the Christian's real basis of authority had shifted from the objective to the subjective; from the objective which is God-authenticated to an inward and subjective 'faith' which became self-authenticating. Thus, those aspects of Christian theology (ie. faith and the word), which in a properly integrated and balanced theology ought to be friends, ended up as enemies. Similarly, the enemy shifted his focus to the church and proceeded to drive the Christian on to the horns of a dilemma:

Major premise: No church so full of weakness and blots can be a New Testament church.

Minor premise: This church of whom you are a member, is full of '... corruption ... in its administrations'. (I.75)

Conclusion : This church, of whom you are a member, is not a New Testament church.

72. The example concerns a young Welshman, Arise Evans, who came to London in 1629. At first, so he says: "I looked upon Scripture as a history of things that passed in other countries, pertaining to other persons; but now I look upon it as a mystery to be opened at this time, belonging also to us." cf. Hill, The World Turned Upside Down, op.cit., 93, footnote 30.

73. Hill, ibid., 94, footnote 33. Arise Evans thought that Revelation 8 and 11 gave an account of the (English) Civil War, that chapters 8 and 9 of Amos set down all that came to pass since the beginning of the Long Parliament. In Amos 9:1 the lintel at the door, which was to be smitten that the posts may shake, must refer to (the) Speaker (of the Commons) Lenthall.

The Christian was thus trapped between the imagined perfection of the N.T. Church, and the real imperfections of the church of which he was a member. But as he examined other churches, the dilemma remained; until at last he could '... see no church at all in being'. (I.75)

His next step, according to Gurnall, was to do what many Christians throughout history had attempted to do: in this latter day of apostasy he would recreate and re-establish a real N.T. church that would be pure in doctrine and practice! His insight into the Scriptures were unique. In fact, he was simply falling into a very old heresy of chasing after a romanticised 'perfect' church, that had never existed anywhere than in the imagination.

(b) Emotions.

Having deceived the Christian in the area of judgement and discernment, the enemy now '... prevails no less on the hearts and lives of men ... than on their judgements'. (I.75)

Thus:

Under the notion of zeal, he kindles sometimes a dangerous flame of passion and wrath in the heart, which like a rash fire makes the Christian's spirit boil over unto unchristian desires of, and prayers for, revenge where he should forgive. (I.75)

This deception one could call self-righteous zeal. Zeal for God, said Gurnall, was commendable. The danger laid in using it in a wrong, un-Scriptural and unbalanced manner, while convinced that you were actually right! There was only a short step from that to the conclusion that all other zeal was false and must be condemned, and, if necessary, withstood physically. (ie. Both Protestant and Roman Catholics were ready to be dissenters and were burnt at the stake).

Christians must never think that Satan was so busy distorting the truth in general terms, or with regard to the masses of people, that he was not also interested in misleading individual believers. While he concerned himself with quantitative delusions throughout the whole world, he never despised the possibility of a single victorious attack upon any one believer.

Employing his superior understanding of a Christian's peculiar temperamental weakness, he would vary his attack accordingly. He would not,

for example, dispute the presentation of God as merciful and gracious in general terms to mankind. But the Christian who was sensitive and introspective might very well be made to doubt that such mercy and grace could apply to him as an individual:

Thus, ... you (will) find God represented ... as merciful and gracious, but not to such a great sinner as you; to have power and strength, but not able to save thee. (I.88)

The enemy would concede the major point (God's general mercy), in order to win a minor, but very important point (God will not show mercy on you!). No matter how important a general truth might be, the individual Christian would feel more intensely a particular application to himself.

Having examined the enemy's perversion of the truth in relation to the non-Christian and the Christian, Gurnall concluded that '... Satan hath a threefold design'. (I.188)

These are:

Firstly. He doth this in despite to God, against whom he cannot vent his malice at a higher rate, than by corrupting his truth. (I.188)

Secondly. The enemy does this '... to weaken, if not destroy the power of godliness in them'. (I.188)

Thirdly. His design is '... to disturb the peace of the earth'. (I.189)

(ii) In defiling and disfiguring the Christian.

The enemy did not attack haphazardly. He planned his assault with precision. Satan, Gurnall stated, was determined to break the Christian's fellowship with God, by causing him to sin:

Satan, in tempting the saint to sin, labours to make a breach between God and the soul. He hates both (God and the Christian), and therefore labours to divide these dear friends. (I.105)

If he could get the saint to sin, then God would be angry with him; the Christian, in turn, would be angry with God for rebuking him for his sin:

In this case God and the soul will be like man and wife fallen out. (I.105)

But the enemy did not just plan a breach, but also:

by his temptations aims at the defiling of the Christian's conscience, and disfiguring that beautiful face of God's image which is engraven with holiness in the Christian's bosom. (I.103)

The attack upon the Christian was calculated and deliberate because holiness was a characteristic of God's nature stamped upon the Christian's new nature. More than anything else the enemy hated holiness, but because he could not harm God he turned his attention upon the Christian and attacked him where he most resembled God, in a holy and godly life. The new life the Christian now possessed:
 is stamped, holiness is the beauty of this face, which makes us indeed like God. (I.214-215)

The enemy was fully aware that sin defiled. It polluted and dirtied the Christian spiritually. Sins like idolatry, error, spiritual pride or unbelief caused '... filthiness of spirit'. (I.187)

The enemy sought both to sully God's image and name, and to harm the Christian. '... You are holy. That he cannot endure'. (I.214)

A further reason for his hatred toward the holiness of God and the progressive holiness of the Christian, was that the enemy once possessed that same holiness and beauty.

Now, however, in his fallen state, he:

like a true apostate, he endeavours to ruin that in the Christian which he hath lost himself. (I.214)

Finally, as God impresses his image of holiness on those he possesses, so Satan attempts to impress his own image of 'an unclean-spirit' even temporarily upon the Christian:

"Miles feri faciem", as Caesar's speech, when to fight with the Roman citizens, he bade his soldiers "strike at their face". These citizens ... love their beauty; mar that and mar all. (I.214)

(iii) In promoting darkness.

A third consequence of the enemy's evil nature was that he promoted darkness on an increasingly wide-ranging front affecting the Christian and the non-Christian.

The Christians, after release from the Devil's prison, could look in at:

the Devil's prison (I.137, 147, 158) ... (and) ... see the smoky hole where once he lay, to view the chains wherewith he was laden. (I.137),

and would be reminded of the horror of it all: 'smoky' and 'horror'

suggest spiritual darkness and ignorance.

Gurnall the realistic pastor did not shrink from the possibility that to scour out the saint's spots, God might commit a saint to the Devil's prison temporarily. (I.147)

The case of the non-Christian was infinitely worse:

Such a one lies in Satan's inner dungeon ... his prison-house... (I.161-162). (The Enemy is the) ... prince of darkness (I.137), (as well as the) ... ruler of the darkness of his world. (I.148)

Satan also taught men and women to sin. Sinners who had refused to open their ears to hear God's truth, had in effect:

run out of God's school into the Devil's, by rebelling against the light. (I.152)

Gurnall, you will note had here changed metaphors. He used the words (and concepts) 'sin' and 'darkness' as almost synonymous, certainly complementary. Sin, he said:

is called the 'Works of Darkness' ... (I.151) ... (And again) ... Sin may be called darkness. (I.151)

Satan was the external cause of sin because he was the ruler, custodian and promoter of darkness; he himself was '... held in chains of darkness'. (I.151), and consequently could not promote anything else. He can only promote what he is.

The internal cause of sin within man was '... the blindness and darkness of the soul'. (I.151) Upon this inflammable mass of fire-wood the enemy descended; like called unto like.

What did Gurnall mean when he said that the enemy was 'the great promoter' (I.151) of darkness? Every soul was in a state of sin and darkness, but which this state consisted of chiefly was '... the particular sin of ignorance'. (I.151)

He put it like this:

Ignorance above other sins enslaves a soul to Satan ... Ignorance, as it lets sin in, so it locks it up in the soul, and the soul in it. Such a one lies in Satan's inner dungeon. (I.161-162)

Christians, though firmly bound for God and glory experienced times when great darkness came upon them. This was deliberately promoted by the enemy who knew how such darkness increased opportunities for

mischief by casting the Christian into fear, despondency, depression and even despair.

The enemy, tormented:

to see the Christian under sail for heaven, filled with ... sweet hope ... he raiseth what storms and tempests he can, either to hinder his arrival in that blessed port ... or at least to make it a troublesome winter voyage ... And this indeed he very often obtains in such a degree, that by his violent impetuous temptations beating upon the Christian, he makes him throw over much precious lading of his joys and comforts; yea, sometimes he brings the soul through stress of temptation to think of quitting the ship, while for the present all hope of being saved seems to be taken away. Thus, you see what we wrestle with devils for. (I.217)

Thirdly: The enemy's aggressiveness, persistence and power.

Aggression was the natural outflow of an evil and malicious nature. A proper understanding of the enemy's aggressiveness would help to prepare the Christian for spiritual combat.

Everything we knew about the enemy's nature, temperament, character, plots, names, plans, stratagies, objectives and particularly his methods, all pointed to unceasing, constant and persistent aggression.

A brief look at the enemy's 1. Names and appellations, 2. His actions, and 3. His power would substantiate this.

1. Names and appellations.

The names and attributes of God all point to him as a redeeming God, a God of grace: God exercised his attributes redemptively.

In contrast the names and attributes of the enemy all point to a destructive use. God creates and redeems; Satan aggressively attacks to cause chaos and destruction. He is the great accuser of the saints, (I.279) the great persecutor, (I.72, 304) and a trouble maker, for he:

vexeth the Christian by laying his brats at the saint's door ... (and) ... in aggravating the saint's sins. (I.86)

He is the gaoler who imprisoned the Christian, albeit temporally,

(I.108, 133, 147) a tyrant who enslaves, (I.155, 156, 162) and a pirate:

Could the Christian enjoy but a free trade with heaven a few years without molestation, he would soon grow a rich man ... But what with losses sustained by the hands of this Pirate Satan ... he is kept low in the life, and much of his gains are lost. (I.215)

He is a robber (I.224) and a serpent. (I.293)

The enemy's names reflected his immense power and evil. They were not merely symbolic titles such as many monarchs possessed whose grandiose titles did not correspond to their real status.

Satan was:

the strong man, Luke xi.21 ... in defiance of the sons of Adam, none ... being able to cope with this giant. (I.140)

He was called:

the roaring lion ... If he roars, all tremble ... (I.140) (He sometimes comes) ... as a lion in the persons of bloody persecutors, and labours to scare Christians from the truth with fire and faggot. (I.293)

Also he was:

the great red dragon ... (I.140) ... (who) ... when the Christian is newly converted ... this dragon pours a flood of temptations after it. (I.72) ... (and) ... the fire this dragon spits, full of indignation against God and his saints. (II.75)

He was also:

the prince of the power of the air ... and the god of this world ... a prince can muster his subjects, and draw them into the field for his service. (I.140)

2. Satan's actions.

The enemy's actions against the Christian took many forms and came from different directions.

He was, for example, constantly busy with:

warlike preparations against the Christian (I.71) ... (and) ... assaulting believers. (I.213)

Therefore, the Christian was to be on his guard:

O! Watch then thy heart, that Satan's fire-balls - which upon every little occasion he will be throwing in at thy window - take not hold of thy spirit. (II.336)

Satan's darts or arrows:

have a wounding or killing nature, especially when well-headed and shot out of a strong bow ... Such are Satan's temptations - headed with a desperate malice, and drawn by a strength no less than angelical. (II.75)

He waged incessant war against the Christian's prayer life. He would:

interrupt him in the act of prayer, when he can by no means keep him from it ... Sometimes he will inject ... sinful, proud, filthy, yea, blasphemous thoughts ... to make a hurly-burly and confusion in (the Christian's) spirit. (II.318-319)

Or, he would try to convince the Christian that his prayers were not graciously received in heaven, so the Christian:

gives them (ie. his prayers) up for lost ... (the enemy) depriving him of the present comfort and benefit which his faith might pay him in before a return is made of his prayer. (II.331)

Or, he would persistently:

draw the saints into the depth of despair, under a specious pretense of not being humble enough for sin. (I.89-90)

The impact of this accusation could have disastrous consequences in the Christian's prayer life. According to Satan the Christian could never show enough repentance or penitence, never cultivate enough humility and so he would be driven to a terrible despair that might make him stop praying altogether.

By contrast, Gurnall pointed out that '... as truly godly sorrow goes up, these terrors (ought) to go down'. (I.92)

The terrors of the enemy and the godly sorrow wrought by the Holy Spirit were quite different in character; the difference was faith. Faith was the handmaiden of grace, whereas faith and fear (in the sense of terror) could not be bedfellows. Comparing faith and its functions to the eye, he said:

This eye, beholding its sin piercing Christ and Christ pardoning its sin, affects the heart. The heart (affects) sighs. These inward clouds melt, and run from the eye of faith in tears; and all this is done when there is no tempest of terror in the spirit, but a sweet serenity of love and peace. (I.92)

In the area of prayer then (for example), he betrayed himself by the violence of his accusation and condemnation; whereas the Father

graciously invited the Christian to approach the throne of grace boldly in any time of need.

3. Satan's power.

Aggressiveness without the power to translate itself into action is no more than posturing. But the enemy did not merely posture: he had immense power. The Christian must never forget that the enemy was '... a great prince'. (I.131)

Princes have thrones, so had Satan. Princes were shown homage and honour, likewise the enemy:

Satan is served upon the knee of his subjects; the wicked are said to worship the Devil, Rev. xiii.4. (I.131)

Princes had legislative power:

Satan gives law to the poor sinner ... it is called a 'law of sin' ... because it comes with authority. (I.131)

Princes had their ministers of state:

so Satan his, who propagate his cursed designs. (I.131)

In a word, princes have their tribute and custom; so Satan his. (I.132)

We were weighed down with a lump of flesh, (I.140) but the enemy and his fellow-angelic beings, who fell with him, and who did his bidding:

have no such encumbrance, no fumes from a fleshly part to cloud their understanding, which is clear and piercing; no clog at their heel to retard their motion ... being spiritual, they cannot be resisted with carnal force; fire and sword hurt them not. (I.141, 142)

It is feasible that Gurnall was teaching his flock to fight the enemy at the point where his real power lay, and that at that point physical weapons of sword and fire (as used in the Civil War) were useless. Only the armour and weapons furnished by God, and described in Ephesians 6, were the weapons to use.

Chapter II

The enemy's methods and wiles.

(A) Satan's wiles.

1. Introductory - His wily cunning.

If the 'fiery dart' is the actual launching of a specific attack upon the Christian, then the enemy's 'wile' is the method or manner by which he launches that attack. Like some of the steps in the ordo salutis which can be viewed as separate theological distinctives, yet cannot be separated in experience, so the actual launching of the fiery arrow and the manner of its launching can be conceived separately but never experienced separately. Assault, camouflage, attack and deception are all integrated in a single action.

The Christian soldier's survival depended, not only upon knowing that the enemy was going to attack, but how he would attack. That knowledge would spell the difference between victory and defeat.

Gurnall started with Paul's phrase in Eph. 6:11, methodeias tou diabolou, ie. 'the wiles of the devil'. 'Wiles' means basically 'to work by method' and is related to the word used for 'craft' or 'artifice'. In the context of Ephesians the plural form suggested various forms of craftiness or methods of deception.

Gurnall's understanding of this word 'wiles' involved something of a shift from the concept of the craftsman to that of the scholar formulating his arguments. The Greek word, he said:

signifies, that art and order one observes in handling a point; we say such a one is methodical ... (in showing) ... ingenuity and acuteness of wit so to compose a discourse. (I.71)

There is a shift of emphasis, rather than of basic interpretation, for he went on to draw an analogy between argument and warfare.

This was how he put it:

Indeed, the expert soldier hath his order as well as the scholar; there is method in forming an army, as well as framing an argument. (I.71)

Finally, in terms of exegesis, he suggested that this basic idea of 'method' and 'order' had in fact been used by Paul:

to express the subtlety of Satan, in laying his plots and stratagems, in his warlike preparations against the Christian. (I.71)

Fundamental to the enemy's superior cunning were three facts. The enemy's (i) Superior intelligence, (ii) Superior psychological insight, (iii) His wily subtlety or the sheer wiliness of his cunning.

(i) Superior intelligence.

This Gurnall linked with his nature as a spirit-being. Such beings were not limited or clogged by the:

dark prison of the body ... (I.177) ... (rather) ... they excel in knowledge all other creatures ... because, as spirits, they come nearest by creation to the nature of God who made them. (I.177-178)

For this reason Gurnall urged upon the Christian one of his most important rules for Christian warfare: the Christian should never:

enter the list and dispute ... with his naked reason with Satan, who hath, though the worst cause, yet the nimbler head. (II.93)

Hence the absolutely crucial importance of using the Shield of Faith, to defend oneself against the enemy's fiery darts.

The Puritans, it must be emphasised, were not averse to the use of reason, but rather naked reason. Part of the 'material' used to construct the shield of faith was the Christian's enlightened, intellectual understanding of, for example, justification by faith. To trust to unaided reason alone rendered the Christian no match for the enemy. There was, Gurnall said, a vaster chasm between the Christian's intellectual ability (viewed 'nakedly') and that of Satan:

than between the weakest idiot and the greatest scholar in the world. (II.93)

(ii) Superior psychological insight.

The enemy's second advantage, in terms of his cunning, was the vast amount of experience he had built up, over the centuries, of

psychological insight into human nature. In somewhat quaint terms he said that:

Satan is the greatest intelligencer in the world ... he makes it his business to inquire into the inclinations, thoughts, affections, purposes of the creature, that finding which humour abounds, he may apply himself accordingly. (I.75-76)⁷⁴

As a tempter to sin, the enemy showed his wiliness in at least three ways.

First:

In choosing the most advantageous season for temptation. (I.71-72)

That is to say 'timing' the temptation with cunning wisdom.

1. When, for example, the Christian was newly converted, and the grace within him was still weak and he inexperienced.
2. When the Christian was beset with some great affliction. Ill-health, bereavement, financial loss, poverty, sorrow, trials.

Satan:

lets Christ fast forty days before he comes, and then he falls to work. (I.73)

3. Again:

When the Christian is about some notable enterprise for God's glory, then Satan will lie like a serpent in the way. (I.73)

4. When he could enforce temptation visually:

Look not on that beauty with a wandering eye, by which thou wouldst not be taken prisoner. (I.74)

5. When the Christian was flushed with God's love. The Christian experiencing the smile of God in a particularly satisfactory manner, may become a little careless, and so present a perfect opportunity for the enemy to attack.

6. Finally, at the hour of death:

when the saint is down and prostrate in his bodily strength ... (and the enemy) ... if he cannot trip up (the saint) so as to hinder his arrival in heaven, yet (he will) at least bruise it (him), that he may go with more pain thither. (I.74)

Second:

In those stratagems he useth to deceive the Christian. (I.75)

1. The stratagem of 'gradualism'. The enemy began with a modest temptation, for to reveal the full depth of his intentions would be

74. The word 'humour', in the 17th century usually denoted moods, emotions or the temperament of a person's psychological make-up.

counter-productive. Gurnall then went on to outline the enemy's progressive attack:

He first presents an object that occasions some thoughts; these (in turn) set on fire the affections, and they then fume up into the brain, and cloud the understanding, which being (now) disabled, Satan now dares a little more declare himself and (finally) boldly solicit the creature to that it would even now have defied. (I.77)

2. The stratagem of disguise. His disguise as a friend of the Christian was the most dangerous:

He hangs out false colours, and comes up to the Christian in the disguise of a friend, so that the gates are opened to him and motions received with applause, before either be discovered. (I.75)

The enemy was as:

the grand setter,⁷⁵ he observes the Christian how he walks - what place and company he frequents, what grace or heavenly treasure he carries in his bosom - which, when he hath done, he hath his instruments for the purpose to execute his design. (I.218)

Typically Gurnally applied this truth pastorally:

possibly thy wife, before acquainted with thee, was full of life in the ways of God, but since she has been transplanted into thy cold soil ... thy frothy speeches and unsavoury conversation ... thy worldliness and formality, she is now both decayed in her graces and a loser of her comforts. (I.218)

3. The stratagem of strategic withdrawal. Gurnall called these 'politic retreats'. (I.78) Like the trap set at Ai, the enemy sometimes of his own accord withdrew and so apparently ended a siege. The Christian relaxed his diligence, came out from behind his fortifications, or in our idiom, let his guard down and the enemy ambushed him.

