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John A. MacKay.
December 190,

A
BRIEF OUTLINE
OF AN
EXAMINATION
OF
THE SONG OF SOLOMON:
IN WHICH
MANY BEAUTIFUL PROPHECIES,
CONTAINED IN
THAT INSPIRED BOOK
OF
Holy Scripture,
ARE
CONSIDERED AND EXPLAINED;
WITH
REMARKS, CRITICAL AND EXPOSITORY.

—◆◆◆—
BY WILLIAM DAVIDSON, Esq.
—◆◆◆—

Naphtali is a hind let loose : he giveth goodly words. *Gen. xlix. 21.*
The Archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him : but
his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong
by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob. *Ibid. 23.*

London :

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

BY J. BARFIELD, WARDOUR STREET,
PRINTER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE REGENT;

AND SOLD BY

JOHN HATCHARD, Piccadilly ; THOMAS EGERTON, Charing-Cross ;
LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, and BROWN, Paternoster-Row ;
and L. B. SEELEY, Fleet-Street.

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1817.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

PREFACE.



THE Author of the following remarks on the Song of Songs, having been, by the good Providence of God, brought into the land of trial and affliction, in which he has now dwelt more or less for above twenty years, has been, by the same good hand, led to the more particular study of the Holy Scriptures; which have been his joy and delight, his comfort and consolation, under the most afflicting circumstances: and he has been particularly led to the study of the Prophecies, both of the Old and New Testaments; on which, as his health permitted, and often at the distance of long intervals, he has made remarks, and drawn up short outlines, which he humbly hopes would not be unworthy of examination

at this time, and which he wishes to lay before the public in successive publications, as speedily as his health will permit. This he is the more desirous of accomplishing, as he thinks they contain short, but clear and connected views of the chief Prophecies contained in the Sacred Scriptures.

In the present little volume is given a brief Outline of an examination of one of the most beautiful and important books of the Sacred Writings; a book but little understood, and of which many erroneous expositions have been given; and some of a carnal kind, wholly inconsistent with the meaning, intention, and nature of this Sacred Book. With a view of avoiding those errors, and with a sincere desire of discovering the true sense of the inspired Writer, the Author of these pages has spent much time in examining the original Hebrew, and various translations from it: by which means

also he has more particularly endeavoured to investigate the sense in a prophetic view, that he might be the better enabled to judge of the book itself, and of the inspiration of the writer. And he feels the fullest confidence in saying, that the numerous beautiful prophecies which he has been enabled to point out, most clearly speak in the affirmative on the latter head, and evidently demonstrate the Divine authority of this inspired and most wonderful book of Holy Scripture: a book which, when viewed in the proper light, is highly devotional, tending to warm the heart, and to inspire it with the love of God; while it directs our attention to the consummation, or to the fulfilment of the Promises of God in Christ Jesus.

How far the Author has succeeded in his endeavours to discover the true sense of the prophet, or the particular import of the prophetic passages he has endea-

voured to explain, is now left for the examination of the reader.

The whole is now offered with fear and trembling lest any hint towards improvement should be misconstrued, or should, even in the most remote degree, tend to diminish that veneration which ought to be entertained for the English Bible; a book in which the light of its Divine Original shines with a distinguished lustre. The English translation of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, as now found in the Bible, as a whole, has been considered by many great and learned men capable of judging, as unequalled by any other; and as far as the feeble investigations of the Author have reached, he fully subscribes to that opinion; considering it, generally speaking, as a sacred edifice, which ought not to be disturbed without the greatest care and circumspection; an edifice evidently reared under the guidance of the good Spirit of

God, who may have for a moment left the great and good men, the translators, to themselves, to see what was in their hearts, and to shew, to those who should come after, that they were but men. And on some occasions, he may have so guided them in their great and good work, or have so far left them to themselves, as to preserve the sacred words of prophecy sealed, until the time appointed for their discovery. For it seems to have been so ordered of God, that the particular prophetic passages of Scripture, which foretel the future histories of the Church of Christ should be so written as to elude all human investigation, until the proper appointed time; when, and not before, their true import is permitted to be known; and before which, neither human learning, nor human wisdom, can find out or shew their proper meaning. This is most evidently proved, by the darkness and discord which, more or less, exist in the works of those interpreters who have endeavoured

to discover the sealed words of prophecy before the time in which they were permitted to be known. And in this way we may account for many of the erroneous interpretations of Mede, Newton, and other great, learned, and good men; who, notwithstanding all their wisdom and learning, could not open the sealed book of prophecy before the appointed time. But the time is come: for Daniel was commanded to “shut up the words and seal the book,” not for ever, but “to the time of the end;” in which time we now live. Therefore the sealed book is now permitted to be gradually opened, and its contents to be successively seen in the proper time and order.

And as before the ending of the Jewish dispensation, and before the destruction of Jerusalem, it was graciously made known to the Christians that the latter would take place, and directions given to them how they might avoid the great

calamities of those days ; so in this time of the end, and just before the most awful visitation of this earth which has ever taken place, is the sealed book of prophecy allowed to be opened, that the Church of God may know what conduct she is to pursue under such trying circumstances.

The remarks contained in the present Outline are submitted with great deference and humility for the consideration of the reader ; the Author being well aware of the difficulty of the subject, and of the impossibility of avoiding errors in so extensive a field of inquiry. He should have been happy to have made them more perfect than they are : but being an invalid, and life being short and uncertain, and the times awful and trying, he has thought it more advisable to hasten the publication even in their present state ; lest, from any future avocation, or ill-health, the public should be

wholly deprived of the result of his labours, however small that may be.

Therefore, considering the nature and difficulty of the subject of examination; that this book of Scripture has always been considered most difficult to interpret, and that even to this time it is but imperfectly understood; he hopes the reader will make all proper allowance for any imperfections which he may discover in the following pages, which must only be considered as a few hints, which may probably help towards a better understanding of this divine inspired Song. And he would further observe, that, in the present attempt, he has endeavoured, as much as possible, to avoid error, and to be useful; and that he has therefore judged it proper, on some occasions, to state the subject in different points of view, leaving the reader to judge for himself. And, for the same reasons, he has sometimes thought it necessary to

make repetitions, in his endeavours to explain his thoughts on so difficult a subject: but some may perhaps have been unnecessary; which he trusts the reader will excuse, as well as other inadvertencies which may have escaped the writer's notice. And, if in these short remarks the reader shall discover any feeble ray of new light, let him believe that it is solely derived from that unbounded Source, from which cometh all knowledge, whether human or divine, and give the praise, the thanksgiving, and the glory, to HIM alone.

Shaftesbury House, Kensington Gravel Pits.

September 2nd, 1817.

ERRATA.

<i>Page.</i>	<i>Line.</i>
137,	17, for 17th, read 16th.
159,	23—25, omit the inverted commas, and read thus, <i>in his shadow I have greatly desired, or earnestly desired, and sat down.</i>
275,	1, for <i>narrabitiser</i> , read <i>narrabitisi</i> .
363,	After CHAPTER VII. and under, insert CHRIST, as the Speaker.
393,	24, 25, the following words should be <i>in Italics</i> , thus, <i>like two young roes, twins of a roe of Jah</i> ; and omit the inverted commas.
442,	8—10, omit the inverted commas.

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INTRODUCTORY

OBSERVATIONS AND REMARKS.



SECTION I.

A FEW PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS RESPECTING ESPOUSAL AND MARRIAGE AMONG THE JEWS; AS TENDING TO THROW LIGHT UPON THE FOLLOWING REMARKS CONCERNING THE CALLING, ESPOUSAL, AND MARRIAGE OF THE CHURCH BY CHRIST, FORETOLD IN THE SONG OF SONGS.

WHEN a marriage was intended among the Jews, and the young people from certain acquaintance were satisfied with each other, a solemn promise of marriage was given and received; which was sometimes done by a written and legally attested contract. This promise being mutually given, the parties were *betrothed*, or *espoused* to each other: they were from this time bride and bridegroom, and by the Law of Moses, were considered as husband and wife, although not yet dwelling toge-

ther, Deut. xxii. 23, 24 ; Matt. i. 18 ; and any departure from the espousal covenant was punished accordingly. When betrothed, the bride and bridegroom were permitted to visit one another ; and it was sometimes long after the espousals before their union took place ; or before the marriage ceremony was performed, and the bride conducted to the habitation of her husband. The names of espousal and marriage, given to those institutions among the Jews, are frequently used in Scripture to point out the connection between God and his Church during the Old-Testament dispensation ; and also in the Song of Solomon, and in the New Testament when prophesying of the espousal and marriage of the Church of Christ to Him her Bridegroom. During the Old-Testament dispensation, God is pleased to style himself the Husband of the Jewish Church ; and to speak of her as the married wife. Isa. liv. 1, 5, 6. And Jeremiah speaks of the *espousals* of the Jewish Church unto God, in the wilderness, ii. 2 : and, when speaking of her departure from him after her espousal, says, “ although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord.” xxxi. 32.

Therefore a departure from God and his

worship and service is considered as spiritual adultery or fornication against him. Jer. iii. 8, 9 ; Ezek. xvi. 32, xxiii. 37 ; Rev. ii. 20—23. Bishop Patrick observes, “ Idolatry and false worship in the Church is constantly expressed in the Scriptures under the name of spiritual fornication, and going a whoring from God : whom therefore the Church was to look upon as her husband. And so he taught the children of Israel to do, by using this form of speech throughout the whole prophetical writings.” *Pref. to Song*. And Isaiah, speaking of the receiving again of the Jews, says, “ *As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee,*” lxii. 5 ; namely, as at the time of the marriage of the Lamb : and this mystical marriage, which is more particularly described in the Revelation of St. John, is much illustrated and explained by the prophecies contained in the Song of Songs : but it is not yet come, though we may reasonably expect that it is now very nigh at hand.

SECTION II.

A FEW REMARKS ON THE CALLING, AND ESPOUSAL TO GOD OF THE JEWISH CHURCH; AND OF HER MARRIAGE TO HIM, OR FULL SETTLEMENT IN THE LAND OF CANAAN UNDER DAVID AND SOLOMON, WHEN KING AND PEOPLE WERE WALKING IN THE GOOD WAYS OF THE LORD THEIR GOD.

ALMIGHTY God having chosen Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to be the Fathers of the Jewish nation, declared himself to be their God; and gave them the sign of circumcision: and in them he chose their seed after them to be his peculiar people, promising to be their God, and to give them the land of Canaan as an inheritance, the land which he had promised to their fathers. When the Egyptians oppressed them he remembered his covenant, and his people, and sent Moses to inform them that he had seen their affliction, and was come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them into the promised land: and when he had redeemed them out of the land of Egypt by his mighty arm, he made

a covenant with them, as a people, in Horeb; by which he was to be their God, and they were to be his people, and to obey his voice, and to serve Him only, and to have no other gods before him. Thus were the Jews *espoused* to God as his peculiar people, as a wife of youth, who was to be married to him, or to be more fully united to God; as when settled in Jerusalem under David and Solomon, by the full, free, and undisturbed possession of the promised land, when king and people should wholly follow the Lord, and acknowledge him to be their God. Therefore, while Jehovah was bringing his people out of Egypt, and leading them through the wilderness, and there instructing them; they were his espoused people, looking forward by faith to the promised possession: and hence we read in Jeremiah, “ Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land *that was* not sown.” ii. 2. Had this stiffnecked and rebellious people been mindful of their espousal covenant, and continued to serve God, and to walk in his ways, they would have been his peculiar people, and the most glorious of all people:

but alas! the generation who were present at Horeb, having rebelled against the Most High, and forsaken the covenant, could not, by reason of their wickedness and unbelief, enter into his rest: they were therefore cut off in the wilderness. With their posterity in the land of Moab, and just before their entrance into the Holy Land, did God renew his covenant by the hand of Moses; that he might establish them to be a people unto himself; He being ever mindful of his promise to be a God unto them, as he had sworn unto their fathers. Soon after this they were led into Canaan by Joshua, the successor of Moses; a brave officer, and a faithful servant of his God: who, just before his death, at the commandment of Jehovah the God of Israel, assembled the tribes of Israel to Shechem; and called for the elders of Israel, their heads, their judges, and their officers, that they might present themselves before the Lord their God. Being assembled, they were reminded by God, by his servant Joshua, of all that he had done for them, and that he had now given them the good land as he had promised; and they were commanded to fear and serve him in sincerity and in truth, and to put away the false gods which their

fathers had served: and the people promised to do so; acknowledging the good and great things which the Lord had done for them. Thus was the espousal covenant renewed again with this rebellious people; who were to repent of their transgressions, and to serve their God; while they were to proceed against the inhabitants of the land, according to the commandment of God, until they obtained full possession. But they soon departed from following God, and forgot his covenant; having only served him all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua. Notwithstanding, the Lord did not wholly cast them off: though he did not leave them altogether unpunished. Many a time did they rebel and provoke him while under their Judges, unto the days of Samuel; who, by his unwearied exertions, endeavoured to establish them in the service of the God of their fathers. They then chose them a king, even Saul; who with his people sinned more and more against God. But the God of Abraham still mindful of his oath unto the fathers, and of his espousal covenant with their seed, the Jewish people, was pleased to raise up his servant David to reign over them, as the king and judge of his

people Israel. To him did God graciously vouchsafe to make many glorious discoveries concerning himself, and the full and final redemption of his church and people by the Spiritual David, David's Lord and God; even by Jesus Christ, the son of David after the flesh, but who was also God over all, blessed for ever, the Son of the Highest; of whom also David was a distinguished type. David having greatly desired to find an habitation for the God of Israel, is permitted to see, with the eye of faith and prophecy, that glorious spiritual edifice which God would erect in the latter days, even his Christian Church; and also the glorious reign, and established kingdom of the Messiah: and though he was not allowed to build the glorious temporal House at Jerusalem, an eminent type of the spiritual or latter House, yet he received the pattern of the building; which was to be finished by his son Solomon, to whom God would give peace, and whom God would enable to build it.

David having received, by the hand of Nathan the prophet, the promise that his son should build the house of God, praises and magnifies the Lord, having a full view of that promise both temporal and spiritual; and re-

minds his God of the covenant relation between him and his people, in these words, “ For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, Lord, becamest their God.” 1 Chron. xvii. 22. Their Maker *was* their husband. Isa. liv. 5.

When David was old, and full of days, he made Solomon his son king; and placed him upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel. And having, after this, assembled all the princes of the people, and all the congregation, he charges both king and people to follow the Lord; giving unto Solomon the pattern of the House, and of the courts, and chambers, and treasuries thereof, with full directions concerning all the sacred vessels, the courses of the priests and Levites, &c. &c. according to the commandment of the Lord; and calling upon the princes and the people to consecrate their service to the Lord, by some offering in aid of this great work. The princes and the people immediately obeyed the king; and it is said that “ they rejoiced for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord:” and that “ David the king also rejoiced with great joy.” 1 Chron. xxix. 9. David proceeds, before his princes

and the congregation, to bless the Lord, commanding *them* also to bless the Lord their God. The whole is so grand, sublime, and beautiful, that I hope the reader will excuse my inserting the passage. “ Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed *be* thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*; thine *is* the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour *come* of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand *is* power and might; and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who *am* I, and what *is* my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things *come* of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we *are* strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: our days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is* none abiding. O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name

cometh of thine hand, and *is* all thine own. I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things : and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee. O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee : And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all *these things*, and to build the palace, *for* the which I have made provision. And David said to all the congregation, Now bless the Lord your God. And all the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord, and the king. And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings unto the Lord, on the morrow after that day, *even* a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, *and* a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel : and did eat and drink before the Lord on that day with great gladness. And they made

Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed *him* unto the Lord *to be* the chief governor, and Zadoc *to be* priest. Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him." 1 Chron. xxix. 10—23. Moreover David, a little before his death, gave to Solomon the following expressive and excellent charge, together with other instructions concerning some individuals. "I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: That the Lord may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel." 1 Kings, ii. 2—4. "Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly," ver. 12. "And Solomon loved the Lord walking in

the statutes of David his father," iii. 3. He was king over all Israel: and Judah and Israel *were* many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry. iv. 1, 20. Solomon being now settled on his throne, goes to Gibeon to worship the Lord: and soon begins to prepare for the building of the house of God. This grand, stately, and magnificent structure was happily finished by Solomon; and was a beautiful type of the Christian Church: and Solomon, while he continued to serve the Lord his God, was also a type of the Spiritual Solomon, the Lord Jesus Christ; and it is highly probable that he retained his integrity until the 34th year of his reign, or as long as our Saviour lived upon the earth; and did not depart to idolatry until after that time, which might be called the time of his old age: and also, that he wrote the inspired book of the Song of Songs, in the former part of his life, while he was walking in the good ways of the Lord God of Israel.

While engaged in building, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "*Concerning* this house which thou art building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to

walk in them ; then will I perform my word with thee which I spake unto David thy father. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel. So Solomon built the house, and finished it." 1 Kings, vi. 11—14. God thus promised to Solomon, who was then building a house for his dwelling place among his people Israel, that while he continued to serve and obey Him, he would dwell among them ; or would as it were come and consummate the espousal covenant, or marry the Jewish Church, having already given them quiet possession of Canaan : and afterwards, when the house was finished, He, by his cloud and glory, did, as it were, take possession of the house, and consummate the marriage of the Jewish Church : when He rejoiced over his people Israel, and they considered the Lord to be their God, and rejoiced in being his chosen people, and determined to walk in his ways.

Solomon having thus finished the Temple of Jerusalem, the temporal house, for the name of the Lord his God, and brought in the things dedicated by his father David, and the silver, the gold, and all the instruments, assembled the elders of Israel, the heads of the tribes, the

chief of the fathers to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord : and king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed unto the Lord ; and the priests brought in the ark into his place, to the Oracle of the house, the most holy place. When the priests had placed the ark and were come out of the holy place, they with the Levites praised the Lord with trumpets and other instruments of music ; saying, for *he is* good ; for his mercy endureth for ever : and a cloud filled the house, even the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. Thus did the God of Israel express his approbation of these services done by his king and people, and as it were take possession of his Jewish Temple, in which he was to dwell, and to place his name ; and where his people were to worship, and in which was now placed the ark of the covenant, containing the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, containing the everlasting covenant between God and his people, which he made with them there. God also did hereby as it were renew his covenant with his people, even that covenant contained in the ark which had just been placed in the Temple

before his glory appeared in it: or, as above expressed, he now came to dwell with them, or to marry the Jewish Church, and to abide with her for ever, if she would walk in his ways, and acknowledge Him as her husband; which the Jews did at this time, by uniting with their king in the service of God. Their Maker was now become their husband. But, alas! she soon departed from her husband to serve other gods; and she could shew no bill of divorcement; for she was not sent away, but she of herself departed from God. Many a time did he forgive her, and receive her again; but she as often departed; until she was at last cast out of his land, and from the place of his dwelling; yea, at last was cast out of his sight, and the Gentiles, a strange nation, chosen in her place: and hence the Gentiles are called to rejoice, as “more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife.” Isa. liv. 1.

As the glory of the Lord had filled the house, the priests could not stand to minister: and Solomon proceeded to dedicate the same unto the Lord, first acknowledging his presence in the thick darkness, or in the cloud which filled the house.

King Solomon kneeling down upon his knees, upon a raised scaffold of brass, and with his hands spread forth towards heaven, and in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, solemnly dedicated the Temple unto the Lord; making many supplications unto him in favour of his people, and concluding with these beautiful and remarkable words: "Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. O Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant." 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42. He then stood up and blessed all the congregation of Israel, with a loud voice; acknowledging that the Lord had now given unto his people Israel the promised rest, and imploring his blessing upon himself and them, that He would incline their hearts to walk in his ways, and admonishing the people so to do; saying, "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his ser-

vant. The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us; that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers: and let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require; that all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, *and that there is none else.* Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord your God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.” 1 Kings viii. 56—61. “Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord’s house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they

bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, *saying*, For *he is good*; for his mercy *endureth* for ever. Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the Lord." 2 Chron. vii. 1—4. And king and people rejoiced before the Lord; and the people were dismissed by Solomon "glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the Lord had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people." vii. 10.

