

Chapter 1

The final number of Israelites much increasing in Ægypt, 6. especially after the death of Ioseph and his brethren, 8. a new king, that knew not Ioseph in vaine striueth to hinder their multiplication, 11. by imposing workes vpon them, 15. and by commanding to kill, 22. and to drowne al the male-children of them. God in the meane time rewardeth the midwiues, that fearing him, killed not the children.

These be the names of the children of Israel, that entred into Ægypt with Iacob: they did enter in euerie one with their houses, ² Ruben, Simeon, Leui, Iudas, ³ Iffachar, Zabulon, and Benjamin, ⁴ Dan, and Neptali, Gad, and Afer. ⁵ Therefore al the foules that came out of Iacobs thigh, were feuentie: and Ioseph was in Ægypt. ⁶ Who being dead, and al his brethren, and al that generation, ⁷ the children of Israel increased, and as it were springing vp did multiplie: and growing strong exceedingly, filled the land. ⁸ In the meane time there arose a new king ouer Ægypt, that knew not Ioseph: ⁹ and he said to his people: Behold ^a)the people of the children of Israel is much, and stronger then we. ¹⁰ Come, let vs wifely oppresse the same, lest perhaps it multiplie: and if there shall be anie warre against vs, it ioyned with our enemies, and we being ouerthrowne, they depart out of the land. ¹¹ Therefore ^b)he set ouer them maisters of the workes, to afflict them with burdens: and they built vnto Pharao cities of tabernacles, Phithom, and Rameffes. ¹² And the more they did oppresse them, so much the more they multiplied, and increased: ¹³ and the Ægyptians hated the children of Israel, and deriding afflicted them: ¹⁴ and they brought their life into bitterness with the

The first part of this booke. Of the Israelites feruile affliction in Ægypt, and their deliuerie from thence.

^a Enuie, vaine feare, (*v. 10.*) & hatred of true religiō (*v. 13.*) are the causes why Infidels persecute the faithful.

^b The first persecution was in temporal losses and bodilie paines, by pressing them with workes.

hard workes of clay, and bricke, and with al feruice, wherewith they were preffed in the workes of the earth. 15 And the King of Ægypt faid to the midwiues of the Hebrewes: of whom one was called Sephora, the other Phua, 16 commanding them: a)When you fhall be midwiues to the Hebrew wemen, and the time of deliuerie is come: if it be a manchild, kil it: if a woman, referue her. 17 b)But the midwiues feared God, and did not according to the commandement of the king of Ægypt, but preferued the menchildren. 18 To whom being called vnto him, the king faid: What is this that you ment to do, that you would faue the men-children? 19 Who answered: The c)Hebrew wemen are not as the Ægyptian wemen: for they haue the knowledge to play the midwife them felues, and before we come to them, they are deliuered. 20 God therfore did wel to the midwiues: and the people encreafed, and became ftrong exceedingly. 21 And d)becaufe the midwiues feared God, he built them houfes. 22 Pharao therfore commanded al his people, faying: Whatfoeuer fhall be borne of the male fex, e)caft it into the riuer: whatfoeuer of the female, referue it.

ANNOTATIONS

- 17 But the midwiues feared God.) In commendation of the midwiues not obeying the kings commandment, Moyfes oppofeth the feare of God, to the feare of Princes; fhewing therby that when their commandments are contrarie, the fubiects muft feare God, and not do that the Princes commandeth. So did our Sauour himfelf teach, and that for feare of damnation, faying: *Feare him vvho hath povver to caft into hel.* And fo his Apoftles indued with the Holie Ghoft, practifed, answering in this cafe, that they muft heare God rather then men. Againe, *God muft be obeyed rather then men.* Always vnderftood, when they are contrarie.
- God muft be feared before Princes commanding contrarie things.
- Princes muft be obeyed in lawful things.
- Al lies are finnes and vnlawful.
1. *Pet.* 2. For otherwife both S. Peter and S. Paul teach vs, that Princes, yea Infidels, of whom they efpecially fpeake, muft be obeyed.
- Ro. 13. 19 Hebrevv vvemen are not.) Herein the midwiues finned. For it is neuer lawful to lye. Beaufe *the lavv of God is truth,*
- Mat.* 10.
Luc. 12.
Act. 4.
& 5.
1. Pet. 2.
Ro. 13.
Pfal. 118. v. 142.

^a The fecond was fecrete murder.

^b The third was open murder.

wherby S. Auguftin proueth (*li. cont. mend. c. 10.*) that whatfoeuer varieth from truth is vnlawful. VVhen therfore (faith he) examples of lying are propofed to vs out of holie Scripture, either they are not lies, but are thought to be, whiles they are not vnderftood, or if they be lies, they are not to be imitated, becaufe they are vnlawful. S. Gregorie teacheth the fame (*li. 18. Moral. c. 26.*) *Quia profecto ab equitate difcrepat, quifquid a veritate difcordat. Becaufe affuredly vwhatfoeuer difagreeth from veritie, differeth from equitie.* Yet thefe fathers hold fuch an officious lye, as this was, to be a leffe finne, and more eafily pardoned, and purged by good workes following.

21 Becaufe the midviues feared God.) Feare of God as it is properly taken in holie Scripture, is that holie feare, by which the children of God refraine from finne, and that with temporal danger, left they fhould offend the diuine Maieftie. So thefe midviues endangering their owne liues, by not fulfilling Pharaos commandment, had the true feare of God, and for the fame were rewarded, as is moft probable, eternally: though mention be here made only of temporal reward, after the maner of the old Teftament. VVhere fuch promifes were made to Abraham, and other moft godlie Patriarches, for an affay only and taift of euerlafting life, which is more exprefly promifed in the Gofpel of Chrifft, as S. Hierom teacheth, *Epift. ad Dardanum.*

Venial finnes.

Feare of God meritorious.

Temporal rewardes promifed in the old Teftamēt, eternal in the new.