Consequently:

Let Satan tempt or not tempt, assault or retreat, keep thou in (battle) order, stand in a fighting posture, let his flight strengthen thy faith, but not weaken thy care. (I.78)

Third:

In pitching on fit instruments ... to carry on (out) his designs. (I.78) Since the enemy must divert suspicion from himself, he employed accomplices with enough credibility to make his plan succeed.

75. The 'grand setter' was the person in a gang that 'set up' the job, but did not necessarily take part in it himself.

Gurnall noted four sorts of persons he used:

First sort: Persons of place and power. (I.79)

These included representatives from:

the commonwealth or church. (I.79)

Second sort: Persons of parts and policy. (I.79-82)

Men of wit, intelligence and ability, as well as persuasiveness:

A wicked cause needs a smooth oration; a bad ware, a pleasing chapman. (I.80)

Third sort: Persons of reputed holiness. (I.82)

Yes, such is the policy of Satan, and the frailty of the best, that the most holy men have been his instruments to seduce others. (I.82)

Fourth sort: Persons of relation and interest. (I.82)

The enemy used persons who were very close to his intended victim:

Satan sent the apple by Eve's hand to Adam. Delilah doth more with Samson than all the Philistine's band. Job's wife brings him the poison, "Curse God and die", Satan employs Peter, a disciple, to tempt Christ. (I.82)

2. His wiles in action - some examples.

The enemy's darts and wiles were not two separate entities; they were only different aspects of the same fiery assault upon the Christian. The dart involved a quality of malignancy, the wiles the quality of cunning. It was harmful and treacherous and caused great pain and chaos. The wiles varied in variety, number, sophistication and implacability.

One of the enemy's aims was to throw the Christian off-balance. That was the first step in his cunning to make the Christian fall. The following wiles are not exhaustive, but representative of many the enemy used. They can only be examined briefly.

1. The enemy troubled and vexed the Christian.

One of the most cunning weapons was the 'fiery dart' that tempted the Christian to blasphemy. With little or no warning the Christian suddenly found anger, rebellion, oaths, hatred and even blasphemous thoughts rising up within his heart, directed to God:

They come like lightning, flashing into the Christian's thoughts before he hath time to deliberate with himself what he is doing. (II.100)

Again:

Satan ... force(s) it in a manner upon the Christian, and violently press(es) for its entertainment (ie acceptance). (II.98)

But such thoughts were inappropriate or incongruent, and did not naturally arise from a Christian in a state of grace. But so cunningly was the attack concealed:

that he, poor creature ... perceives not the juggler's art of conveying it unto him. (II.99)

For some Christians the consequences could be devastating, - that he, a son of God, should be guilty of such thoughts! Such a Christian:

suffers many sad terrors from the mere presence of such horrid thoughts in his bosom, (II.99) (and may conclude) ... that he is not a child of God ... or else, saith he, I should never have such vermin of hell creeping in my bosom. (I.86)

And ironically, in this vexatious attack the enemy made use of the Christian's integrity, because the Christian is '... jealous of his own heart', (I.86) and anxious to be sincere in his dealings with God!

Thus where the Holy Spirit sanctified, comforted, and brought peace to the troubled heart of the Christian, the enemy accused of sin and then troubled the saints for 'sins' which they were supposed to have committed.

2. The enemy aggravated and exaggerated.

In this attack the enemy exaggerated the Christian's culpability and falsified the operations of the Holy Spirit. In the first attack the enemy accused the Christian of things (ie. blasphemy), of which he was not guilty.

In this particular attack his actions presupposed that the Christian had sinned and knew it. The enemy, however, inflated this culpability '... that it may seem to be the act of the Holy Spirit'. (I.86)

Seeing a Christian:

tardy in duty, faulty in service (the enemy now rakes up) ... all the bloody aggravations he can think of ... and aggravating his sin (seeks) to unsaint him and persuade him he is but an hypocrite. (I.87)

The Christian's culpability was such as to exceed the mercy of God's nature (I.87-88)

The enemy played both on the Christian's sensitivity about sinning against God, and upon his naïvety in believing that any and every sense of sin and guilt came of necessity only from the Holy Spirit, on the grounds that one of the Spirit's functions was to convict of sin.

3. The enemy cavilled and confused.

In this attack the Christian's enemy substituted the whole for the single. The enemy pounced upon one sin and from that single failure led the Christian to believe that he was in fact a total failure in every aspect of his spiritual life.

And truly:

Satan hath such an art at this, that he is able to take our duties in pieces, and so disfigure them that they shall appear formal, though never so zealous; hypocritical, though enriched with much sincerity. (I.88)

Not surprisingly the Christian would lead a weary spiritual existence:

(so) that they know not whether (it be) best to pray or not, to hear or not; and when they have prayed and heard, whether it be to any purpose or not. Thus their souls hang in doubt, and their days in sorrow. (I.88)

The Christian might go about some duty to God with a somewhat unwilling spirit; Satan then declared that such an attitude immediately nullified everything: you were a total hypocrite!⁷⁶

Consequently, the Christian began to think of his 'duty' to God as a debt owed, and not in terms of a love-offering from one justified by faith. If regarded as a debt then the payment must be perfect. The Christian now realises the hopelessness of such a position because every 'duty' is tinged with sinfulness and selfishness. The terminus is despair!

76. The enemy's argument ran like this:

Major premise: One sin nullifies your entire Christian life.

Minor premise: You have sinned like that.

Conclusion : Your entire Christian life is nullified.

The major premise actually rests upon the presupposition of salvation by works and the law, summed up in James 2:10 "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at one point is guilty of breaking all of it." James' argument is perfectly valid if you are going to seek salvation by keeping the Moral Law perfectly. But no mortal is capable of that. But in confronting the Christian with this syllogism the enemy carefully camouflages this salvation-by-works/law presupposition underlying his major premise.

To help and encourage the Christian, Gurnall the pastor added:

God beholds these (the Christian's failings) as the weaknesses of thy sickly state here below, and pities thee, as thou wouldst do thy lame child ... learn to distinguish pride in a duty and a proud duty; hypocrisy in a person, and a hypocrite ... The best of saints have the stirrings of such corruptions in them and in their service. (I.89)

4. The enemy disheartened and dispirited.

The whole thrust of the Puritan's integrated theology led them to believe in the eternal security of the Christian: once saved, always saved. The enemy cannot rob the Christian of his salvation, but he can rob him of his joy in the Lord.

In many of his wiles the enemy sought to bring the Christian to a state of despair, for a despairing Christian was a joyless Christian and a joyless Christian obscured the shining of the grace of God.

Gurnall considered despair to be:

the sin that of all Satan chiefly aims at. (II.103-104) ... (There is) ... more malignity to be in this one sin of despair, than in any other, yea, all together. (II.120)

Why? Because despair was unbelief at its worst. It had:

a way peculiar to itself of dishonouring God above other sins. (II.120-121) ... (Despair) ... puts the soul beyond all relief. (II.104)

The following were some of the arguments Gurnall marshalled to demonstrate the methods the enemy uses in bringing the Christian to a state of despair.

Argument 1. You are not humble enough for your sins. (I.90)

The enemy reasoned like this:

There ought to be a proportion between sin and sorrow.
But there is no proportion between thy sins and thy sorrow.
Therefore thou art not humbled enough ... What a plausible argument in here at first blush. (I.90)⁷⁷

77. The enemy's syllogism runs as follows:

Major premise: There ought to be a proportion between sin and sorrow. (I.90) - The amount of sorrow and humility you feel and show should correspond exactly to the amount of sin of which you are guilty.

Minor premise: But there is no proportion between thy sins and thy sorrow. (I.90) - The amount of your sorrow and humility does not correspond exactly to the amount of sin of which you are guilty.

Conclusion : Therefore, thou art not humbled enough. (I.90) - In other words, God will not forgive you.

Thus, a Christian can be trapped by the logicality of the argument, not realising that a logical argument is not necessarily a true argument. Viewed from the Puritan position there was a correct principle here: sin does carry with it the demand of an exact penalty and payment. But (and this the enemy obscures in argument), the penalty for breaking the Moral Law was paid in full by Christ.

The presupposition, whispered into the Christian's ear, is that he himself must render this perfect Salvific-Humility. The enemy has trapped the Christian in a legalistic cul-de-sac. He tries desperately to 'sorrow enough', to be 'humble enough', to 'weep and mourn enough', only to fail miserably.

Gurnall's remedy was:

Firstly, not to confuse the quality of repentance with the quantity of feelings conjured up. Don't confuse:

that which is accessory, (with) that which is essential to the nature of duties and graces. (I.91)

Secondly, do not confuse godly sorrow with:

legal terrors ... as truly godly sorrow goes up, these terrors go down ... faith is the eye. This eye, beholding its sin piercing Christ, and Christ pardoning its sin, affects the heart. The heart affected sighs. These inward clouds melt, and run from the eye of faith in tears; and all this is done when there is no tempest of terror upon the spirit, but a sweet serenity of love and peace, (I.92)

To which he added:

Thou art a dead man if thou think to answer thy sin with proportionable sorrow; thou wilt soon be above thy depth, and quackle (suffocate or choke) thyself with thy own tears, but never get over the least sin thou committedst. (I.90)

Ultimately, true 'heart sorrow' was qualitative, that sincere and genuine sorrow of a child expressed to his father. That was the only 'law' governing the Christian.

Argument 2. Your requests are too great. (II.314-318)

Here the Christian was brought to compare himself with other Christians. This presupposed that the 'right' or 'boon' to enter God's presence was '... reserved for some few favourites' only. (II.314) Particularly

those who lived holy and pious lives! And you, Christian:

darest thou think so well of thyself that thou art one of them? (II.314)

Few Christians could withstand the 'logic' of such an argument, knowing full well that many Christians were far more spiritual than they.

This approach of the enemy, far from exalting God's standards, only obscured his mercy:

O, beware therefore thou dost not disfigure the sweet lovely face of God's mercy - which smiles alike upon every poor, penitent, praying soul - while thou fanciest God to have a cast of this his eye, and to look more favourably upon one than another, lest by this you betray the glorious name of God. (II.316)

God's true grace was available to every sinner (upon the basis of justice satisfied), and God's justification gave equal access to him to all Christians.

Argument 3. Your prayer will never be heard in heaven. (II.343-355)

This attack caused even further despondency. It was enough that Satan merely laid this 'possibility' before the Christian; his timidity and fears would do the rest. The 'fear' would very soon become a 'fact':

As a merchant that gives (up) his ship for castaway, when indeed it is safe and richly laden (only stays for a fair wind); he not knowing or believing this, puts himself to as much trouble and sorrow as if it were in truth as he feared. (II.343)

Fear, not faith, becomes that which dominated the Christian's mind and as a consequence:

he loseth the revenue of that present peace which otherwise would be paid in unto him from the expectation of its (the prayers) certain return with a joyful answer. (II.343)

The analogy of the merchant mourning over a non-existent event (the supposed loss of his ship), is very helpful; the Christian could fall into profound depression over myth propounded as fact (you are not as pious as David, therefore do not expect God to hear your prayers!). The myth took on a terrifying verisimilitude.

But there was hope:

Thy prayers pass such a refining in Christ's mediation, that their ill scent is taken away. (II.345-346)

Further, the Christian should learn to distinguish:

betwixt God's hearing and his answering the saint's prayer ...
(every prayer) ... makes an acceptable report in God's ear
as soon as it is shot; but God doth not always thus speedily
answer it. (II.347)

The enemy might also try another tack; sometimes the Christian left off praying:

with an aching heart, by reason of the sad impressions of an
angry God left upon his spirit. (II.348)

And this Satan exploited with, - is this how God treats you?

Should this happen, remind yourself that:

the cloud of anger which seems to sit on God's brow is
not in his heart ... It may assure thee that his ear is
open to thy cry when his face is hid from thine eye. (II.349)

Argument 4. You have no gifts for prayer. (II.306-307)

Here the enemy sought to link, in the Christian's mind, the idea of spiritual superiority with the use of superior words and rhetoric in prayer, or contrariwise to suggest that hesitant and poor usage of words in prayer reflected spiritual inferiority.

The greater the gift of:

apt and moving expressions ... (the greater) ... the music
their words make, (II.306)

and more likely would their users find entrance and acceptance by God.

If convinced by this argument, the tongue-tied Christian could fall into despair.

Apart from the false analogy between aptness of words and acceptability to God, the enemy built his case on another camouflaged syllogism.

Major premise: Those with a 'flowing tongue' and with 'apt and moving' expressions, have a greater entry with God (and by implication are very spiritual).

Minor premise: But you do not have a 'flowing tongue' and neither can you pray with 'apt and moving' expressions.

Conclusion : You do not have such a great entry to God (and by implication you are not so spiritual).

Gurnall's theologically and pastorally sound answer was that all the absence of a 'flowing tongue' showed was:

thou has not so good a head, but (that) doth not the least hinder thy heart to be as gracious as theirs. And better of the two, that the defect should be found in thy head than in thy heart. (II.306)

5. The enemy puzzled and perplexed.

If the enemy could not succeed as he wished through vexing, accusing, cavilling, depressing or disheartening the Christian, then, Gurnall suggested, he would labour '... to puzzle him with nice and scrupulous questions'. (I.95)

The enemy knew that he could not 'kill' the Christian, so he would opt, inter alia, for crippling him, rendering him useless by confronting him with puzzles and perplexities which would confuse him, or checkmate him in his spiritual life.

1. Sometimes Satan will be asking the soul, how it knows its election.
(I.95)

Answer:

Election indeed is first in order of divine acting; yet faith first in our acting. We must believe before we can know we are elected, yes, by believing we know it ... When thou believest first and closest with Christ, then is the Spirit of God sent to anoint thee to the kingdom of heaven; ... Here thou dost not go up to heaven, and pry into God's secrets, but heaven comes down to thee, and reveals them. (I.96)

2. Again, he will ask the Christian what was the time of his conversion. (I.96)

Answer:

content thyself with this, that thou seest the streams of grace, though the time of thy conversion be like the head of Nylus (the Nile), not to be found ... you may know the sun is up, though you did not observe when it rose. (I.96)

3. Again, what will become of thee, saith Satan, if God should bring thee into such an affliction or trial, when thou must burn or turn, or when all thy outward estate shall be rent from thee, no meal in the barrel, no money in the purse? (I.96)

Answer:

Pacify thy heart with these ... plain conclusions. Every event is the product of God's providence; ... God hath put in caution he "will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" ... He that enables thee in one condition, will in another. (I.96-97)

4. Again, Satan ... perplexeth the tender conscience of doubting Christians, with obscure Scriptures, whose sense lies too deep for their weak and distempered judgements readily to find out. (I.97)

Answer:

Drawing from his own pastoral experience, Gurnall said quite explicitly that he had known Christians who, having tried desperately to unravel passages such as Heb. 6:6 and 10:26, and having failed, had come to the conclusion that:

they have sinned against the knowledge of the truth, and therefore no mercy remains for them. (I.97)

If only, Gurnall suggested, they had sought to understand the more difficult passages in the light of the easier ones:

they would have refreshed their understanding by looking off (away from) these places (difficult questions) ... they might have found that in other Scriptures plainly expressed, which would have enabled them, as through a glass, more safely to have viewed these. (I.97)

5. A further method of perplexing the Christian was by means of what Gurnall termed '... dark providences'. (I.97)

Gurnall was perhaps thinking here that in this area of God's mysterious providences, the enemy wanted the Christian to reason inductively (from the particular to the general), rather than deductively (from the general to the particular).

Thus the Christian looked at numerous examples of suffering and from such particulars he inferred that God had turned against him:

From these Satan disputes against (the general principle of) God's love to, and grace in, a soul. (I.97)

Gurnall employed the obvious example of Job. Satan robbed him of his goods, bereaved him of his children, turned his wife against him, and afflicted him through his friends. Satan then:

labours to make him question his spiritual estate and sonship (ie. tries to get Job to infer general truths from particular incidents). (I.97)

His aim was to get Job to look at the particular incidents that had befallen him and from them draw the general conclusion that God had deserted him: your conditions are full of pain and chaos and cruelty, that is what God is like!

Gurnall's answer was to reverse the process of thinking: to start with

the general, absolute truths about God in His being and revealed in his Scriptures, and then apply those facts to any 'dark providence':

Read the saddest providence with the comment of the Word,
and thou canst not make such a harsh interpretation ... it
is strange that a saint should be at a loss for his afflicted
state, when he hath a key to decipher God's character. Christian,
hath not God secretly instructed thee by his Spirit from the
Word, how to read the shorthand of providence? (I.98)

In supplying these answers, Gurnall more than once used a phrase that was both unusual and suggestive. He admonished:

Be sure Christian, thou keepest to the plains ... Now,
Christian, keep the plains and thou art safe. (I.95-96)

Take heed that Satan coop thee not up in some straits,
where thou canst neither well fight nor fly. (I.95)

The image was military. In military terms he was pointing out that to have any hope of victory a soldier needed to retain manoeuvrability. To be trapped in a 'strait' was to find oneself faced with the hopelessness of an ambushed soldier.

Gurnall's message was: keep spiritual balance by keeping priorities central in thinking and living. A Christian who kept the larger issues before him (ie. keeping to the plains), would not get trapped in the labyrinth of less important issues. He would always retain his perspective; he would see the really important issues, and when faced with lesser issues would be able to keep them in proportion. The less important would not edge out the more important. The Christian would not draw major conclusions from minor evidences; would not, for example, conclude that he was not a Christian simply because he could not give a day or date for his conversion.

(B) Satan's darts.

1. Introduction.

Gurnall's description and teaching on the 'fiery darts' of the enemy falls within his Second General Part of this particular section. Having dealt with the Exhortation to take up the shield of faith, he now gives the reason why Christians should do this.

Paul, he pointed out, did not say 'may be' you would be able to quench the 'fiery darts', but rather 'Ye shall be able'. Furthermore, the

the Christian would not only quench ordinary temptations:

but the worst arrows the Devil hath in his quiver - Fiery Darts; and not some few of them, but "all the fiery darts of the wicked". (II.71-72)

Gurnall's encouragement rested once again on arguments from Scripture.

2. The character of the 'fiery darts'.

(i) The darts were insubstantial.

Their nature, like that of the Christian's warfare was also spiritual or pertained to the soul of man. While he saw something of the hand of the enemy in the Civil War, he did not consider the 'fiery attacks' upon the Christian in the present context of his argument as essentially material, even though some of the attendant circumstances might be physical or material. Whatever physical effects, such as chaos, plundering, loss of life and property, resulted from the Civil War, nevertheless the causes were decidedly spiritual; they were 'insubstantial' or non-material. The actual arena of conflict lay within the heart, mind and will of men and women.

This emerges with great clarity in an earlier passage in Vol.I, p.58, where Gurnall dealt with the necessity of being covered with the entire armour:

He (ie. the Christian), must be armed in every part cap-à-pie, soul and body. (I.58)

But why did he here include the 'body' if the fight took place in the insubstantial realm of the spiritual? Because the enemy might fire an arrow through the eye, ear or senses in order to reach the soul of the Christian. Thus if the entire man were clothed in armour but the eye left unguarded, then:

Satan can soon shoot his fireballs of lust in at that loophole, which shall set the whole house on flame.
Eve looked but on the tree, and a poisonous dart struck her to the heart. (I.58)

The substantial thus became the medium of the insubstantial. Like Bunyan, Gurnall also used the metaphor of the soul as an inner city. Satan, had '... several squadrons' ((I.58) of soldiers armed with these deadly arrows. If then the Christian was unwise enough to arm

and protect himself only in certain places then he might know for certain that Satan would make a feint against the armoured section in order to draw attention away from his real objective, so:

he may be entering thy city at another gate (ie. the unguarded one) of spiritual wickedness. (I.58)

The affections (emotions), were particularly vulnerable. The affections lay almost entirely in the realm of the spiritual or inward man. Perhaps borrowing from Plato, Gurnall likened our emotions to a horse that needed a firm rider to control it. Our emotions needed to be covered by God's armour.

The arrow was launched from the invisible realm; it passed through the visible realm of the senses to embed itself finally in the invisible realm of the Christian's soul.

(ii) The darts were swift.

Lightning is called God's arrow because it flies swiftly (II.74); likewise, the enemy's attacks were swift and deadly; temptations struck as fast as lightning.