Thus did the Jewish Church, after having been called by God as a virgin, and then espoused to him, become at Jerusalem the married wife of the God of Israel; when her beauty was perfect through the comeliness which the Lord her God had put upon her, see Ezek. xvi. 13, 14: and she continued to serve him until the seduction of Solomon by his strange women; when king and people departed from their God to serve the gods of the surrounding nations, and thus committed spiritual adultery against him: and having thus broken the covenant, they became liable to the punishments denounced in the Law of Moses against the transgressors. She became an adulteress, and was liable to be punished

accordingly. Ezek. xvi. 32, 38, 39, 43. Yet, notwithstanding the repeated rebellions, the multiplied iniquities, and departures of the Jewish people, on account of which God was obliged to punish them, and at last to cast them out of his land, he hath not wholly cast away the seed of his servant Abraham; but, according to his promise, is still their God, and will bring them into his Christian sheep-fold in the good and appointed time. The Shulamite will return, and appear in all the glory of her Lord, Song vi. 13: when he will thus address them, in the words of his inspired prophet, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you," &c.: and again, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." Jer. iii. 14, 22. Indeed the redemption of Israel seems now so near, that we may say unto them, in the words of our Lord, as recorded by his Evangelist, "Look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke xxi. 28.

SECTION III.

A FEW REMARKS ON THE CALLING, ESPOUSAL,
AND MARRIAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
UNTO CHRIST, AS CONNECTED WITH THE
SUBJECT OF THE SONG OF SONGS.

THE Gospel, or Christian Church, the Spouse of Christ, is the proper offspring, immediate successor, or daughter of the Jewish Church; and her descent, or this her origin, if I may so speak, may be thus traced. Whereas the Jews, from the days of David and Solomon, had gradually declined from the worship of God, and the observance of his law delivered to them by Moses, and were therefore reprov'd by the Lord's prophets who came after, speaking in the name of the Lord, and received at different times the severest chastisements, according to *their* words; and had, at last, so far forgotten their Maker and their God, that at the time of the coming of our Lord to take upon him our human nature, little more of religion remained among them than its form and name: it then pleased God, in mercy to mankind, and according to the purpose of his

will before determined, to send his Son into the world, to be made in the likeness of sinful flesh; that he might thereby illuminate them with his Spirit, instruct them by his precepts and example, and at last make an atonement for their sins, by offering himself up for them upon the cross, as an unspotted sacrifice highly acceptable to God. And from the time of the annunciation and birth of his forerunner John, and the annunciation of his own appearance in the human form, some few believers would be in patient expectation of their Deliverer: and, on the appearance of John the Baptist preaching repentance and remission of sins, and announcing the speedy appearance of his Lord (the royal Bridegroom of his bride, the Church, and the spiritual Solomon of the inspired Song of Songs; and he at whose voice John, the friend of the Bridegroom, afterwards, greatly rejoiced, John iv. 29.), many others would be added to their number; it having been prophesied by the Angel to Zacharias, that John should turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. And these, though few in comparison to the great body of the Jews of Judah and Benjamin, who were mere formal worshippers, or Jews only in name, would

then constitute the beginning of the Christian Church ; a Church, as it were, rising out of the Jewish mother church, but which was made sensible, by the preaching of John, that something more than mere ceremonial worship was required ; and that repentance, and fruits meet for repentance, were necessary, as well as a lively faith in and through the promised Saviour of the world, who was just expected to appear ; a Church which was not to be confined to the Jews (the seed of Abraham after the flesh) only, but was to be extended to all the true worshippers of the Gentiles also, who should then become the spiritual children of Abraham, and heirs of the promises. And into the Christian Church, thus first formed of faithful Jews, from the Jewish nation, of the stock of Abraham, all Gentiles were afterwards admitted who worshipped and believed God according to the faith of faithful Abraham ; while the natural Jewish branches, the Jews after the flesh, were excluded, or broken off : and thus was the Gentile nation, the wild olive-tree, grafted in among the branches, and upon the stock of the true olive-tree, as pointed out by St. Paul, Rom. xi. 16—24. Therefore all the true worshippers

of God, who worshipped him in spirit and in truth, whether Jew or Gentile, constituted the spiritual Church which begins the Dialogue in this inspired Song; or the Bride who, being first called, was to be betrothed, or to become the spouse of Christ, and afterwards to be married to him. And as there thus remained among the Jews, at the coming of Christ, a remnant of the true Israel of God, and therefore members both of the spiritual and temporal Jerusalem; and as the first virgin converts to Christianity were from among these Jews of the temporal Jerusalem: so the Christian Church is sometimes spoken of as the Daughter of Jerusalem, and her individual members, male and female, as Daughters, as in this Song, though wholly in a spiritual sense.

At this time, therefore, may this Church, the Bride, be supposed to have been formed, and made acquainted, by the preaching of John, with many of the glorious things spoken of her in the Old Testament, which were to be accomplished by Christ, as just mentioned; and it may also be believed that, on John's announcing the coming of this great Personage, she was particularly desirous of his appear-

ance; and that she might then naturally break forth in the warm and affectionate exclamation with which the Song begins—" Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!" And knowing experimentally the consolations and comforts of the Word of God, and the great love of her Lord, who was to lay down his life for her, she might naturally add, that *his love was better than wine*; or more refreshing and enlivening than wine, or any of the most exhilarating cordials which make glad the heart of man.

The Christian Church having been thus begun, and called by the preaching of John, was to be further called, and regularly formed by our Lord himself; who was to instruct her by his own precepts and example, and by the preaching of his Disciples; and which was diligently performed during our Lord's ministry, or, as is generally supposed, for the space of three years and a half, after which he was to espouse her, as at his death upon the cross; when the full redemption of his people was to be accomplished. John came as the forerunner of the Bridegroom to prepare his way before him, by calling the people to repentance, and announcing a new dispensation as about

to take place; he came to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, Luke i. 17; to prepare the Bride for the coming of the Bridegroom, and to give knowledge of the great Saviour of the world by pointing out the Lamb of God who was to take away the sins of the world, John i. 29. And John rejoiced greatly in hearing the Bridegroom's voice: but having finished his testimony, and the work for which he was sent, he was cast into prison, and put to death by Herod, while our Lord was proceeding in the course of his ministry: which ministry having carried on for the appointed time, and having performed the work given him to do, he finally laid down his life for his people; thus espousing his Church, whom he had first called by his grace, and then sanctified by his Spirit, and now justified by espousing her, and whom he will certainly marry at the due and appointed time: and it is to the day of espousal, the day of the gladness of his heart, that the prophet alludes in the Song, iii. 11; all which will be more fully noticed hereafter.

It is therefore of this King of Sion, this spiritual Solomon, and of the Christian Church, his Bride, that the Song of Songs makes mention.

But some very different opinions have been entertained respecting the persons there spoken of, and the subject matter of the Song itself, some of which will now be very briefly considered.



SECTION IV.

OF THE AUTHOR, LANGUAGE, FORM, OCCASION, NATURE, AND SUBJECT MATTER OF THE SONG OF SONGS; AND OF THE PERSONS THERE SPOKEN OF: AS ALSO, OF THE METHOD PURSUED BY THE AUTHOR OF THE FOLLOWING SHORT REMARKS ON THIS VERY IMPORTANT BOOK OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

IT may be proper first to notice some erroneous opinions concerning the occasion and subjects of this Song, before we state others which appear to be more rational, and better supported.

As the Song of Songs has been generally believed to be written by Solomon, the son of David, king of the natural Jerusalem; and as

we read that Solomon took the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to wife, some interpreters have thought that the whole book was composed upon the occasion of his marriage with her; and have therefore considered it as a nuptial or marriage song, primarily and chiefly referring to this Solomon and his Bride, and admitting of certain distinct divisions according to the seven days of the Jewish wedding. *Bossuet, and others.* But if this inspired prophetic Song, chiefly, if not wholly, refers to the spiritual Solomon or to Christ, and his Church, and particularly to their espousals; though the time of receiving of the Shulamite again, and the marriage of the Lamb (which has not yet taken place) be there foretold; all applications to the literal Solomon and his bride, and to their marriage, are improper, and cannot be admitted. Indeed no part of it will apply to the latter without the most unnatural and forced construction; and therefore must be left for ever. Some have thought that this application was warranted by the mention which is made of the crowning of king Solomon in the day of his espousals, that day of the gladness of his heart, Song iii. 11; but here they err, by considering the

day of espousal here mentioned as the day of marriage, and then applying it to the marriage of the literal Solomon, with which it has no connection whatever; this day of espousal being the day of the death of Christ, when he, the spiritual Solomon, declared, "it is finished," and from this moment espoused his Gospel Church; whom he will marry in the good and appointed time, as mentioned in the Revelation, xix. 7. This was truly the day of the gladness of his heart, he having then finished the eternal redemption of his people; the day in which he was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows; on which also, his body having been wrapped in linen with the spices, his garments smelled of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. Psalm xlv. 7, 8.

It has also been supposed, that the bed of Solomon, mentioned iii. 7, was the bridal bed of the literal Solomon: but it is evidently the espousal bed, or grave of Jesus, the spiritual Solomon here intended, the king of Sion; surrounded by a royal guard of valiant men; even the guard which his enemies, the rulers of the Jews, placed about it, to guard his body in the night, as will be fully shewn hereafter. The same espousal bed is also mentioned in

the first chapter, ver. 16; and not the bed of the literal Solomon. We shall now proceed to consider the subject as stated in the argument.

The Song of Songs is believed by the most enlightened interpreters and commentators, to be written *by Solomon* the son of David, king of Israel, in the *Hebrew language*, as now found in the Hebrew Bible, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost: and it is considered by Bishop Lowth, and other distinguished Hebrew scholars, to be written in *the usual form of Hebrew poetry*; as also by Dr. Kennicott, who has arranged it in the poetic form; in which, also, it has been given by different writers, and is now offered by the writer of the following pages: and as there is no certain guide in this matter, the reader will expect to see some difference of opinion.

On what *occasion* it was written does not clearly appear, nor at what *time*: but, from its nature, we may conclude that it was written before Solomon's departure to idolatry; and, very probably, about the time of the building, or dedication of the Temple of Jerusalem.

As to *the nature and subject* of this Song, it seems to be a most sublime, grand, beautiful,

spiritual, and prophetic Song, concerning the spiritual Solomon; or Jesus Christ, the super-eminently anointed, the spiritual Bridegroom, the Son of David after the flesh: and his Church, or Bride, whom he was to call by his forerunner John, and by his own preaching and that of his Disciples, as when he appeared in the flesh at Jerusalem; where, after having instructed her by his precepts and example, he did at last espouse her unto himself, as at his death upon the cross; and whom he will marry, when the time is come, Rev. xix. 6, 7, 8. xxi. xxii.; as at the conversion of the Jews, when all Israel shall be saved, and the new Jerusalem, or more perfected state of the Christian Church upon earth, shall begin to take place: a Song which contains the most beautiful prophecies concerning the calling of the Gospel Church, as at the preaching of John the Baptist, and appearance of our Lord; and others, which were fulfilled during the ministry of Christ; as also concerning many circumstances connected with the espousal of his Church, and concerning his grave or bed, the royal guard which watched the sepulchre of our King of Zion, his resurrection and return from the dead, and others: a Song

which seems to celebrate the excellent virtues, the distinguished fragrance, the glorious spiritual beauty, the chaste reciprocal loves, and the ultimate union of Christ and his true spiritual Church; thus giving as it were a general prophetic outline of her history, from the preaching of John the Baptist, and baptism of our Lord, to the conversion of the Jews and that of the wild Arabian, and their union with the Christian Church. And while her particular, often invisible, progressive state here on earth is mentioned, and her duties pointed out; her outward unseemly state, her trials and persecutions do not pass unnoticed.

Bishop Patrick having, in the preface to his paraphrase on the Song of Solomon, quoted these words of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ," observes, "For of that *one husband* alone, and of that *pure virgin*, and no other; and of their *espousals, love, and union*, is this incomparable Song of Solomon to be understood, and expounded;" namely, of Christ, and his spiritual Church. But though the more perfected union between Christ and his Church, as at the conversion of the Jews, and

marriage of the Lamb, is here mentioned, and the conversion of the Jews foretold; yet, by far the greater part of this prophetic Song concerns, 1st, her call by her Lord to be espoused; 2dly, his gracious espousal of her, as at his death; 3dly, many other circumstances concerning our Lord's preaching, death, and resurrection; and, 4thly, their mutual love, and her earnest desire for her future state of more perfect communion with her beloved, as at the marriage of the Lamb: and also contains many other beautiful prophecies, and directions to her and her members. So that this might be more fitly called an *espousal* than a *marriage* Song.

This Song is composed in the form of a dialogue; and seems to consist of various, more or less continued, mystic allegories, formed of figures and similitudes chiefly taken from pastoral and rural scenes, which are natural and beautiful, and often grand and sublime. And *the speakers*, and *the persons spoken of*, seem to be the following; namely, Christ, the Royal Bridegroom; the spiritual Church, his Bride; and her attendants, the Daughters of the spiritual Jerusalem, the first virgin converts to Christianity: and mention

is also made of Shepherds, and of Companions (see on viii. 13.) and Friends of the Bridegroom; which shepherds may most probably be his inspired Prophets of the Old Testament, and his chosen and inspired Apostles, and faithful Ministers of the New, among whom John the Baptist had his place as the friend of the Bridegroom; and of Watchmen, probably the watchmen of the Jewish Church at the natural Jerusalem, or the Chief Priests, Scribes, and Elders of the Jews: and a little Sister of the Spouse and Bridegroom is likewise spoken of in the 8th chapter; who seems to me to be the Arabian sister, or church of the Arabian nation, of whose conversion the prophet seems to speak.

Finally, it may be considered as a chain of mystical allegories, conveying, under various images borrowed from natural objects, the most sublime spiritual meanings; and as containing the grand prophetic outline above mentioned of the chief circumstances concerning our Lord and his Church, from the preaching of John the Baptist to the conversion of the Jews and Arabians unto Christ.

That it is prophetic of the Christian Church and her Lord, has been believed by many of

the most learned and respectable commentators; though they seem not to have clearly pointed out the particular periods there referred to, nor to have seen in a distinct view the prophetic import of many of its most beautiful passages.

We shall now proceed to take a cursory view of this Song of Songs, portion by portion, in hopes that even this humble effort may assist in producing a more accurate acquaintance with one of the most difficult books of Scripture; and fully trusting in the kind indulgence of the reader to excuse many errors, many marks of human weakness and imperfection, which, notwithstanding the utmost endeavours of the author to prevent them, will no doubt be found in the following pages.

The general method which the author purposes to adopt is, 1st, To state whom he considers to be the speaker in the dialogue; and then to give the English Translation, as found in the Bible, to the end of the speech: 2dly, To proceed, verse by verse, or portion by portion, making his remarks, critical or expository, as they occur: and 3dly, To add, at the end of all, the whole Song in the poetic form; retaining the phraseology of the English trans.

lation, as nearly as possible; excepting in some few instances, where evident improvement may be made: and, in general, leaving any new translation, which may arise from the present examination, for the further consideration of the Church.

He will therefore proceed; sincerely imploring the Divine blessing to accompany his efforts, and thus to enable him to be useful in his generation.

A BRIEF OUTLINE

OF AN

EXAMINATION

OF

THE SONG OF SOLOMON, &c.

CHAPTER I.

THIS inspired prophetic Song begins with the following short, but expressive preface; which seems to be a portion of the sacred book itself, and a title given to it by the Holy Spirit.

THE PREFACE.

Ch. I. 1. "The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's."

"The Song of Songs." The Hebrew is שיר השירים, *shir hashshirim*; which literally renders, *A Song of Songs*. "The most excellent of all Songs that Solomon or any other person ever composed." *Bishop Patrick*. It may therefore be called emphatically, *The Song of Songs*; and this rendering has been adopted by the English translators.

“Which is Solomon’s.” אשר לשלמה, *asher lishlomoh*: Or, which (is) *of* or *by*, or *of* or *concerning* Solomon: which may import, either that this Song was written by the temporal Solomon, King of Israel; or that it treats *of* or *concerning* the spiritual Solomon, or Jesus Christ, the King of the spiritual Israel, of whom the temporal Solomon, while he walked in the ways of God, was a type; as the Hebrew word לשלמה, *lishlomoh*, rendered *Solomon’s*, will bear both these renderings, according to the signification of the prefixed *lamed*. The same Hebrew prefix has been rendered *for* in the preface to the 72d Psalm.

That it was written *by* King Solomon is generally agreed by the most eminent interpreters and commentators; that the subject matter thereof is *concerning* the spiritual Solomon, the King of the spiritual Israel, is also very generally, and ought to be universally believed, as will appear by the few following remarks; and being a book in which the latter glorious Personage might greatly delight to read and meditate, as being highly devotional, and containing the chief things concerning the espousal and marriage of his Church, the great business for which he came into the world, it

might also be said to be *for* this spiritual Solomon. On these different significations of the prefixed *lamed*, we may remark as follows.

1st. The rendering of the English translators, *Solomon's*, or *of Solomon*, as importing that this Song was written by King Solomon, would well accord with the introductions to the other two books written by the same inspired Prophet; namely, the Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes; and with those of the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets, as informing the Church by whom they were respectively written, under the direction of the good Spirit of God.

2dly. The signification of the *lamed* in this place, as *of* or *concerning*, might be naturally inferred from a due consideration of the 45th Psalm; which is allowed to have been written before upon the same subject, and concerning the same great Personage, and by the royal Father of King Solomon; in which the same sentiment as that now expressed seems to be declared by the same Hebrew prefix. For David observes, that he speaks in this Psalm, of the things which he had made “touching the King,” i. e. *concerning* the King, namely Messiah; using the same Hebrew prefix as

that used by his son Solomon, and which is rendered *touching*, (i. e. *concerning*, or *relating to*) in this Psalm; למלך, *lemelec*, *touching the King*.

3dly. The signification *for* is given in the title of the 72d Psalm; a most beautiful prophetic Psalm, in which the final triumph of the Redeemer over all his enemies, the establishment of his Church, the extent and durability of his Kingdom are most beautifully described; and which he would no doubt read and meditate upon with delight: which title is לשלמה, *lishlomoh*, *for* Solomon; and the lxx. render Εἰς Σαλωμων, *for* Salomon; though the rendering, according to the Hebrew and this Greek version, might also be *upon*, *of* or *concerning* Solomon.

David, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, writes this Psalm, prophesying of all the glorious things just mentioned concerning the spiritual Solomon, and his Kingdom, which he no doubt recommended for the use of his son Solomon, for whom he also prays: and is it not probable that the spiritual Solomon, the Lord Jesus Christ, would delight to contemplate the glorious things spoken of himself and his kingdom in this Psalm? Indeed it is not

unreasonable to believe that the Psalms of David, and the Song of Songs, formed the principal devotional books of our blessed Lord. And what better Psalms, or Hymns, or spiritual Songs could he use, than those indited by his own glorious Spirit, the Holy Ghost?

We therefore see that three distinct principal senses might be expressed by the Hebrew *lamed*: the first is adopted by the English translators, as pointing to the literal Solomon as the instrument, or writer; but the second seems to be the sense in this place, as declaring the spiritual Solomon to be the Solomon spoken of in this prophetic Song; though these two senses would be both expressed by the English word *of*; namely, as being the writing *of* a Solomon, and *of* or *concerning* a Solomon; and the letter and spirit, as to the word Solomon, would thus accompany each other. But the 2d and 3d verses, if considered as speaking of the person mentioned in the 1st verse, or in this preface, which is generally allowed to be a portion of this inspired book, seem to fix the sense, by pointing out that the Solomon here intended is the spiritual, and not the temporal Solomon;

which seems thus further confirmed, that the Solomon and king hereafter mentioned throughout this book of prophecy (unless perhaps in one single instance), also refer to the spiritual Solomon only, as will soon be seen. The true rendering therefore seems to be, *of* or *concerning* Solomon; and this 1st verse may, therefore, be thus literally rendered: *A Song of Songs, which (is) of or concerning Solomon.*

It is the Song of שלמה, *Shelomoh*; or, as rendered in English, *Solomon*. This name seems to have been given for the literal Solomon before he was born, 1 Chron. xxii. 9; as significative of that peace which should be given unto Israel in his days. It is generally viewed as a single word signifying *peaceable*. But may we not rather consider it as a compound word, formed of שלום, *shalom*, signifying *peace*, and of ה, *he*, as the representative of הוא, *hu*, signifying *he*; together importing *He peace*? Which, if applied to the temporal Solomon, would point him out as the man of rest in whose days God would give שלום, or *peace*, *ib.*: and when referred to the spiritual Solomon, would well describe that glorious person who is our peace, as thus mentioned by

the Apostle, Eph. ii. 14, “ For *He* is our *peace* ;” and who is styled by Isaiah, the Prince of שלום, *shalom*, or of *peace* ; and of whom it is said by his prophet Micah, when speaking of the gospel times, that *He* was to be *the peace*, זה שלום, ch. v. 5. Moreover, this Hebrew noun also signifies *reconcilement*, *Parkhurst* : and it is by reconciling us to God, by virtue of his atonement for us, that our peace is made with our heavenly Father.

