

AN
APOLOGY
FOR THE
HONORABLE NATION
OF THE
JEWS,
And all the SONS of
ISRAEL.

Written by Edward Nicholas, Gent.

Isaiah 14. 1. For Jehovah will have compassion of Jacob, and will yet chase Israel, and cause them to rest in their own land, and the stranger shall joyn himself unto them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

Deut. 23. 39. Happy art thou O Israel: Who is like unto thee, O people! saved by Jehovah, &c.

Jer. 30. 7. Alas for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacobs trouble, but he shall be delivered from it.

Jer. 31. 14, 15, 16, 17. Thus saith Jehovah, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted because they were not: Thus saith Jehovah, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears, &c.

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A N
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 OF THE
J E W S.



That our Nation of *England* hath already suffered much affliction, and that we yet labor under many burthens, fears, and doubtings, what will be the sequel, is a thing so clear, that lamentable experience doth abundantly testifie.

Those that are in authority in this kingdom, and we all, may make the application; that the crying sins of our Nation do call for vengeance, which we have just cause to expect, unless we meet God by repentance, and satisfaction of the oppressed.

To undertake to speak of the many gross and loud crying sins we lie under the guilt of, were to lessen them; they are so many, 'twere better to be silent, then to use few words in rehearsing them that are so odious to God, least we seem to extenuate them: I shall confine my self to two, The oppression of the poor, And the persecution of the Saints of God. As for the first, I hope that the multitude of affairs (wherein we are involved) have interrupted

(partly) good and pious intentions : The sufferings of many of the faithful friends of the Parliament have been great, and must needs vent themselves by some complaints, and the rather, seeing our good God hath forgiven Ten thousand Talents, as by their great, if not miraculous successes appears, yet every cruel servant takes his brother by the throat for small matters, and exacting the utmost usury (which in quiet and peaceable times is contrary to the Law, as I humbly conceive by some Statute appears) not allowing the freedom to walk on the Lords-day, and to joyn themselves with such Congregations of Gods people for the refreshment of their souls, amidst their sufferings in the outward man, as they desire to do.

But the sin principally intended here, is, The strict and cruel Laws now in force against the most honorable Nation of the world, the Nation of the Jews, a people chosen by God, as appears by the many and large expressions of his favor to them, styling them, *His Gems, his first-born, a precious people above all peoples of the earth, a kingdom of priests, an holy people unto himself*: And further saith, they are his own servants, and should not be in bondage to any, being onely to serve six years, and the seventh to go out free, and in the year of Jubile, every man was to return to his inheritance: But above all, that privilege of theirs, the benefit whereof hath an influence on all the faithful, and redounds to their happiness, *That in thee and thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*: So strong an obligation are we bound in to them through Gods mercy.

And now let all the faithful servants of God take to their considerations, how great indurings that honorable Nation hath suffered, what bloody slaughters have been made of them in London, in the North countrey of England, and divers other parts of this kingdom; and how they have been proscribed and banisht this kingdom, and denied that commerce allowed to all others, even to bar-

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barous Infidels; so that the transcendency of this sin is not to be paralleld, in regard they being so honorably stiled and owned by God himself, in rejecting them, we highly incense the Majesty of Jehovah: whereas we ought rather to honor them whom God honoreth, and to have a grateful remembrance of those people of God, by whom he hath conveyed to his people so great blessings and incomparable privileges, to comfort the afflicted, and not to take the opportunity, when God was angry with them, to help forward the affliction. In their next place, if we would but follow the politicians rule, that aym onely at their own ends and gains (*proh dolor*) that may prove, and will certainly be an advantage to us divers ways, and on the contrary, most dangerous to this kingdom, for that the protection of all men is in Gods people, whose blessings are continually shewred down on a Land for their sakes, of whom are these a part that we have thus abandoned. It was a notable observation of a reverend and godly learned Preacher, before this Parliament, on this Text, *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm*, Psal. 105. 15. That the good or evil usage of Gods people, is the greatest State-interest in the world: how great cause have we then to lay this to our hearts, the godly can best judge.