Even more frightening was Satan's rate of fire: he speeded one temptation after another at the Christian:

as quick as the nimblest archer. No sooner than one arrow is delivered, but he hath another on the string. (II.74)

(iii) The darts were secret, or 'fly secretly'. (II.74)

The enemy's attacks, often '... comes afar off'. (II.74)

By this Gurnall did not mean physical distance so much as camouflage:

A man may be wounded with a dart and not see who shot it. (II.74)

The victim might not always realise immediately where the 'fiery dart' had come from; indeed, in some cases he might never realise its origin:

Sometimes he useth a wife's tongue to do his errand; another (time) ... he gets behind the back of a husband, friend, servant. (II.74)

The enemy might even borrow:

God's bow to shoot his arrows from, and the poor Christian is abused, thinking it is God (that) chides and is angry, when it is the Devil that tempts him to think so, and only counterfeits God's voice. (II.74)

So 'secret' are they that they often:

make little or no noise as they go ... insensibly doth temptation make its approach; - the thief is in before we think of any need to shut the doors. (II.75)

(iv) The darts had a power to wound grievously. (II.75)

Satan's temptations were:

headed with desperate malice, and drawn by a strength no less than angelical; and this against so poor a weak creature as man. (II.75)

These arrows had manifold characteristics, not least of which was the fact that Satan's formidable, still-existing angelic powers propelled them. Not surprisingly:

There was never any besides Christ that Satan did not foil more or less. (II.75)

(v) The darts were also 'fiery'.

Gurnall did not restrict the word 'fiery' to specific temptations only, such as:

despair, blasphemy, and those that fill the heart with terror and horror. (II.75)

He substantiated this by reference to the shield of faith which was for '... all kinds of temptations'. (II.75)

There was no temptation, however innocuous looking, that might not turn out to be a 'fiery' one.

What then is the significance of the word 'fiery'?

Answer 1

They may be said to be 'fiery', in regard to that fiery wrath with which Satan shoots them. (II.75)

Answer 2

They may be said to be 'fiery', in regard to the end they lead to, if not quenched, and that is hell-fire. There is a spark of hell in every temptation; and all sparks fly to their element. (II.76)

Answer 3

And chiefly ... in regard to that malignant quality they have on the spirits of men - and that is to enkindle a fire in the heart and consciences of poor creatures. (II.76)

3. The enemy's darts in the form of temptation to pleasure.

To see how Gurnall applied the shooting of these 'fiery darts' into the Christian we now concentrate on three temptations which concern enticement to pleasure.

Before entering into details, Gurnall once again established a doctrinal foundation. While enticing temptations from Satan were inherently fiery they also found plenty of combustible material in us to react to:

The fowler lays the shrap (a place baited with chaff to entice birds), but the bird's own desire betrays it into the net. The heart of man is marvellous prone to take fire from these darts. (II.76)

The 'flesh' had not yet been destroyed or eradicated; hence Christians could and did still respond to the alluring enticements of 'fleshly' pleasure.

Gurnall based what he had to say on the well-known passage of 1 John 2:15-16, namely the loves and lusts of the world: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. In launching these arrows what did the enemy wish to accomplish?

First dart of pleasing temptations: 'The lust of the flesh.' (II.78)

The temptation was 'fiery' like the arrows; and the sinful yielding of the flesh to temptation was likewise portrayed in fiery terms. The temptations carried fire in their mouths and they inflamed the carnal heart with:

unruly passions and beastly affections ... the fire burns in his wretched heart (and) burns in his lust. (He is) ... a soul in flames. (II.78-79)

This kind of temptation was the strongest and most powerful, because it promised '... delight to the flesh'. (II.78-79) The nature of the temptation was also consistent with the nature of the great tempter himself. The enemy would do all in his power to entice the Christian into some sensual, fleshly sin in order to defile him and spoil God's honour. In such a fall the Christian would momentarily conform to the enemy's own fallen, unholy and impure image.

Second dart of pleasing temptations: 'The lust of the eyes.' (II.80)

By 'the lust of the eyes':

the apostle means those temptations which are drawn from the world's pelf and treasure. (II.80)⁷⁸

Here, an inordinate value had been placed on the world's treasures, which happened when the world's treasures were valued above heaven's. Christians and non-Christians were tempted through the eyegate, by:

The lust of the eyes ... because it is the eye that commits adultery with these things ... the covetous eye looks on another's wealth to lust after it. (II.80)

Satan's arrow was aimed at tempting the Christian to believe that what he saw was the ultimate focus of true wealth, more real than that he did not see: the wealth of the world was superior to the treasure laid up in heaven. Ahab, Judas and Demas were three examples of those who were fatally wounded by this dart, which presented to them '... this golden apple'. (II.80)

Third dart of pleasing temptations: 'The pride of life.' (II.81)

The first dart involved sensual delight; the second the deceptive delight of worldly wealth; the third dart was a delight in:

the honours of the world ... There is an itch of pride in man's heart after the gaudy honours of the world. (II.81-82)

Whether one lived in a large city like London, or a rural village such as Lavenham, did not alter man's basic depravity. The environment might change; human nature did not:

when the temptation without and the lust within meet, then it works to purpose. (II.82)

Two examples were Balaam who '... loved the way that led to court', and the Jews, who:

when convinced of Christ's person and doctrine, yet were such slaves to their honour and credit, that they part(ed) with Christ rather than hazard that. (II.82)

78. The word 'pelf' is an archaic English word meaning money or riches, not merely in a descriptive sense, but rather in the moral sense of something bad or degrading. It stems, apparently, from the Old French word 'pelfre', meaning booty or spoils.

Chapter III

The role of faith.

Ephesians 6:16. "In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the Evil one."

Introduction

In order to grasp the fuller context of Gurnall's teaching on the role of faith we need to go back to the commencement of what he calls 'Part Second' (Vol. I, p.44 following), where he gives:

Directions for managing this war successfully, with some motives sprinkled among them. (I.44)

Success will only be achieved if the believer 'managed' the real war with the weapons God had provided; to use his own weapons was presumptuous and could only end in disaster.

To support his claim, Gurnall recorded how during the siege of Münster (1533-1535), some foolish men thought they could chase away the besieging army:

with no other cannon than a few words charged with the name of the Lord of Hosts, which (they) blasphemously made bold to use, saying "In the name of the Lord of Hosts depart." (I.44)

Likewise, many foolish Christians tried to fight battles against the enemy in the same way. They defied the Devil without any of God's real armour to defend themselves.

Gurnall's analogy was not between a physical battle and the on-going spiritual battle of the Christian, but between those who faced the enemy with proper weapons, and those who did not.

In examining the section of 'The Shield of Faith' and following Gurnall's outline, we shall extract the broad principles interwoven in the section.

If faith were merely '... an act of understanding' (II.3), then reprobates and devils could exercise it. Indeed:

Judas knew the Scriptures, and without doubt did assent to the truth of them ... but he never had so much as one dram of justifying faith in his soul. (II.3)

Furthermore, any person, who:

only notionally knows the promise, and speculatively assents to the truth it (II.3),

did not know true faith but was like one who saw good food and acknowledged its goodness, but never ate of it. Genuine faith did not consist of merely assenting to '... any axiom or proposition in the word'. (II.4)

Justifying faith of necessity had a 'dogmatical' content: there must be 'understanding' and 'theological propositions'.

But the reverse was not necessarily true: we must not infer from the fact that because a man had a clear theological grasp of what justifying faith was that he had embraced it, savingly believed it, actually eaten of this wholesome meal. Genuine faith could be tested by its effectiveness in battle. Gurnall exhorted his hearers never to forget that this faith enabled the Christian to quench the 'fiery darts' of the enemy; merely to have a theological or intellectual understanding of faith, would not of itself quench them. More was needed, which was not apart from, but in addition to this theological and intellectual understanding.

Dealing with the negative, he further asserted that:

Justifying faith was not (the same as) assurance. (II.3)

God's act of justification and personal assurance of justification were two different things: 'position' and 'peace' were not to be confused. Without this fundamental presupposition, the 'fiery darts' would strike into our 'peace' and injure it, and lead to believing that our justified 'position' before God had been lost as well.

(A) Characteristic presuppositions of faith.

Faith only functioned as it did because of certain antecedent characteristics. For example, faith was the instrument of our justification. Furthermore there was about faith a certain unique 'fitness', (II.15) in its being something that enabled us to receive the grace of God and thus ward off the enemy's attack on that grace. Grace was '... the only receiving grace'. (II.15)

The Christian employed faith as a shield, and not other virtues such as

joy and hope which had different purposes and functions. Victory depended on using the right weapons for the right purpose on the right occasion: misuse would bring defeat. Spiritual weapons were designed for specific purposes and ought to be used with the same vigour as were military weapons.

I. Faith defined.

Weapons-training was part of a soldier's military education. For maximum effectiveness the soldier should first of all know and understand his weapon. It was too late to seek help or advice in the heat of battle. To use the shield of faith to its maximum efficiency the Christian should know both what faith was and how it functioned.

We now turn to Gurnall's definition and description of the nature of faith.

First, what faith was not.

It was not 'temporary faith' (Matt. 13:20-21). That kind of faith:
 makes a goodly blaze of perfection ... but soon disappears.
 (II.2)

Neither was it 'miraculous faith' (Matt. 7:21-23), for together with the other disciples Judas:

cast devils out of others, (yet was) himself possessed of the devil of covetousness, hypocrisy, and treason. (II.2)

Nor was it just 'historical faith'. By this he did not deny that genuine faith had historical roots; rather he meant that genuine faith was not merely:

a naked (intellectual) assent to the truths of the gospel, (II.2), which we might call merely a head or theoretical knowledge.

Neither was it 'assurance'. (II.3) Assurance, Gurnall pointed out was:
 rather the fruit of faith, than faith itself. (II.3)

What was crucial to the Christian in battle, was that genuine faith existed independently of any objective assurance of faith. Before a flower formed and opened, and after it had wilted and dropped off, the plant's root existed and continued to exist. It would be foolish

to imagine that the whole plant consisted of the visible flower. If that were the case, when the flower ceased to exist, so would the plant.

This analogy held true in the realm of genuine faith. Thus:

so doth true justifying faith live before assurance comes, and after it disappears. (II.3)

Justifying faith was the objective root, assurance was the subjective flower.

Gurnall the pastor, concluded that a Christian, while under fearful attack from the enemy, could be walking in a great deal of darkness subjectively, yet could continue to walk by faith on the grounds of what God in Christ had done for him in the objective act of justification by faith. So, genuine faith should never be confused with inward experience, or comfort of '... some sensible demonstration of his love'. (II.8)

Second, what faith was.

(A) Justifying faith.

There is only one kind of faith (that) remains, which is it the apostle means in this place, and that is justifying faith. (II.2)

Justifying faith:

is that act of the soul whereby it rests on Christ crucified for pardon and life and that upon the warrant of the promise. (II.4)

1. The subject involved.

faith is seated, not (in) any single faculty, but the soul. (II.4)

2. The object involved - Christ crucified.

In the actual moment of what one might call the covenant transaction, whereby the sinner was declared righteous by God, the sinner's faith was directed very specifically to Christ crucified. On the other hand, viewed from that moment of justification until the entrance into God's presence, the Christian's faith was directed to the totality of the Scriptures. Gurnall's use of the phrase 'justifying faith', referred

therefore to both a single act, as well as to a continuing functioning of faith. The Scriptures instructed the sinner to direct his faith to Christ and to terminate it upon Christ, to close with Christ and become united with him. (II.5)

But more, faith's eye should not be directed only to Christ in terms of:

his personal excellencies - so (that) he is the object rather of our love than faith - but as bleeding, and that to death, under the hand of divine justice for to make an atonement by God's own appointment for the sins of the world. (II.5)

The primary office of faith was to unite the sinner with a Saviour. The function of faith or the 'office' of faith was not primarily to attract, but to save, much as the basic relationship between a sick person and a medical doctor was not one of goodwill, a pleasant relationship or a mutual attraction, but healing:

No church without his blood ... E latere Christi morientis exstitit ecclesia - the church is taken out of the dying Jesus's side ... Christ did not redeem and save poor souls by sitting in majesty on his heavenly throne, but by hanging on the shameful cross, under the tormenting hand of man's fury and God's just wrath. (II.5)

3. The act and ground of justifying faith had two aspects.

- (i) The single act.
- (ii) The continuing functioning of justifying faith.

(i) The single act.

A sinner closed with and was united to Christ by faith and declared by God to be perfectly righteous in a single act. He was 'justified'. But this act of 'justifying faith' had certain antecedents (II.6), which included the following.

(a) Knowledge. This knowledge was the knowledge of God as to his nature, attributes, holiness, revelation in history, and a knowledge of Christ's office and work in the atonement.

(b) Assent. This assent was '... Assent to the truth of the word of God', (II.6) and ultimately assent to the authority of God himself;

If this foundation-stone be not laid, faith's building cannot go on. Who will trust him that he dares not think speaks true? (II.6)

(c) Conviction and confession.

Gurnall's description was:

A sense of our own vileness and emptiness. By the one he means us to see our demerit ... by the other, our own impotency. (II.6)

(d) The warranty or ground of (a), (b) and (c).

Gurnall strongly emphasised the Scriptures as the 'warranty' or 'promise'. This was the only ground upon which the sinner could freely put his trust in Christ and know he would be accepted by God. It was equally the only ground upon which a Christian could continue to live and act to God's glory. Because God himself had extended the 'warranty', both the sinner and the Christian had an absolute guarantee that God would remain faithful to what he had promised:

But the great God is so absolute a Sovereign, that none can make a law to bind him but (he) himself. (II.7)

For this reason the sinner could embrace Christ, cling to him, rest upon him, terminate his faith upon him, close with him, be united to him, pitch upon him, receive him, take hold of him and lay his whole weight and expectation of mercy upon him. (II.3-6)

One particularly rich phrase in 'believing' on Christ:

implies a union of the soul to Christ and fiduciary recumbency on Christ. (II.6)

Gurnall did not use the phrase in the modern legal/banking sense. He meant, quite simply, a posture of trustful repose on the promises of God and the atoning work of Christ.

(ii) The continuous functioning of justifying faith.

Perhaps the most important sentence in the opening pages of his section on the shield of faith was the following:

Faith was the principle of our new life. (II.37)

To this he added that the desire to love Christ and to satisfy real spiritual hunger:

can be truly desired of none but one that is a new creature. (II.37)

This 'principle' of our new life was not merely a faith which the Christian exercised in his daily Christian life after he had become a

Christian. That was true, but it went much deeper. Rather it was a principle which had existed before the Christian exercised it, just as a person only runs or walks because a life-principle is antecedently present. The life-principle and the activities form a single entity and function together.

How then did this great act of justification relate to the Christian as he began to live his new life in Christ? Gurnall answered that there was the profoundest of relationships between the single act of justification, and the ongoing, continuous functioning of this justifying faith, summed up in one word: continuity.

A sinner could only be justified once. Nevertheless certain irrevocable spiritual principles began to function in that single action of God, which functioned thereafter with increasing intensity and extensity, to form '... the principle of our new life', (II.37) in Christ. To refer again to Gurnall's analogy, the root had been planted; it would now continue to grow and bear flowers.

(B) Two implied characteristics.

We may term these: All-inclusiveness and Multi-purposed.

(i) All-inclusiveness.

The word and concept 'justifying faith' included all the positive aspects previously mentioned: The subject, object and ground of justifying faith; the Christian's new position as pardoned and the recipient of Christ's righteousness by imputation; his 'fiduciary recumbency' and adoption into God's family; his union with Christ.

All this constituted the shield of faith. The correct use of this shield of faith:

doth the soul admirable service ... It is able to appease the tumult which such a temptation may raise in the soul ... yea, to keep the King of heaven's peace so sweetly in the Christian's bosom.(II.9)

(ii) Multi-purposed.

For each attack there was a specific defence, hence the multi-purpose usage of the shield. The shield said Gurnall:

is not for the defence of any particular part of the body ... but is intended for the defence of the whole body ... (that) ... the skillful soldier might turn it this way or that way, to latch blow or arrow from lighting on any part they were directed to. And this does excellently set forth the uni-versal use that faith is of to the Christian. It defends the whole man. Sometimes the temptation is levelled at the head ... Again, is it the conscience that the tempter assaults? ... Again, is it the will that temptation is laid to catch? ... (Use the whole shield, and) ... every part of the Christian by it is preserved. (II.8)

II. Faith was a grace.

Faith was not:

a grace inherent in us ... our own work. (II.14)

On the contrary, God had put forth his mighty power:

upon the soul in working faith. (II.28)

The powerful work of the Holy Spirit upon the sinner's soul had as its aim:

the production of faith. (II.29)

The sinner's soul was like a garrisoned castle:

resolved to stand out against both the treaties and batteries of an assailing enemy (God). (II.29)

God's act of grace was revealed in subduing the sinner:

to the obedience of faith. (II.29)

The Spirit operated in three areas: understanding, conscience and will. These:

are like three forts, one within the other, which must all be reduced before the town be taken. (II.29)

What is more, the Spirit subdued them in a specific order; first the understanding, then the conscience and finally, the will.

(1) Upon the understanding, the Spirit:

puts forth an act of illumination, (II.29-30)

The sinner was renewed in the spirit of his mind, and renewed in knowledge.

No sinner was able to illuminate himself or work up faith in himself.

The act of faith that the sinner expressed or directed towards God was

neither:

naked assent ... (or) ... blind assent without some knowledge.
(II.30)

Such illumination was part of the grace of God displayed to sinners.

(2) Having now:

sprung with a divine light into the understanding, (II.30) the Holy Spirit next addressed the conscience, and:

the act which (he) passeth upon that is an act of conviction.
(II.30)

He did this by utilizing the newly present knowledge. The conscience felt the full weight of the light of this new knowledge upon it, a knowledge that was not merely intellectual truth in abstract form, but warmed and pressed down convincingly upon the conscience, which was '... God's officer in his bosom'. (II.30)

(3) In the faculty of the will:

the Spirit puts forth an act of renovation, whereby he doth sweetly, but powerfully, incline the will, which before was rebellious and refractory, to accept Christ, and make a free deliberate choice of him for his Lord and Saviour. (II.32)

The multi-faceted activities and characteristics of faith as a grace came out clearly in the many designations Gurnall used to describe such a grace:

Faith was eunuch grace, (II.5) a serving grace that knew only one master. Faith was a self-emptying grace, (II.15) it excluded boasting. Faith was a receiving grace, (II.15) it was empty-handed. Faith was a radical grace, (II.23) it radically excluded all self-produced merit as a basis for salvation. Faith was a choice grace, (II.54+65) it was unique in the galaxy of graces. Faith was a wise grace, (II.80) because it caused the Christian to prepare for the next world. Faith was a considering grace, (II.97) because of it the Christian did not act hastily. Faith was a right pilgrim-grace, (II.7) because '... it travels with us to heaven, and when it sees us safe got within our Father's doors - heaven I mean - it takes leave of us'. (II.7-8) Faith was a wrestling grace, (II.37) it wrestled with God in prayer. Faith was a ministering grace, (II.16) God used it for the good of his children.

Faith was a quietening grace and an appeasing grace, (II.9) the Christian employed it to quieten his heart when storms broke over him. Faith was a conquering grace, (II.11) by faith we overcame the world, the flesh and the Devil. Faith was the captain grace,(II.13) of all the graces which the Christian possessed such as love, joy, humility; faith stood at the head of the line.

These characteristics faith presupposed, helped the Christian in his spiritual conflict with the enemy by re-assuring the Christian of the indestructability of his faith. If faith were self-activated or self-produced then the enemy could swoop upon it and destroy it, but since it is a 'grace' and the Holy Spirit's production, it is indestructible. The enemy was not so much against the Christian's personal faith; he fought against the One who produced such faith in the Christian.

III. The pre-eminency of faith.

Gurnall elevated the shield of faith to the place of pre-eminence in the panoply of armour Paul instructs the Christian to use.

This fourth piece of armour stood:

methinks, among them (the other pieces of armour), as the heart in the midst of the body ... (II.1) ... (When the apostle speaks of faith, he) ... as it were, lift(s) up its head and annoints it above all its fellows. (II.1)

He then added that:

it is faith, not love which is the conquering grace on earth. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (II.11-12)

Love had a place in the battle, and did excellent service '... but it is under faith as its leader'. (II.12)

Faith was the richest and best medicine, the best piece of cloth in the shop, the best piece of meat in the market, the best lawyer to hire and the best physician to bring healing. (II.26)

Faith was allocated this place of pre-eminency because of:

the noble effect which is here ascribed to faith - "by which ye shall quench all the 'fiery darts' of the wicked", (II.10)

which Paul said of no other piece of armour. In contrast to the other

pieces:

when he (Paul) speaks of faith, he ascribes the whole victory to it. (II.11)

But, the Christian soldier also needed to be convinced of this pre-eminency of the shield before he engaged in combat, otherwise he would not use it as he should.

What then were the presuppositions which stressed the pre-eminency of faith in the Christian's warfare?