In this preface, therefore, to the inspired Prophetic Song now under consideration, we are informed that it is *a Song of Songs*, or *a most excellent Song* ; and a *Song of*, or *concerning* Solomon : and whether we consider the subject of which it speaks, the chief persons spoken of, or the language in which it is written, it may justly be considered as one of the most excellent, most sublime, and beautiful of all the Songs which have ever been composed, even to this day ; and as it abounds with prophecies concerning the Church, and her Bridegroom, the great Solomon spoken of in the Song, which well agree with others of the same kind revealed through the other prophets, its authenticity and inspiration need not be called in question.

St. Paul speaks of spiritual Songs, Eph. v. 19; of which there are many examples in Holy Scripture highly sublime and beautiful; among which this Song holds a distinguished rank, being highly spiritual, and only using literal images to figure spiritual things; and though the figurative language used is partly taken from the tender and chaste affections which are commonly felt and expressed in a natural courtship, or after an espousal contract; it seems to have no connection with the marriage of Solomon, King of the natural Israel, nor with this Solomon, nor with his bride, the daughter of Pharaoh.

THE CHURCH.

- Ch. I. 2. " Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth : for thy love *is* better than wine.
3. Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name *is as* ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.
4. Draw me, we will run after thee. The King hath brought me into his chambers : we will be glad and rejoice in thee ; we will remember thy love more than wine : the upright love thee."

IN these verses, the Gospel Church seems to address herself to Christ, the spiritual Solomon spoken of in this Song, in the name of herself, and her Virgin Companions, the true Christians, or Daughters of the spiritual Jerusalem. For it is to be particularly remembered, that the Church spoken of in this inspired prophetic Song is the true Church of Christ; and not the visible Christian Church, in which there are no doubt many merely nominal Christians, whose conformity to the commandments of Christ are merely formal and external, and who in that state, have no lot nor share in the inheritance of the saints; nor in the new Jerusalem, that spiritual Church which is from above, and which Christ will for ever love and preserve, and make to triumph over all her enemies. It is therefore the true Church which is here intended, and the Daughters of Jerusalem are her true spiritual children, or true Christians.

Ver. 2. "Let him kiss me," &c. Here the Church, in a beautiful and abrupt, but most earnest and affectionate manner, desires the presence of her Lord; and the enjoyment of the chaste, but endearing embraces of HIM whose love is better than wine; or than the

best, and most exhilarating of cordials : which might naturally be spoken by her at, or about the time of John's preaching, or of the baptism of our Lord. And this desire would naturally arise in her mind, by meditation on the ancient prophecies which foretell this agreeable event, or this first coming of her Lord. And we accordingly find, that a general expectation of his coming was excited about the time of the birth of John the Baptist; which was strongly confirmed afterwards by his preaching, and declaring himself to be his forerunner. And at the presentation of our Lord in the Temple, we find a faithful Simeon waiting for his coming, and rejoicing thereat. "Let him kiss me:" or, "Let him come and declare to me with his own mouth, the many gracious and endearing promises, comforts, and consolations contained in the word of God, as declared by his holy prophets." Good Bishop Patrick thus paraphrases, "O that he would come and speak to us by himself, and not merely by his Prophets; who have told us so much of Him, that I cannot but wish to converse familiarly with him, and receive the words of his own mouth," &c.

This passage therefore may be considered

as a prophecy of the first coming of Christ, which was fulfilled when he began to preach his gospel ; for we read, in the gospel according to St. Luke, that, after his baptism and temptation by Satan, he went in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and began his preaching with this passage of the prophet Esaias, “ The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor ; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord,” iv. 18, 19. declaring, that it was now fulfilled ; “ This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” ver. 21. As if he had said, “ This day am I come to preach the good news to my Church, my poor, captive, and despised people ; that all these gracious promises made to her and them, by my Spirit speaking by the mouth of my prophet Isaiah, are to be now fulfilled.” And it is added, that “ all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.” ver. 22. Grace was poured into his lips, and flowed from them to his Church. Psalm xlv. 2. And thus did Jesus,

the Saviour of his people, the Bridegroom of his Church, after having been at his baptism anointed with the Spirit above measure (by which he then became the *Christ* of God, the supereminently *anointed*), begin to kiss his Gospel Church with the kisses of his mouth : which he further confirmed by unfolding the will of his heavenly Father, and by discovering the affectionate mediatorial offices which he was come to perform, and the gracious promises to be afterwards fulfilled by the exhilarating and comforting influences of his Holy Spirit. And it seems to be to this unction of this Holy and Just One, and to the savour of his distinguished virtues and graces, that his Church alludes in the following verse, the 3d of the Song ; which when compared with the verse now under consideration, and the general tenor of the subject, seems to fix its beginning about the time we have above mentioned, as the 3d verse has particular reference to the time of the baptism of Christ, when the Holy Ghost descended and rested upon him in a bodily shape, and when he was anointed to preach the glad tidings of salvation to his Church and people, and to the other sacred offices which he came to execute ; for he was

to be the Prophet, Priest, and King of his people.

“For thy love is better than wine.” She no doubt alludes to the great love of Christ in voluntarily offering to come to instruct her, and to die for her. Psalm xl. 7—10. xxii. Isaiah liii. 10, 11, 12. His love was great indeed; strong as death, Song viii. 6; love that passeth knowledge. Eph. iii. 19. “And this greatness of the love of Christ for his people is here strongly expressed by the Hebrew word, rendered *love*, which is in the plural number, as in the margin of the Bible. The pious Mr. Williams observes, “The term for *love* is plural in the original, as intending the various instances of this love, and the different methods in which it is displayed.” See *New Translation*, p. 150. And great indeed is the love of God and Christ toward us: it is better, and more, much more exhilarating than wine or any created temporal enjoyment.

Ver. 3. “Because of the savour,” &c. It was at the baptism of Jesus, who possessed the Spirit without measure, John iii. 34, that his unction to preach the Gospel took place; and it was then also that he became the Christ, the Anointed of God, according to the Levitical

Law, being about thirty years of age. Luke iii. 21, 22, 23. And it was from this time that his graces and virtues became most conspicuous; and that the odour of his good ointments began to diffuse itself in his Church, through the dark and benighted land of Judea, and the Gentile regions of Galilee: and his fame, like that of the temporal Solomon, and like a fragrant ointment poured forth, soon spread itself around and brought virgin converts to the Church: and being thus the anointed of God, and receiving a name, as in the prophecies of the Old Testament, expressive thereof, it might be then said that his very name was as precious ointment poured forth, or was fully expressive of his being anointed for the high and exalted offices which, according to the ancient prophecies, he was now come to fill; or that his name was as an odoriferous ointment, which, in time, was to fill the whole world with its fragrance. Bishop Patrick observes, that the name "*Messiah*, signifying anointed, carried in it all that could be desired: he being anointed by God to be the great Deliverer and Saviour of his people." *Annot.* It was by the glorious gifts and graces of Christ communicated to his people and his

gracious words to them, that the love and admiration of a sinful world were to be excited, and virgin converts brought to the Church. The ointments of the Spouse, or betrothed Church of Christ, his chosen and fair one, are also spoken of in the 4th chapter, ver. 10.

Doth not this verse clearly point out, that this Song of Songs refers to Christ, the Messiah, the spiritual Solomon; and not to the natural Solomon, there being nothing in the etymology of his name which has any reference to anointing, or to ointment, or to perfume; though he was the anointed king of the natural Israel, and as such, and from many other circumstances of his situation and character, a type of the spiritual Son of David, the Solomon here intended? If this reference to Christ be fully admitted, as it must be, then the person spoken of in the second verse is here sufficiently declared, and the beauty of the abrupt beginning becomes apparent: while the first verse, or preface to this inspired Song, must also be considered as declaratory of the same personage, *of or concerning* whom the Song was to treat, the person alluded to in the second verse.

Ver. 4. "Draw me; we will run," &c. She entreats her Lord to draw her; that is, by the gracious and powerful influences of his Spirit, by whom all her members must be drawn before they can come to Christ; and says that she and her virgin converts will run after him: as if she had said prophetically, 'Thou shalt call and draw me to be thy Church, and I and my virgins will eagerly follow thee.' Accordingly, we read, in the fourth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, that "Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," ver. 17: and that, seeing two of his Apostles (*i. e.* who were to be) fishing, he said unto them "Follow me," and they straightway did so; and that, going on, he saw other two, "and he called them," and "they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him." 18—22. And thus hath it always been in the moment of his powerful call: he calls his sheep, and they immediately follow him. Of this, the father of Solomon had before prophesied, when speaking of the eternal priesthood of his Lord, and of his triumph over his enemies, thus; "thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power,"

Psalm cx. 3: referring more particularly to the conversion of the Jewish people as a nation, as will be seen hereafter.

The first converts were prepared for the coming of their Lord by the preaching of John, and with upright hearts, were desiring his appearance; and when come, they received him with joy and gratitude, and anxiously wished for a more intimate communion with him; expressing their readiness to obey him, or to run in the way of his commandments, Psalm cxix. 32, as in the words of Solomon.

“Draw me,” &c. They wish to be betrothed to him, and finally to be united with him. Thus did our Lord continue to draw converts to himself, and thus did they run after him, from the time of his Baptism to that of his Crucifixion. When, after being lifted up upon the cross, as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, and after having offered himself up as an unspotted sacrifice for the sins of the world, he was to continue by his Spirit, and the virtues of his sacrifice and intercession, to draw all men unto him, John xii. 32; iii. 14, 15: and it being only at his death that he espoused his Church, and became King of Sion, in that day of the gladness of his heart, Song

iii. 11, when he declared that it was *finished*; we may naturally believe that, in the next line, when she says, “The King hath brought me into his chambers;” we are prophetically and chronologically referred to the time of his death, when the espousal took place.

“The King hath brought,” &c. *The King*, in a prophetic view, may refer to our Lord either by anticipation; or, when he was actually become the King of Sion. In the former sense the term *King* can refer to him only some time before his death; while in the latter, it will directly apply to him either at his death, when he became King, or at any time afterwards. In the former view he might be called King, as when he is said to be born King of the Jews, or when he was anointed by Mary: but, in the latter, only when after having purchased his Church with his own blood, he became the King of Sion, the spiritual Israel, and afterwards.

The Church, having at the coming of Christ thus joyfully received him as her Lord and Bridegroom, to whom, according to his own desires and the declarations in his word, she was about to be betrothed, would now, according to the prophecy of Moses, sit down at his

feet, and receive of his words, as at the sermon on the mount and on other occasions : Matt. v. &c. while he would instruct her with that care and affection which is at the same time expressed by the same prophet, Deut. xxxiii. 3 ; “ Yea, he loved the people : all his saints *are* in thy hand : and they sat down at thy feet ; *every one* shall receive of thy words.” And having gradually explained to her the Scriptures, and led her step by step into their most hidden recesses, which at the time of the crucifixion and espousal might be made more manifest to her, she might then declare that the King had brought her into his chambers ; or that, after having called her as his Gospel Church, and admitted her to the free intercourse of hearing his words, and of holy meditation thereon, he had by this time fully informed her and made her acquainted with the chief of the glorious prophecies delivered in favour of himself and her ; or that he had brought her into the innermost chambers of the *Old Testament*, and there shewn to her the glorious things of the *New* therein contained and foretold ; or she might here take a prophetic glance of her own espousals, when her Lord enters with her triumphantly within the

veil into her Mother's house, as just after his death; when some of the beautiful prophecies contained in the 45th Psalm are fulfilled.

“ We will be glad,” &c. They express their joy thereat, and their grateful remembrance of his love, or that they will cause it to be remembered; saying, that the upright love him. *נזכירה*, *nazcirah*, the Hebrew word here rendered, “ we will remember,” being in the Hiphil form, signifies *we will cause to be remembered*: See *Dr. Hodgson* and *Mr. Good*; as if intimating that the Church will celebrate the Redeemer's love throughout all ages; and she also, by the same Hebrew verb, in the same Hiphil form, declares, in the last verse of the 45th Psalm, that she “ will *cause* his name *to be remembered* in all generations:” which will undoubtedly be the case.

The true Church always rejoiced in the presence of her Lord; and could never forget his great love for her, and particularly his laying down his life for her: for “ greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” John xv. 13.

The following words of our Lord evidently point him out as the royal Bridegroom spoken of in this Song, and in other places of the Old-

Testament Scriptures. They were spoken in answer to John's disciples, who had asked, why the disciples of Jesus did not fast as well as they. To whom Jesus replied, "Can the children (literally *υιοι*, sons, alluding to his Apostles and Disciples,) of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast:" Matt. ix. 15. Jesus had now called his Church, or drawn her towards him: and her members were now become the children of Jerusalem, or of the bride-chamber, her Sons and Daughters; some of the former being considered as his attendants; and some of the latter as her attendants, the daughters of the spiritual Jerusalem, and always present at the visits of her Lord. The Christians were, moreover, become the Lord's Children, the flock which he, the good Shepherd of Israel, vouchsafed to feed, Psalm lxxx. 1; John x. 11: and they had now begun to rejoice in him. Accordingly we find John the Baptist, some time after the baptism of Christ, thus expressing his joy in his Lord and Saviour; by which also he points him out as the Bride-

groom of his Church the bride; “ He that hath the bride, is the bridegroom : but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled,” John iii. 29: and with him the Church also rejoiced.

Some commentators have considered the acknowledgment of the Church here mentioned, that the King had brought her into his chambers, as a declaration of her marriage. But this does not appear to be the case, as the prophecy (*i. e.* in narration) has not, even in the fullest and most extended sense, yet reached beyond the time of the crucifixion, at which time our Lord did only espouse his Church and become King ; though, according to the Jewish custom, the bride and bridegroom were allowed to visit one another occasionally after their espousals : and the time of the marriage of the Lamb is not yet spoken of in the Song of Songs, and has not yet taken place. He espoused his bride at the time of his crucifixion, after which he departed into a far country ; but, at the appointed time, he will return and marry his espoused bride, who will

then be ready and prepared for his reception, for this will be granted unto her. Rev. xix. 7, 8.

But though not then married, and not to be so until her Lord's return, this personal absence did not hinder that intimate communion in hearing and reading the word, in meditating upon it, in prayer, and in the society of Christ himself, which were then enjoyed by the saints; and which (excepting the personal appearance) they have ever since enjoyed; and, as may be believed, in a superior degree since the atonement was made, and the Holy Ghost given in a larger proportion: and the time of her fullest fruition is not yet come, for the Jews are not yet converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles is not yet come in, Rom. xi. 25, 26; and blessed are they who shall be called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb, Rev. xix. 9; when the following beautiful prophecy of Isaiah will begin to be fulfilled: "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee," lxii. 5; so will God and the Lamb then rejoice over the Christian Church.

THE CHURCH TO HER COMPANIONS,
THE DAUGHTERS OF THE SPIRI-
TUAL JERUSALEM.

Ch. I. 5. “ I *am* black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem; as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

6. Look not upon me, because I *am* black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother’s children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; *but* mine own vineyard have I not kept.”

Ver. 5. “ I *am* black.” שחורה, *Shehhorah*, is here rendered *black*: and this rendering is supported by Pagninus, Montanus, and others; and seems to be confirmed by ch. v. 11, of this Song, where it is compared to the colour of the Raven. Here it is used figuratively, and seems to represent a great degree of external unseemliness, affliction, or persecution. So Jeremiah, speaking of a very afflicted state of his people, says, “ Their visage is blacker than a coal;” or rather, according to the margin, “ darker than blackness.” Lament. iv. 8; and two distinct Hebrew words are used to import *dark* and *blackness*, the latter being from the same Hebrew root from which the word here rendered *black* comes. Indeed *black* is repeat-

edly used in Scripture as a figure to denote affliction and mourning; as appears from the above and following passages. Job xxx. 30, 31; Jer. viii. 21; xiv. 2, &c. Bishop Patrick renders *dark* and *swarthy*: and Mr. Williams thus expounds, “*She was dark as the tents of Kedar*, or of the Arabians, which, according to some writers, were made of black goats’ hair, or, according to others, dyed black.” Mr. Harmer says they were made of black goats’ hair. *Outline of New Com.* Volney says, the tents of the Bedoween Arabs, woven of goats’ or camels’ hair, are black or brown, *Parkhurst*. The tents of the wild Arabs are to this day of a very dark or black colour, being made of the shaggy hair of their black goats. *D’Arvieux. Notes, Ch. Fam. Bible.* The sense therefore is, that she is black as the tents of Kedar, but comely as the curtains of Solomon, “*But comely.*” Though her external circumstances were *black*, unseemly, mournful; she was, notwithstanding, spiritually well favoured, and comely, from the grace or favour which her Lord had bestowed upon her. The “*daughters of Jerusalem*” here mentioned, seem to be the same virgin converts spoken of in the 3d verse.

“As the tents,” &c. The tents of Kedar have been already mentioned; and the curtains of Solomon were no doubt magnificently grand and beautiful.

So that, in this verse, the Church seems to acknowledge her external blackness, or unseemly appearance; or her afflicted, poor, low, and despised outward condition; which she compares to the black, or dark sun-burnt, or weather-beaten tents of the wild Arabian, Kedar being one of the sons of Ishmael, the father of the Arabian nation: and to speak of her real comeliness as the bride of Christ, that comeliness which he had now put upon her; which she compares to the beautiful, stately, and magnificent curtains of King Solomon.

Her blackness is hereafter accounted for: and her real beauty, when called and sanctified by her Lord, will not be doubted.

Ver. 6. “Look not upon,” &c. The root *ראה*, *raüh*, from which the word rendered *look upon* comes, according to Mr. Parkhurst, signifies “to see, look, look at, in whatever manner.” Stockius considers the meaning in this place the same as “contemnere” to despise: and Bishop Patrick says, “Do not despise me,” &c. But the same verb is used in Joshua ii. 1,

and is rendered *to view*; namely, as a spy, *attentively*, and *with consideration*; which may be the meaning in this place.

“Because I *am* black.” Here the Hebrew word which is rendered *black* in the last verse, appears in a reduplicate form, the two last radicals being repeated; and might be rendered *black black*, or *very black*, the reduplication generally giving intensity to the signification. Bishop Patrick seems to have had the same view of the intensity of meaning; for, having paraphrased this word in the fifth verse as importing the being *dark and swarthy*, he, in the sixth, renders *exceeding black*. Williams observes, that the word is rendered more emphatical by the reduplication; and he adds the following various readings, which have this circumstance in view: “*valde fusca*” *Bochart*; “*prorsus, vel valde, et tota nigra*,” *Markius, Michaelis*; “*very black*,” *Dr. Gill. New Trans.* p. 158, n. 2. But Montanus, who had in the fifth verse rendered “*nigra*,” *black*, in the sixth renders “*fusca*,” *brown* or *dark-coloured*; as if the reduplication implied diminution, instead of intensity. Stockius renders, in the sixth verse, “*subnigra*,” *blackish*; thus also diminishing the signification.

“Because the sun,” &c. The sun here mentioned is most probably Satan, who is the Sun of his own infernal kingdom, and seems to be spoken of in other parts of Scripture under this title: and our Lord is also the Sun of righteousness of his spiritual kingdom. That Satan looked on her and was attentive to her progress, is manifest from his attempts against our Lord just after his baptism, &c. Matt. iv.

“Hath looked upon me.” רָאָה , *shazaph*, the Hebrew root from which the word, here rendered *looked upon*, comes, is only found in other two places of Scripture; where it is rendered *to see*. Here, Parkhurst renders *to shine upon*; and Williams, *to beam upon*. But would it not be better to adopt the primary sense *to see*; which would well express the sense intended by the English Translators, giving only that difference of translation which the context requires? Stockius translates “conspicatus est,” *hath beheld*: but, *hath seen* seems preferable; or probably, *hath viewed* may be still more expressive.