Furthermore, besides the judgements of God, which our Forefathers have felt by bloody Wars, and other miseries, we at this time have experience of many calamities; and now the years of recompence are approaching, which we have cause to believe, when we read of the many comminations of God, against the spoilers and oppressors of his people the Jews, as Jer. 30. 16. *Therefore, all they that devour thee, shall be devoured, and all thine adversaries, every one of them shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee, shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee, will I give for a prey: and Isa. 33. 1. and 34. 1. to 8. and 41. 11. Behold, all that were incensed against thee, shall be ashamed and confounded, they shall be as nothing, and they that strive with thee, shall perish.*

perish, and so to the end; and 49. 25. *Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered, for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children: And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh, and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine, and all flesh shall know, that I am thy Savior and Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob:* and Jer. 25. 31. and *Isa.* 51. 22, 23. and 60. 14. and 61. 3, 4.

'Tis Objected, The great guilt that lies on the Jews for crucifying Christ, and that therefore, and for refusing the Gospel, they are rejected of God, so unworthy of favor, assistance, and compassion herein desired. In Answer, though this be imputed to the whole Nation, yet it is apparent in the Gospel, that that action was done by the Elders, chief Priests, and Scribes, his Doctrine reproving their Hypocrisie, and laziness and pride, that they wrought a faction against him, and not that the whole Nation were guilty; for the people ere while brought him into the city, crying, *Hosanna*. And its said, when Jesus was condemned by *Pilate*, and the chief Priests and Elders, that they perswaded the people to refuse Jesus, and to choose *Barrabas*: 'tis probable that they are so well vers'd in their own business of so high a nature, that they can say more for themselves: It is too great an undertaking for me, and will require a larger Tract, to clear the matter against all Objections, which may be done by men of more learning than I profess to have; the regal Government of the Jews being long before ended: what God in his secret will and judgement intended in the scattering of the Jews, I presume not to understand or to guess at: my purpose is onely to prove, That God yet owns them for his people, and though cast off for a time, yet their certain future reduction is promised, as *Paul*, in *Rom.* 11. 24, 25, 26. *For if thou wast cut out of the olive-tree which was wilde by nature, and wast grafted contrary to nature in a*
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right olive-tree, how much more shall they that are by nature, be grafted in their own olive-tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this secret (lest ye should be arrogant in your selves) that partly obstinacy is come to *Israel*, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in: And so all *Israel* shall be saved, as it is written, *Isa.* 59. and 27. 9. and Jer. 31. 33, 34. Heb. 8. and 10. I have next to offer to your considerations, the many promises made by God by the mouthes of his Prophets, for the reduction of them into their own countrey, still owning them for his own people, a countrey, I say, lawfully theirs, by the donation of God himself, and a propriety, that no Prince under Heaven can plead the like, the promises also setting forth the restitution of the pure worship of God, the restitution of all things to their primitive Estate, *That the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea,* *Isa.* 11. 49. & 60. & 61. to the end of the Prophecie; besides many more places in this and other Prophets, some whereof do more plainly extend to the advantage of the Gentiles, as *Isa.* 56. 6. *And the strangers that cleave unto the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be his servants; every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and takes hold on my Covenant, Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar, for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all peoples; And consequently for us (the faithful) as well as for the Jews.*

Now weighing well with our selves both these threats and promises, were it not a strange negligence (I conceive it a madness) in us to forego so great priviledges, as by those honorable people of the Jews may accrew unto us, and as great wilfulness to lay our selves open to those judgements threatned, I leave to the judgement of all men that are any thing affected in this matter, or that tender the glory of God, their own good charity towards that the people

people of God: We have great and important cause to take heed, lest we of this Kingdom of *England*, putting from us and abandoning these people of God, we separate not our selves from Gods favor and protection, this being a greater aggravation of the sin, for that it is now more known. It is not tollerable even amongst Moral men, if we go no further, to adde affliction to the afflicted, as we do in continuing Laws in force against them; it stands not with a generous spirit, to triumph over a man helpless and in misery, much more hateful is it in men that profess themselves the servants of God; but rather that we endeavor to comfort them, and (if it were possible) to give them satisfaction for the innocent blood of theirs shed in this Kingdom, and to restore them to commerce amongst us.