1. Faith was the principle of our new life in Christ.

If thou canst heartily pray for love to Christ, faith on him, or any other grace - feeling the want of them ... thou mayest conclude safely there is the principle of new life. (II.37)

For these were signs that justifying faith was functioning! The newly-born Christian hungered after these graces because of the principle of faith that was already implanted by the Holy Spirit. Other fruits like joy and love only followed because faith was already present.

2. Because of '... God's aim and enquiry'. (II.12)

Before he looked for anything else God looked for the grace of faith in the Christian. This was also true when he aimed at making the Christian holy, particularly in trials.

Afflictions:

are God's spade and mattock, by which he digs into his people's hearts to find out this gold of truth. (II.12-13)

3. Because it was so highly commended in Scripture.

Gurnall pointed to the Roman Centurion's faith in Luke 7:1-10, where our Lord did not commend him for genuine virtues such as his conscientious care for his servant or his humility, but rather for his faith, '... his faith outshines his humility in its greatest strength'. (II.13)

4. Because of its relation to justification.

The appropriation of the righteousness of Christ was the prerogative of faith alone:

As God did single Christ out from all others to be the only mediator betwixt him and man ... so he hath singled faith out from all other graces, to be the instrument or means for appropriating this righteousness of Christ to ourselves. (II.14)

Christ was the treasure and faith the hand that received it; Christ's righteousness was the robe, faith the hand that put it on.

But why:

is faith rather than any (other) grace employed in this act? (II.15)

Answering his own question Gurnall said:

Because there is no grace hath so proper a fitness for this office as faith. (II.15)

To explain this 'fitness' or 'office' he employed the analogy of the various members of the body. God appointed the eye to see, not the ear; the hand to take our food, not the foot. The member's nature (fitness) would determine how it was to be used. Each member had been created to function in only one way, used in any other capacity it would not work. Likewise, faith had a '... fitness for this work peculiar to itself', (II.15) because that was the way God had constituted faith.

Furthermore, if faith was so crucial in initiating our relationship with God (when we were justified), how equally important would it not be in spiritual conflict with the enemy? Faith was initiatory, but also ongoing. It did not act as the instrument of justification and then cease to act! Many Christians did not comprehend this ongoing feature of faith and ended up defeated constantly by the enemy. Gurnall made an integrated and interlocking unit of faith and the sinner's position (forensic and justificatory), and faith and the Christian's power (his sanctificatory experience). The 'office' of faith remained unchanged after justification. The corollary of this unchanged 'office' was that we could now utilize this same faith in the fight of faith. As those who had been justified by faith, we were now to use the same instrument that God had appointed to catch the fiery darts that would be shot at us.

5. Because of its relation to and influence upon its sister graces.

Faith '... preserves all the other graces', (II.10) as '... thy faith is, so are all the other graces'. (II.26)

Faith's 'sister graces' were:

humility, patience, temperance (II.26) ... liberality (generosity) (II.54) ... righteousness, holiness, love, mercy (II.55) ... (and) ... repentance. (II.16)

Faith actuated its sister graces by means of the Scriptures, and by '... fetching strength from Christ to ... reinforce them'. (II.17) Faith was a '... rich tradesman', (II.16) who had a stock of wool (the Scriptures) - also termed 'the promise' (II.16) and 'good news from heaven'. (II.16) Faith now gave out this wool to sub-contractors (ie. the sister grace of humility, love etc). They used the wool to manufacture various garments. But, if the tradesman (faith) were to stop supplying his sub-contractors with wool, they would have to cease their spinning and work.

Faith, for example, enabled the Christian to love Christ more:

It is faith that proclaims the promise; opens Christ's excellencies; pours out his name ... When faith hath drawn a character of Christ out of the Word, and presented him in his love and loveliness to the soul, now the creature is sweetly inveigled in his affections for him. (II.16-17)

When the Christian felt that his 'love' or 'humility' (ie. sister graces), were weakening, then the wrong thing to do was to make a direct, introspective examination of his condition. The trouble occurred because faith had been injured or harmed, '... When faith falls, then every grace is put to the run and rout'. (II.18)

6. Because of its ability to quench Satan's 'fiery darts'.

Only the shield of faith protected the Christian, not a 'shield of love' or of 'humility':

faith, and only faith, can quench the 'fiery darts' of Satan's affrighting temptations. (II.91)

When, for example, the Christian was in danger of being overwhelmed by the power of the enemy and God seemed remote, only faith could come to the Christian's rescue:

Faith only can see God in his greatness; and therefore none but faith can see the promises in their greatness ... where there is faith to chase the promise, there the promise will afford comfort and peace abundantly ... Now none but faith can learn (teach) us this skill of drawing out the sweetness and virtue of the promise. (II.113-114)

7. Because of its pre-eminency from the enemy's point of view.

Satan aimed:

to fight faith above all, as that which keeps him from coming to the rest (the other graces). (II.18)

A Christian who was '... ever so humble, patient, devout', (II.18) but who did not employ the shield of faith would very soon discover that:

Satan will easily pick some hole or other in these graces, and break in upon him when he stands in his best array ... (but) ... this is the grace which makes him face about and take him to his heels. (II.18)

If the enemy could bring down faith, then all the other graces would follow. Where the Christian's faith was steadfast, the other graces would also remain steadfast.

IV. Faith and naked reason

It is important to grasp that Gurnall was not anti-intellectual, as is often the case with romantics and mystics. He recognised reason as a God-given and ordained faculty to help and guide us:

Wherefore else did God set up such a light if not to guide us? (II.94)

1. The Christian's reason, though enlightened was weak.

The enemy would dispute this or that truth, such as the Deity of Christ, because he knew full well that the Christian's '... reason and understanding cannot comprehend it'. (II.8)

He therefore warned of the frailty of human understanding:

the Christian's weak understanding ... (and of) ... my own purblind (partially blind, dim-sighted) reason. (II.9)

At the same time reason could become a crutch upon which weak faith might lean too much. (II.60)

2. The Christian's reason should be subordinate to faith.

Reason must:

Keep its own place, and that is to follow faith, not be the ground of it ... Our faith must not depend on our reason, but reason on our faith. (II.94)

This was not to denigrate reason, but to confine it to its proper 'office'. The intellect is a light, but a lesser light, hence:

The more perfect the light is to rule the less. Now the light of the word - which faith follows - is more clear and sure than reason is or can be. (II.94)

The hierarchy was quite clear: the Scriptures, faith, then reason.

3. This subordination of reason was not to an inward, subjective faith.

Gurnall did not view faith as a faculty such as the mind, emotions or will. Therefore the subordination of which he spoke was not that of one faculty to another. In other words he did not think primarily of faith as something consisting of subjective religious feelings or experiences, to which reason was then made subordinate. That would simply be substituting one imperfect faculty for another, and the Christian's religious feelings would become the supreme arbitrator of all his actions.

To Gurnall and his fellow Puritans faith related primarily to the body of truth as revealed in the Scriptures, and only then to human inner, subjective experience in the things of God. The first had to regulate and authenticate the second. Thus, when a Christian subordinated his reason to faith, he was in fact subordinating his reason to the ultimate reason:

But thou layest the stress of thy faith on the Word, not on thy reason. (II.94)

4. The Christian's reason and the 'fiery darts' of the enemy.

What was the role of faith and reason in the Christian's warfare?

As Gurnall put it:

Will not reason serve the turn to stop the devil's mouth in this point (ie. quench the darts)? (II.92)

For an answer he turned back to the philosophical problem of proving the existence of God:

Cannot the eye of reason spy a deity except it look through the spectacles of faith? (II.92)

He conceded:

I grant that this is a piece of natural divinity, and reason is able to demonstrate the being of God. (II.92)

But, he added:

That light which reason affords is dusky and confused, serving for little more than in general to show there is a God ... (but) ... will never tell who or what God is ... "to know God to be God" (ie. be personally acquainted with God) ... reason itself can never do. (II.93)

In other words, at a certain point reason came to a halt. Gurnall warned that it was:

dangerous to enter the list and dispute ... by thy naked reason with Satan, who hath a nimbler head. (II.93)

We can never match him syllogism by syllogism.

The Christian should therefore respond by faith and interpose '... the word between him and Satan's blows'. (II.94)

V. The Christian's faith could be 'weak' or 'strong'.

The last presupposition of which we need to take note was the stress Gurnall placed upon the distinction between weak and strong faith. Whichever the Christian possessed would heavily influence his success in spiritual warfare.

This weakness or strength was directly related to the Christian's grasp of what the shield of faith really was and how he could or should employ it. 'Unbelief' and a weak faith were closely linked.

Of the many examples Gurnall gave of weak faith one will have to suffice. A Christian who was suspicious of God and full of doubts about God's love for him, was a Christian with a weak faith. (II.57) His weakness stemmed from neglect of the study of the Scriptures and consequent ignorance of God's promises:

When thy stomach fails to (appropriate) the word, thy faith must needs begin to fail on (resting on) the word. (II.56)

If only:

Christians who are so much in complaints of their faith, would but turn their complaints into inquiries why it is so weak and declining. Is it not because faith has missed its wonted meals from the word? (II.57)

Weak faith was '... poor spirited ... foiled ... taken prisoner ... run(s) his head into every hole ... (was) ... oppressed ..., (II.59)

(full of) ... unbelieving fears ... doubts ... goes sighing ... mourning with a heavy heart ... dull melancholy ..., (II.60) ... lame ... groping for some footing for reason to stand on ... (full of) ... many questions ... fears, (II.61) ... embittered ... murmuring and lays down sad conclusions against itself ..., (II.62) ... (had) little strength to resist temptations ..., (II.63) ... (full of) slavish fear ..., (II.64) ... servile ... feeble ..., (II.65) ... (disowned) the grace of God in him ..., (II.66) ... (is) distempered ... questions whether God loves him or no ... doubts whther Christ be his'. (II.67)

Strong faith, by contrast, relied '... on God, upon his naked word in the promise ..., (II.60) ... (was) composed and contented (in his heart about) the changes which providence brings upon the Christian's state ..., (II.61) ... (was) more able to wait long for answers to (his) desires and prayers ..., (II.62) ... (could) ... more easily repel motions, and resist temptations to sin ..., (II.63) (powerful desires) to abandon sin, perform duty and exerts acts of disobedience ..., (II.64) ... (was able) to sweeten the thoughts of death'. (II.65)

If faith was a radical grace, then:

unbelief (is) a radical sin, a sinning sin ... a ring-leading sin, a sin-making sin ... (it also) damps the motions of grace. (II.23)

(B) How faith functioned against the enemy.

The shield of faith was not an ornament; its basic purposes were protection and defense, although it had offensive characteristics as well. That the enemy would attack was an absolute certainty. In this section we shall describe Gurnall's teaching on how to wield the shield of faith in action, and how as the Christian did so, he would be able to counter the variety of the enemy's attacks.

I. The shield should be used actively.

In using the word 'actively' one is conscious of the paradox of the shield as an essentially defensive piece of armour, being used by the Christian actively. Nevertheless, Gurnall insisted upon the active and vigorous use of the shield.

This principle was in keeping with the concept of the unity of faith, as well as its continuity. When he turned to God through Christ, the sinner did the believing, not God. And once he had moved from death to life, the new Christian should continue to exercise faith. The essence of 'saving faith' was activity, a positive embracing of Christ. Now that he had become a Christian, that principle remained unchanged. Justifying faith must be enlarged and built up as the Christian grew spiritually. The shield must be toughened and strengthened. Faith was a grace that acts!

Gurnall's exhortations to exercise one's faith were numerous. Faith was a plant which could and should grow. (II.4) An increased and stronger faith '... is chiefly to be laboured for'. (II.11)

Again, faith:

is not lazy; it inclines not the soul to sleep, but (to) work; it sends the creature not to bed, there to snore away his time in ease and sloth, but into the field. (II.33)

How was faith to be preserved?

Exercise thy faith, if thou meanest to preserve it ... We live by faith and faith lives by exercise ... (do not let your faith be) ... long out of work. If you do not use it when you ought, it may fail you when you desire most to act it. (II.57-58)

He also referred to faith as improving, expecting, endeavouring, (II.90) advancing, (II.58) building on the word, (II.102) wrestling, (II.37) working with Scripture, (II.109), running, pleading, (II.109) and observing, (II.115) - all words indicating activity.

Faith also works love, (II.33), sharpens the soul's love for God, (II.34), excites to prayer, (II.37) fires the affections, (II.37) applies the promises, (II.20), desires Christ, (II.68) and enjoys Christ. (II.71)

II. How justifying faith ought to be employed.

The Roman soldier used his shield to defend his entire body:

And this indeed doth excellently well set forth the universal use that faith is of to the Christian. (II.8)

The following are some of the more important methods in which faith should be used. In speaking about faith and its active employment, Gurnall often personified faith: faith was a 'pilgrim', a 'teacher',

a 'messenger', a 'lawyer', as well as being a 'shield' or an 'anchor'.

1. Faith was a shield.

This metaphor summed up the ultimate purpose of the functioning of faith. The primary purpose of this shield was to defend the Christian. To this end faith interposed the Scriptures:

between the Christian and this arrow ... (II.9), (and in so doing) ... defends the Christian in the exercise of all his graces. (II.18)

Thus his soul would be covered when the enemy's darts descended on him. (II.86) The utilization by faith of the Scriptures meant that faith '... receives the shock', (II.9) as every good shield ought to. Faith '... chokes the bullet'. (II.83) Thus the Christian was able to stand:

his ground and do his duty notwithstanding all the shots that are made against him. (II.18)

In this way the enemy's 'fiery arrows' were quenched, (II.76-123) and the Christian remained undaunted and kept in perfect peace.

But the Christian was not only enabled to stand, but ended up with a positive victory. Faith had '... brought the Christian honourably off'. (II.9)

2. Faith was a spiritual eye.

Faith, if employed in conjunction with the Scriptures, had the capacity to 'see' spiritual truths and 'apprehend' a spiritual dimension, which could not be penetrated with what Gurnall called 'unregenerate' eyes. Faith '... hath a piercing eye ... It looks behind the curtain of sense'. (II.79)

Faith is also a:

good spy, that makes discovery of the excellencies in Christ ... (II.22) ... (and) ... spies mercy in the greatest affliction. (II.97)

Faith observed God's mercy, (II.115) apprehended a good God, (II.64) gave the soul a view of the great God, (II.105) looked where our treasure was laid up, (II.37) gave a sight of God's merciful heart, (II.21) saw the spiritual glories in God's promises, (II.60) discerned the enemy's

fireballs, and should be awake to see Christ as he passed by in his loveliness. (II.17)

But the eye of faith also had a vital role to play in direct spiritual combat.

Here we shall briefly recall four main areas related to the place and role of faith as an 'eye'.

(i) The lust of the flesh.

These temptations:

promise pleasure and delight to the flesh ... those which present sensual pleasure. (II.78)

The eye of faith helped to quench these fiery darts because:

(It) undeceives and takes off the mist from the Christian's eyes to see sin in its naked being ... (II.79) ... (it) sees the filth, the hell, that is in every sin. (II.38)

Furthermore, the eye of faith enabled the Christian to:

see ... (that) the nature of sin (was void of all true pleasure ... (and) ... how transient its false pleasures are ... The pleasure of sin is extrinsic to its nature, and therefore will corrupt. (II.79)

Positively, the eye of faith showed the Christian:

where choicer enjoyments are to be had at a cheaper rate ... all the rich dainties of the gospel ... (II.80) ... Christ's excellencies ... When faith has drawn a character of Christ out of the word, and presented him in his love and loveliness to the soul. (II.16-17)

Indeed:

Since thou hast known more of Christ, and had a view of his spiritual glories, (thou) canst now pass by their door (ie. lusts) and not look in; yea, when they knock at thy door in temptation, thou canst shut it upon them, and disdain the motion. (II.64)

(ii) The lust of the eyes.

These temptations:

are drawn from the world's pelf and treasure. (It is) called so, ... because it is the eye that commits adultery with these things. (II.80)

Here the eye of faith enabled the Christian to see a world of true and lasting values:

It discovers a world beyond the moon - and there lies faith's merchandise - leaving the colliers of this world to load themselves with clay and coals, while it (ie. faith), trades for grace and glory. Faith fetches its riches from on far. (II.81)

Faith taught the soul to say:

I am well provided for already Satan; I need not thy pension.
(II.81)

(iii) The pride of life.

There was:

this itch of man's proud flesh the devil labours to scratch and irritate by suitable proffers. (II.81-82)

Pride, worldly honour, status, prestige, standing, positions were all part and parcel of this temptation.

Once again the eye of faith came to the Christian's aid.

Faith:

shows the danger of such a bargain, should the Christian gain the glory of the world for one sin, (II.83)

and enabled the Christian to see:

the exploits of former saints, who have renounced the world's honour and applause ... Thus, faith peruses the roll of Scripture - saints, ... (so that) ... the Christian may be excited to the same gallantry of spirit. (II.83)

(iv) The enemy's afflictions.

The word 'affliction' was used to convey various attacks upon the Christian by the enemy.

The role of the 'eye of faith' was pivotal in protecting the Christian in such attacks.

(a) When the Christian lost sight of the work of grace in him.

So powerful could the enemy's attack be, that the Christian could very well ask himself:

I know not whether I love God or no in sincerity; I dare not say I have any truly godly sorrow for sin: indeed I have thought formerly these graces had a being in me, but now I am at a loss what to think, yea, sometimes I am ready to fear the worst. (II.20-21)

In this condition the Christian employed the eye of faith to make

a:

discovery of the rich mercy in Christ to poor sinners, and calls the soul to look up to it, when it hath lost sight of his own grace ... so long as we have not lost the sight of God's merciful heart our head will be kept above water, though we want (lack) the evidence of our own grace. (II.21)

Faith's eye involved an inner spiritual illumination of God's love, but equally it was a theological and doctrinal eye upon which such assurance rested. This eye spied specific truths, which it then applied practically to the heart of the Christian in distress.

Take David:

This holy man, had such a piercing eye of faith, as he could see the promise, when he was at (his) lowest ebb of misery ... as if the promised mercy had been actually fulfilled to him (already). (II.39)

(b) When the Christian was apprehensive about God's justice.

Gurnall associated this apprehensiveness with a Christian whose faith was weak. He was filled with slavish fear, (II.64) servility, and like a young child full of fear for the rod. (II.64)

He obeyed out of fear, not love.⁷⁹

But as his faith increased:

his servility ... wears off, and ... natural affections - will prevail more with him to please his father than any other argument whatever. (II.65)

What broke the chains of servility and fear? The eye of faith discovered that mercy sat on the brow of justice. (II.64) The eye of faith apprehended:

a good God, that stands ready with the sponge of his mercy dipped in Christ's mercy, to blot out his sins as fast as he scores them up by his humble sorrowful confession of them. (II.64)

79. One is reminded of the medieval distinction between attrition (repentance inspired by fear of punishment), and contrition (repentance inspired by love for God).

(c) When the Christian was suffering affliction.

Satan:

tempts thee to asperse (calumniate) God as if he were forgetful of thee. (II.97)

But, like Job, the eye of faith should spy mercy in the greatest affliction. (II.97) Gurnall coupled this 'spying' with what he called the good memory of faith. Faith is also:

a considering grace ... Faith hath a good memory, and can tell the Christian many stories of ancient mercies; when his present meal falls short, it can entertain the soul with a cold dish, and not complain that God keeps a bad house neither ... Christian, play over thy old lessons. (II.97)

Faith:

sets God before the soul - within sight ... faith eyes God eyeing the soul, and so preserves it. (II.96)

(d) While the Christian was travelling as a pilgrim.

The two great images Puritan writers and preachers employed to describe the Christian on his way to heaven were the pilgrim and the soldier. The 'travelled' together, as Christian and Hopeful 'travelled' together in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

Gurnall employed both these images, although both referred to the same person: The Christian is both soldier and pilgrim. Faith, he said '... is a right pilgrim grace; it travels with us to heaven'. (II.7)

If used correctly, then the eye of faith would constantly remind us of our pilgrim-status, hence our true nature and calling. A Christian with weak faith would inevitably have weak or limited spiritual vision. His eye of faith was underdeveloped, weakening his defence against the world, the flesh and the Devil.

In contrast a mature pilgrim would have a more mature view of the great end of life: he had long-distance sight.