In this passage, therefore, the Church seems to beg that her virgin converts, the daughters of Jerusalem, will not consider her according to her external appearance, which, though

indeed very black, or very dark and discouraging, is occasioned by the Sun, or brought upon her by Satan, who had viewed or eyed her: and Satan evidently kept his eye upon her, and no doubt brought upon her all the persecution and affliction which she suffered; and it was by the same scorching Sun that all the tribulation and persecution mentioned by our Lord, in his parable of the sower, were produced. Matt. xiii. 5, 20, 21.

“My mother’s children,” &c. בני אמי, *bene immi*, literally, *the sons of my mother*; and may more particularly allude to the heads of the Jewish nation, though בני may also be rendered *children*. The chief instruments of her persecution were her mother’s children, who were angry with her: and the persecutions of the Christians by the Jews are well known. And, as the Jewish mother-church was the mother of her Gentile daughter, the Gospel Church; so the Jews were the children of the same mother, though those who persecuted the Christian Church were only the children after the flesh; whereas she was her spiritual daughter, and formed the first congregated body of the first true believers in Christ; and we find our Lord calling the Gospel Church

his *Sister*, Song of Songs iv. 9, and her speaking of him as her *Brother*; namely, in a spiritual sense. Song viii. 1. Indeed our Lord was born, after the flesh, a Jew, of the lineage of David: and being good and holy, he was also a true Jew after the Spirit. And all the Jews who were converted to Christ were both natural and spiritual Jews: whereas the wicked, impenitent, and persecuting Jews were not of the true Israel of God; being Jews only after the flesh, and not after the Spirit. Yet they were members of the Jewish synagogue, and worshippers in the Temple, and therefore children (though only natural children) of the same mother. They were, therefore, figuratively, her mother's children: and such were the Jewish Chief Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, and other literal rulers.

They were angry with her, and her Christian members. And why? For the same reason that Cain was angry with Abel; because they were more righteous than their Jewish brethren: for the latter, refusing to conform to the commandments of God delivered to them by Moses, had substituted their own vain traditions, and thus made the word of God of none effect; and therefore, the true Jewish

Church could not acknowledge them as legitimate offspring, but as her natural children, or children after the flesh.

We have seen, as above mentioned, that the Jews after the Spirit received their Saviour with gratitude and joy; and that, immediately embracing his Gospel, they became Christians, or children of Christ, the spiritual Solomon, and Son of David, who was to redeem his people, and to set up the spiritual tabernacle of David among them, or the Christian Church: and these Jews formed, as it were, that portion of the true olive-tree into which the Gentile branches were grafted, Rom. xi. 17; forming together the spiritual Judah, the true Israel of God, (under their spiritual David, the Lion of the tribe of Judah,) the spiritual mount Sion, and Jerusalem; the place appointed for the Lord's people, his holy mountain, from which they shall move no more, 2 Sam. vii. 10; Isa. lvii. 13; where the Lamb shall feed them with the bread of life, and lead them unto living fountains of water, Rev. vii. 17; and where this their good Shepherd shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. Mic. v. 4.

But the elders, chief priests, scribes, and the rulers of the natural Jews, having rejected the law of their God, and also the Messiah therein declared, Mark viii. 31, had thereby so neglected the Lord's Jewish vineyard, that it yielded no proper fruits, and had therefore rendered themselves unworthy to have the charge of it any longer. Accordingly, at the baptism of Christ, those shepherds were, in a spiritual sense, cut off, as prophesied by Ezekiel and Zechariah, Ezek. xxxiv. 7, 8, 9; Zech. xi. 8; and Christ, the spiritual David, the great and good Shepherd of Israel, was appointed to feed his people Israel, Jew and Gentile, in their place, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24: and from this time the care of both Jew and Gentile vineyards was transferred, in a spiritual sense, to the Christian Church, under her Lord, her head and the chief corner stone of the building, whom the Jews, by their rejection of God and his laws (that inheritance of the congregation of Jacob) did, as it were, now appoint to be keeper thereof; or she was now to be the depository or keeper of the oracles of God, as contained in the Scriptures then given, or which were afterwards to be communicated, and in which were to be contained the

ultimate appointments of the Jew and Gentile nations.

And the natural Jews, with their rulers, these murderers of the Son of God, were left in possession of the temporal vineyard (the Jews of Jerusalem and Judea who would not embrace the Gospel) only until they had filled up the measure of the abomination spoken of by the prophet Daniel; when the Romans came and destroyed these wicked men, burnt up their city, dispersed the people, and spoiled them of their vineyard; which was now, by appointment of the Lord of the vineyard, given unto others. Dan. ix. 27; Matt. xxi. 33, &c. Mark xii. 1, &c. Luke xx. 9, &c.

Now it appears, from comparing the parable of the vineyard, as related by these three Evangelists, with the first seven verses of the fifth chapter of Isaiah, which contains a similar prophecy concerning the Lord's Jewish vineyard, that the nation of the Jews formed the vines; the rulers and the chief priests the husbandmen, and Judea, and mount Zion, or hill of Jerusalem, the fruitful land or hill where they were planted. "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the

men of Judah his pleasant plant or plantation," Isa. v. 7: and these choice plants he planted in "a very fruitful hill," 1, 2, having the Law of their God for their direction, and his holy Temple and its worship and service among them conducted by his servants the Priests and Levites; but being neglected by the rulers and chief priests, and having degenerated, instead of grapes, they brought forth wild grapes, 2; and they proceeded until they were rooted up, and the vineyard given to other husbandmen, as described in the parable. Thus these natural Jews were, with the natural land of Judea and Jerusalem, given up to be punished and trodden under foot by the Gentiles, until the Lord's indignation against them be accomplished, Dan. xi. 36, and until their great Deliverer shall come out of Sion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob, Rom. xi. 26; when the natural Israel shall be joined with the spiritual Israel (now existing in the Christian Church, who are thus spiritually the men of Judah, the pleasant plants or plantation of the Lord) and become one people upon the spiritual mountains of Israel; for God hath not wholly cast away his people whom he

foreknew, Romans xi. 1, 2, and the vineyard of the natural Israel, the natural seed of Abraham, is still an object of his care.

Therefore, during the Old-Testament dispensation, the Jewish nation was the vineyard of the Lord; plants of his planting; and, in a temporal sense, the mountains of Judea and Jerusalem were the mountains upon which they fed, these being their temporal inheritance in the land of Canaan; and the temple of Jerusalem is sometimes spoken of as the mountain of the house. But they had a spiritual inheritance also, of much more importance, the law of their God, even "the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob," Deut. xxxiii. 4; and this was the great spiritual mountain, the mount Carmel, the holy mountain, to which the flocks of the Lord were to repair for spiritual nourishment and support; and it was the word and promises of God to their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which supported them in all their troubles, and enabled them to rejoice in the Lord their God. Moreover to the Jews were committed the whole of "the Oracles of God," Rom. iii. 2, contained in the Old Testament, forming one great spiritual mountain of Israel, which extended in a spiri-

tual geographical sense to the death of Christ; and upon which they were to feed until then: for the law and the prophets were unto John; and in another sense, even to the death of the Messiah, when the veil was rent, and the New-Testament dispensation commenced: for Christ himself and his disciples adhered strictly to the law of Moses until his death; and he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Rom. x. 4. And to the Jews belonged “the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service *of God*, and the promises; whose *are* the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.” Rom. ix. 4, 5.

Now about the time of our Lord’s beginning to preach, the Jews, as a distinct nation, were under the guidance and direction of their Elders, Chief Priests, and Scribes, the husbandmen appointed over this vineyard of God; who ought to have taken care of it, according to their Lord’s commands: but, rebelling against him, they spitefully used his messengers, or prophets; beating some, and killing others; and at last became the murderers of his beloved Son; impiously wishing, according

to the parable, to seize the inheritance for themselves ; or to feed the people in their own way, according to their own vain traditions. For these shepherds, instead of feeding the Lord's flock upon his holy mountain, with the heritage of Jacob their father, or with the true manna, the bread of life, and the living waters of the word, fed them only with the sour and poisonous grapes of their own traditions ; whereby they defiled his land, and made his inheritance an abomination, Jer. ii. 7, 8 : therefore when a month of years was accomplished, or rather fulfilling, or when our Lord had attained to about his thirtieth year, then did he spiritually cut off these worthless shepherds by beginning to feed his own flock himself ; and he, loathing their wicked ways, severely reproved them for their perversion of the righteous laws of God, and for their various iniquities ; and they abhorred him, Zech. xi. 8, and continued to persecute him with unceasing industry, even unto death. And it seems to this neglect of the Jewish vineyard by the Jewish shepherds, that her spiritual daughter alludes, when she says " Mine own vineyard have I not kept ;" that is, the vineyard, which, in right of her mother, was her's, and which

had now fallen into decay, by the improper management of those Jewish shepherds; who fed themselves, and not the flock of God.

But her Lord being a Jew after the flesh, as well as one after the Spirit, and being about to begin the New-Testament Church-state, and set up the spiritual Kingdom of Israel, he begins by first calling all the true Jews, and others of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, whom he constitutes as his Christian Church, or the spiritual Israel, who leaving the false and foolish traditions of the elders, were to worship God in spirit and in truth.

The rulers of the Jews of the natural seed of Abraham, perceiving this, immediately shew their enmity to her, by refusing to have any communication with her, and turning out of the synagogue whoever warmly espoused her cause: and thus, under these circumstances of persecution and affliction, is she, at once, deserted by her mother's children, and left by them in charge of the vineyards. The word *הכרמים* *hacceramim*, here rendered "the vineyards," is in the plural number, and not in the dual: and therefore means more than the two vineyards of Jews and Christians. Are not the Arabians meant as a third vineyard? If so, the three

vineyards would then be as follows: namely, 1st, that of the true Israel, constituting the Christian Church; and 2dly, that of the natural Israel, who though left out of the pale of the Church for a time, on account of their iniquities, are notwithstanding under the eye and protection of God, and will be again, at the proper time, united with their Christian brethren of the true Israel, when their fruits will appear; and 3dly, that of the Arabian nation, which seems to be mentioned in the 8th chapter, as a little sister; who will also be brought into the Christian Church. Moreover, the wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles having been broken down at the death of Christ, the Christian Church was thrown open to the Gentiles also, who gladly accepted the offers of the Gospel; while the Jews, continuing in wickedness and unbelief, were rejected, and afterwards dispersed among the Gentile nations. So that, excepting a certain remnant of the Jews that embraced Christianity at first, and were the first fruits of the Gospel, the Christian Church has been chiefly formed from among the Gentiles, (though many Jews have at different times been converted); and will, most probably be so, until the con-

version of the Jewish nation. And hence it was said by our Lord, that the kingdom of God should be taken from the Jews, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof: namely, to the Gentiles, as happened at the death of Christ, when they were admitted into the Christian Church, and to form the chief part thereof. Matt. xxi. 43.

Of these two vineyards, Jew and Christian, just spoken of, the spouse seems to speak, in the 8th chapter of this Song, as well as of the Arabian sister, as we shall see hereafter.

“ They made me Keeper of the vineyards,” &c. While the Jews continued to serve God, and to be his people, they were the keepers or depositories of the oracles of God, as contained in the law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms (including the other books with them); which together constitute the Old-Testament volume, or one of the mountains of the land of the spiritual Israel; or the land upon which the Lord’s flock did feed, and by which the trees of his vineyard were nourished, and supported, and enabled to yield the choice Israelitish wine for the exhilaration of the tribes of Israel. But when the rulers of the Jews, by rejecting the Gospel, disbelieving

the Scriptures, and continuing in their wickedness, became unworthy of this office, and of the charge of the Lord's vineyard; then did the care of the Old-Testament Scriptures, together with those of the New (the second volume of the book, and the other spiritual mountain of the spiritual Israel, which was *afterwards* to be added), naturally devolve upon the spiritual Daughter of the Jewish church, or upon the Christian church: as well as the charge of the Lord's vineyards; namely, those of the spiritual and natural Israel, just mentioned; and of the Arabian vineyard also.

Now these two spiritual mountains conjoined may be considered, in another sense, as the one great spiritual mount Carmel, upon which all the Israel of God are hereafter, as it were, to be assembled and to feed.

It is also worthy of remark, that, over the natural vineyard of the Lord, or over the Jews, He appointed the Gentile nations, as watchmen, to punish them when they rebelled against him; as mentioned by Jeremiah, iv. 16, 17, 18. And the Jews, having been repeatedly punished without the desired effect, had become so exceedingly depraved about the time of the coming of Christ, as to have little more

of religion than the name: then did our Lord appear as the Sun of righteousness, to call to him his Christian Church, to die for her, and to make her the future depository of the Divine Oracles (namely, of the Old and New Testaments) both for the Jews and the Christians; and it seems to be prophesied of the Jews, in the form of a commandment (which may have been so permitted in order to preserve that character which more remarkably distinguishes them from all other nations, and to fulfil various prophecies concerning them), that they should continue to observe the law of Moses until their conversion, according to the prophecy of Malachi, iv. 4; and the Jews dwelling at Jerusalem were left to fill up that measure of iniquity, for which they were soon to be punished by the Romans, and by them to be scattered so as to be dispersed throughout all nations. Luke xxi. 24. So that to the Christian Church is committed the care, not only of the Christians, but of the Jews, and of the Arabians also; to instruct them, and to give them their meat in due season; she being entrusted with the care of the two Testaments just mentioned, the two spiritual mountains upon which they are to feed, and in which are contained the

origin and prophetic history of the Jew and Gentile, as well as of the Arabian nations. The Jewish vineyard seems to be spoken of in the 8th chapter of this inspired Song, as the vineyard of Solomon, or of the Lord, as it also is by Isaiah, v. 1 : and he will watch over it, and make it fruitful in the due and appointed time. While the Christian vineyard is, as it were, committed to the church ; but, under her Lord, as is necessarily implied : and the Arabian sister will not be forgotten of her God ; who will hear her in the good and appointed time.

To this appointment, therefore, whether from natural inheritance, or ordination of God, the Church seems to allude, when she says, she was made Keeper of the vineyards. She was to go on from strength to strength, through good report, and evil report, through fire and water, and to brave even tortures and death for the sake of her religion (all of which many of her members have valiantly endured), and to preserve the sacred deposit committed to her charge until the conversion of the Jews, and their union with the Christian Church ; when the marriage of the Lamb, or of Christ to his Church, seems to take place : and in

this latter sense, the Christian Church is now become the Keeper of the vineyards, and of the two mountains of the spiritual Israel, the two mount Carmels on which the flocks of the Lord feed; and it is foretold that the Jews, after their conversion, are again to feed on mount Carmel; or to taste of the wine of the Old-Testament Scriptures, as in the days of old; or to feed on the great Carmel, the united Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, that great mountain of the Lord, which in time will feed the whole earth, and fill it with most excellent fruits. They are also to be brought into the spiritual mount Gilead, the land of balm, the residence of the great spiritual Physician, who will heal them of all their spiritual diseases.

“ Mine own vineyard have I not kept.” This seems to be spoken as a lamentation that the Jewish vineyard should have been so neglected by the keepers thereof, as to have become so degenerated as to bring forth wild grapes instead of true ones: which she seems to speak as the daughter of the Jewish Church, now become Christian, and enduring the persecution and affliction of her mother’s children; who, instigated by Satan, had rejected

the Gospel, and thus left to her the care of the vineyards, for which she would not fail to attract his and their most determined enmity ; to which she ascribes her external dark, and discouraging condition or appearance.

If she be considered to speak this as a Gentile, just drawn, or converted to Christ, and lamenting her former unconverted state, and that of her nation ; it will probably be thought that she here alludes to that great deviation from the worship of the true God, by idolatry and depravity of different kinds, which had overspread the whole Gentile world at the time of our Lord's appearance ; for at that time, both the Jewish and Gentile nations were filled with wild vines, and foxes that spoil the vineyards, and hurt the grapes : but she being a Jewess after the Spirit, and daughter of the spiritual Jewish mother, I should prefer the interpretation before given.

THE CHURCH TO CHRIST.

Ch. I. 7. " Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest *thy flock* to rest at noon : for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions ?"

HERE the Prophet alludes to the common custom of eastern shepherds, who guide their flocks into some cool shady places at noon, that they may not suffer by the burning heat. And the Church declares her love for her Lord, the great and good Shepherd of Israel; and asks him where he feeds his flock at noon, or in the time of the severest persecutions, Mark iv. 6, 17; wishing to feed her flocks in those pastures pointed out by her beloved, and to direct them where to rest and seek shelter under the greatest persecutions. Her love induces her to wish to be constantly with himself; and to hear the word from his own mouth, not being satisfied with the prophetic records delivered by his Prophets, nor with the preaching of his Apostles: and probably afraid lest, like a straying sheep, she should wander from the good Shepherd while present with her. Our Lord, the Shepherd of Israel, feeds his flock, the members of his true Church, by his Word, or in the green pastures of the mountains of Israel; or, in his Sacred Word of Truth contained in the two Testaments, the figurative mountains of Israel. And when he feeds his flock, and adds new converts, he nourishes and enlarges his Church

his mystical body; and to do the will of his heavenly Father, was his meat and drink.

Moreover, having in the two foregoing verses declared her external unseemliness, and the cause; she now applies to her beloved for information and direction what she is to do when that Sun, which had hitherto molested her, should be at his height; or when she should be brought by Satan into the greatest affliction, or the severest trials he was able to bring upon her and her companions: and the directions given seem applicable to the Church in all ages, and are very excellent. They are given in answer, in the following verse; and some beautiful remarks on the person of the spouse are added in the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses.

CHRIST TO HIS CHURCH.

Ch. I. 8. "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

9. I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.

10. Thy cheeks are comely with rows of *jewels*, thy neck with chains of *gold*.

11. We will make thee borders of gold, with studs of silver."

Ver. 8. "If thou know not," &c. She is here spoken of as a Shepherdess having kids to feed; and she is informed that she is to go forth *in* (the Hebrew prefix is **נ**, and here renders *in*: and it is so rendered by Mr. Good.) the footsteps of the flock, and to feed her kids, or young converts, beside the shepherds' tents. Or, she is to direct them to walk in the steps and in the way in which the people of God have ever walked, and will walk in all future ages, Rom. iv. 12; 1 Peter ii. 21; *viz.* in the good old path of faith and works, in which He has commanded them to walk; and this may also imply the association, in churches and elsewhere, with pious persons who fear God and walk in his ways; whose upright walk they are to follow, observing also the good precepts and examples of their godly pastors or ministers; and she is to guide them to the tents, or habitations, of the shepherds of Israel; or, besides their attendance on the administration of the word and ordinances in the house of God, under their spiritual pastors, the shepherds of Israel, she is to guide them to the sacred books of Moses,

the Prophets, and the Psalms; where they may trace the footsteps of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Samuel, and David, &c.: or, to the preaching of her Lord, and that of his Apostles; or, to the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles; where they will find the examples of our Lord and his Apostles, of Matthew, of Luke, the beloved Physician, &c.: or, in a word, to the Bible; where they will see the examples of those pious individuals, and of all the other Old and New-Testament worthies, in whose tents, or in whose writings, her beloved may always be found. Good Bishop Hall thus paraphrases: “Follow the holy steps of those blessed Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, which have been my true and ancient flock, who have both known my voice and followed me; and feed thou my weak and tender ones with this their spiritual food of life, far above the carnal reach of those other false teachers.” *The edition by the Rev. Josiah Pratt, B. D. Vol. III. p. 273.*

He is our Shepherd; he maketh us to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth us by the still waters, Psalm xxiii. 2. Ezekiel, while reproving the worthless shepherds of Israel,

who fed themselves and not the flock of God, thus speaks of our great spiritual David, the good Shepherd of Israel; “ I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, *even* my servant David, he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God.” xxxiv. 23, 24. And, in the same chapter, “ I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and *in* a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God.” 14, 15. And we are the sheep of his pasture, and live, not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matt. iv. 4. The Old and New Testaments contain the Word of God, and they, therefore, seem to be the mountains of Israel, and the green and fat pastures, and still waters above alluded to. He feedeth his flock like a shepherd, he carrieth the lambs in his bosom, and gently leadeth those that are with young. Isa. xl. 11. He maketh them to rest at noon: or under the most afflicting circumstances, the hottest seasons of tribu-

lation and persecution, he comforts and consoles his people. He is the good Shepherd that giveth his life for the sheep.