It is objected, That many of these prophecies have respect to the seventy years Captivity, and their release from *Babylon*, and of Gods vengeance on the Enemies of the people of God of those times. In Answer, Although many prophecies do so, yet the places abovementioned, and many more, do abundantly prove the reduction of *all* the house of Israel, the ten Tribes never yet returned into their own Land, and the great joy that is promised them in those yet future blessed times, as *Hosea* 3. they are esteemed by God, as the spouse to the husband, and in the last Verse, *Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord, and David their King, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days*; And *Ezek.* 36. the Prophet is directed to the whole house of Israel, as appears more plainly in the 10 Verse, *And I will multiply the men upon you* (speaking of the mountains of Israel all along before) *even all the house of Israel wholly, and the Cities shall be inhabited, &c.* And a much more luculent place is the 37 Chapter of *Ezek.* where mention is made of the return of all the Tribes of Israel, the Prophet being commanded to take a piece of wood, and to write upon that to *Judah*, and the children of

of Israel his companions, and then to take another piece of wood, and write upon that to *Joseph*, the tree of *Ephraim*, and all the house of Israel his companions, and joyn them one to another into one stick, and they shall become one stick in thine hand; *And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? say unto them, Thus saith Jehovah God, Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the Tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand; And the sticks whereon thou writest, shall be in thine hand before their eyes: And say unto them, Thus saith Jehovah God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the Heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own Land: And I will make them one Nation in the Land, upon the mountains of Israel, and one King shall be King to them all; And they shall be no more two Nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all, neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, &c.* These words are an explanation of the parable of the dry bones in the beginning of the Chapter; whereby part of my purpose is sufficiently proved, that their restauration and inhabitation of their country here on Earth, is yet to be fulfilled; for the ten Tribes that were first captivated by *Shalmanezzar*, never yet returned to this day, which yet shall be in the time appointed by God, and consequently their oppressors bear the greater and notorious sin, undervaluing a people to whom God hath made such precious promises. And whereas it is again Objected, That these places of the several Prophecies, do intend the state of the Church triumphant, of the new *Jerusalem*, conceived to be in Heaven after the day of Judgement, and that these places have a mystical signification in them, mentioning *David* to be their King, who was a type of Christ. Answer, doubtless God hath given us the Scriptures for our instruction and edification, and hath

given us reasonable souls, understanding, and other faculties, it were strange then that there should be a literal construction of these places following, which are so adapted to the understanding of even the simplest, that nothing can be more clear: *Isaiah 65. 21, 22.* speaking of the Jews return, *And they shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them; They shall not build, and another inhabit, they shall not plant, and another eat: For as the days of a tree, are the days of my people, and mine elect shall enjoy in old age the work of their hands: and Zech. 8. 5. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts there shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age: and the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls, playing in the streets thereof: and Ezek. 28. 26. And they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell safely, when I have executed judgements upon all round about them that despise them, & they shall know that I am Jehovah their God: and Micah 4. 4. and Jer. 31. and Zech. 10. 6. and 12. 6. with many more pregnant places. As these Scriptures do most plainly set forth and prove their reinhabitation of their countrey, so it proves that the same hath not been yet fulfilled, for after their return from *Babylon*, we know how their countrey hath been desolated by the invasion of their Enemies, and how often by many Nations, as it continues to this day. It is further Objected, that in divers places mention is made of *David* to be their King for ever, who is held a type of Christ, and that therefore it seems to allude to the future estates of the Saints in Heaven. Answer, though mention be made of *David's* being their Prince for ever, and of their dwelling in their Land for ever, yet I conceive those places do not conclude the estates of the Saints in Heaven, for it is said in *Jer. 30. 21.* *And their noble ruler shall be of themselves, and their governors shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near and approach unto me:* We know that*