To this Gurnall added that:

the promise (Scriptures) is this pilgrim's staff with which it (the Christian) sets forth. (II.8)

But the eye of faith alone discovered the promises in the Scriptures and could utilize them as a staff. To try and make of comfort,

experience and sensible demonstrations of God's love, (II.8) ie. inner, subjective feelings a pilgrim's staff would be fatal for the emotional aspects of the journey changed all the time. The true eye of faith saw only one staff, the Scriptures as the basis (out of which feelings might or might not flow), and leaning upon that promise '... sees us safe got within our Father's doors - heaven I mean'. (II.7)

3. Faith was an obedient servant

Faith, if correctly employed, enabled the Christian to increase his obedience to the Lord, which in turn meant increased protection from the enemy's 'fiery darts'.

Faith, love, obedience and protection all interlocked and interacted profoundly at this point.

(i) Faith originally closed with Christ. (II.42)

Faith united the soul to Christ, (II.17) laid hold of him, (II.14) appropriated his righteousness by faith, (II.14) wore Christ's satisfaction, (II.109) married us to him, (II.26) and finally:

the soul is contracted to ... (and) ... espoused to Christ ... (II.37) ... (and) ... feeds by faith in the Lord Jesus. (II.87)

(ii) Love now followed.

As faith reported to the soul:

of the sweet excellencies it sees in Christ, (so) ... the Christian's love now cannot choose but spring and leap in his bosom at the voice of faith, as the babe did in Elizabeth's womb at the salutation of her cousin Mary. (II.17)

(iii) Obedience now flowed from increased love.

Faith was '... an obediential faith'. (II.32) This obedience began in the heart and from there:

it diffuseth and dilates itself to the outward man,
till it overspreads the whole man in a sincere endeavour.
(II.33)

This obedience:

doth not pick and choose - take this commandment, and leave that - but hath respect to all the precepts of God. (II.40)

As obedience grew so 'weak' faith became 'strong' faith:

If therefore, thy heart be strongly carried out from love to God to abandon sin, perform duty, and exert acts of obedience to his command ... take it with humble thankfulness, (that) thou art a graduate in the art of believing. (II.64)

(iv) Protection.

As the Christian's faith increased in strength (because of increased obedience to God, based in turn upon increased love), so the strength to resist the enemy's attacks, would also increase.

Using Peter as an illustration, he said:

Peter's faith, was weak when a maid's voice dashed him out of countenance; but it was well amended when he could withstand, and, with noble constancy, disdain the threats of (the) whole (Jewish) counsel. Acts xiv.17. (II.64)⁸⁰

A strong faith meant a strong shield, and a strong shield, meant increased and better protection.

4. Faith was a trader.

Faith was a:

rich tradesman ... (II.16) ... a rich merchant ... (II.39) ... (furthermore) ... faith's merchandise ... trades for grace and glory. (II.81)

The 'commodities' faith traded with were such graces as repentance, love and prayer. But how, for example, did the Christian trade in prayer?

(i) The Christian traded in prayer quite simply by praying.

If one wanted a certain commodity to increase in value then you had to trade with it and use it. The more the Christian prayed, the greater would become his spiritual capital.

(ii) The Christian traded in prayer, when he prayed expectantly.

When the Christian engaged in prayer faith filled his soul with expectation:

As a merchant when he casts up his estate, counts what he hath sent beyond the sea, as well as what he hath in hand; so doth faith reckon upon what he hath sent to heaven in prayer and not received, as well as those mercies which he hath received,

80. Gurnall spells the word counsel rather than our common spelling council.

as well as those mercies which he hath received, and are in hand at present. Now this expectation which faith raiseth in the soul after prayer, appears in the power that it hath to quiet and compose the soul in the interim between the sending forth, as I may say, the ship of prayer, and its return home with its rich lading it goes for. (II.39)

5. Faith was a physician.

The Christian was often spiritually sick. Accordingly he needed a physician. (II.20) The gospel was a drug, a '... rich drug', (II.26) by which Gurnall did not mean 'expensive', but 'powerful' and 'effective'.

The Christian's spiritual illness was variously described by Gurnall: He was a sick man ... very weak ... low and feeble ... a bruised reed, ... (II.20) he pants and blows ... as much as a sick man doth go up a hill, ... (II.19) his eye was gummed up, (II.60) and he walked with a crutch. (II.61) He suffered continual pain ... (II.60) He was like a man suffering from sea-sickness, (II.60) with all its malaise and nausea, and he was lame and weak in body. (II.62)

These illnesses had serious side effects. Such a man lived uncomfortably and with:

dull melancholy ... (and goes) ... sighing and mourning with a heavy heart. (II.60)

Such a Christian, Gurnall diagnosed as suffering from:

weakness of grace ... (and is temporarily) ... overmatched by the policy and power of Satan ... (he is unable to) ... bear up against ... the counterblasts of hell. (II.20)

In other words, the fiery darts were penetrating his defence; the shield of faith was not being correctly used. Such a Christian was in a pitiable state, and was in desperate need of 'physicking'. (II.20) Gurnall believed that God had ordained certain means to achieve certain ends. When a man was sick he ought to go to his doctor, and when a Christian was sick he ought to send for Doctor Faith.

Once summoned he would 'succour' the Christian. The word 'succour', as used by Gurnall and his fellow Puritans, had a warmth, intimacy and sense of compassion perhaps lacking in the more modern medical term 'treated'.

One of the first things a good doctor did was to calm his patient and allay his fears.

So faith:

brings great comfort to a sick man, though very weak at present, to hear his physician tell him that though he is low and feeble, yet there is no fear he will die ... Now faith and only faith, can ... bring this good news to the soul, that it shall persevere ... the faithful God will not suffer his grace to see corruption. (II.20)

The next step was to dose the patient with the correct medication:

Faith succours the Christian in the weakness and inactivity of his graces, by applying the promises for the saints' perseverance in grace ... faith, when it sees symptoms of death in the saint's grace, finds life in the promise, and comforts the soul with this. (II.20)

The promises of the Scriptures were God's 'antibiotics' which faith applied to the wound the Christian had received from the fiery darts of the enemy.

The Christian took this medicine by drinking it by faith.

Faith:

puts them (the promises) into the very mouth of the soul; it (faith) masticates and grinds the promise, so that the Christian is filled with its strength and sweetness. (II.23)

6. Faith was an advocate.

An advocate pleads his case on behalf of a client in a court of law. He is 'a professional pleader', whose counterpart is the public prosecutor. The advocate marshalls his arguments before the court, the judge and the jury as he seeks the acquittal of his client. In spiritual terms faith pleads our case like an advocate. The public prosecutor is either the enemy or the Christian's conscience (through which the enemy often works).

While the Christian was often falsely accused, there were, said Gurnall, other occasions when he had genuinely sinned. These, the enemy would exploit to the full, dragging the victim before the bar of God and his own conscience. Often the Christian felt utterly helpless because he knew he was guilty as charged. What was the Christian to do? Engage faith to argue your case, suggested Gurnall.

That such advocacy was one of faith's functions was revealed in the following phrases: Faith is able to '... prove the devil's lie a charge', (II.103) '... shows this on the best evidence', (II.107) '... faith hisseth away Satan with this argument', (II.117) '... faith is able to prove by these ... considerations', (II.120) '... Now the strongest argument that faith hath to put this question out of doubt'. (II.107) Faith shows, (II.108) teaches, (II.110), bears witness. (II.111)

The Christian cannot engage faith to prove that he was not guilty if in fact he was. But faith could act as an advocate on his behalf by showing him or bearing witness to him that God in Christ had and would forgive all his sins.

The following were some of the arguments that Advocate Faith marshalled to succour the Christian when distressed:

with the guilt of them (his sins), and Satan labours most to aggravate them. (II.101)

Argument (i) God had promised to pardon all sin.

In the final analysis, faith argued, the enemy's word (ie. your sins are too many and too great; you cannot expect God to go on forgiving you), had to be pitted against Scripture (ie. all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men ... Matt. 12:31).

If we employed faith actively then the result would be that faith would:

see the promises in their greatness because the value of promises is according to the worth of him that makes them. (II.113-114)

Faith's role consisted of conveying and accompanying the frightened Christian up to the promises and then beyond the promises to their Holy Author. But in conveying us faith actually argued from the greatness of God to the greatness of the promises.

Thus:

if the creature believes this (God's promises always to forgive), Satan's dart is quenched ... the devil's fiery dart hath lost its envenomed head, which used so much to drink up the Christian's spirits. (II.102)

Argument (ii) Keep your balance about the seriousness of sins.

Take, for example, the sin of blasphemy. If a Christian vented his anger against God in this manner the approach of faith in such a situation was to argue:

that these blasphemous thoughts, as they are commonly entertained in a saint, are not so great sins in God's account as some other that pass for less in our account. (II.102)

The enemy would do anything to prevent the Christian from having a balanced view of his failure and sins. He would drive the Christian to an extreme position where he was overwhelmed by the thought that he had committed the greatest of all sins, was thus the greatest of all sinners, virtually beyond help and so he would sink into despair.

Gurnall pointed out, interestingly, that lust was in one sense far worse than blaspheming God:

The fiery darts of blasphemy may scare the Christian more, but fiery lusts wound sooner and deeper ... Temptations of pleasure entice the heart to them, whereas the horrid nature of the other stirs up the Christian to a more valiant resistance. (II.102-103)

Argument (iii) God's holiness 'obliges' him to forgive our sins.

The Christian, well aware of God's holiness, trembled in despair when his enemy suggested that such holiness would never allow God to pardon his many sins.

But, argued faith, it was precisely God's holiness that formed the ground of our forgiveness and the absolute certainty of our pardon.

It was, Gurnall stressed:

the holiness of God that obligeth him to be faithful in all his promises. (II.107)

Thus, the very attribute of God that the enemy used to terrify the Christian should really be his most sought-after consolation! God's holiness implied his integrity and rectitude and trustworthiness; these characteristics undergirded every promise in the Scriptures, including his promises of forgiveness.

So, faith argued:

That though the infinite holiness of God's nature doth make him vehemently hate sin, yet the same doth strongly incline his heart to show mercy to sinners. (II.106)

Argument (iv) God did and would pardon without prejudice to his justice.

Satan:

comes full mouth against the believer with this objection, "What! Such a wretch as thou find favour in the eyes of God?" (II.108)

What evidence could faith now provide that God might pardon without prejudicing his justice?

(a) The first piece of evidence rested:

on the full satisfaction which Christ hath given to God for all the wrong the believer hath done him by his sin. (II.108)

God promiseth to accept the sinner's debt at Christ's hand. (II.110)

(b) The second piece of evidence flowed from the truth that:

Christ our true propitiation covers all the law, which else would come in to accuse the believer ... (II.109) ... (indeed) ... it was the great undertaking of Christ to bring justice to kiss mercy ... that ... the act of pardoning mercy (should be) carried clear, nullo contradicente - without a dissentient voice. (II.108)

(c) The third piece of evidence arose from the first two:

God cannot see the sinner for Christ that (who) hides him. (II.109)

Gurnall then imaginatively portrayed God's wrath speaking to itself as it viewed the Christian sheltering behind Christ:

"This is not the man", saith wrath, "that I am to strike. See how he flees to Christ, and takes sanctuary in his satisfaction, and so is got out of my ... reach, that (Christ the sanctuary) being a privileged place where I must not come to arrest any." (II.109)

(d) The fourth now followed:

Christ's satisfaction worn by faith is the sign that distinguisheth God's friends from his enemies. (II.109)

(e) Finally, faith could conclude that:

my Saviour is infinitely greater than my greatest sins. (II.109)

Remember said faith:

a weak faith may save but a weak Saviour cannot ... (II.110) ... (The Father has) ... singled out (him) from all others, angels and men, and set (him) forth as the person chosen by God to make atonement for sinners. (II.109)

To sum up:

God, who knew what a heavy burden (of sin) he had to lay upon his (Christ's) shoulders, was fully satisfied by his strength to bear it. (II.110)

Argument (v) God's honour and glory was more advanced through salvation than damnation.

Faith argued:

When God damns a sinner, justice is only glorified passively. God forceth his glory from devils and damned souls; but they do not willingly pay the debt ... They acknowledge God just, because they can do no other, but at the same time hate him. (II.113)

But introducing Christ changed the entire picture. Thus, faith could now say to the enemy:

Now, in the satisfaction that Christ gives, justice is glorified actively, and that both from Christ ... and also from believing souls, who now sing praises to the mercy and justice of God that redeemed them, and will for ever in heaven. (II.113)

Argument (vi) If God had pardoned the sins of all the elect, throughout the ages, then surely he could pardon all your sins.

The enemy could so trap the Christian that he would become convinced that his catalogue of sins far exceeded the proportions of anyone pardoned in Scripture. (II.119)

The way out of this apparent impasse was along the following lines:

Now, suppose thy sins were greater than any one saint's; yet, are they as great as all the sins of the elect together? Thou darest not surely say or think so. And cannot Christ procure thy pardon, who are but a single person, that hath done it for many millions of his elect? Yea, were thy sins as great as all theirs are (an impossibility!), the sum would be the same; and God could forgive it if it lay in one heap. (II.119)

Faith used the old device of the a fortiori argument, simple in concept, but profoundly helpful to a Christian in need of teaching and encouragement about his sins. The Christian who truly grasped this argument, raised in his defence by faith, would soon stop that:

arrow which is so oft on Satan's string made headless and harmless. (II.118)

Argument (vii) The one sin of despair was greater than the other sins all together.

Any drifting into despair should arouse your suspicion, because, for one thing:

dost thou think to mend the matter or better thy condition by despairing? (II.120)

A sense of guilt, combined with the clear possibility of forgiveness, suggested that God was speaking to you, but merely sliding into despair required investigating the origin of those feelings, since that was not the way God worked. Christian doctrine, the history of God's people, the experiences of individual Christians, all pointed to the intention of God to bring forgiveness, healing and redemption. That was the good news of the gospel!

If the message we received about our relationship to God was nothing but bleak, despairing, bad news, it could not originate from God. The Christian might not yet know the way out of this despair, but the discovery of this principle would itself be a profoundly liberating experience.

A further reason to view such despair with suspicion was bound up with the sinfulness of despair itself.

Faith:

is able to prove ... more malignity to be in this one sin of despair, than in any other, yea, all together. (II.120)

These 'proofs' were:

- (a) Despair '... opposeth God in the greatness of his commands ... (which) ... is to believe.' (II.120)

When the Jews enquired of Jesus (Jn. 6:28-29) what 'work' they should be doing to do the work of God, Jesus replied, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent (Christ)."

Do this, faith argued:

and you do all in one. This is the work that is ... all in all ... (thus) ... if faith be the work of God above all other, then unbelief is the work of the devil ... And despair is unbelief at the worst. (II.120)

Unbelief is despair in the bud, despair is unbelief at its full growth. (II.120)

- (b) Despair '... hath a way peculiar to itself of dishonouring God above all other sins'. (II.120)

The despairing soul is the person that will not let Christ make satisfaction for the wrong that by his sins he hath God. (II.121)

The Christian who felt too sinful to accept what God in Christ had done for him suffered from an exaggerated sense of sin that was nothing but a camouflaged attack of the enemy under the guise of greater piety.

In doing this, the Christian was not losing his salvation, but was portraying God as lacking in mercy and was in effect saying that the coming and agony of our Lord on the cross was for nothing, as far as he was concerned:

O what shame would despair put the mercy of God to in the sight of Satan, his worst enemy! He claps his hands at this, to see all the glorious attributes of God ... divested of the honour ... (he) desires no better music than to hear the soul ring the promises, like bells, backward; make no other use of them than to confirm it is its own desperate thoughts of its damnation, and to tell it hell-fire is kindled in its conscience, which no mercy in God will or can quench to eternity ... He nails the hands of his almighty power, while thinks his sins are of that nature as put him out of reach and beyond the power of God to save him ... In a word, the despairing soul transfixeth his very heart and will, while he unworthily frames notions of God, as if he were unwilling to the work of mercy, and not so inclined to exercise acts of pardon and forgiveness on poor sinners as the word declares him ... O tremble therefore at despair. Nothing makes thy face gather blackness, and thy soul hasten faster to the complexion of damned souls, than this. Now thou sinnest after the similitude of those that are in hell. (II.121-122)

- (c) Despair '... strengthens and enrageth all other sins in the soul'. (II.122)

The man who had no hope (ie. the fruit of constant despair), would be driven to desperation in words and deeds. For him, nothing was left.

Did you never, Gurnall asked:

see a sturdy beggar - after a while knocking at a door, and concluding by the present silence or denial that he shall have nothing given him - fall to cursing and railing of them that dwell there? (II.122)

If despair enters it is impossible to keep blasphemy out. (II.122)

Or:

If thou once thinkest that God's heart is hardened against thee, thy heart will not be long in hardening against him. (II.123)

- (d) '... The greatness of this sin of despair appears in this, that the least sin envenomed by it is unpardonable, and without this the greatest is pardonable'. (II.123)

Gurnall, entering into the spiritual and psychological emotions and feelings of the Christian, sketched the products of despair and non-despair in relation to sin.

Despair cancelled out all reasonable, logical and above all Biblical thinking. So twisted and unbalanced could a Christian's thinking become that he would end up believing that even the slightest failure was enough to damn him eternally. He lost all sense of proportion and might conclude that a moment of anger or jealousy or bitterness was totally unpardonable. So obsessively subjective did he become that he could no longer stand back and view such sins in a sensible and Biblical manner. Such sins were certainly wrong, but just as certainly pardonable by a merciful Father. The opposite was also true. A balanced and Biblical understanding of sin, salvation and God's mercy would come to the Christian's assistance, even if he fell into a serious sin, for '... without this (despair) the greatest (of sins) is pardonable'. (II.123)

He concluded with an interesting allusion to Judas:

Judas was not damned merely for his treason and murder; for others that had their hands deep in the same horrid fact, obtained a pardon by faith in that blood which through cruelty they shed; but they were these heightened into the greatest malignity possible, from the putrid stuff of despair and final impenitency with which his wretched heart was filled, (so) that he died so miserably of, and now is infinitely more miserably damned for. (II.123)

SECTION III

GURNALL'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE PURITAN
CONCEPT OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Introduction

Religious debate, says G.R. Cragg:

was the chief intellectual preoccupation of the seventeenth-century Englishman ... Differences in doctrine and discipline, controversies concerning ways of worship and forms of church government were eagerly canvassed and fiercely debated ... Page after page, one author refutes another, dissecting, sentence by sentence, his opponent's work and attacking his argument phrase by phrase.⁸¹

The vast majority of such debates took place through the press. Theological works outnumbered all other books and pamphlets. And ultimately much of the debate centered on the question as to whether there were sufficient grounds for cleavage from the Established Church or not.

Gurnall did not directly attack the protagonists of a holy commonwealth, a coming millenium or the need for a holy war against Charles I. Indirectly, however, his own position grew in clarity. In this sense his 'The Christian in Complete Armour' made a valuable contribution to the religious debate.

Gurnall differed substantially from many of his fellow Puritans in the broader Puritan constituency.⁸² The difference revolved, inter alia, around the interpretation of the nature and extent of the Christian's

81. Cragg, op.cit., 220

82. This Puritan constituency encompassed large numbers of ministers, laity, merchants, middle-class families, bankers and university academics, who (to mention the most important of their feelings and attitudes) were forcefully sympathetic to Parliament, the Parliamentary forces, Oliver Cromwell and the New Model Army, and hostile to men such as Laud, Charles I and their supporters.

spiritual combat, as well as the nature of magisterial (including monarchical) authority.

While his fellow Puritans would not have disagreed with his exegesis, exposition and application of Ephesians 6 as applicable to the invisible spiritual realm, they did not confine it within those boundaries. Spiritual warfare they argued, should be broadened to include political agitation and military action against God's enemies, such as Archbishop Laud, Papists, Charles I and the Royalist forces.

Gurnall's understanding of the nature of Christian warfare emerged clearly and definitively when he dealt with the power of the Christian's enemy.⁸³ The enemy, Gurnall warned his flock, was a great prince, with immense power. (I.131) And while we are weighed down with a lump of flesh, (I.140) the enemy and his fellow-angelic beings have no such handicap. They:

have no such encumbrance, no fumes from a fleshly part to cloud their understanding, which is clear and piercing; no clog at their heel to retard their motion ... being spiritual, they cannot be resisted with carnal force; fire and sword hurt them not. (I.141,142)

This latter phrase lies at the heart of Gurnall's differences with those of the larger Puritan constituency. His contribution was therefore an important different perspective on the nature of spiritual combat and all that flows from that presupposition.

We will firstly consider the views of those belonging to the larger Puritan constituency. (See footnote 82), most of whom believed that the parliamentary forces were God's instrument of judgement, and would establish a new, holy commonwealth and possibly also usher in the millenium.