Ver. 9. "I have compared thee," &c. The Hebrew word, לִסְסָתִי, *lesusathi*, here translated "to a company of horses," literally renders, *to my horse*, or *cavalry*. In this verse the beauty and excellence of the Church seem to be pointed out: and also what her Lord expects of her, or what she will be. As if he had said, "You have just asked me what you are to do in the noon-day of persecution, or where you are then to feed your flocks; and I have directed you to walk in the footsteps of the flock, and to keep beside the shepherds' tents: and I now further inform you, that you are to conduct yourself under these and all other circumstances like the horses in Pharaoh's chariots; and I know that you will do so: you will be like them in beauty, courage, stateliness, and in all other excellencies." She is therefore compared to a company of royal horses, in the chariots of Pharaoh, King of Egypt. And this country being famous for chariot-horses, the King would no doubt have in his chariots the most excellent and stately that could be procured. And the properties

of a fine horse are well known: he is stately and noble in his appearance, strong in body, swift of foot, in courage undaunted, and ever ready to execute the commands of his lord: and, when occasion requires, he becomes his goodly horse in the day of battle; where, with his neck clothed with thunder, he paweth in the valley, rejoiceth in his strength, and rusheth on to meet the armed men; and undaunted at the thunder of the captains, and the shouting of the mighty men, he neigheth contempt against fear, and turneth not back from the sword, the spear, or the shield. See Job xxxix. 19—25. And a company of such horses, richly caparisoned, and in high courage, in the royal chariots, would exhibit one of the most beautiful, grand, and magnificent spectacles which could be viewed.

This verse, therefore, contains a beautiful, though figurative description of the Church and her members, under the Lord; who is the appointed head of the heathen (or of spiritual Egypt), which he is to have for his inheritance; and is, therefore, most probably, figured in this place and in this particular, by Pharaoh, King of the heathen land of the temporal Egypt.

Let then the Christians of the present day

endeavour, in their Christian course, to follow the directions implied in this verse; and to imitate the members of the primitive church, in their noble courage, zeal, activity, cheerfulness, and contempt of difficulties or persecutions in their Lord's service: let them be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Moreover, if among the other beauties and excellencies of the horse, we suppose that his fulness also is alluded to in this place; it will be remembered that the Lord's land is a good land, a land flowing with milk and honey; and that his flocks are to feed in the rich pastures of Israel, Ezek. xxxiv. 14; that they shall be fat and flourishing, Psalm xcii. 14; and be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house. Psalm xxxvi. 8.

Bishop Patrick has well observed, that this comparison of the Church to a company of horses, "may convince us, that Solomon does not aim at any single person in this Song, but at a great many united in a body; *i. e.* the whole company of believers in the Messiah:" and he thinks that the Church is hereby represented as being very powerful and able to prevail over all opposers. *Annot. in loc.*

Ver. 10. "Thy cheeks are comely," &c.

Her cheeks are comely with rows of Patriarchal and Apostolic jewels; her neck with golden chains of prophecy, and its fulfilment. And how beautiful is the chain of prophecy which follows! “ Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel,” Isa. vii. 14; joined with its fulfilment as related in the first chapter of St. Matthew’s Gospel, 18—23!

The figures used in this description may be taken from the eastern custom of ornamenting their horses with costly trappings of gold, adorned with pearls and precious stones, if this verse be considered as an allegorical continuation of the foregoing, and as referring to the horses just mentioned: but, if not, they may be taken from the customs of the eastern ladies, who used to decorate their heads with rows of pearls or precious stones, some of which descended so as to hang over their cheeks, or by the sides of their faces: and who also wore gold chains about their necks. *Harmer*, p. 206; *Williams*, p. 174.

Ver. 11. “ We will make thee,” &c. Here our Lord speaks in the plural number, or in his own name and that of some other persons. Shall we say in the name of his attendants;

or rather consider this as an intimation of the plurality of persons in the Godhead? Bishop Hall seems to be of the latter opinion; who thus explains: "And though thou be already thus set forth, yet I and my Father have purposed a further ornament unto thee, in the more plentiful effusion of our Spirit upon thee; which shall be to thy former deckings, instead of pure gold curiously wrought with specks of silver." Vol. III. p. 273. Our Lord promises to make her rows, or borders* of gold, with studs of silver; or that her ranks or boundaries shall consist of the precious sons and daughters of the spiritual Zion, comparable to fine gold, Lament. iv. 2; and silver, and precious jewels, Mal. iii. 3, 17; Rev. xxi.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. I. 12. "While the King *sitteth* at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

13. A bundle of myrrh *is* my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

14. My beloved *is* unto me *as* a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi.

* In the original the same Hebrew word is used, which, in the former verse, is rendered *rows*.

Ver. 12. "While the King," &c. The reader will refer to the remarks on the 4th verse; and it may be here observed, that if the prophecy contained in the present verse concerning the *nard*, or *spikenard*, refers to the times of the different anointings of our Lord, or to any other time before his death, and therefore before he became King, that title is here given to him by anticipation; and that if it refers to the time of his death, or after, then he was become King, as here expressed.

"Sitteth at his table." This is rather a paraphrase than a translation; though the Hebrew may be thus translated in a certain limited sense. The original word *במסבו* *bimsibbo*, here rendered *at his table*, literally signifies, *in his circle*: which might imply either when in the circle of his friends, as at dinner or supper with his disciples and others, as on the following occasions recorded by the Evangelists, Mark xiv. 3—9; John xii. 2—9; Luke vii. 36—50; Matt. xxvi. 7—13, 26—30; or, when compassed about by the many bulls of Bashan, as by the wicked, when taken; or when surrounded by both friends and enemies, as at the time of his crucifixion and when suspended upon the cross. Psalm xxii.

12—16; Matt. xxvi. 47, &c. Mark xiv. 43—50; John xix. 25, 26, 27.

The English translators, considering the circle here alluded to as a circular sitting at table, as at dinner or supper, have rendered, *sitteth at his table*, as the sense of the passage: and Buxtorf, on the Hebrew word מסב, *mesab*, considers it as a noun masculine signifying, “circuitus” *a circuit, or a going round*, according to the signification in 1 Kings vi. 29, where it is used adverbially, and rendered *round about*; or “accubitus,” which signifies *a sitting or lying down at meat, a sitting at table, &c.*; adding “circularis propriè, in orbem enim antiquitus ad mensam sedebant;” that it was properly a circular sitting, it having been the custom anciently to sit at table in a circle. And he renders במסבו in this place “in accubito suo,” *in his sitting or lying down, i. e. circularly*, or as at table, where the reclining posture was often adopted; and so also does Pagninus: Montanus and others render, “in circuitu suo,” *in his circuit*; and others, *in his circle*; so Williams: and as the radical idea of the Hebrew root from which the words *mesab* and *bimsibbo* come implies *turning about, going round, circuit, or circularity*, so these

renderings may be admitted ; though the latter seems to be that intended in this place. Indeed the latter rendering, *in his circle*, seems preferable, not only as being more literal, but as giving a more extended signification, and admitting of the prophetic application of the word either to the time of our Lord's sitting at table with his friends, as at dinner or supper ; or of his preaching to the surrounding multitudes, in the midst of the congregation ; or to those of his being surrounded by his enemies, as at the time of his being taken, and when on the cross : and on all these occasions did the virtues of Christ, as his kindness, his love, his patience, and long suffering ; the distinguished fragrance of this Royal Nard, this Plant of renown, the Church's Chief among ten thousand, her sweetest Nard, become eminently conspicuous : and on these occasions, did he diffuse around him the sweet vivifying odours of mediatorial grace and mercy, by the blessed Gospel which he preached, the gracious words of truth which flowed from his lips, and by his acceptable prayers, praises, and thanksgivings which, as the fragrant incense, daily ascended up before God for his people ; as well as when, finally, after having given an

example of most perfect holiness and devotedness to the will and service of his heavenly Father, and given the proper instruction and directions to his apostles and followers, He, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself up on Calvary, as a full, perfect, sufficient, most fragrant and acceptable sacrifice for his Church and people ; proclaiming to them with a loud voice, in the moment of his departure, *It is finished* ; which, if divested of Divinity, he could not have done at this period of exhaustion and dissolution, as no such example can be produced since the creation of the world, nor is it consistent with that exhausted state of the powers of the human constitution ; and by this single circumstance, even if there were none of all the various other proofs contained in the Old and New Testaments, would his Divinity be most fully established. At this latter time was our blessed Saviour surrounded or encircled not only by his weeping friends, but by his most inveterate enemies : and it was at this time, or at his death, that he became King by the eternal redemption of his people. But being a Jew, born under the Old-Testament dispensation, which he came to fulfil, while he was about to introduce the Gospel

dispensation ; it is probable that, notwithstanding his being the supereminently anointed of God, anointed with the Holy Ghost without measure, it was divinely ordered that, according to the usual manner of setting apart the Jewish Prophets, Priests, and Kings for those high offices, He also should in like manner be anointed ; He being the Prophet, Priest, and King of his people : or this may have been thus kindly ordained, to permit the Church to shew her love and gratitude to her Lord and Saviour. In this view, therefore, may we not consider this 12th verse as referring prophetically to the times of the different anointings which were performed by the Church by her representative, the penitent, pardoned, grateful, and affectionate Mary (who very probably was the same woman spoken of by Matthew and Mark, though not there named, for she is mentioned by Luke as a woman, and said in John to be Mary. John xi. 2.) ; as also to the last tribute of the Church's love in attending her Lord at his crucifixion ; as well as to His great love in dying for *her*, and to the fragrance of that sacrifice of himself which he offered up for the sins of the world. Or, should we consider it as referring to the time of his death

alone, considering the assembled multitude on that occasion to be the circle prophetically mentioned?

It may be here worthy of remark, that, in Psalm xxii. 12, when the prophet is speaking of the King of Sion, as compassed about with wicked men, as at his crucifixion, a word from the same Hebrew root from which *bimsibbo* comes is used, סבבני, *sebabuni*, “circumdederedunt me,” *Mont*; *have compassed me*, *Engl.*: and further, that, as our Lord came to redeem or to purchase his Church with his own blood, as soon as he had declared that all was finished, and poured out his soul unto death, the redemption was completed, and his Church espoused; and that he, from this time, became King of the Jews, of the true Israel of God, according to the inscription on his cross; at which time he was encircled by his enemies and friends. Shall we then render, *While the King is in his circle?*

“My spikenard,” &c. literally *my nard*, נרדי *nirdi*. The Hebrew word נרד *nerd*, which is rendered *spikenard* in the English Bible, literally signifies *nerd*, or *nard*; and is rendered by the LXX, *ναρδος*, or *nard*; and by the Vulgate, *nardus*.

It occurs only three times in the Old Testament, and that in this Song; namely, in the present text, and in iv. 13, 14; and, as a noun in all. Mr. Parkhurst observes, “It seems to be not an Hebrew, but a foreign *i. e.* an Indian word:” and Schleusner, that this word owes its origin to the East, “Originem suam hæc vox orienti debet.” *Lex.* But there appears no good reason for these conjectures; as it seems to be pure Hebrew, and of very significant import. May it not be resolved into the three following component parts, as representatives of the three following words: namely, into נ, as the representative of נן, *nin*, signifying *son*; ד, as that of דוד, *dod*, signifying *beloved*; and ר, as that of ריח, *riahh*, *scent*; importing together, *beloved son of scent* or *smell*; or that the plant called nard yielded the most choice perfume, or most agreeable fragrance, as was universally allowed?

That it is the *plant* which is here spoken of seems probable from its being mentioned, iv. 13, 14, both in the singular, and plural number, as a plant and plants in the garden of the Church; and her members are sometimes likened to odoriferous plants and shrubs, and fruit-bearing trees; and hence they are

figured, in the passage of the song just quoted, under the names of nards, saffron-plants, cophers, myrrh-trees, frankincense-trees, cinnamon-trees, &c.; and all the chief spice-bearing shrubs and trees. They are particularly likened to those plants or trees which furnish medicines for the cure of diseases, and also possess an aromatic or fragrant smell; and the former will figure the good dispositions and works which, by the grace and good Spirit of God, they are either prepared to perform, or actually do perform; and the latter, their grateful prayers, praises, and thanksgivings which they are daily offering up to God in the name of his beloved Son, for his grace and mercy, and for a continuance of his favour towards them.

The name of this plant is, as we have seen, in Hebrew נֶרְד, *nerd*; in Greek, as rendered by the LXX, *ναρδος*; by which it is also named by the Evangelists, Mark and John, when speaking of the ointment prepared from it; and in the Latin Vulgate, *nardus*: therefore the proper literal rendering is *nerd*, or *nard*, there being no mention of *spike*, either in the Hebrew or Greek Scriptures; though, as the nard producing odoriferous shoots resem-

bling spikes, and therefore called *spikenard*, was the best, the most fragrant and precious, and as the nard mentioned in scripture was supposed to be of this kind, as it no doubt was, this name was adopted by the English Translators, both in the Old and New Testaments; to which they were probably directed by the term *πιστικης* used by Mark and John, and which they have included in the name of *spikenard*, as will soon be shewn. And as the prophecy delivered in this place, Song i. 12, may primarily refer to those passages of the Evangelists where *ναρδος*, *nard*, or as in the English Bible, *spikenard*, is mentioned; so it may be believed that the same plant, the true nard, was intended in both Testaments, and that it was from it that the soft flowing precious ointment of which the Evangelists speak, and with which the Lord Jesus seems to have been three times anointed, was prepared.

Of nard there are various kinds; but of these the true Indian nard, bearing shoots resembling ears or spikes, and therefore called *spikenard*, is, as already mentioned, the most excellent and fragrant, and seems to be the true nard mentioned in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. It is thus described by

Calmet, “ a plant that grows in the Indies, whose root is very small and slender. It puts forth a long small stalk, and has several ears or spikes even with the ground, which has given it the name of spikenard. The nard of the mountains is the most odoriferous. All the species of spikenard are hot and drying,” &c. *In loc.* From the descriptions of Dioscorides, Galen, and Matthiolus, compared together, the nard, called spikenard, seems to be a grassy plant, having a root which may in some sense be compared to the bulbous root of garlic, which consists of its head formed of portions called cloves, and its thready roots; as it (the nard,) in like manner, consists of a head, formed of shoots resembling spikes or ears, interwoven together, and close upon the ground, and of like thready roots under it. These spikes send up a grassy foliage, which, when dry, resemble hairs; and hence the appellation *hairy-spiked nard*; and probably a seed-bearing stalk, as that described by Calmet, may arise among them: but they are not real ears, containing the seed of the plant; but form as it were the head of the root, being only called spikes from their resemblance to them. Galen, speaking of Indian nard, says, *it is that*

which they call spike, not that it is a spike, for it is a root, but that it is so called because it resembles a spike, or ear. “Ea vero est, quam spicam vocant, non quòd spica sit, radix etenim est, sed quòd spicæ formam referat.” It is from these spikes, which form the head of the root, that the best and most precious ointment of spikenard is prepared.

Matthioli points out the error of Pliny, lib. xii. cap. 12, in describing this nard as a fragrant shrub having real spikes, or ears, and small thick leaves, both ears and leaves possessing like properties. But according to this description, the plant mentioned by Pliny is very different from that above described, and may rather be compared to our lavender; which, though highly fragrant, is far excelled by the spikenard.

Galen has observed, that, though there are various sorts of nardus, the term *ναρδος σαχυσ*, or *spike-nard*, should not be applied to any but *nardus Indica*. Therefore this latter plant, which excels all the others in virtues and fragrance, seems to be that alluded to in the text.

This plant, called in the Hebrew *nerd*, is afterwards mentioned by Hippocrates, who flourished about four hundred and twenty-five

years before our Lord; who, when writing *περι γυναικείης φύσεως*, thus speaks of it as an ingredient with cinnamon, myrrh, &c. in a composition for fumigation; *κινναμωνον, και ναρδον και σμυρναν*, &c. So that the plant was then called, by the Greeks, *ναρδος*, or *nard*: and this name is also used by the LXX, in their translation of the Song made about two hundred and eighty-four years before Christ: and after them, Dioscorides, who lived before and in the days of our Lord, in lib. i. cap. 6, gives a short history of the plant, under the name of *ναρδος*, and of its different kinds; and, in chap. lxiv. of the same book, he gives a short account of the *μυρον ναρδου*, or *nard-ointment*, under the title *ναρδινον*; that it was sometimes made with a sweet-smelling leaf, called *mala-bathrum*, and sometimes without it; but generally with several other sweet-smelling ingredients. But it is highly probable that the nard-ointment used by Mary was prepared of the nard alone, as will be seen hereafter. And of the same fragrant plant do the Evangelists seem to speak, when mentioning the different anointings of our Lord, under the same Greek name, *ναρδος*.

The Indian spike-nard, therefore, or the true

nard mentioned by Solomon, is a most fragrant aromatic plant, and was highly valued by the ancients, on account of its excellent odour, and the various medicinal virtues which they considered it to possess: and we may believe that from it was prepared the *unguentum nardinum*, the *μύρον νάρδου*, or *ointment of nard*, or of *spikenard*, spoken of in the New Testament, with which Jesus was anointed; an ointment of a very soft or liquid consistence, as is expressed by the name *μυρον*, which could therefore be poured upon the head, as mentioned by the Evangelists, Matt. xxvi. 7; Mark xiv. 3; and which was considered as a very precious perfume, both fragrant and costly.

This plant (or its spikes, in which the chief fragrance resides,) has a most fragrant smell, and a warm, aromatic, bitterish and pungent taste; and having been reckoned a preservative against poisons, and used as an ingredient in the medicinal compositions which were considered as antidotes, and used both externally and internally, in various diseases by the Greek, Arabian, and Roman physicians, is said to possess many excellent medicinal virtues. But of such virtues no mention is made in Scripture; it being there spoken of only as a plant

or plants in the garden of the Church, and as yielding odour of a very precious and diffusive nature. Song i. 12 ; iv. 13, 14; John xii. 3, &c.

But this odoriferous plant, diffusing its sweet odour all around, would well figure a member of the Christian Church when offering up an acceptable sacrifice, as of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving to God : for, as the odoriferous particles pass off from the plants which produce them, and perfume the surrounding air with their fragrance ; so the prayers of the saints the members of the Church, pass from them, and ascend to God as the smoke from the altar, or censer of incense, bringing down the blessing of the Lord. See Rev. viii. 3, 4. And as our Lord is, in the 14th verse, compared to a cluster of sweet-smelling copher, so also might he in this be likened to the fragrant nard ; and most particularly so when, on the 14th day of the month Nisan, at three o'clock, the usual time of the offering up of the evening sacrifice, he offered up himself as a most fragrant and acceptable sacrifice for the sins of his people ; a sacrifice which, like the cluster of copher, or of the sweet-smelling cyprus, in the vineyards of Engedi, was to fill

the Jew and Gentile vineyards, and even the whole surrounding world with its fragrance.

To this plant the Church seems to compare herself, or her members, more particularly referring to the fragrance thereof, when she says, “ my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof:” and in chap. iv. of this Song, she is compared to a garden, or orchard of pomegranates, nards, &c. &c. 12—14; and in chap. viii. of the same, to a pomegranate, 2: and the various anointings, or the pourings forth of the ointment, prepared from the best and most odiferous, the genuine nard, by the woman and Mary, as described in those passages of Scripture above quoted, may probably be primarily alluded to, as the times and acts of sending forth the sweet smell here mentioned; though the prophecy may also particularly refer, as already noticed, to the time of our Lord’s offering up of himself, as a most fragrant and acceptable sacrifice for his people.

We shall now proceed to point out the different anointings above-mentioned.

Our blessed Lord having come into the world and taken our nature upon him in order to fulfil the divine law broken by man, to preach the gospel of peace to his people, and

to instruct them in the good way in which they were to walk, and to offer himself up as the unspotted Lamb of God for the sins of the world, and then to become the King of Sion, to reign over them for ever ; and having grown up in perfect innocence (being, by his Divinity, preserved holy, harmless, and undefiled), to about his thirtieth year, Luke iii. 23, the time appointed by the Levitical law for the entrance of the Levites into their ministry, was baptized by John, in Jordan, and thus set apart for the three sacred offices, of Prophet, Priest, and King of his people ; for which he was most fully qualified, as possessing the Spirit without measure, as was testified by his appearing upon him in a bodily shape at his baptism, and by the voice from heaven, declaring him to be the beloved Son of God, in whom he was well pleased. Luke iii. 21, 22.