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this Prophecie was long since *David's* time, and therefore how this future kingdom shall be instituted, God onely knows, which he will reveal in due time: 'Tis plainly proved by other places that they shall enjoy their honor here on Earth, and in the sight of the Heathen (their oppressors) which doth plainly imply, that it shall be here on Earth that the Jews shall enjoy this blessing and deliverance, &c. *Ezek. 28. 25.* Also we read *Jer. 31. 36.* *If these ordinances depart out of my sight, saith Jehovah, then shall the seed of Israel cease from being a nation before me for ever: So that their continuance to be a Nation, proves a terrestrial estate, whatsoever additions of glory, and priviledges further God will confer on them: Commentators have their several judgements herein (and differ among themselves) yet whatsoever they say, I conceive we have no warrant to wrest those Scriptures onely to a spiritual sence, unless they do repugn some known truth of God in the Scripture. Since these things are so, How far are we from that godly zeal of those people of God of the Gentiles, that shall bring the beloved Jews in their arms, and their daughters on their shoulders, when Kings shall be their nursing fathers, and Queens their nurses, *Isa. 49. 22, 23.**

The rage of men in all countries of the world have been very extreme against the Jews, 'tis not so much wonder to see the barbarous Infidels, robbing them and embroiling their hands in their blood, as that men that profess more of Gods truth (though falsely:) In *Spain* there were 120000 Jews cast out and banisht, in the year 1492. In *Italy* and other places, the like hardship they have endured.

But I hope better things of our Nation, that when our troubles at home by Gods mercy are composed, there are many gallant men now in arms, and others that may be instrumental for the beating down Gods Enemies, and the Enemies of his people: Gods power is enough, and who shall let it; yet he usually works by means, and who knows but these now in arms may have the honor to do

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Gods work herein ; I am sure 'tis to be wished, that we wrastle with God by Prayer, that this design for Gods glory and his people may be advanced ; and that our weapons (when quiet here at home) may be bent against the cruel oppressors of his people in forraign parts, and those merciless Tyrants so rigorous towards the Jews where they are, vexing them, and spoiling them of their lives and liveliness ; *That at the last we may beat our swords into plow-shares, and our spears into pruning-hooks ; When Nation shall not lift up sword against Nation, neither shall they learn war any more,* Isaiah 2. 4. I trust God will direct his instruments in their proceedings to this great deliverance (who-soever they be) in just and righteous ways, and will crown those actions that are built on just foundations : When *Solomon* built the temple in *Jerusalem*, it was ordered that the Timber and stone was hewen and prepared in *Lebanon*, that noise of hewing being not heard, at the erecting of that glorious House for Gods worship ; what mean our late tumults and bloodshed then ? as a reverend Preacher (now deceased) well observed, Sith God will do his own work his own way, and by his own onely power, but this may be the hewing and working in *Lebanon* which we have heard ; it behoves then all the Servants of God so to approve their hearts to him, that when the Lord comes with Refiners fire, and Fullers sope, such instruments may have the blessing to be exact in Gods work, that others imployed hereafter outdo them not, howsoever there are many infirmities in the best, yet is it their duty to strive for perfection.

Whereas I stile them honorable, though it may seem ridiculous to their Enemies, and the ignorant ; yet I may truly say, They are of the highest and most honorable descent of any Nobility in any Countrey in the world, being ennobled by God himself, and the reason is given which must be most righteous ; not for any thing in them, or for their multitude, but because God set his love upon them. We see Princes fa-