Secondly, we will examine Gurnall's contrasting views.⁸⁴

83. See Section II.

84. Actual quotations from Gurnall will be restricted to avoid duplication of quotations given in earlier Sections. However any source from Gurnall will be substantiated by use of the usual method, ie. (I.115) equals Volume I, page 115.

I. The broader Puritan constituency.

It is impossible, within the limitations of this thesis, to deal exhaustively with their views, teachings and actions. We shall only marshal enough evidence to substantiate the points made concerning their position. These Puritans envisaged a holy war waged by means of political and military actions to establish a holy commonwealth in England and New England, which in turn would usher in the long-awaited millenium.

1. A holy commonwealth.

In the early 1640's and onwards these Puritans believed that God could and would establish a dispensation throughout England and New England, which could be described as the 'godly rule' in a visible 'holy commonwealth'.

Cromwell's hunger for a 'godly rule' in such a 'holy commonwealth' is clearly manifested in a letter to Colonel Walton, when his son had died in the battle of Marston Moor, in which the Parliamentary armies had been victorious:

It had all the evidence of an absolute victory obtained by the Lord's Blessing upon the Godly Party principally. We never charged but we routed the enemy ... God made them as stubble to our swords.⁸⁵

Michal Walzer has rightly seen Cromwell's New Model Army as the embodiment of the attempt to set up a visible Kingdom of Christ with "its rigid camp discipline, its elaborate rules against every imaginable sin from looting to rapine to blasphemy and card-playing".⁸⁶

To this Lamont adds:

If Cromwell had honoured the memory of Colonel Walton's son, the Commonwealth should have become quite simply the New Model Army writ large.⁸⁷

Both the Lord's spiritual and the Lord's temporal, though professing to be citizens of two distinct cities were really just English Lords and acted accordingly. The same principle held true in the wider Puritan constituency:

85. Lamont, W.M. Godly Rule. Politics and Religion, 1603-1660. Macmillan, St. Martin's Press, 1969, 137, footnote 3.

86. Lamont, *ibid.*, 138, footnote 4.

87. Lamont, *ibid.*, 138.

In Old-England these aggressive middle-class favourites of God ... ventured to hope that England might soon become the city of God.⁸⁸

Richard Baxter,

argued that ... the British Commonwealth should be turned into a Holy Commonwealth, and in general that the civil state should be identical with the church, the visible city of God. His treatise, 'A Holy Commonwealth' (1659), is a consistent, clear exposition of the whole theory.⁸⁹

Thus, for example, Baxter stated, in his Thesis no. 205:

By this it appeareth that in a true Theocracy, or Divine Common-wealth, the Matter of the Church and Common-wealth should be altogether or almost the same, though the form of them and administrations are different ...⁹⁰

To which Baxter added his Thesis no. 206:

It is this Theoretical Policy or Divine Common-wealth, which is the unquestionable reign of Christ upon earth, which all Christians are agreed may be justly sought ...⁹¹

These views were certainly not confined to the Puritans in England; in New England they were also publicly taught and expounded. The Parliamentary wars were linked with wars against the Red Indians and French forces, as God's wars to establish this holy commonwealth. Thus a Captain Edward Johnson, speaking in the 1650's in New England could say about the Puritan settlement there:

Know this is the place where the Lord will create a new Heaven, and a new Earth in new Churches, and a new Commonwealth together.⁹²

It can also be seen in the Rev John Eliot's publication 'The Christian Commonwealth: or, The Civil Polity of the Rising Kingdom of Jesus Christ', in which:

He advocated a system of unified administration, modelled on the Scriptural system of the ancient Israelites, under God, the supreme king.⁹³

Nothing, Schneider concludes,

seemed more evident to the minds of the Puritans than that God was actually taking a hand in establishing his kingdom on earth.⁹⁴

88. Schneider, H.W. The Puritan Mind. Ann Arbor Paperbacks, The University of Michigan, Fourth Printing, 1966, 14.

89. Schneider, *ibid.*, 14.

90. Schneider, *ibid.*, 15.

91. Schneider, *ibid.*, 16.

92. Schneider, *ibid.*, 8, footnote 1.

93. Schneider, *ibid.*, 25.

94. Schneider, *ibid.*, 31.

2. The coming millenium.

The proposed 'holy commonwealth' and the coming millenium were inextricably bound up together.

Tai Liu substantiates this truth:

The Puritan vision of a glorious millenium of Christ's kingdom here on earth is no longer regarded merely as the ideology of the reckless Fifth Monarchy Men; on the contrary, it is now a considered central theme in Puritanism during the whole course of the Puritan Revolution. Historians now understand that millenarianism was not merely the fantasy of the alienated who had no command of the reality of society but also a dynamic force in the minds of men who were totally involved in the reconstruction of the world ... Millenarian visions coloured the aspirations of all Puritan groups, and in the early stages of the Puritan Revolution they were by no means confined to the enthusiastic mysticism of the sects.⁹⁵

In this regard he turns our attention to the well-known Puritan preacher, Thomas Goodwin. Sometime in 1641, shortly before returning to England, Goodwin preached a sermon to a church still in exile in the Netherlands. In England the Long Parliament had been summoned and the King's government and Archbishop Laud were under attack. Great reforms in both church and state were expected. He chose as his text Revelation 19:6, and spoke of the coming Kingdom of Christ:

Babylon's falling is Zion's raising; Babylon's destruction is Jerusalem's salvation ... As soon as ever that is done, that Antichrist is down, Babylon fallen, then comes in Jesus Christ reigning gloriously.⁹⁶

Goodwin's eschatological visions of the coming millenium were twofold:

Christ's reign in the world as king of the nations and his reign in the church as king of the saints.⁹⁷

Goodwin went to great lengths to stress the literal understanding of the former. The sermon also identified the:

Independent form of the church with the beginning of the Kingdom of Christ.⁹⁸

95. Liu, T. Discord in Zion: The Puritan Divines and the Puritan Revolution 1640-1660. Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1974, 3.

96. Liu, *ibid.*, 1.

97. Liu, *ibid.*, 5.

98. Liu, *ibid.*, 7.

In fact, Christopher Hill suggests that Goodwin '... believed the last times would begin in 1650'.⁹⁹

The fact that such views were not merely those of sectarian cranks is corroborated by Christopher Hill who reports the words of the Scot Robert Baillie from London in 1645:

The most of the chief divines, not only Independents but others ... are extreme Chiliasts.¹⁰⁰

Milton spoke of '... Christ as (the) shortly expected King'.¹⁰¹

As Parliamentary rule grew and was established Parliamentary preachers fed the fires of this hope especially in 1648-49:

There were also the millenarian hopes built up by the Puritan preachers.¹⁰²

These preachers included, inter alia, William Bridge who told the House that the victories of the Army were fulfillments of a providential design leading to the eventual triumph of Christ's reign on earth. On November 29, 1648 George Cokayn announced the condition of the coming millenium, in which '... the saints ... shall judge the world'.¹⁰³

Thomas Brooks admonished the Rump Parliament to be the divine instrument for its fulfillment:

God is now about a glorious designe to exalt his sonne ...
Oh right Honourable, the doing of great things is most
worthy of great men; the Lord stirre up your hearts, that you
may further that glorious worke ... that Christ revealed, and
his Kingdome exalted in this Kingdome.¹⁰⁴

The latter 'Kingdome' referred to England, and the first to the millenium to be established.

Other preachers included William Sedgwick who said that God's reign over the nations and his setting up a kingdom for the saints which would never be destroyed was close at hand,¹⁰⁵ and Thomas Collier who boldly preached that:

99. Hill, op.cit., 33, footnote 67.
100. Hill, ibid., 96, footnote 36.
101. Hill, ibid., 96, footnote 37.
102. Hill, ibid., 35.
103. Liu, op.cit., 60.
104. Liu, ibid., 61.
105. Liu, ibid., 63.

when Christ as King of the saints reigned in the Army, then the Army would rule the world ... that "the work in hand is the creation of those new heavens, and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness".¹⁰⁶

On his way to New England, the newly elected Governor John Winthrop, delivered a lay sermon and reminded his hearers that:

It was the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, which would knit together a truly Christian society ... If only they could prove faithful in their venture, ... then men would exclaim of succeeding plantations, "The Lord make it like that of New England! ... For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword through the world".¹⁰⁷

William Haller sums up these great expectations as follows:

The more certain the saint became that he was already a citizen of Zion the more eagerly and the more certainly did he expect Zion to commence soon here upon earth. When the Long Parliament began its work, this meant to the respectable Puritan reformer the establishment of the presbyterian utopia; to the saints of the separation, it meant the millenium.¹⁰⁸

3. A holy war,

The establishment of such a 'holy commonwealth' and an idyllic millenium would become a reality through a 'holy war'.

At this point Gurnall clearly and emphatically parted company with many other Puritans in Parliament and from Cromwell and his New Model Army. When he referred to the Civil War as 'this bloody warfare', he had, quite clearly a different perspective. Gurnall did not believe that a 'holy commonwealth' and an idyllic millenium would be ushered in by the Civil War (ie. the 'holy war' of the broader Puritan Constituency). Spiritual ends were not attained through physical violence.

Once again many Puritan preachers played an important role in urging a

106. Liu, *ibid.*, 63.

107. Adair, J. Founding Fathers. The Puritans in England and America. J.M. Dent and Sons, 1982, 9.

108. Haller, W. The Rise of Puritanism. Harper, 1957, 269.

different course:

By the mid-seventeenth century a consensus seemed to have been reached, indicating the advent of remarkable events in the mid-1650's: the fall of the Antichrist, perhaps the second coming and the millenium. This underlay the confident energy, the utopian enthusiasm, of the Puritan preachers in the early 1640's. With what subsequently seemed to them naïve optimism, they called the common man to fight the Lord's battles against Antichrist.¹⁰⁹

Gurnall's assessment of the conditions prevailing in England during this period was realistic, not naïve.

But who was the Antichrist that needed to be destroyed with military force?

We do not doubt, Christopher Hill answers:

the sincerity of the great numbers of preachers who proclaimed that Parliament's cause was God's, and that - whatever Charles I's subjective intentions - his government was objectively forwarding the cause of the Roman Antichrist. The royalists were 'the antichristian party'.¹¹⁰

The execution of Charles I was justified because it cleared the way for the enthronement of King Jesus.

Corroborating this call to wage military war against the Antichrist, a modern writer confirms that:

However others might view the challenge of War, the Puritans did, with one heart, regard it as a signal from God that at last He was going to advance His kingdom on earth. The Lord was calling his servants into battle to subdue and overcome the Antichrist, whom Puritans on both sides of the Atlantic believed was either Charles I or Archbishop Laud. At last the great war of faith raging on the continent (the Thirty Years War), which they had viewed from afar for so many years, was coming to English soil. Whatever the commitment of others, there was no hesitation on the part of the Puritans, with Cromwell resolutely in their number, to answer the momentous opportunity that God was providing His own elect to bring righteous government to England.¹¹¹

109. Hill, op.cit., 93, footnote 27.

110. Hill, ibid., 33, footnote 65.

111. Ishkanian, J. II. Defenders of the Faith. Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658). The Journal of Christian Reconstruction. Vol. VI, No. 1. Gary North (Ed). Symposium on Puritanism and Progress. Published by Chalcedon, 1979, 181-182.

Having formulated who the main contenders for the title of Antichrist were, the next logical step was to proclaim that whoever fought on the side of Parliament and Cromwell, was in fact fighting in God's cause and in God's War:

Preachers on the Parliamentary side called ordinary people to fight for God's cause ...¹¹²

Antonia Fraser perceptively points out the growth of military engagements for spiritual ends:

Throughout the seventeenth century there had been a build-up in the violence of the preacher's sermons, as spiritual conflict gradually became confused with physical engagement. Stephen Marshall's call was for war ... and it was the 'neuters', those who would not engage themselves, who bore the brunt of his denunciation. His outburst, later printed under the apt title 'Meroz Cursed', was preached in the same form up and down the country, to become a famous set-piece of the period ... The crime of the people of Meroz had been to fail to join in a particular Old Testament battle ... blessed woman on the contrary, in Marshall's view, was Jael, the slayer of Sisera ... Clarendon later indicted these preachers of Marshall's school for being "the only trumpet of war and incendiaries towards rebellion" instead of messengers of peace as should have been their function.¹¹³

One is immediately reminded of Gurnall's position (to which we will turn shortly), when he said explicitly that:

their work (ie. ministers of the gospel) ... is not to blow a trumpet of sedition and confusion, or sound an alarm to battle, but rather (to preach) a joyful retreat from the bloody fight (ie. the Civil War) wherein their lusts had engaged them against God and one another. Indeed there is a war they are to proclaim, but it is only against sin and Satan ... (I.547)

Oliver Cromwell had no such doubts or problems of conscience about the use of military violence to overthrow Charles I and defeat the royalist forces. His personal motto was: 'Pax Quaeritur Bello - Let Peace be sought through War'.¹¹⁴

112. Hill, op.cit., 96.

113. Fraser, A. Cromwell, Our Chief of Men. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, Third Impression, May 1974, 79.

114. Fraser, *ibid.*, 89.

Cromwell enjoyed war. Richard Baxter described the immense exhilaration which used to seize Cromwell as he rode forward on his charges into the enemy. It was exciting to ride with the New Model (Army) buff-coats and to charge into battle with your pike and sword shouting "God and our Strength".¹¹⁵ This is a very far cry from Gurnall's assessment of it being simply a 'bloody war'.

Among his Puritan contemporaries Cromwell's victories, as well as his own judgement of himself, marked him as a sign of divine favour as well as God's instrument to destroy the royalists.

On the 13th September, 1644, in a debate in Parliament Cromwell urged toleration of the sectaries. The motion was redolent of the spirit of Cromwell, who was, for his day, remarkably tolerant in religious matters. During the sitting:

the Speaker of the House gave official thanks to Cromwell for his faithful service in the late battle near York "where God had made (him) a special instrument in obtaining that great victory",¹¹⁶ ... the wording would also have been approved by Cromwell who did indeed see himself as God's special instrument on this occasion.¹¹⁷

Cromwell's acceptance of God's providence in military victories, a major characteristic of his thinking, was acceptable also to the other Puritans who viewed such victories as God's onward march in time and history to establish his 'commonwealth' and 'millenium'.

Immediately after the first success of the Parliamentary forces at a skirmish outside Grantham in Lincolnshire in May 1643:

Cromwell set a precedent for the future by ascribing his success to the workings of divine providence. "God hath given us, this evening, a glorious victory over our enemies" he wrote that very night from Syston Park to a fellow commander. It was with a mere handful of men that it had "pleased God to cast the scale".¹¹⁸

Echoing Richard Baxter's view that '... the civil state should be identical with the church, the visible City of God' (p.142), Cromwell, after the victory of Marston Moor on 2 July 1644, writes:

115. Fraser, *ibid.*, 177.

116. Fraser, *ibid.*, 136, footnote 26.

117. Fraser, *ibid.*, 136.

118. Fraser, *ibid.*, 102.

Truly England and the Church of God hath had a great favour from the Lord, in this great victory given to us. It had all the evidence of an absolute victory obtained by the Lord's blessing upon the godly party principally.¹¹⁹

Once again, in stark contrast, we hear Gurnall mourning that:

many thousands have been sent to the grave in a few late years among us by the sword of man ... (I.3)

He did not see the Lord's blessing upon the godly party that Cromwell could apparently discern.

Cromwell presupposed that the Parliamentary army was the 'godly party'. As such they would want to obey God's will, by overthrowing the 'ungodly party', Charles I and his Royalist forces. Victory was evidence of God's blessing upon them. Finally, not only the nation (England) would benefit, but perhaps of greater significance 'the Church of God' (see footnote 119). Cromwell and the other Puritans believed that the church of God benefitted from the outward, military action: 'The Lord hath wrought for us (and) God would go on.'¹²⁰ Gurnall maintained that the Christian could only utilize God's armour and weapons for spiritual combat in the church and on behalf of the church.

This was after a Royalist force under Lord George Coring was smashed by the New Model Army at Langport, Bridgewater on 10 July, 1645.

The New Model Army, under Cromwell, was an important and vital force in the defeat of Charles I and his armies. Cromwell chose for his officers:

not such as were soldiers or men of estate, but such as were common men ... only he would give them the title of godly, precious men ...¹²¹

It was a common saying of the time that "the Saints should have the praises of God in their mouths and a two-edged sword in their hands".¹²²

The New Model Army was really viewed as God's Army, and even described as Cromwell's '... fighting Church'.¹²³ When Richard Baxter was invited

119. Fraser, *ibid.*, 120.

120. Loades, D.M. Politics and the Nation 1450-1660. Obedience, Resistance and Public Order. Fontana/Collins, 1974, 431.

121. Fraser, *op.cit.*, 100, footnote 18.

122. Fraser, *ibid.*, 100.

123. Ishkanian, *op.cit.*, 186.

to become pastor to the officers of Cromwell's troops '... they intended to turn themselves into 'a gathered church''.¹²⁴

In 1647 Joshua Sprigge¹²⁵ wrote a book on the Civil War under the title 'Anglia Rediviva'. In his Epistle Dedicatory to Mr Speaker Lenthall, he said:

I make no question but you will easily discern a thread of Divinity running through the whole proceeding of this Army, and that their actions have been nothing else but a Copy of the Wisdom, Power, Providence and Love of God put forth in men.¹²⁶

And to William Dell (an Army chaplain), and the greater number of his hearers:

the 'church' would mean the 'Saints' armed spiritually and militarily for God's service.¹²⁷

Many of the same sentiments held true for other chaplains like: Edward Boles,¹²⁸ Hugh Peter,¹²⁹ William Sedgwick,¹³⁰ and were far removed from Gurnall's sentiments that the Civil War was plunging England into bloodshed, chaos, and an increased breakdown of law and order in society, as well as hastening a moral and spiritual collapse within the church.

Finally to mention the Puritan preachers who addressed Parliament:

In any case, the pulpit in Parliament was to be monopolized almost exclusively by the Puritan clergy and used by them as a most effective organ for propagating their millenarian ideology thus transforming what was primarily constitutional conflicts between the King and Parliament into a holy war between Christ and Antichrist.¹³¹

Such preachers included: Cornelius Burges, Stephen Marshall, Jeremiah Burroughs, Thomas Wilson, Thomas Case, William Bridge, Joseph Symmonds,

124. Fraser, op.cit., 100, footnote 19.

125. Sprigge (1618-84) had an obscure career at Oxford, and gained his M.A. at Edinburgh. It is thought unlikely that his work was totally original but that he carefully used contemporary sources.

126. Walker, E.C. William Dell, Master Puritan. W. Heffer, 1970, 40.

127. Ibid., 59.

128. Walker, ibid., 44.

129. Walker, ibid., 45, 46, 48.

130. Walker, ibid., 47.

131. Liu, op.cit., 11.

Nathaniel Holmes, Henry Burton, Edmund Calamy, Simeon Ashe, Edward Corbett, John Arrowsmith, Joseph Caryl, William Greenhill, Matthew Newcomen and Philip Nye.¹³² These were respected preachers and not cranks whose sermons and views had a correspondingly greater impact. This 'propagating' of certain Parliamentary policies, even to the extent of disobeying the civil authorities¹³³ became part and parcel of their ministerial activities.

Gurnall was appalled that ministers of the gospel should adopt a role so at variance with the Bible (as he saw it), and because it prevented them from ministering to all men irrespective of their political views or social status. Hence his total lack of emotionalistic preaching calculated to inflame the political or military aspirations of either side.

II. Gurnall's contribution and perspective.

1. He emphasized the real locus of Christian warfare.

In contrast to a large section of the Puritan constituency (both in England and New England), Gurnall maintained that the Biblical locus of the Christian's struggle and warfare took place in the invisible realm against the Christian's real enemy, and not in a physical, political or military realm. He sought to keep the two conflicts, namely, the one between Royalist and Roundhead, and the other between the Christian and his great enemy distinct.

To adopt the stance of the other Puritan preachers, as well as of the laity in Parliament, was to fight the wrong war against the wrong enemy with wrong weapons.