Having thus, according to the Divine appointment, and in order to fulfil all righteousness, become ὁ χριστός, the anointed, the Christ of God, as spoken of in the Old Testament Scriptures, under the name of משיח *Mesiahh*, Psalm ii. 2 ; and being full of the Holy Ghost, he proceeded, after a certain preparation by fasting, and the temptation of Satan in the

wilderness, to fulfil those sacred offices in their proper time and order. Luke iv. Soon after this, and while engaged in his prophetic office in a synagogue of Nazareth, he declared that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, because he had anointed him to preach the gospel to the poor, &c. chap. xviii: and not long after, having raised to life the widow's son, of Nain, it is said, that there came a fear on all, and that they glorified God, saying, "That a great Prophet is risen up among us; and, that God hath visited his people," chap. vii. 15, 16. John the Baptist hearing of all these things, sends two of his disciples to Jesus; who, having seen the Saviour and his works, are dismissed by him to report to John what things they had seen and heard, verse 22. Soon afterwards, Jesus being invited by one of the Pharisees, named Simon, sat down to meat in the Pharisee's house, verse 36—40. "And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the

ointment, verses 37, 38: which the Pharisee seeing, began to reason within himself concerning the rumour of his being a Prophet; and concluded that if he was, he would have known what manner of woman she was who touched him, verse 39. But Jesus convinced him, that though she had been a very great sinner, her sins were now forgiven, and that, in consequence, she loved him much; and had therefore performed the kind and grateful acts recorded in verses 37, 38, which she no doubt did as marks of her most affectionate gratitude to her God and Saviour, verse 40, &c. She anointed his feet with the precious ointment: and it will be remembered that, before our Lord's death, he washed his disciples' *feet*, which was previous to their entering upon their apostolic labours, as the appointed successors of their Lord; telling them that, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit," is wholly clean; probably alluding to the sanctification of the feet and person for that path of holiness in which they were to walk, as being separated for the service of God; which might be implied in the gracious act of the Saviour, as well as the lesson of humility which he also intended

to teach them. John xiii. 4, &c. Thus our blessed Lord, while officiating in his prophetic office, preaching and declaring the counsel of his heavenly Father, was visibly anointed by his Church, or by the penitent Mary (who is said by the Evangelist John, to be the woman here mentioned, chap. xi. 2.), one of her members, and her representative; and this anointing is accompanied by such expression and action, as sufficiently shew it to have been done as a mark of most grateful affection to her Lord; whom she knew to be a Prophet, and was therefore, probably, unwilling that any of the circumstances or honours usually bestowed on other prophets should be omitted to her Redeemer.

Here, neither the name of the woman, nor the kind of ointment is mentioned. But we are told by the Evangelist John, that it was Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, chap. xi. 2; and from the expression used in chap. xii. by Jesus himself, just after another anointing by the same Mary; “against the day of my burying *hath she kept this;*” may we not reasonably conclude, that it was the same kind of ointment with which this second anointing was performed? And as it seems probable that

a third anointing was performed by the same Mary, may we not also conclude that she at first prepared a sufficient quantity of ointment from the purest true nard, or spikenard, for the three anointings, and divided it into three separate vessels, using one of them then, and reserving, or keeping the remainder as sacred and dedicated to the service of her Lord?

These anointings may have been divinely ordered; first, that the usual anointing might be performed upon this Great Personage, who was greater than Elijah, Aaron, or Solomon, than any of the prophets, priests, and kings which had ever appeared in the world; for it was usual to anoint the Jewish prophets, priests, and kings, when set apart for their respective offices, being by divine appointment; and secondly, that the Church might be thus permitted to shew her true penitential sorrow for sin, her love and gratitude to her Redeemer, her cheerful and fervent desire to receive of his words and to serve him for ever as the humble handmaid of the Lord; and, on another occasion, Mary is found sitting at her Lord's feet, hearing his word. Luke x. 39. Who can describe the contrite feelings, the sacred love, veneration, and gratitude of the

humble, penitent, and pardoned Mary; when weeping and washing, kissing and anointing the feet of her adorable Redeemer? She loved much: his Church loved him: and the love was reciprocal. We love him, because he first loved us.

I may here remark, that in the 46th verse of this viith chapter of Luke, two substances are mentioned with which the body used to be anointed in the days of our Lord: namely *μυρον*, *unguentum liquidum*, a liquid, or soft flowing ointment; and *ελαιον*, *oleum*, or oil, properly *olive oil*. The latter was only simple oil, which was very cheap; but the former was a flowing ointment, generally made of oil, and various sweet-smelling ingredients, which was more or less precious according to the value and nature of the substances of which it was composed. Of all the ointments of this kind the *unguentum nardinum*, or nard-ointment was the most expensive, and the most valued; and would be almost invaluable if made of the finest nard alone, without any other ingredient with it.

Jesus, the *Prophet*, like unto Moses, having been, as above-mentioned, visibly anointed by Mary in the Pharisee's house, continued to

instruct, and to preach to his people, and to deliver many prophecies concerning himself and his church (some of which are not yet accomplished although now very near, and about to be fulfilled), while he continued with them. And the whole time of our Lord's ministry is generally believed to have been about three years and a half.

We now proceed to make a few remarks upon the second and third anointings recorded by the Evangelists, as connected with our present subject: the one is said to have happened six days, and the other two days before the passover:

St. John, in his xith chapter, 1, 2, informs us that Mary, who had anointed the Lord with ointment, was the sister of Martha, and of Lazarus of Bethany: and in his xiith chapter, he gives an account of another, a second anointing by the same Mary, while at supper in their house, or the house of Martha, Luke x. 38: which seems to have been performed on the day of his arrival, which is said to have been six days before the passover. But Montanus renders literally, *ante sex dies Paschæ*, or *before six days of*, or *from the passover*, as if implying that it was sometime

before the six days, which might be on the end of the seventh day before the passover ; and this seems to be the true literal rendering. If then we consider this second anointing as a visible one which the church was permitted to perform in conformity with the Law of Moses, and the custom observed when the high priest was anointed, and thus sanctified, or set apart for his exalted office ; it seems exactly to agree as to the time of consecration, mentioned in Leviticus viii. 33, which was seven days ; “ for seven days shall he consecrate you :” or, he was to remain, after his anointing, in the tabernacle of the congregation seven days, preparatory to his offering sacrifices ; and, on the eighth day, he was to offer offerings for himself and the people. As, then, the Jewish passover was now about to be abolished by the offering up of the true Paschal Lamb, which was now to be slain for the sins of the world, and of which all the Jewish lambs slain at their passovers were types ; and as Jesus was about to offer himself up on the Friday of the following week, and then to enter, as our Great High Priest, within the veil by his own blood ; if he arrived at Bethany only six days before ; which, reckoning inclusively, would be on the first day of the week, or on our Sabbath ; there

would not be time for the fulfilment of seven days: but if, according to the literal rendering of Montanus, we consider that Jesus came to Bethany some time before the six days, we may reasonably conclude that he came in time to be anointed, so that the seven days might be accomplished before his offering. If therefore he arrived at Bethany on Saturday, about or before three o'clock, the time of the offering up of the evening sacrifice, and that in which the Great High Priest of our profession offered up himself for us, and if we consider the Jewish day to consist of evening and morning, and as beginning at six o'clock in the evening, this time, according to their inclusive mode of reckoning, seems to agree with the Evangelists' account: as from three o'clock to six on Saturday will be reckoned one day; to six on Sunday evening, another day; and to six on Friday evening, on which day, at three o'clock, the great and last passover was offered up, will be five more days; or, seven days in all, the time spoken of in Leviticus.

Shall we then conclude, that on the Saturday before the passover, Jesus retired among his friends, members of his church, in order to permit them to do to him some kind acts of

service, and to anoint him; and that he then arrived at the house of Martha, in Bethany, where he supped, and was anointed on the same evening; and that from this time inclusively he as it were began to prepare himself for his eternal and unchangeable priesthood, which he was to begin by the offering up of himself after seven days, or on the Friday following? But if the rendering in the English New Testament be considered as correct, then the time of six days mentioned would be in like manner inclusively fulfilled, if our Lord arrived only after six in the evening; or of seven if we reckon to after six o'clock on Friday, or to the time of the literal passover, as about to be kept by the Jews, on the evening of the day in which the true Paschal Lamb was slain; but the literal passover being then abolished, this reckoning may not be admissible. But it must be remarked, that though our Lord retired to Bethany, and probably made this the chief place of his abode when he departed from Jerusalem until the day before his death, it was not necessary for him to remain either there or in the temple wholly unto that time. For as he was holy, harmless, and undefiled, and possessed the Spirit without

measure, and was therefore fully prepared for the sacred offices he was to perform, and was constantly resident in his own spiritual temple, he had no need of a local retirement within the Jewish tabernacle or temple, as was necessary for the high priests under the law: on the contrary, he had business of the highest import to perform in his church, and to proceed in the fulfilment of prophecy, and of his Almighty Father's commands. Accordingly we are informed, that on the next day, much people, hearing that he was coming to Jerusalem, went forth to meet him with palms in their hands, and crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord."

This second anointing is performed by the same Mary who had before anointed our Lord in Simon's house, John xi. 2: and it seems highly probable that she also anointed him the third time (Matt. xxvi. 6, &c.) in the house of Simon the Leper (who was probably the same Simon, or the Pharisee), in Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha, where also Lazarus lived; as we shall see hereafter. Now the second anointing is recorded by St. John, in his xiith chapter; where we are informed,

that six days before the passover,* Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, verse 1; who seems to have been at the house of his sister Martha, where Mary also was. That there they made him a supper, and that Martha served, while Lazarus sat at table with him: but that Mary then took a pound of ointment of spikenard *ναρδου πισικης* literally, of *faithful nard*, as by Montanus, “*nardi fidelis*,” and the Vulg. “*nardi pistici*,” very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and that the house was filled with the odour of the ointment, verses 2, 3: that Jesus, when Judas was remarking concerning the profusion of the ointment, then said “Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.”

The filling the house with its odour would in one sense figure the very excellent and diffusive fragrance of the atonement he was to make, or the sacrifice he was to offer up on the day of his burying as our Great High Priest, which was to fill heaven and earth with

* The word *passover* in this place seems to refer to the offering up of the true Paschal Lamb himself, the Lamb of God, for the sins of the world; being the last which was required.

its fragrance. Here the name of the plant from which the ointment was made is particularly mentioned, and is the same as that used by the LXX, when rendering the Song of Songs; and, according to the text should be rendered *faithful nard*, as by Montanus and the Vulgate: and it may be believed that this was the same plant mentioned by Solomon, Song i. 12; and that it was with an ointment made from it that the first and third anointings also were performed. This anointing was done with a pound, not of *μυρον πισικον*, of *genuine* or *faithfully prepared ointment of nard*; but of ointment of *ναρδου πισικης* of *faithful nard*, that spoken of in the prophetic song, and to which the church's members seem to be there compared. And as the ointment of nard with which Jesus was anointed was, during its application, as it were figurative of the fruit of the true Christian living nard who applied it (for if the tree is good so also will be the fruit, the produce, or the effects), so may we believe that the term *πισικης* is here applicable to the nard itself, and not to the ointment prepared from it, as is clearly pointed out by the grammatical construction of the passage; for as *μυρον* is in the neuter gender, and *πισικης* in the

feminine, it is evident that they do not agree, and that the latter can only be applied to *ναρδον*, which is also feminine. So that the true literal rendering is, *ointment of faithful nard*. Moreover this term was most probably necessary in reference to the prophecies, and to shew the excellence of the ointment: which was probably made of the one most precious and pre-eminent ingredient, which excelled all others known in the East, the true and faithful nard; unadulterated, and unspoiled. For it appears from Matthiolus when commenting on Dioscorides, that the best spikenard, in being transported first from India by the Indian and Arabian sea, and then over land to Alexandria, and from thence to Venice, has been so spoiled on the voyage, by attracting the moisture of the sea, and becoming musty and putrescent, as in consequence to lose its agreeable odour, and to acquire a strong unpleasant smell. So that it was corrupted, and could not be chosen for medicinal, or other uses; and hence the same excellent writer, in pointing out the errors of Manardus, speaks particularly of the *selected and uncorrupted* nard or spikenard; “*selectam et incorruptam*,” meaning the true spikenard which was not

hurt by the voyage, and possessed the true virtues and odour of the plant. And Dioscorides, lib. i. cap. vi. speaking of a very inferior kind of nard, which not only wanted the fragrance of the true nard, but possessed a very strong unpleasant smell, observes, that, when the spike was white and squalid, and wanted its down, it was sold wetted; and adulterated by stibium (antimony or black lead) with water, or palm wine; *Adulteratur stibio cum aqua, aut palmeo vino, Matthiol. in Dioscor. C. Bauhin. Basil. 1598*: and it may be readily believed that the same was done to the true nard, when the plant was either imperfect, or when produced in too moist a situation, and therefore appeared different to the good plant: with which this and other inferior kinds, and that spoiled by the voyage, might also often be mixed. Moreover Pliny also mentions, lib. xiii. 1, that there were nine kinds of herbs which came near to the Indian spikenard, and might be taken for it; and that the nard-ointment might thus be easily adulterated. For all these reasons, the Evangelists John and Mark no doubt meant to shew that the ointment with which our Lord was

anointed was made from the best, most perfect, and genuine plant.

The third anointing appears to have been performed two days before the same passover, as related by Matthew, xxvi. 2, 6, &c. and by Mark, xiv. 1, 3, 4, and about four days after the second anointing. That the two relations given by these Evangelists are of the same anointing, which I believe to be the third and last, seems evident from the text; and Mark mentions the kind of ointment used on the occasion; from which and from what hath been said, we may reasonably infer, as has been before intimated, that the three anointings were performed with the same kind of ointment, or that prepared from the true and genuine plant, the true nard, or spikenard.

St. Matthew relates, xxvi. 6, &c. that when Jesus was in Bethany in the house of Simon the Leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head as he sat *at meat*: and that, on the disciples shewing indignation against the woman for what they considered as waste of ointment, Jesus reprov'd them, saying, that she had wrought a

good work upon him; adding, "For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial." verse 12.

St. Mark xiv. 1, &c. relates that after two days was the passover, and that Jesus being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the Leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious; that she brake the box, and poured it on his head; and that when some "murmured against her, Jesus said, Let her alone; Why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on me." And he afterwards adds: "She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying." verse 8. And for this act of affectionate gratitude to her Lord and Saviour, her name will be remembered to the latest posterity. This history, by Mark, is most distinctly related; and confirms the idea, that Matthew speaks of the same transactions. According to Matthew, it was an alabaster box (*μύρου βαρυτίμου, unguenti pretiosi,*) "of very precious ointment"; to Mark, "an alabaster box of ointment" (*γαρδου πιρικης, literally, of faithful nard;* but by the Vulg. "nardi spicati" or *spikenard;* by Mont. "nardi probati," or *proved nard*) "of spikenard" (as rendered by the Vulgate); "very

out a prince; having rejected Jesus, the Great High Priest and King, given them by God.

I now proceed to make a few additional remarks, tending to confirm the idea that the three anointings were all done by the same woman, and with the same precious ointment: which seems important in the present inquiry, as shewing a certain conformity to the anointing of the High Priest according to the Levitical Law.

We are informed by the Evangelists that Bethany, a small town about two miles and a half from Jerusalem, was that of Mary and her sister Martha, who had a house there; and that Simon the Leper also lived in Bethany, in whose house the third anointing is expressly said to have been performed, by a woman whose name is not mentioned. But as we have seen that Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, who resided in the same town with Simon, and was probably his neighbour and well known to him, was the woman who anointed our Lord twice; the first time at Simon the Pharisee's house, and the second time at their own house; is it not more than probable that she also anointed him the third time in the house of Simon the Leper,

her townsman, though her name be not then mentioned? And is not Simon the Pharisee, at whose house this same Mary, who must have been acquainted with the Pharisee, first anointed our Lord, the same as Simon the Leper? This seems highly probable: and, when the first anointing, in the house of the Pharisee, is related, she is then spoken of only as a *woman*; though we are afterwards told by John, that this woman was *Mary*, John xi. 2.

Respecting the kind of ointment used for these anointings, we are informed by John and Mark that the ointment *ναρδου πισικης*, or of *faithful nard*, or of the *true, good, and genuine* plant *nard*, which is *spike-nard*, was used: and I have endeavoured to shew that they are the second and third anointings of which they speak; and that it is intimated by our Lord, at the second anointing, in the house of Martha and Mary, that she *had kept* this; as if she had preserved a certain quantity of the ointment from the time of the first, unto that of this second anointing; which might be the case, even although there was probably a space of three years between the first and second anointings; as Pliny mentions that

compositions of a similar kind will keep good for four years, lib. xiii. cap. 1 ; and also, that they are best preserved in pots or vessels of alabaster, cap. 2 ; and that they were sometimes sold for three hundred pence a pound, cap. i.

The ointment is said by Matthew and Mark to be “ very precious ;” and by John to be “ very costly ;” where it is also observed that the house was filled with its odour, and that it might have been sold for three hundred pence. It was therefore a most odoriferous, and valuable ointment, and probably more excellent than any then used, even by the greatest of the kings of the East : and its preciousness was no doubt judged of by the excellence or peculiar fragrance of the smell.

May we not rationally conclude, that the pious Mary being divinely directed and permitted, at the time of her conversion, and about the beginning of our Lord’s ministry, determined to prepare a certain quantity of ointment made from the true nard alone, and therefore far more precious, and different from that commonly sold (which was generally, if not universally prepared of other less fragrant ingredients, with only some nard. *Vide Dioscorid.*

lib. i. cap. 64.) which she dedicated for his sole use, and with which the three anointings were performed? If so, it would be most fragrant indeed, and probably in this respect superior to any ever used before; as the nard was the most odoriferous of plants, and hence probably its expressive and emphatic name according to the etymology above given: and it would be exceedingly valuable, as even that commonly sold, though inferior to this, and generally containing other ingredients, with but little of the nard, was accounted very fragrant, and sold for a very high price, as mentioned by Pliny. The conjecture of the ointment being of a particular kind and excellence, and that a certain quantity was prepared at once, and dedicated for his sole service, would well agree with the following appointment concerning the high priest under the law. A particular oil, or soft flowing ointment, was ordered to be prepared as an oil of holy ointment, or an holy anointing oil, *Exod. xxx. 22—25*, for anointing him, and thus consecrating him for his sacred office, *verse 30*. It was to be an holy anointing oil unto the Lord throughout the generations of the children of Israel, *verse 31*; and to be used for no other purpose; not

to be poured upon man's flesh, nor any to be made of the same composition, and whosoever did so, or put it upon a stranger, was to be cut off from his people, verses 32, 33: and a large quantity of this holy anointing oil was ordered to be prepared, verse 23.

In speaking of Mary as a member, and the representative of the true Christian Church, the daughter of her Jewish mother, she may be compared to a living nard, yielding its fragrance, as when anointing her Lord; while all the gratitude and affection which she felt and expressed, all the moral fragrance which she possessed or displayed, must be considered as flowing from him, the royal nard above mentioned.

The plant nard was not a native of Judea, though some shrubs of inferior fragrance, and bearing spikes, or true ears, may have been there produced; as asserted by Pliny and others.