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vorites are much courted, there's much more reason that Gods favor should attract a greater respect to these sons of Israel then they have: God made good his promise made to *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, who descended from *Sem* the choice and beloved seed : The works and wonders God shewed in their deliverance out of *Egypt*, honoring them with his presence, and leading them by a pillar of a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night : Why should then the great Princes and Nobles of the world, so much magnifie themselves, for their ancient and honorable descent, whereas the Jews were Gods chosen people and beloved, and descended from the most holy men of God, accounted Princes and Prophets in their times, and of the Kings of *Judah*, whereof there were more Religious Princes, then of any Kingdom we read of in all ages or Nations ? And this I believe to be true Nobility, having God to ratifie it. The Gentile Princes had the beginnings of their greatness by the Sword, Tyranny and Policy, most ordinarily, as the Turks now, and the Romans of old, and others ; And what challenge can they (yea, more legitimate Princes then they) make from Gods dispensation, in comparison of the Jews : And though the Jews have contracted a great guilt, for their unthankfulness for the peculiar blessings given them of God, and other grievous sins ; yet when God, who is Lord over all, and against whom their sins were committed, shall acquit them of this guilt, pronouncing, *Isa. 40. 1, 2. That her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, and that she hath received of the Lords hand double for all her sins :* Why then should Princes and their great nobility, both which are but the progeny of Princes of a lower degree then *Abraham* and *David* ? furthermore, why should the Pope and his Cardinals, with their Clergy, that are but impostors, and have cheated the whole world, and but upstarts of base degree, why should all these ? and what have they to challenge to themselves, to be so hard masters to those honorable people of whom

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God hath pronounced, That the Jews shall be feared of them whose servants they were.

I know the great impugnors of this Apology for the Jews will be the Pope and his Clergy, and of them the Jesuits, his principal Agents, for that this opposeth their chief principle, the political upholding of the Papacy and themselves; and its no wonder, their cruelties shewed upon them, and their detestation of them is such, that in *Italy* (though they are allowed some commerce, which the *Italians* do for their own profit they make by the Jews divers ways) yet they enjoin them to wear apparel, of colour distinct from other people, insomuch that men abhor the wearing of a red Hat, lest they should be accounted Jews. The Papists are especially offended with them, because the Jews so much abhor the Imagery and Idolatrous Worship of theirs, for touch that, and touch the corner stone of their Politique foundation: The Jesuits do nestle into all Kingdoms and States of Christendom, and have an influence on their Counsels, as also of Universities, Armies, great Cities and Corporations, wherein they employ the choicest wits they have, who undertake any kinde of professions, the better to cloak their designs; as Gentlemen, Divines, Philosophers, Soldiers. It is most heartily wished, and now hoped for, that their *Cyrens* Songs shall not inchant the ears of the godly, whatsoever they may work on carnal Politicians and Hypocrites.

I humbly offer this Apology, with these considerations, to the whole Kingdom of *England*, from the highest to the lowest, that as God hath exceedingly blessed this Kingdom above others, especially in this, that it hath been almost One hundred years, the chief Bulwark for defence of the Truth, and retreat of the afflicted in Europe; so now that we all shew our selves compassionate and helpers of the afflicted Jews; and pray, that the same Authority that proceeded against them formerly, that now the same power and authority will repeal those severe Laws made against them:

them: That our receiving them again, and giving them all possible satisfaction, and restoring them to commerce in this kingdom, may be exemplary to other Nations that have done them, and continue to do them wrong; till which time (God putting their tears into his bottle) God will charge their sufferings upon us, and will avenge them on their persecutors.

And what I have now written, was not upon any mans motion of the Jews Nation, but a thing that I have long and deeply revolved within my heart; but truly and indeed, my endeavors are for the glory of God, the comfort of those his afflicted people, the love of my own sweet native country of *England*, and the freeing of my own soul in the day of account; for I thought my self obliged in conscience, to publish my conceptions herein; and furthermore, do most earnestly pray, That the potent parties may no longer continue in division, but denying all Counsels of the flesh, the acquiring of Honors, and all self-ends, may ingenuously confess themselves and their failings one to another, and dealing with lenity one towards another, and humbled before Jehovah, may obtain remission of our sins and miseries, and a blessing from God be shewed down upon us, which God Almighty of his infinite mercy grant.

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