Speaking of fellow-ministers he said quite plainly:

Indeed there is a war they are to proclaim, but it is only against sin and Satan. (I.547)

We are fighting angelic beings with angelic powers (I.140-141);

132. Liu, *ibid.*, 11, 11, 12, 14, 14, 15, 15, 15, 15, 19, 20, 22, 22, 22, 22, 22, 23, 24.

133. Liu, *ibid.*, 22: 'Late in December 1642, Edward Corbett played the role of Jeremiah to advise the House of Commons to obey the will of God, not the authority of man. "Indeed", he said, "the voyce of God makes me deaf to Humane Institutions: And when Heaven speaks, I do not understand the language of the world: Disobedience in such a case is devotion, and the greatest Rebell, the best Christian."' '

their essence is immaterial and not corporeal. (I.177) We do battle with Satan, who like a general walks around the city (of our life) to spot our weak points. (I.85)

Inseparably linked with the enemy's apostasy was the fact that he had:

proclaimed war against God, and He brings thee, by sinning, to espouse his quarrel. (I.182)

Unable to harm God, the enemy strikes with boundless rage against the Christian. (I.180) This was where the real action lay. It was in the realm of truth, which the enemy sought to pervert, that we clashed with him. He sought to corrupt the truth (I.188) or lied about it. (I.177) He vilified Scripture, by magnifying faith as more important in the Christian's experience. (I.75) He laboured to bring division between God and the Christian, (I.105) to defile the Christian's conscience and defile God's image, (I.103) '... You are holy. That he cannot endure'. (I.214)

The Christian could even end up lying in Satan's prison in great darkness, albeit temporarily. (I.108) Satan flashed blasphemy into the Christian's mind; (II.98 and 100) attacked the Christian in the realm of prayer, (II.343-355) and confronted him with various temptations: 'the lust of the flesh and the eyes and the pride of life'. (II.78, 80, 81)

All these examples point to only one conclusion: Gurnall the preacher and pastor wished to ensure that his flock knew where the real locus of the Christian's combat was located: in the invisible realm of the mind, heart and emotions, in truth and will.

A modern writer, who is highly critical of Gurnall, corroborates our interpretation of Gurnall's position:

What I take issue with is Gurnall's perspective, that the 'Christian Warfare' can be reduced to a wholly internal struggle. Gurnall retreated from a battle in which his comrades were dying in order to meditate on transcendent verities, and the thrust of his book is an encouragement to do the same ... The Journal (of Christian Reconstruction) is committed to the proposition that we need a whole lot

more of Cromwell, and a whole lot less of Gurnall.¹³⁴

Even in the 20th century Gurnall still has his critics. If in general terms David Chilton has diagnosed Gurnall correctly, it is nevertheless quite wrong to suggest that he meditated on transcendent verities while his brother-ministers were dying, and thereby to give the impression that Gurnall lacked concern about the events around him. As we have already seen,¹³⁵ Gurnall was deeply aware of the momentuous Civil War raging about him and also was deeply troubled both by the moral and spiritual breakdown in English society and the decline of piety in the church.

As well as defining the locus of the battle, Gurnall also emphasized the immaterial nature of an angel's constitution. (I.140-141)

The Devil:

is a spirit; that is, his essence is immaterial and simple, not ... corporeal (as we are). (I.177)

So too the demons are of:

spiritual substance, not qualities or evil notions ... (they are) ... entire spiritual substances ... (I.177)

While Gurnall did not define the phrase 'spiritual substance' any further, he logically contended that:

being spiritual, they cannot be resisted with carnal force; fire and sword hurt them not. (I.141,142)

Likewise were the enemy's 'fiery darts' insubstantial and secret and invisible. They make little or no noise when fired at the Christian, (II.75) and often he does not see who shot them in the first place. (II.74)

To sum up: The locus of the Christian's combat was not Naseby or Marston Moor but the unseen and invisible realm of the Christian's heart, mind, will and emotions.

134. Chilton, D.H. Cromwell and his Critics. The Journal of Christian Reconstruction. Vol. VI, No. 2. Gary North (Ed). Symposium on Puritanism and Society. Published by Chalcedon, 1979-80, 37-40.

135. See here: SECTION I, Chapter I, No II 'William Gurnall's assessment et al ...'

2. He believed that the real weapons that a Christian should use in spiritual warfare, came out of God's armoury, and more particularly the shield of faith.

It is not possible to fight a spiritual battle with secular, military weapons and the attendant physical violence. The answer lay in regeneration and not political overthrow. Gurnall thus questioned whether any political regime could solve England's spiritual problems, which meant fighting the right war with the right enemy with the right weapons.

He placed great emphasis upon the shield of faith as the most important piece of armour in the Christian's armoury. Only the shield of faith could quench the 'fiery darts' of the enemy. Inextricably bound up with the shield was the teaching of justifying faith. Only as the Christian grasped this great truth could he use the shield effectively.

The correct use of this shield:

doth the soul admirable service ... It is able to appease the tumult which ... a temptation may raise in the soul ... yea, to keep the King of heaven's peace so sweetly in the Christian's bosom. (II.9)

Why? Because justification by faith placed the Christian in an unassailable position! Hidden behind that truth he could deflect all the enemy's arrows.

The shield:

is not for the defense of any particular part of the body ... but is intended for the defense of the whole body ... (that) ... the skilful soldier might turn it this way or that way, to latch the blow or arrow from lighting on any part they were directed to. And this doth excellently set forth the universal use that faith is of to the Christian. It defends the whole man. Sometimes the temptation is levelled at the head ... Again, is it the conscience that the tempter assaults? ... Again, is it the will that temptation is laid to catch? ... (use the whole shield, and) ... every part of the Christian by it is preserved. (II.8)

Faith is the choice grace, (II.54+65) a wise grace, (II.80) a right pilgrim-grace, which travels with us to heaven and sees us safe within the Father's house, (II.7) a conquering grace, (II.11) a ministering

grace, (II.16) the captain grace. (II.13)

Only this shield equips us for protection:

faith, and only faith can quench the fiery darts of Satan's
affrightning temptations. (II.91)

In fact, Satan aimed:

to fight faith above all, as that which keeps him from coming
to the rest (of the other graces). (II.18)

But the shield of faith comes to the Christian's rescue:

Faith only can see God in his greatness; and therefore
none but faith can see the promises in their greatness ...
where there is faith to chase the promise, there the pro-
mise will afford comfort and peace abundantly ... Now none
but faith can learn (teach) us this skill of drawing out
the sweetness and virtue of the promise. (II.113-114)

It was ultimately sword, pike and cannon-fire versus the utilization
of the spiritual shield of faith in Christian combat.

However, it would be historically inaccurate to suggest that the Puritan
Revolution made no positive contribution. At least one important
contribution to English politics and government involved the increasing
role of Parliament and the growth of democratic principles in governing
the country. With historical hindsight we can discern this: Gurnall,
caught up within the Civil War and its aftermath could not.

3. A belief that the role of the Christian minister was to be that
of preacher-pastor. He was to tend God's flock in God's way,
ensuring the unity of the church. He was not to identify him-
self with any particular political stance - in modern terms
he was not to be a 'political priest'.

In a period when God's name was used by both clergy and laity to
excuse and justify violence, Gurnall played a different melody, that of
peace and unity in the church.

Referring to New England, Schneider once again corroborates this truth.

In New England as:

the fortunes of the Holy Commonwealth (became more desperate),
the more stubbornly its champions waged what Cotton Mather called
the wars of the Lord.¹³⁶

136. Schneider, op.cit., 37.

Cotton Mather was one of the leading luminaries amongst the New England clergy. Schneider suggests that the New England Puritans came to view the Red Indians as instruments of Satan, and when the Indians began cooperating with the popish French they were:

doubly hated, as not only in the service of the devil, but of Anti-Christ too.¹³⁷

Consequently (following the logic of the Puritans in England who were fighting Royalists as the enemies of God), there was no hesitation in battling against the Red Indians and the French in the Lord's name.

Even Thomas Shepard, the first minister of Cambridge (New England), and one of the gentler men could describe and justify the massacre of the Pequot Indians. The English, he said:

casting by (aside) their peeces (rifles or muskets), took their swords in their hands (the Lord doubling their strength and courage) and fell upon the Indians, where a hot fight continued about the space of an houre, at last by the direction of one Captayne Mason their wigwams were set on fire as being dry and contiguous one to another was right dreadful to the Indians, some burning, some bleeding to death by the sword, some resisting till they were cut off ... until the Lord had utterly consumed the whole company except four or five girles they tooke prisoners ...¹³⁸

Victory was a sign of the Lord's presence and help. This kind of 'interpretation' was also Cromwell's in England. As Antonia Fraser puts it:

But if one delves into the reactions of Cromwell himself, one must take into account his peculiar providentialist temperament. Since to Cromwell the successful outcome of any venture could be interpreted as a sign that God had approved of his involvement in the first place ...¹³⁹

But to return to New England. The Puritan authorities also acted harshly towards 'sectaries' such as the Quakers. Refusing to be banished they forced the hand of the authorities who:

tried all the varieties of forced-imprisonment, cutting off ears and tongues, whipping ... Finally they hanged two men ...¹⁴⁰

137. Schneider, *ibid.*, 40.

138. Schneider, *ibid.*, 40-41.

139. Fraser, *op.cit.*, 149.

140. Schneider, *op cit.*, 70.

The same principle of seeking to achieve spiritual ends by violent means was present amongst some of the Puritan clergy in England. Hugh Peter, who allegedly was to be seen with a Bible in one hand and a pistol in the other,¹⁴¹ described the second day of the bombardment of Winchester (late in September, 1645) as follows:

The Lord's Day we spent in preaching and prayer, whilst our gunners were battering ...¹⁴²

Probably few ministers carried a weapon, as Hugh Peter allegedly did, but they would heartily have endorsed Cromwell's belief that:

God had put a sword into the hand of Parliament "for the terror of evil-doers ..."¹⁴³

These few examples at least give an idea of the mindset and outlook of the clergy in the broader Puritan constituency.

To turn to Gurnall is to discover a very different atmosphere and outlook that can be summed up as irenic. He mourned the divisions amongst the godly and the violence-justified actions of even the clergy.

His own feelings were clear:

I love, I confess, a clear and still air, but, above all, in the church among believers ... (I.550)

Turning to the state of the nation and the church he mourned:

O sirs, what a sweet silence and peace there was among Christians a dozen years ago. (Approximately 1636, see page (p.37), Methinks the looking back to those blessed days in this respect - though they had also another way their troubles, yet not so uncomfortable, because that storm united, this (the Civil War) scatters the saints' spirits ... (I.189)

To begin with Gurnall had very definite views on the nature of the Christian ministry, which co-incided with his views on the nature of the Christian's spiritual combat.

The gospel, in and of itself could never bring division or sow contention:

The gospel cannot be faulted that breathes peace ... This dividing quarrelling spirit is contrary to the gospel. (I.547+548)

141. Fraser, op.cit., 100.

142. Fraser, ibid., 169.

143. Fraser, loc.cit., 169.

His reason now follows:

All truth is reducible to a unity, like lines they lovingly meet in one centre - the God of truth - and are so far from jostling and clashing, that, as stones in an arch, they uphold one another. They then which so sweetly agree in one themselves cannot learn (teach) us to divide. (I.548)

The nature of gospel unity and its outworking is thus based on a theological and not a pragmatic truth, namely 'the God of truth'.

The preacher-pastor's role was to act as peacemaker between God and sinners, and Christian's within the church, and this would then work its way into and leaven the nation:

O how strangely do these men (his fellow-clergy) forget their Lord that sent them, who is a Prince of peace! ... The gospel of peace is a strange text, one would think, to preach division and raise strife from; and the pulpit as strange a mount for to plant the battering pieces of contention on. (I.547)

Gurnall then boldly outlined the work of a gospel minister (which we must keep in mind when considering the direct or indirect justification of physical warfare against God's physical enemies, by many of the Puritan clergy).

He said explicitly that:

their work ... is not to blow a trumpet of sedition and confusion, or sound an alarm to battle, but rather (to preach) a joyful retreat from the bloody fight wherein their lusts had engaged them against God and one another. Indeed there is a war they are to proclaim, but it is only against sin and Satan. (I.547)

Those who make the gospel their instrument to promote strife and contention dip:

their sin into a deep die, who abuse the gospel to a quite contrary end ... What would the prince think of that captain who, instead of encouraging his soldiers to fall on with united forces as one man against the common enemy, should make a speech to set his soldiers together by the ears among themselves? Surely he would hang him up for a traitor ... O woe to such vile men who have prostituted the gospel ... (I.547)

The use of the word 'prostituted' reveals the depth of Gurnall's understanding of a unifying gospel and a dividing gospel.

It is not going too far to submit that Gurnall's perspective of the

nature of the Christian ministry, in terms of Christian warfare, was radically different from Cromwell's army chaplains and those who preached the famous 'Root-and-Branch' sermons to Parliament in the early 1640's.

Two further aspects need mentioning.

The first concerns the relation of church and state. As a man of his age Gurnall saw the church as part of the fabric of society. (See here pp. 19-20 and particularly G.R. Cragg's statement, footnote 32). Nevertheless, when defining the role of the Christian minister in relation to the Civil War the basic principle he proposed was that of non-interference. The Christian minister was to keep to that sphere God had assigned him and not 'sound an alarm to (physical) battle'. Without perhaps realizing it, Gurnall, in establishing the principle of non-interference, was in fact laying the foundation for the separation of church and state.

Secondly, in relation to the Christian ministry, was Gurnall's refusal in 1662 to follow hundreds of his fellow-Puritans into the wilderness as a result of the Act of Uniformity, not just the choice of a 'soft-option'; the prostitution of his conscience and evidence of spiritual 'backsliding'? (See p.15)

The following answers should dispel such notions:

1) The Presbyterians (to which party Gurnall almost certainly belonged: see p. 10, footnote 20), often found:

that they could go a considerable distance toward meeting the requirements imposed, and it was legitimately a matter of doubt whether the remaining obstacles were such as to compel them to forsake the national church.¹⁴⁴

2) It is also possible that Gurnall saw in the Declaration of Breda (April 1660), the Act of Indemnity (August 1660), the First Declaration of Indulgence by Charles II (1662) and later in the Second Declaration of Indulgence (1672), the portents of a more understanding and sympathetic attitude towards the Puritans from Charles II and Parliament. Living in this hope he stayed on within the Established Church. It was, unfortunately a naïve hope.

¹⁴⁴, Cragg, op.cit., 8.

3) In the light of the fact that the gospel was a gospel of unity and not division, (I.547,548) did Gurnall not see the departure of his fellow-Puritans as the sin of schism? The loss of between 1 500 and 2 000 ministers was a major spiritual catastrophe both for the Established Church and England as a nation.¹⁴⁵

4) Following on from 3) is perhaps the most important answer of all, namely the distinction Gurnall made between the 'essentials' of the gospel versus 'circumstantials' or 'adiaphora'.

Gurnall, like the vast majority of his fellow-Puritans was a Calvinist. There was thus a deep theological unity between those we may call the 'Anglican' Puritans (who remained within the Established Church after 1662), and the 'Puritan' Anglicans, Presbyterians and Independents who suffered ejection. Gurnall's irenic moderation lies in the distinction he made between what he believed to be the 'essentials' and the 'lesser things'; between the fundamentals of the gospel and issues which had no direct bearing upon being justified by faith. (I.300) He was, for example, happy to endorse both the extemporaneous form of praying (which he describes as a 'conceived form'), and the set, liturgical form (which he says is prayer cast into a form beforehand). (II.396)

This irenic spirit indicates, as we have already suggested, Gurnall's profound concern for the unity of the church. To bring division into the church over 'lesser' issues, as was increasingly happening (for eg. the Presbyterian-Independent quarrels), was to rend and tear apart the Body of Christ.

In a significant passage preached ca. 1658-62, (II.399-400), he dealt with 'the scrupulous separatist'. He admitted that if:

the foundation of doctrine be destroyed, and the worship became idolatrous, in that case God goes before us, and calls all the faithful after him to come out from the communion of such a church. (II.400)

Such a statement is entirely in keeping with the moral integrity of Gurnall's character as it emerges from his preaching and thinking; he took decisions based upon principles, not 'soft options'.

145. For a very helpful discussion of the numbers of Puritan pastors that were ejected or resigned see: Whiting, C.E. Studies in English Puritanism from the Restoration to the Revolution, 1660-1688. Frank Cass, 1968, page 10 and following.

However, he continued, it had always to be remembered that:

God doth not, for corruption of doctrine that are remote from the foundation, or of worship in things ritual and of an inferior nature, cast off a church, and withdraw his presence from it; neither ought we. (II.400)

Neither ought we! For if things continue as they were at the present time, then:

truly we are more likely to drive Christ from us than invite him to us. (I.487)

Gurnall died in 1679. A year later E. Stillingfleet published a sermon that provoked instantaneous public reaction and discussion. It was published in 1680 and entitled 'The Mischief of Separation'. His argument, with which I suggest Gurnall would have agreed, was simple and straightforward:

The nonconformists, he pointed out, conceded that the Church of England was a true church of Christ; they admitted that unjustifiable separation was sin, and yet they persisted in what was indistinguishable from sin. If it were permissible for them to attend church and even on occasion to receive communion, how could they justify an attitude which unquestionably weakened the national church?¹⁴⁶

4. A belief that the Christian should have a deep respect for those in authority over him.

Gurnall believed in an orderly society in which:

it should be the care of every Christian, to stand orderly in the particular place wherein God hath set him. (I.279)

Furthermore, there was a clear distinction between the magistrate's business and function and that of the subject. (I.280)

He laid down a crucial principle:

We are to pray for magistrates that they may rule in the fear of God, but if they do not, we may not step upon the bench and do his work for him. God requires no more than faithfulness in our place. (I.282)

He would hardly have endorsed the sentiments of many of his fellow Puritans who preached civil disobedience, on the grounds that they were fighting against the Antichrist.

146. Cragg, op.cit., 233.

Just how out of step with the broader Puritan constituency Gurnall had become is obvious from two more statements. Good subjects, he said in a section preached either during or immediately after the Civil War, ca. 1644-58:

follow their calling, commit state matters to the wisdom of their prince and his council. When wronged they appeal to their prince in his laws for right; and when they do offend their prince, they submit to the penalty of the laws, and bear his displeasure patiently, till humbling themselves they recover his favour, and do not, in a discontent, fall into open rebellion. (I.135)

In the same vein he added:

It is bad enough for a subject not to keep the king's laws, but far worse for him to presume to mint a law of his own head. The first is undutiful, but the latter is a traitor. (II.544)

It is significant that his principle of non-interference, dealt with earlier appears here again.

5. Gurnall discerned a spiritual, moral and social exhaustion in the nation that would have far-reaching consequences.

Inevitably Gurnall had to arrive at a certain judgement about the Civil War itself and the consequences of such an upheaval, which were already manifesting themselves while he was still alive.

The broader Puritan constituency, as we have seen:

were all convinced that they waged war which was essentially holy and Christian.¹⁴⁷

The New Model Army was 'God's fighting church', the divinely chosen instrument to establish a 'holy commonwealth' and to inaugurate the 'millenium'.

Gurnall viewed it in exactly opposite terms: it was a major catastrophe that had brought chaos to England. Without trying to read the future he discerned that it would have sad and serious consequences. How far-reaching even he could not guess.

147. Walker, op.cit., 39.

The Civil War he discerned and said had brought days of great confusion in the Christian Church (I.110-111) and unhappy changes. (I.426) It had caused untold harm to the Christian ministry: when '... were people's affections more withdrawn from their ministers?' (II.257) He feared that the War might even hasten a Papist resurgence, (I.110) and believed that many had actually become apostates because of the military warfare in the land. (I.260) This storm had scattered the saints' spirits, (I.189) and set Christians at each other's throats. (I.189) When the Civil War ended he thanked God that '... at last (the sword had) got into its scabbard of peace ...' (II.337) The War he stated had brought dissension, sad miseries, blood, contention, confusion, (I.557) rivers of blood, ruined cities and towns, and made families fatherless and husbandless. (I.426) He mourned that:

many thousands have been sent to the grave in a few late years among us by the sword of man ... (I.3)

The political and moral malfunctioning in English society and life was accelerated by the death of Oliver Cromwell in September, 1658.