The Greek adjective *πισικος*, which occurs only in the two places in the New Testament above mentioned, Mr. Parkhurst derives from *πισις* fidelity, and thinks it signifies "genuine, unadulterated, pure;" and that Theophylact says, "that by *ναρδον πισικην* is meant *την αδολον*

ναρδον, και μετα ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ κατασκευασθεισαν, nard unadulterated and *faithfully* prepared. So Jerome, veram et absque dolo." He also shews, under πισις, V, that it signifies "*fidelity, faithfulness*; Rom. iii. 3. Tit. ii. 10. 1 Tim. v. 12:" referring to Macknight. *Lex. Gr.* If St. Jerome means the plant, he seems to give the true sense of the passage; though that the plant was to be the true and genuine nard, and without deceit, and unspoiled, will be wholly comprehended under the most literal rendering of *faithful nard*. It was to be the ointment of *faithful nard*, the plant so called, which, if of an improper kind, or deceitfully coloured, or otherwise adulterated, or if spoiled on the voyage, it could not be. But it may be questioned whether either Theophylact or Jerome have the *plant* in view, in the above passages; and whether they do not consider the term nard as applicable to the ointment only, as has been often done by other interpreters; though their words, as quoted by Parkhurst, and according to the grammatical construction of them, would apply to either. Indeed the term nard was so commonly applied by historians and poets to the *muron*, or *ointment* made from this plant and other

ingredients, and the ointment was so commonly known by the name of nard, that expositors and interpreters have very generally considered those two passages of Mark and John in this view; applying the term nard to the ointment, though they were not warranted so to do by the text, particularly when considered in connection with the beautiful prophecies of the Song of Songs. They have therefore explained as if the Evangelist had meant to express that Mary anointed our Lord with unadulterated and faithfully prepared *nard*, i. e. *nard-ointment*; instead of ointment of *faithful nard*, meaning the *genuine plant*, as expressed in the text.

Indeed it seems evident from their reasoning that they sometimes apply it to the ointment, and sometimes to the plant itself. And, even the enlightened Schleusner, to whom every Biblical student is under the greatest obligations, seems to have fallen into the same error: and though he mentions under *ναρδος*, the proper meaning of *μυρον ναρδος πισικης*, as being an ointment of true and unadulterated nard, “*unguentum ex nardo vera, non adulterata*,” refers to the article *πισικος*, which he considers as applicable to the ointment

only, as expressive of its being of a liquid consistence, thus: “ Mihi derivandum videtur a *πίω*, verbo obsoleto pro *πίνω* bibo, ut adeo *πισικον* sit i. q. *πόσιμον*, vel *πότιμον* potabile, potui aptum, liquidum, dilutum et *νάρδος πισικῆ* sit nardus liquida et diluta. Oleum enim nardinum tenue maximè laudatur teste Dioscoride I. c. 75.” (according to Matthiol. I. 64.) “ Conf. Plin. H. N. xiii. 1,” &c. As to Dioscorides, he should have said, *unguentum enim nardinum tenue laudatur*, &c. For Dioscorides is speaking of the ointment, or *ναρδινον*, made of oil, nard, and various other sweet-smelling ingredients, to give it a consistence thicker than oil, and on account of the pleasant smell of these ingredients: when, he seems to speak of the same flowing ointment, as when the thicker parts of the composition have subsided, thus; “ *Laudatur tenue, non acre, nardi aridæ, aut anomomi odorem referens.*” *Matthiol. in Diosc.*

But in the above quotation as expressive of his own opinion, the reasoning refers wholly to the ointment under the name of nard, and not to the plant; which ointment he would explain to have been, not *μυρον*, or a soft flowing ointment, as it is said to be; but even *ελαιον tenue*, or a thin liquid oil, contrary to the

words of the text. He proceeds, and evidently under the same impression, to notice the derivation from *πίσις* “Sed alii deducunt à *πίσις* fides, ut *πισικόν* sit purum,” evidently having *μυρον* in view, “sincerum, verum, germanum, et minime adulteratum, et *νάρδος πισική* nardus vera et germana, ἡ ἄδολος καὶ μετὰ πίσειως κατασκευασθεῖσα, (sæpe enim nardum adulteratam fuisse ex Plinio. H. N. xii. 12. xiii. 1. et Dioscoride I. 6, 7. constat.) ut Theophylactus,” &c.: and here he refers to Pliny when treating of the plant and ointment, and when particularly speaking of the adulteration of the ointment by the substitution of an inferior plant for the true nard; and to Dioscorides, when speaking of the plant only. He adds, that some (*vid. Wetsten.*) rather consider the word as a Latin word, concluding that *νάρδος πισική* has the same meaning as *nardus spicata*, h. e. *ex spicis expressa*, &c. evidently alluding to the ointment. He gives the Syriac translation of Mark xiv. 3. “Nardi capitatae,” adding “aut potius *præstantis*,” &c.

Mary uses the ointment of *faithful nard*, or *of spikenard*, it being that which yielded the sweetest smell; and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment; and it is asked

why this *ointment* was not sold, &c. John xii. 5; but not why this *nard* was not sold, though the odour of the nard was imparted to the anointing oil, and contained in it. So that there seems to be a clear distinction made in this Gospel between the plant itself, and the ointment prepared from it.

Moreover, as the Indian nard which has grassy or hairy spikes, is the faithful nard intended by the Evangelists, in the passages now referred to, the rendering in the English New Testament may be considered as giving the sense of the original, though not the literal rendering thereof: which seems to be (ointment) *of faithful nard*, namely of the plant spoken of in the Song of Songs by the name of נֶרְד, *nerd*, simply; but which, according to the etymology above given, is beautifully and emphatically expressive of its superior excellence over all other odorous substances. The name nerd, or nard, was at first most probably confined to this most odoriferous kind; though afterwards, when the use of the fragrant ointment became much more frequent in the East, and particularly in the Roman empire, and brought a great price, it might be applied to inferior kinds of sweet-smelling plants, or of

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the same growing in different soils and climates which had degenerated from the true Indian nard; and hence probably the necessity of adding the epithet *πισικης*, to signify that the ointment was prepared from the *faithful* or *true nard*: and it appears from Dioscorides, as above mentioned, as well as from Pliny, Hist. Nat. lib. xii. cap. 12, and xiii. 1, that such a distinction was necessary.

To conclude; by the term *πισικης*, may not only be expressed that the ointment was prepared from the true nard of sweetest smell, but that this nard, or the plant so called, was in a proper state of preservation, and unadulterated; that it was the true, good, and genuine nard: and it is well known, that the most perfect plant in kind and nature may be either spoiled, or adulterated. Therefore the term *faithful* seems to be fully expressive.

Ver. 13. "A bundle of myrrh," &c. Myrrh is a gum-resin of a bitter, aromatic taste, and fragrant smell; and is produced in Arabia Felix, and other parts. It resists putrefaction, and possesses various medicinal properties. It was formerly accounted among the chief spices, and was used in the embalming of dead bodies. Exod. xxx. 23; John xix.

Now the anointing of the body of our Lord, as for his burial, being foretold in the last verse; the embalming his body with myrrh, &c. at his burial, as was done by Nicodemus and others (John xix. 39, 40), and its lying in the tomb for one complete night (that is according to the English translation), between, as it were, the Old and New Testaments, those figurative breasts of the Church, from which believers draw the pure milk of the word, seem to be prophetically given in the present.

And it is to be considered, that the Church is the mystical body of Christ, of which he is the head: and that therefore the grave of her Lord may in one sense be considered as their bed; and it seems to be that spoken of in the 17th verse, and said to be green, or innocent and holy.

In the chapter and verses of St. John just quoted, we read that Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes “about an hundred pound *weight*,” and that he and others then took the body of Jesus and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews was to bury. So that the body of Jesus was, from this time, as it were, a bundle of myrrh: and our Lord, having been cru-

cified about three o'clock on Friday (which, as it only ended at six o'clock, is, according to the manner of reckoning among the Jews, reckoned one day), and soon after enveloped in the myrrh and buried, lay the whole of that night, and all Saturday (counted a second day) in the grave, and arose from the dead very early on the third day, when it was yet dark, Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1; he had therefore lain there only one complete night, as the second night (which, strictly speaking, only terminated at six in the morning) was not ended when he left the sepulchre; therefore, on the night following the crucifixion, this prophecy seems, in one sense, to have been fulfilled: and then did Jesus, as a bundle of myrrh, lie all night betwixt the figurative breasts of his Church.

That the breasts here mentioned figure the two Testaments of the word of truth, has been believed by many of the most enlightened interpreters. It therefore only remains to shew the application of the present prophecy, in reference to these figurative breasts.

The Old Testament having been begun by Moses, was gradually formed by the addition of the various succeeding sacred books; *viz.* to

Malachi inclusive ; when, this figurative breast of the Church may be said to have been completely formed.

The New Testament was, in like manner, gradually formed ; beginning with St. Matthew's Gospel, and ending with the Revelation by St. John. And as the business of the New Testament began with the annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist (the forerunner of our Lord) to his father Zacharias, and as the prophecies contained in the Old Testament concerning the Messiah and his kingdom began soon after to be fulfilled, and were to proceed to their fulfilment in the appointed succession, and to be afterwards recorded in the New Testament, which together with its own revelations and business was to exhibit the fulfilment of many of the prophecies contained in the Old Testament ; we may conclude that by the time of the espousals, or the death of Christ, the substance of the New Testament figurative breast was formed, though it was not then written, but was to be gradually completed by the addition of the successive sacred books ; *viz.* to the book of Revelation inclusive. *See p. 22, 25.*

The two Testaments, therefore, seem to be

the two figurative breasts alluded to in this beautiful verse.

Besides the above rendering by the English translators, "he shall lie all night," there is another rendering which we come now to notice. We would therefore remark, that the Hebrew word, לַל, *lun*, rendered *to tarry all night*, signifies also "commorari," *to abide or remain*, Zech. v. 4; see *Harmer*, 217: and this latter sense has been adopted by some expositors; and would well agree in some other prophetic views, as in the following. In as much as the Lord's flocks feed in the Old and New-Testament fields, of which Jesus is, and ever will remain, the door, or the way; and as he now sits there enthroned, in the midst of his twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles, the twenty-four elders mentioned in the Revelation, iv. 4, the judges (by the sacred word contained in the two Testaments) of the spiritual Israel; so, in these senses, may he be said to *abide* or *remain* between the Old and New-Testament scriptures; which, as containing all the glorious promises of mercy and deliverance intended for his people, seem to be mentioned by Moses, Deut. xxxiii. 27, as the everlasting arms; or, as it were, pro-

ceeding from the Lord Jesus in the middle; viz. the everlasting arms of his mercy in which his people will be embraced. And, our Lord, in his conversation with Nathanael, informed the Jews, in the person of Nathanael their representative, that thereafter they should see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man, John i. 51: and, after the conversion of the Jews, they will undoubtedly see the sacred scriptures in their true and proper meaning; and they will see the ministers of the word beginning at Moses and all the prophets and ascending to Christ, and in like manner descending from the book of Revelation upon the same glorious Personage, and thus illustrating his character and offices, by the Divine Word contained in the books of scripture. He sits enthroned in the midst of his word, with his twelve apostles on one hand, seated as it were on twelve thrones, judging, by the word, the twelve tribes of the Christian Israel: and by the word of God contained in the two Testaments will Christ judge the world at the last day. So that the Hebrew word will either imply *to tarry all night*, or *to abide*, or

remain there: and probably was meant to convey both meanings.

The figure of the bundle of myrrh as lying between the breasts may be taken from the custom used in the East, of putting bags of myrrh, or other substances, into the bosom to corroborate the heart, and exhilarate the spirits. *Bp. Patrick Annot.*

Ver. 14. "My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire," &c. The translators of the English Bible, knowing that camphire (rather camphor) was a fragrant substance, and observing that the Hebrew name כפר, *copher*, resembled this, have rendered it *camphire*; or, as in the margin, *cypress*, meaning a cluster of flowers or berries of an aromatic shrub, and not of the cypress tree. But as camphor, which is a pellucid, white, and brittle substance, of a crystalline texture, &c. is a solid camphoric substance which is sometimes found in drops or lumps exuded in the substance of a tree (which was unknown to the ancients), it cannot with propriety be called a cluster, or be considered as the flowers or berries of the shrub here spoken of. הכפר, *haccopher*, has been rendered by the

LXX, *κυπρε*, of *Cyprus*; which is said to have been a shrub of a moderate size (according to Mr. Harmer the al-canna; which, he says, is like our privet. *p.* 219), which grew after the manner of vines, producing sweet flowers, and clusters of berries of a very fragrant smell, which diffused their fragrance all around them to a considerable distance, thus covering the surfaces of all the grapes in the vineyards, and perfuming them with their odour; and of which a balsam and an ointment were made, of high estimation.

The word כפר, *copher*, is found in Job xxxiii. 24; and rendered, in our Bibles, *a ransom*, (“ I have found *a ransom* ;”) and by Pagninus and Montanus, “ propitiationem,” *a propitiation*, or *atonement*, or the offering by which propitiousness is obtained. And the term, *propitiation*, is applied to Jesus Christ, by St. Paul and St. John, in the New-Testament: “ Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,” Romans iii. 25; “ he is the propitiation for our sins,” 1 John ii. 2: and he voluntarily offered himself up as an atonement for our sins; or, as a fragrant, sweet-smelling sacrifice, highly acceptable to God. And having thus paid the

ransom of his people, and espoused his bride, or thus solemnly pledged himself to be her future husband, he would immediately become the King of Zion, crowned by the mother-church, Song iii. 11; though, according to the prophecies, he was to remain in the tomb for a certain time. And it is particularly to be remarked that he was honoured with royal sepulture; his body having been previously anointed with the most precious and costly ointments, and embalmed with the chief spices, Matt. xxvi.; John xii; xix. 39, 40, 41; and having been laid in a new tomb, hewn out of a rock; and, finally, having a royal guard placed to watch it, for fear of violence being offered in the night. Matt. xxvii. 63, 64, 65; Song iii. 7, 8. And this tomb seems to be described by the bride, in the third chapter of this Song, as the bed, or royal couch, of King Solomon; he being both the temporal and spiritual Son of David, who was again to set up the tabernacle or house of David, as at this time of his death, and to reign over his people Israel for ever.

The cluster of copher, therefore, in this verse, may beautifully figure both the act of atonement and its diffusive efficacy: for, as

this most fragrant and diffusive cluster was very precious, and as, if in the midst of a vineyard, it would communicate the finest flavour to all the grapes thereof, or would cover them with its sweet perfume; so may it figure the excellent fragrance and virtues of Jesus and his atonement in the midst of his people, the vineyard of Israel.

“In the vineyards of En-gedi.” It appears from Bochart, Bishop Patrick, and others, that there was a place of this name in the plains of Jericho; and it may probably have been so named by Joshua on his entrance into Canaan, as expressive of the fountain, or source of their inheritance, or its beginning; or it may have been given afterwards, for the same reason: and, as a part of the holy land, it might figuratively denote the whole.

The word rendered En-gedi is, in the original, composed of two words, or עין גדי, *ghen gedi*; which are rendered by the LXX Ἐνγαδδί, *engaddi*, in one word; and by Montanus, *hen-ghedi*: and these words, according to their etymology, signify *fountain*, or *eye of the kid*, or *lamb*. And if, in this sense, the words be considered as expressive of an entrance upon the temporal land of Israel, or the holy land;

may they not also be spiritually considered, as expressive of the Church's entrance upon the land of the spiritual Israel? And united into one, may not the word *Engedi* stand for the whole land of the spiritual Israel, the heavenly Canaan; as if the bride had said, "as a sweet-smelling atonement in the vineyards of Israel," meaning the spiritual Israel?

Or shall we say, that she meant to declare, that the atonement of Jesus was the fountain of all the blessings and happiness which should afterwards arise to the spiritual, or temporal Israel, these two vineyards of the Lord? And Moses, in his prophetic blessing, when speaking of the latter end of his people, observes, that "the fountain of Jacob *shall be* upon a land of corn and wine." Deut. xxxiii. 28: and the original word here rendered *fountain*, is the same as the former of the two words of *En-gedi* גדי, *Ghen*, or *En*. And the Psalmist, when speaking of the same time, says "Bless ye God in the congregations" (namely of the spiritual and natural Israel about to be joined together), "*even* the Lord from the fountain of Israel," i. e. from the source or beginning of their conversion and union to the Church, Psalm lxxviii. 26: and though he uses a differ-

ent word for fountain, yet the meaning seems to be the same.

The rendering of the LXX in one word, *Evyaðði*, as a proper name, may be according to their manner of changing Hebrew names so as to read pleasanter to a Greek ear.

CHRIST TO HIS CHURCH.

Ch. I. 15. “Behold, thou *art* fair, my love; behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves’ eyes.”

HAVING laid down his life for her, and having thus cleansed her by his own blood, and having sanctified her by his Holy Spirit, he has now rendered her a holy, blameless Church, also glorious, and without spot or wrinkle, Eph. v. 26, 27; and has betrothed her to himself: and he, therefore, now twice declares her fair, or very beautiful.

Without noticing the Masoretic rule concerning the dual form in which the names of things which are usually found in pairs generally appear, I may just observe, that עיניך, *ghenayic*, the Hebrew word here rendered *thine eyes*, is in the dual number in this place, as intimating two, or a pair; but that זניים, *jonim*, rendered *doves*, is in the plural: all

which will well agree with the following application of this passage to the two Testaments of light and truth, of God's holy word, which are composed of various books, each of which might be fitly figured by a dove.

The English translators consider the passage as meaning the eyes of doves: but, if the whole affections and good properties of the dove be meant to be here expressed, this latter figure may be considered as fuller, grander, and more expressive than that of *the eyes* of the dove only; and this sense is more fully pointed out in chap. v. verse 12, where, speaking of the eyes of the Beloved, they are said to be *עינים*, *cejonim*, *as doves*. The Church herself is also called a dove. ii. 14. Dr. Hodgson thinks that the eyes are here compared to the doves themselves; as, when it is afterwards said, *her eyes are fishpools*, it must be taken in this manner; and so, of other figures: and Williams is of this opinion. *New Transl.* p. 185.

We would therefore render *thine eyes are doves*; and consider them as figuring the Old and New Testaments, with the books of which they are formed.

The two eyes of the Church, the figurative

woman, are doves; or, are beautiful, and full of innocence, truth, fidelity, and love. And, as the light of the body is the eye, so the light of the Church is the word of God: and in his light shall we see light. Psalm xxxvi. 9. The Old and New-Testaments are a pair, fully agreeing with, and confirming one another: and they are full of the love of God to man, through the Lord Jesus; and whatever affection is prophetically expressed in the Old, is amply and faithfully fulfilled in the New. The two Testaments instruct and direct the Lord's people, thus giving them light and understanding in his ways; they are a lamp unto their feet, and a light unto their paths, Psalm cxix. 105; and are therefore, as it were, their eyes. In them also we find Jesus, the Son of God, the glorious Sun of righteousness, illuminating both, Mal. iv. 2; being a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel. Luke ii. 32. He is, as it were, in the centre of his word, imparting his spirit and life through the whole. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men:" he is even *the word*, and the *true light* that enlighteneth all his people. John i. 1, 4, 9. They are figurative eyes; and Moses, by a like figure,

requests his father-in-law to stay with him and the children of Israel, that he might be to them instead of eyes. Numb. x. 32. David says, “The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes, Psalm xix. 8; namely, the eyes of the understanding.

THE CHURCH TO CHRIST.

Ch. I. 16. “Behold, thou *art* fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed *is* green.”

SHE here, as it were in return for the praises of her beloved in the last verse, speaks of his beauty and pleasantness: and he, as being holy, harmless, and undefiled, spake of himself, on one occasion, as a green tree, Luke xxiii. 31; and here, by a similar figure, his and his bride’s bed is said to be *green*, or a pure, chaste, and holy bed, a bed undefiled. And, as the betrothal of the bride was to take place immediately on the death of Christ; so may the matter contained in the last five verses of this first chapter be supposed to be spoken just after that time, and while his body was in his bed or grave. And as the bed of King Solomon mentioned in chap. iii. verse 7, seems to figure the grave of Christ,

the word bed may, in this place, probably mean the same thing, though the Hebrew words are different. It was the same kind of bed as that now described, an innocent and holy bed: and, though it only, in a literal sense, contained the body of the beloved himself; yet, as the Church is the mystical body of Christ, and therefore cannot, in a certain spiritual sense, be separated from him, so she might here speak in the plural number, and say *our* bed.

Some commentators have spoken of this as the marriage bed: but we are only yet brought in prophetic narration to the espousals, or betrothing, of the bride, which took place at the death of Christ; and the marriage of the Lamb is not yet come, and is only to be at his next coming. Rev. xix. xxi. xxii. But as the marriage which is spoken of as then about to take place, Rev. xix. 7, 8, is wholly figurative, as representing the more perfect union of Christ with his Church, and as no other bed is mentioned in this hallowed Song, excepting the bed or grave of Jesus, and the bed of affliction on which the Church was cast; so may it be believed that the above exposition is the most probable of the two.