John Brown concurs:

He was the one strong man in the nation, the only one able to control and combine the conflicting elements of the time, and he was not suffered to continue ... When Cromwell fell the rule of the puritan fell with him.¹⁴⁸

Richard Cromwell, who succeeded his father, was unable to contain the rising tide of conflicting forces that involved the Army, the Presbyterians, the Independents and the Sectaries, all with their own demands. None of them:

had the political skill or the moral authority to control the confusion into which the country was subsiding ... The acquisition of power confronted them with problems too intricate for them to solve. Political and constitutional difficulties emerged to which they had no answers ... They were fatally divided amongst themselves ... The conservative elements within Puritanism - the Presbyterians, the lawyers, the merchants of the city of London - increasingly favoured a restoration of the monarchy. They shared a growing alarm at the multiplying signs of social disintegration ... The confusions of the closing months of the Interregnum revealed far more than the bankruptcy of Puritanism as a political

148. Brown, J. The English Puritans. Cambridge University Press, 1910, 149.

force. They showed that it had no inner cohesion.¹⁴⁹

Gurnall was also vindicated in his spiritual and moral assessment. The nation's spiritual capital was so decayed that many were becoming apostates and Christians were at each other's throats. John Owen, one of the greatest of the Puritans, also discerned this:

Even before his death, John Owen had noted the prevalent signs of spiritual decay. He observed that the distinctive Puritan convictions were held with a tepid propriety that compared unfavourably with the enthusiasm of the days of old.¹⁵⁰

Religious worship was:

generally neglected, while drunkenness and immorality emphasised the extent of the moral collapse which was taking place.¹⁵¹

The nation was weary:

There was the weariness resulting from incessant change and uncertainty ... there was the revulsion of feeling brought about by the beheading of King Charles I ...¹⁵²

Men who had hitherto:

shown little inclination to favour the Royal cause were growing sick of being subject to the caprices of a domineering soldiery.¹⁵³

To which Henson adds:

The Puritan domination had borne hardly on great sections of the community. The capricious military despotism, into which statesmanship had degenerated, had thrown into revolt the self-respect of ordinary Englishmen, of which the King (Charles II) was the symbol, (and) appealed to them with irresistible force.¹⁵⁴

In New England the situation was no better. The revolt against Puritan authority was already present amongst some of the passengers on the Mayflower en route to New England. Schneider says, quoting another

149. Cragg, op.cit., 1-2.

150. Cragg, ibid., 256, footnote 3.

151. Cragg, ibid., 256, footnote 4.

152. Brown, op.cit., 150-151.

153. Gardiner, S.R. The First Two Stuarts and the Puritan Revolution, 1603-1660. Longmans, Green, 1887, 187.

154. Henson, H.H. Puritanism in England. Burt Franklin, New York, 1972 edition, 183.

source:

"Some of the London element boasted openly that they did not intend to be ruled by anyone, but would use their own liberty."¹⁵⁵

Church members were a minority from the first and the philosophy of the holy commonwealth:

far from being a statement of fact, soon became merely the ideal of only a minority.¹⁵⁶

The Half-Way Covenant,¹⁵⁷ resulted in:

The unregenerate second generation (being) allowed to remain in (the) church and to have their children baptised into the church ... Thus, within a comparatively short time, the churches were composed, for the most part, of technically unregenerate persons ...¹⁵⁸

This could only accelerate the downward spiral of spiritual life within the New England churches, apart from the theological confusion which it caused.

The scene in England, described by Cragg, might equally apply to New England:

Principles of all kinds were more laxly held ... Religious enthusiasm was declining; weakness and degeneracy were now the marks of dissent ... The great leaders of the first generation were disappearing from the scene, and their loss was sorely felt. Their successors might be very worthy men, but to many an anxious observer they seemed eminent neither for fervour nor for power.¹⁵⁹

155. Schneider, op.cit., 74, footnote 1.

156. Schneider, *ibid.*, 77.

157. In the so-called Cambridge Platform of 1648, children of members within the Covenant of Grace were also counted as members. However, when they came of age they were required to make a public profession of their regeneration. This was an embarrassing ordeal. Consequently when the time came many of the second generation declined to make such a profession. They nevertheless regarded themselves as church members and asked to have their children baptised. This dilemma forced a compromise. They were allowed to remain in the church and to have their children baptised, but neither they nor their children were allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper - they were members, but not in full communion, hence the term 'Half-Way Covenant'.

158. Schneider, op.cit., 86-87.

159. Cragg, op.cit., 256-257.

Let Gurnall have the final word:

O who can think what a glorious morning shone upon England in that famous parliament begun in 1640, and not weep again to see our hopes for such a glorious reformation, that opened with them, now shut up in blood and war, contention and confusion. (I.557)

O England! England! I fear some sad judgment or other bodes thee! (I.485)

--ooOoo--

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Because this thesis is basically historical-theological the Bibliography has been divided into various sections for easier reference purposes.

BOOKS

BIBLICAL EXPOSITION

Lloyd-Jones, D.M. The Christian Warfare, An exposition of Ephesians 6:10-13. The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1976.

Lloyd-Jones, D.M. The Christian Soldier, An exposition of Ephesians 6:10-20. The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1976.

BIOGRAPHY

Abbot, W.C. A Bibliography of Oliver Cromwell. Cambridge: Mass, 1929.

Bainton, R.H. Here I stand, A Life of Martin Luther. A Mentor Book from the New American Library, New York, 27th Printing. (No date of publication supplied).

Edwards, B.H. God's Outlaw: The Story of William Tyndale. Evangelical Press, Welwyn, England, 1976.

Fraser, A. Cromwell, Our Chief of Men. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, Third Impression, May 1974.

Fraser, A. King Charles II. Macdonald Futura Publishers. Contact Book Edition, 1980.

Hill, C. God's Englishman, Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution. Penguin Books, Pelican Biographies, 1973 Reprint.

Jenkins, E. Elizabeth the Great. Methuen: University Paperbacks, London, 1965.

Martin, Hugh. Puritanism and Richard Baxter. SCM Press, London, 1954.

Parker, G.H.W. The Morning Star, Wycliffe and the Dawn of the Reformation. Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1965.

Stearns, R.P. The Strenuous Puritan: Hugh Peter, 1598-1660. Urbana, Illinois, 1954.

Toon, P. God's Statesman, The Life and Work of John Owen: Pastor, Educator, Theologian. The Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1971.

Walker, E.C. William Dell. Master Puritan. W. Heffer and Sons, Cambridge, 1970.

Waugh, E. Edmund Campion: Scholar, Priest, Hero, Martyr. Oxford University Press, 1980.

HISTORY

- Adair, J. Founding Fathers, the Puritans in England and America. J.M. Dent, London, 1982.
- Alderman, C.L. Death to the King, The Story of the English Civil War. Bailey Brothers and Swinfen, Folkestone, 1973 edition.
- Atkinson, J. The Great Light. Luther and the Reformation. Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1968.
- Bainton, R.H. The Medieval Church. D. van Nostrand, An Anvil Original, Princeton, NJ, 1962.
- Barrow, A. The Flesh is Weak: An intimate history of the Church of England. Hamish Hamilton, 1980.
- Bence-Jones, M. The Cavaliers. Constable, London, 1976.
- Bindoff, S.T. Tudor England. Penguin Books, 1964 edition.
- Cohn, N. The Pursuit of the Millenium, Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages. Granada in Paladin Books, 1978 edition.
- Collinson, P. The Elizabethan Puritan Movement. Jonathan Cape, London, 1967.
- Cragg, G.C. Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution, 1660-1688. Cambridge University Press, 1957.
- Dickens, A.G. The English Reformation. Fontana/Collins, Tenth Impression, September 1978 of the revised edition first issued in Fontana, 1967.
- Emerson, E.H. English Puritanism from John Hooper to John Milton. Duke University Press, Durham, NC, 1968.
- Everitt, A.M. Suffolk and the Great Rebellion, 1640-1660. Ipswich, 1960.
- Fletcher, A. Tudor Rebellions: Seminar Studies in History. Longman, London, New Impression, 1979.
- Gardiner, S.R. The First Two Stuarts and the Puritan Revolution, 1603-1660. Epochs of Modern History Series. Longmans Green, London, 1887.
- Gurnall, W. The Christian in Complete Armour. A Treatise of the Saint's War against the Devil. The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1964 edition.
- Haller, W. The Rise of Puritanism. Harper Torchbooks, copyright 1938, Columbia University Press, First Harper Torchbook edition published in 1957.
- Hill, C. Puritanism and the Revolution, Studies in Interpretation of the English Revolution of the 17th Century. Secker and Warberg, London, 1958.
- Hill, C. The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution. Penguin Books, 1975.
- Hill, C. Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England. Secker and Warberg, London, 1964.
- Hill, C. The Century of Revolution. 1603-1714. Abacus edition, London, 1978.

- Hurstfield, J. and Smith, A.G.R. Elizabethan People, State and Society. Documents of Modern History Series. Edward Arnold, London, 1972.
- Kenyon, J.P. The Popish Plot. Penguin Books, Pelican Publications, 1974.
- Knappen, M.M. Tudor Puritanism. A Chapter in the History of Idealism. The University of Chicago Press, First Phoenix edition, 1965.
- Lake, P. Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church. Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Lamont, W.M. Godly Rule, Politics and Religion, 1603-1660. Macmillan, St. Martin's Press, 1969.
- Lewis, P. The Genius of Puritanism. Carey Publications, Sussex, 1975.
- Liu, T. Discord in Zion: The Puritan Divines and the Puritan Revolution, 1640-1660. Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1973.
- Loades, D.M. Politics and the Nation: Obedience, Resistance and Public Order. 1450-1660. Fontana/Collins, London, 1974.
- Luke, M.M. Gloriana, The Years of Elizabeth the First. Victor Gollancz, 1974.
- MacCaffrey, W. Queen Elizabeth and the making of the Policy 1572-1588. Princeton University Press, 1981.
- Meyer, C.S. Elizabeth I and the Religious Settlement of 1559. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1960.
- Morrill, J.S. The Revolt of the Provinces, Conservatives and Radicals in the English Civil War 1630-1650. In the Series: Historical Problems: Studies and Documents no. 26, Prof G.R. Elton (Ed.), Allen and Unwin, London, 1976.
- New, John F.H. Anglican and Puritan, the Basis of their Opposition, 1558-1640. Adam and Charles Black, London, 1964.
- Pennington, D. and Thomas, K. (Eds). Puritans and Revolutionaries. Essays in Seventeenth-Century History presented to Christopher Hill, Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1978.
- Reese, M.M. The Puritan Impulse, The English Revolution, 1559-1660. Adam and Charles Black, London, 1975.
- Roots, Ivan, The Great Rebellion 1642-1660. B.T. Batsford, London, 1966. (Fabric of English History Series).
- Russel, F.H. The Just War in the Middle Ages. Cambridge University Press, 1975, (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Third Series, Vol. 8).
- Salt, Leo F. Saints in Arms, Puritanism and Democracy in Cromwell's Army. Oxford University Press edition, 1959.
- Seaver, P.S. The Puritan Lectureship: The Politics of Religious Dissent, 1560-1662. Stanford University Press, 1970.
- Smith, L.B. The Elizabethan Epic. Jonathan Cape, London, 1966.

- Sylvester, D.W. Educational Documents 800-1816. Methuen, Date missing.
- Taylor, D. Living in England: The Elizabethan Age. Dennis Dobson, London, MCMLXI, 3rd Impression.
- Wedgwood, C.V. The King's Peace 1637-1647. The Great Rebellion. Collins/Fontana, London, Seventh Impression, September 1977.
- Wedgwood, C.V. The King's War 1641-1647. The Great Rebellion. Collins/Fontana, London, Seventh Impression, September 1977.

THEOLOGY

- Breward, Ian. The Work of William Perkins. The Sutton Courtenay Press; The Courtenay Library of Reformation Classics 3. Appleford, Abingdon, 1970.
- Brooks, T. Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices. The Banner of Truth Trust edition, 1968.
- Ferguson, S.B. The Christian Life: A Doctrinal Introduction. Hodder and Stoughton, 1981. (In particular Chapter 14: The Christian's Conflicts).
- Gurnall, W. The Christian in Complete Armour. A Treatise of the Saint's War against the Devil. The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1964 edition.
- Kevan, E.F. The Grace of Law, A Study in Puritan Theology. The Carey Kingsgate Press, London, 1964.
- Murray, Iain. The Puritan Hope. A Study in Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy. The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1971.
- Murray, Iain. The Reformation of the Church. A Collection of Reformed and Puritan Documents on Church Issues. The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1965.
- Schaeffer, F.A. The Great Evangelical Disaster. Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois, 1984.
- Schneider, H.W. The Puritan Mind. Ann Arbor Paperbacks. The University of Michigan Press, Fourth Printing, 1966.
- Woodhouse, A.S.P. (Ed). Puritanism and Liberty. Being the Army Debates (1647-9) from the Clarke Manuscripts with Supplementary Documents. J.M. Dent and Sons, London, Second Edition 1974.

PAPERS. The Westminster Conference. Formerly known as 'The Puritan and Reformed Studies Conference', held annually at Westminster Chapel, London.

- Caiger, J.A. Preaching - Puritan and Reformed. 1961 Conference, pages 46-61.
- Cook, Paul E.G. The Church. 1977 Conference, pages 15-42.
- Cook, Paul E.G. The Life and Work of a Minister according to the Puritans. 1958 Conference, pages 9-17.
- Jones, Hywel R. Authority. 1977 Conference, pages 5-14.

- Jones, Hywel R. The Death of Presbyterianism. 1969 Conference, pages 31-42.
- Lewis, P. Puritan England. 1975 Conference, pages 60-75.
- Lewis, P. The Puritan Casuistry of Prayer - Some Cases of Conscience Resolved. 1971 Conference, pages 5-22.
- Lloyd-Jones, D.M. Ecclesiola in Ecclesia. 1965 Conference, pages 57-72.
- Lloyd-Jones, D.M. John Knox - The Founder of Puritanism. 1972 Conference, pages 95-111.
- Lloyd-Jones, D.M. Preaching. 1977 Conference, pages 89-102.
- Lloyd-Jones, D.M. Puritanism and its Origins. 1971 Conference, pages 72-90.
- Lloyd-Jones, D.M. Puritan Perplexities. 1962 Conference, pages 64-80.
- Murray, Iain. Scripture and 'Things Indifferent'. 1963 Conference, pages 15-35.
- Oliver, R.W. The Externals of Worship. 1977 Conference, pages 58-70.
- Packer, J.I. The Puritan Approach to Worship. 1963 Conference, pages 3-14.
- Packer, J.I. The Puritans as Interpreters of Scripture. 1958 Conference, pages 18-26.
- Packer, J.I. The Puritan Conscience. 1962 Conference, pages 18-31.
- Packer, J.I. The Puritan View of Preaching the Gospel, 1959 Conference, pages 11-21.
- Rawlinson, L.A. Worship in Liturgy and Form. 1977 Conference, pages 71-88.
- Roberts, M.J. Episcopacy. 1977 Conference, pages 43-57.
- Wilson, J.L. Catechisms, and their use amongst the Puritans. 1966 Conference, pages 31-44.

MONOGRAPHS.

- Lloyd-Jones, D.M. The Weapons of our Warfare. Report of the Campbell Morgan Memorial Lectureship delivered in Westminster Chapel on Wednesday, June 10th 1964. Sixteenth Lecture and published by the Memorial Lectureship. No date of publication given.

JOURNALS.

1. History Today.

- Adams, S. Faction, Clientage and Party. English Politics 1550-1603. December 1982, pages 33-39.
- Cressy, D. Spectacle and Power: Apollo and Solomon at the Court of Henry VIII. October 1982, pages 16-22.
- Dainton, C. Medieval Schools of England. August 1979, pages 489-496.
- Delorme, Mary. Gilbert Burnet. Bishop and Historian. September 1979, pages 594-602.

- Duffy, Eamon. The Bishop of Rome and the Catholics of England. June 1982, pages 5-12.
- Fraser, A. Mary Ward. A 17th Century Reformer. May 1981, pages 14-18.
- Guy, J.A. Sir Thomas More and the Heretics. February 1980, pages 11-15.
- Haynes, A. Supplying the Elizabethan Court. November 1978, pages 729-737.
- Morrill, J. Manning, Brian and Underdown, David. What was the English Revolution? March 1984, pages 11-25.
- O'Day, R. Room at the top. Oxford and Cambridge in the Tudor and Stuart Age. February 1984, pages 31-38.
- Roots, I. The Short and Troublesome Reign of Richard IV. March 1980, pages 11-15.
- Rush, D.B. The Religious Toleration of James I. February 1979, pages 106-112.
- Russell, C. Why did Charles I fight the Civil War? June 1984, pages 31-34.
- Salmon, J.H.M. Oliver Cromwell and the French Romantics. March 1980, pages 16-21.
- Sharpe, K. Archbishop Laud. A re-evaluation of Laud's Career. August 1983, pages 26-30.
- Sharpe, K. Faction at the early Stuart Court. October 1983, pages 39-46.
- Spufford, M. Portraits of Society. Popular Fiction in the 17th Century England. February 1982, pages 11-17.
- Stevenson, D. Professor Trevor-Roper and the Scottish Revolution. February 1980, pages 40-43.
- Trevor-Roper, H. Clarendon's 'History of the Rebellion'. February 1979, pages 73-79.
2. The Journal of Christian Reconstruction.
- Ishkanian, J. Oliver Cromwell. Vol. VI, No. 1. Chalcedon, Summer 1979, pages 177-194.
- Chilton, D.H. Cromwell and his Critics (A Reply to Jon Zens). Vol. VI, No. 2. Chalcedon, Winter 1979-80, pages 34-74.

FURTHER SUGGESTED READING

BOOKS

BIOGRAPHY

- Bromiley, G.W. Thomas Cranmer, Theologian. Lutterworth Press, London, 1965.
- Lyon, D. Karl Marx, A Christian Appreciation of his Life and Thought. Lion Publishing-Inter-Varsity Press, 1979.
- Winston, R. Charlemagne. From the Hammer to the Cross. Harper Row, 1968.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

- Koch, K.E. Between Christ and Satan. Evangelization Publishers, Berg-hausen, 1961.
- Koch, K.E. Christian Counselling and Occultism. Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1965.
- Leahy, F.S. Satan cast out. A Study in Biblical Demonology. The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1975.
- Montgomery, J.W. Principalities and Powers. The World of the Occult. Newly enlarged and revised edition. Dimension Books, Minneapolis, 1975.
- Penn-Lewis, J. and Roberts, E. War on the Saints. Abridged edition. The Overcomer Literature Trust, Poole, Dorset. No date supplied.
- Unger, M.F. Biblical Demonology. A Study of the Spiritual Forces behind the Present World Unrest. Scripture Press Publications, Illinois, Eleventh Printing, 1973.
- Wright, J.S. Christianity and the Occult. Scripture Union, London, 1971.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS, WAR, VIOLENCE AND REVOLUTION.

- Arendt, H. On Violence. Harcourt Brace and World, New York, 1970.
- Bainton, R.H. Christian attitudes toward War and Peace. A Historical Survey and Critical Re-evaluation. Abingdon Press, Nashville/New York, 1960.
- Boesak, A. Farewell to Innocence. A social-ethical study of black theology and black power. Ravan Press, Johannesburg, Second Impression, 1977.
- Broomhall, A.J. Time for Action. Christian Responsibility to a non-Christian World. Inter-Varsity Fellowship, London, June 1966 (Reprint).
- Catherwood, F. A Better Way. The case for a Christian Social Order. Inter-Varsity Press, London, 1975.
- Catherwood, F. The Christian Citizen. Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1969.

- Fisher, H.A.L. History of Europe. 2 Volumes. Fontana, 1969.
- Greaves, R.L. John Bunyan. Courtenay Studies in Reformation Theology. 2. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1969.
- Green, V.H.H. Renaissance and Reformation. A Survey of European History between 1450 and 1660. Edward Arnold, London, 1964 reprint.
- Henson, H.H. Puritanism in England. Burt Franklin, New York, 1972 reprint.
- Hill, C. Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution. Oxford, 1965.
- Hill, C. Antichrist in 17th Century England. London, 1971.
- Ives, E.W. God in History. Lion Publishing, Herts., UK, 1979.
- Kenyon, J.P. The Stuarts. A Study in English Kingship. Fontana/Collins, 12th Impression, 1975.
- Kirchner, Walther, Western Civilization since 1500. Barnes and Noble Books, 2nd edition, 1975.
- Latourette, K.S. A History of Christianity, Vol. II. Reformation to the Present. Harper and Row, revised edition, 1975.
- Meeter, H.H. The Basic Ideas of Calvinism. International Publications, Grand Rapids, 1965.
- Morgan, E.S. The Puritan Family. Religious and Domestic relations in Seventeenth-Century England. Harper and Row, New York, 1966.
- Renwick, A.M. and Harman, A.M. The Story of the Church. Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, Second and Enlarged Edition, 1985.
- Trevor-Roper, H. The Rise of Christian Europe. Thames and Hudson, 1966.
- Verduin, L. The Reformers and their Stepchildren. The Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1964.
- Whiting, C.E. Studies in English Puritanism from the Restoration to the Revolution, 1660-1688. Frank Cass & Son, New Impression 1968.
- Wilkinson, J.T. (Ed). Gildas Salvianus: The Reformed Pastor by Richard Baxter, 1656. The Epworth Press, London, 1955 reprint.
- Youngs, J. Sixteenth-Century England. The Pelican Social History of England Series. Penguin Books, 1984.