And, in this case, the prophetic narration has been almost regularly progressive, and has not yet proceeded beyond the resurrection: and here the Church may be considered as addressing her Lord, soon after his crucifixion, and before his resurrection from the dead; and as admiring his glorious beauty and excellence, and speaking of their bed, or of the grave of Jesus. And St. Paul speaks in a like figurative manner of believers, or the Church, being buried with Christ by baptism into death; and of rising again with him, or being quickened together with him. Rom. vi. 4, 5; Col. ii. 12, 13. The bed being green may also have some reference to the prophecy, that he was not to see corruption, Psalm xvi. 10; which was accurately fulfilled. Acts ii. 31.

CHRIST TO HIS CHURCH.

Ch. I. 17. “The beams of our house *are* cedar, and our rafters of fir.”

BISHOP PATRICK supposes this to be spoken by the bride and her virgins: but others, by the bridegroom. And the latter opinion seems the most probable, from the manner of the dialogue in this place: as it is very natural for the bridegroom, at the time of his espousals,

to inform his bride what kind of house he has procured for her. There is nothing in the construction of the Hebrew which can certainly determine this point, nor is it of much consequence; only, as the bride seems, according to the construction and context in the original, to speak in the beginning of the next chapter, it is therefore, and for the reason just assigned, most probable that the bridegroom now speaks. And he seems to inform his bride of the general structure of the spiritual temple of God, the house just purchased for her by her Lord: namely, that its beams are (of royal apostolic) cedar, and its rafters of (royal patriarchal) fir; thereby intimating the excellence, the fragrance, and durability of the building. The temporal house of God, or the temple of Solomon, was partly built of sweet-smelling literal cedar and fir, both being wood of a fragrant, durable, and incorruptible kind: and of such spiritual timbers is the Gospel Church formed. And it seems of this royal house that the bridegroom now speaks, of which the apostles and prophets and patriarchs are foundations, pillars, beams, rafters, &c.; Jesus himself being the chief corner stone, the chief head, or key-stone of the building.

CHAPTER II.



THE CHURCH.

Ch. II. 1. “ I *am* the rose of Sharon, *and* the lily of the valleys.”

THIS verse has been commonly supposed to be spoken by the bridegroom : but the Hebrew words, rendered *rose* and *lily*, being both of the feminine gender, seem to intimate the contrary, as has been noticed by some respectable writers, and as seems to be confirmed by the following verse ; which is universally acknowledged to be spoken by the bridegroom concerning the bride, and where she is spoken of by the same Hebrew word rendered *lily* in the first verse, and in the same feminine form.

There being no π prefixed to the words rendered *rose* and *lily*, the literal rendering is *a rose*, and *a lily*. This is observed by the LXX, who render Ἐγὼ ἄνθος τῆς πεδῆς, κρίνον τῶν κοιλάδων *I (am) a flower of the field, a lily of the valleys*: and this verse is thus rendered in the *New Translation*, “ I am a rose of Sharon ; a lily of the valleys.” According to Parkhurst

חבצלת, *hhabatstseleth*, is a noun feminine, and signifies *a rose*. “*A rose, or more properly, a rose-bud, an opening rose, occ. Cant. ii. 1; Isa. xxxv. 1. The word seems a compound of חבה to hide, and צל to shade, overshadow.*” *In loc.* And he considers the rendering of *Aquila*, in both places where it occurs, as properly denoting *a rose blossom not fully opened*. Williams is inclined to think “that it strictly means *the rose-bud, or shadowed rose, that is shaded with the calyx.*”

שרון, *Sharon*, signifies *a field*, and is also the name of a place, either in or near mount Gilead, 1 Chron. v. 16, where King David's herds used to feed, ch. xxvii. 29: and as, in the latter text, the king is said to have had herds that fed in the valleys, as if distinguishing between higher and lower pastures, of which the latter would in general be the richest, though the former would be particularly convenient in rainy seasons; we may conclude that the former pasture was upon a higher and therefore drier ground. Bishop Patrick, who considers it as a proper name, shews from the Misshneh, that the soil about Sharon was dry and lean; and that it was therefore the fittest for the growth of roses. He ex-

plains the rose of Sharon to mean “the most excellent rose: for such were the roses of Sharon.” *Annot.* Williams thinks it probable that they were cultivated there “for their use in perfumes, which form an important article of commerce in the East.” *page 197.*

The lily here spoken of is a beautiful, fragrant, and medicinal plant, surpassing all others in modest elegance and beauty.

Bishop Patrick observes, “By the *lily* we are not to understand such as we call the *lilium-convallium*, or *May-lily*,” or *lily of the valleys*; “but some more noble and fragrant flower; being joined here with roses.” It is rather believed to be our beautiful garden lily, which grew wild in the fields and valleys of Judea; and, is supposed to be that mentioned by our Lord, as excelling in beauty the glory of Solomon, Matt. vi. 28, 29, and the beautiful white garden lily may have been still more beautiful in the climate of Palestine; and more fragrant also.

Considering the Church as the speaker, she seems as it were to rejoice in, and gratefully to acknowledge, the distinguished beauty and fragrance which her Lord had by his death most graciously conferred upon her; by com-

paring herself to two of the most beautiful and fragrant flowers produced in the East, and those the best of their kind. It is not to any common rose or lily growing under disadvantageous circumstances that she compares herself; but to a rose of Sharon, a place famous for the growth of roses, and to a lily of the fat and fertile valleys of Israel; or to two of the most fragrant, and most beautiful objects which the eye can behold; flowers which, besides their glorious beauty and fragrance, may also figure humility, modesty, innocence, &c.; of all which she was now possessed by virtue of her Lord's atonement for her.

CHRIST.

Ch. II. 2. "As the lily among thorns, so *is* my love among the daughters."

OR, as the lily, in beauty and fragrance, far surpasses the wild and noxious prickly thorn; so does the Christian Church, by her spiritual beauty and excellence, far excel all other churches, and all the daughters of the natural Jerusalem, and so does a true Christian people surpass all the unconverted nations of the earth.

As this verse is evidently spoken by the bridegroom, and as he therein compares the bride to a lily; so it seems to confirm the idea that the foregoing was spoken by the bride, who also compares herself to the same flower.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. II. 3. “As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so *is* my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit *was* sweet to my taste.

4. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me *was* love.
5. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I *am* sick of love.
6. His left hand *is* under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.”

Ver 3. “As the apple-tree,” &c. Or, as the fruit-bearing tree, among the forest-trees which bear none, is chief, or excels the latter, some of which are notwithstanding useful and excellent in their kind; so Christ, the Son of man, excels all the other sons of men, and all the sons of the spiritual Israel. There have been different opinions as to the kind of tree here mentioned; some contending that it is

the apple-tree, and others, the citron-tree: but, according to the exposition just given, it is not necessary to specify the kind of fruit; though it may be observed, that apples are nourishing, fragrant, and refreshing as well as the citron; and, probably more nourishing; and may therefore be more useful. Or, by apple-tree, may be meant any choice fruit-tree, bearing fruit of an apple-form, beautiful, excellent, and useful: in a similar figurative sense as the eye-ball is called the apple of the eye, from its globular figure.

“ I sat down under his shadow,” &c. Or, as in the margin, “ *I delighted and sat down.*” The spouse here refers to the eastern custom of giving entertainments under fruit-trees, and partaking of their fruit just shaken off or gathered: where they would be refreshed both by the shade and fruits. *Harmer on Song*, 248. *Williams*, 202. And the Lord is frequently represented in scripture as the shade of his people.

The literal rendering is, “ in his shadow I have greatly desired, or earnestly desired, and sat down:” as the Hebrew word rendered in the Bible *with great delight*, is the 1st person perfect pihel of the verb, חמד, *hhamad*, and is

חַמּוּדָתִי, *hhimmadti*, “concupivi,” *I have earnestly desired*; and may have been intended to express a similar desiring to that expressed by our Lord, when he says to his disciples, “With desire I have desired” (heartily desired, *Marg.*) “to eat this passover with you before I suffer,” Luke xxii. 15; and with the same earnest desire did the Church desire to be under the protection of her Lord, who is her head; and to sit down at his feet, and receive of his words. Deut. xxxiii. 3. With her soul did she desire him; the desire of her soul was to his name. Isaiah xxvi. 8, 9. Under the shadow of this tree of life she sat down, and his fruit (the fruit of his lips, or the words of his mouth) was sweet to her taste, yea sweeter than honey and the honey-comb, Psalm xix. 10; she received of his words, even the gracious words of eternal life, for grace was poured into his lips. Psalm xlv. 2. “Never man spake like this man.” John vii. 46.

“And his fruit *was* sweet to my taste:” literally, as in margin, *to my palate*.

This third verse may, prophetically, but concisely, describe the business of Christ and his Church, from his first preaching to the time of his last supper, which seems to me to

be described in the fourth verse. Our Lord, the glorious fruit-bearing tree, the tree of life of his Church, proceeds, from his first appearance, yielding to his Church his fruits; or preaching to her the good news of her salvation by his atonement: which she humbly, joyfully, and gratefully receives and delights in; until the great love-feast, mentioned in the next verse, when she is quite overcome, and desires to be supported by, or to repose herself among, the flagons of the spirit of truth, and the precious fruits of the tree of life, either contained in the word of God or heard from the mouth of Christ.

Ver. 4. “He brought me to the banqueting house,” &c. or literally, *He hath caused to bring me to the house of wine*, which maketh glad the heart of man; or, figuratively, to the spiritual house mentioned in the 17th verse of the first chapter, or to the Church of Christ, on some particular occasion; when she would receive such abundance of the spiritual wine of his word and Spirit, and enjoy such holy communion with him, as would deserve the name of a rich, spiritual banquet, giving joy of the fullest and purest kind; and when her Lord’s

love to her would be manifested, or declared in the most direct terms.

This verse, therefore, may be considered as prophetic of the Church's being admitted to a certain increased degree of communion with her Lord: which seems to have been fulfilled at the Paschal, or last supper, which he ordered his apostles to prepare for him and for themselves, and by which he, as it were, caused his Church to be brought there; when a rich and overcoming banquet was indeed prepared; and that, under the banner of divine love, as declared from the Lord's own mouth, John xiii. 1, &c.

That the prophecy, contained in this and the three following verses, refers to this time, seems probable from the following considerations.

In the first place, Christ had called his Church, and declared to her his intentions of espousing her, or had solemnly pledged himself, as declared in his prophetic word, to become her husband; and the espousal was to take place at his death, by which he was to demonstrate his strong affection for her, and his sincere intention of taking her in marriage at a

certain appointed time; and therefore, the last supper may be considered as the espousal supper, or entertainment preparatory to its accomplishment.

2dly, The whole business of the espousals was then to be declared; namely, his strong affection for her, the betraying of the bridegroom, his sufferings, and death, for the love he entertained for the bride: which love was fully manifested by his gracious condescension in washing his disciples' feet, and by the many affectionate words which proceeded out of his mouth. His readiness to die for her having been declared, and his promise to marry her at the appointed time having been given; the contract of espousals was, as it were, made and completed, and ready to be signed and sealed by his death: and the sacrament of his body and blood was then instituted, and commanded to be solemnized by his Church, in remembrance of him; or, in remembrance of this solemn compact, and of his unexampled love in dying for her, and of his continued affection and care for her and his people, until he shall come again, and perform the promise he has made of marrying her, and thus delivering her from all her enemies. "For as often as

ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." 1 Cor. xi. 26.

And 3dly, this banquet and banner seem to be fully expressed in the gospels; and, particularly, in that of St. John, from the beginning of the xiiith chapter to the end of the xvith; the whole forming a portion of holy writ in which the banner of love is held over his people from the beginning to the end. For in the first verse of the xiiith chapter, the Lord's love for his Church, prior to that time, is declared; and that he loved her to the end, or even to the ending of all things concerning himself as preparatory to his espousals; or even to his death, when he exclaimed, *it is finished*, and gave up the ghost; thus sealing the deed of espousals, by which all the promises of God are secured to his people for ever; are all yea, and Amen. 2 Cor. i. 20. It begins by unfurling, as it were, the banner of love; which continues to be displayed at supper and afterwards, through the whole, even to the end of the seventeenth chapter; in the last verse of which he finishes his prayer for his Church in these gracious words; "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare

ét: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” And thus ended the banquet for the time; and nothing remained but the continuation of her Lord’s love, and the sealing of the deed of espousal on the cross.

Having thus, in the banqueting house, received the most full assurance of the greatest and most unalterable love, she is much affected, and almost overcome, as is beautifully expressed in the following verse.

Ver. 5. “Stay me with flagons,” &c. The Hebrew verbs, סמכו, *sammecu* and רפרו, *rappedu*, are in the 2d pers. pl. masc. imper. pihel; and, with their affixes, signify *stay me ye men*, and *comfort me ye men*; and these words might with propriety be addressed to the apostles of our Lord, who were the only persons present at the banquet, but who might represent the prophets also. She begs of them to comfort her by the appointed means; namely, by the supporting, comforting, and exhilarating promises given by the good Spirit, and contained in the word of God: as if she had said, “Comfort me with the exhilarating wine of the word and Spirit, and with the precious fruits of the apple-tree above mentioned, for

the matchless love of my Saviour and Lord, who has just promised me that he will espouse me to himself for ever, by laying down his life for my sake, has exceedingly affected me, yea almost overcome me; and I am sick of love." Being full of affection for him, and having sweet communion with him, and overcome with the greatness of his love for her, her senses are, as it were, quite overpowered; and she feels that the love of Christ passes all knowledge. Bishop Patrick observes, "This verse is a description of one falling into a swoon, by the abundance of her love; in which case cordial spirits are wont to be called for, to revive such persons, and keep them from fainting quite away. Comfortable smells also are wont to be administered to the nose; which is the meaning of calling here for fragrant *apples, oranges, citrons, &c.* (as well as wine) which are all comprehended under the name of *tappuach* in the Hebrew: which is a word that in its very original imports an *exhalation, or odour-breathing* from that which is so called. By all which the Church is represented to be so marvellously affected with the love of Christ, as to be even oppressed under the weight of Divine benefits; and at a

perfect loss what to think of them, having little or nothing to return for such infinite obligations." "Fulcite me in lagenis." *Mont.* *Support me with flagons*; namely of wine, for she is now in the house *of wine*. verse 4. By which may be figured all the supports and consolations of the Spirit and word of God.

רַפַּד, *raphad*, here rendered *to comfort*, signifies *to strew*: and the literal meaning is supposed to be to strew with apples, that she may be refreshed by the smell. The literal rendering therefore seems to be, *strew me with apples*; namely, with the goodly fruits of the tree she had before mentioned. verse 3. Or, "bring within my reach the various refreshing and fragrant fruits of the lips of my adorable Redeemer, the gracious words of his mouth, that I may apply them as occasion requires."

So an eastern princess, seated upon her royal carpet, and feeling herself in a fainting state, would naturally request her attendants to bring around her all the most vivifying, supporting, and refreshing helps, cordials and medicines commonly used on such occasions: so also the languishing Church, overcome by the love of her Lord, requires the proper

medicines; the refreshing, comforting, and consoling Spirit and word of God.

חולת, *hholeth*, rendered *sick*, is the present participle of the verb חלה, *hhalah*, which signifies to be sick, infirm, having the natural powers of the body infirm or weakened; which seems thus literally rendered by Pagninus, “languens,” *languishing*, or *fainting*: the passage, therefore, would literally, and according to the order in the original, read thus, *for fainting with love (am) I*; though the sense seems expressed in the English translation.

Bishop Hall, who does not notice the particular prophetic import of this fifth verse, observes; “O ye faithful evangelists, apostles, teachers, apply unto me, with all care and diligence, all the cordial promises of the Gospel: these are the full flagons of that spiritual wine, which only can cheer up my soul; these are the apples of that tree of life, in the midst of the garden, which can feed me to immortality. Oh come and apply these unto my heart; for I am even overcome,” &c.

Having viewed with the eye of prophecy the banquet and its effects, she, in the same way, glances at the time when the espousal shall

be accomplished ; or when, by his death, he shall have finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness ; and thus secured for his Church the ample fulfilment of all the promises of God in Christ Jesus : the time, when, the work of redemption being accomplished, she spiritually rested with her Lord, infolded, as it were, in the everlasting arms, the arms of his Old and New Testaments ; as seems expressed in the following verse, which, literally rendered, will read, in the future tense, thus : “ His left hand *shall be* under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me.” verse 6. She is overcome with the love of her Lord ; but is determined to trust in him and his word during his stay in the grave : therefore, she speaks in the future tense, *shall* embrace me. A similar prophecy is delivered, chap. viii. verse 3 ; which, when compared with the context, seems to shew that it refers to the time above-mentioned, or to that just after the crucifixion of Christ, or between his death and resurrection.

By the hands (which in scriptural language include the arms) of Christ, as here mentioned, may be figured the two Testaments ;

which seem to be called by Moses, *the everlasting arms*. Deut. xxxiii. 27. And Christ and his crucifixion seem to be prefigured in Daniel, by a man clothed in linen, who was upon the waters of a river, and holding up his right and left hands unto heaven. chap. xii. 7. And, perhaps, the same were also figured by Moses, when, in fighting against Amalek, his hands were held up by Aaron and Hur. Exod. xvii. 12.

May not the bride therefore mean, that the Lord's gospel left hand was now, as it were, under her head, and that with his Old Testament right hand and arm, he was embracing her; or was embracing her with all the glorious promises and supports therein contained, whereby she was supplied with the bread-fruit of the tree of life, and the wine and oil of his word and Spirit; and, in short, with all things necessary for the full enjoyment of all pure, spiritual, and seraphic delight?

By the time of the last supper, the Gospel Church was fully formed; the apostles were appointed, and her other members united to them and to their Lord. And when Christ was to sit on the throne of his glory, the twelve apostles were also to sit on twelve

thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, Matt. xix. 28: and he immediately entered into his glory at his death, when, according to the title inscribed upon his cross, he became the King of the Jews of the spiritual Israel. And he himself, and the four and twenty elders, who are seen surrounding the throne of God and the Lamb, Rev. iv. 4, now sit enthroned in the Bible judging the twelve tribes of Israel. So that the twenty-four elders are seated, twelve on each side of their Lord; or, as it were, twelve in the Old Testament, and twelve in the New, with Jesus in the midst.

CHRIST TO THE COMPANIONS OF BOTH BRIDEGROOM AND BRIDE.

Ch. II. 7. "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please."

BISHOP PATRICK says, "It is dubious whether this verse be the voice of Christ or of the Church." But according to the Hebrew text, and the opinion of some respectable commentators and translators, it seems to be spoken

by Christ. The Hebrew word השבעתי, *hishbaghti*, rendered *I charge*, which should rather be, *I have charged*, may be either in the masculine or feminine gender: but the personal pronoun, rendered *you*, is masculine, shewing that בנות, *benoth*, which is in the feminine form, and is more commonly rendered *daughters*, may also be in the masculine gender in this place, though the meaning seems to be *sons and daughters*, or *children*; which seems further confirmed, in as much as the verbs rendered *ye stir up*, *ye awake*, are both in the masculine gender also; whereas האהבה, *haähabuh*, the word rendered “*my love*,” but which rather signifies *the love*, as having an emphatic ה prefixed, is of the feminine gender; as is also תהפץ, which is in the future tense, and is rendered by the English translators “*he please*,” but which should therefore be rendered, *she please*, or *shall please*. The literal rendering of the Hebrew may be thus stated: *Adjuravi vos filios Jerushalaïm in capreis, vel in cervis agri; si suscitaveritis, et si evigilare feceritis ipsam dilectionem donec quòd voluerit*. The sense may be thus expressed in English, *I have adjured you, children of Jerusalem, by the roes, or by the hinds*

of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake the love until she please. The Hebrew word rendered *the love*, is highly emphatic from the prefixed particle אז , and the emphatic ה ; and might be rendered *the very love*, as expressive of her being *the one*, the only beloved, the *only one* of her mother, now betrothed by her Lord. Song vi. 9. Some render *this lovely one*. See *New Translation*, p. 218.

I should, therefore, consider the bridegroom to be the speaker: and that he spake by the same prophetic anticipation in reply. She having spoken of her joy and happiness, as at the espousal supper; he now answers, that (then) he had charged the children of Jerusalem, the young converts male and female, not to stir her up nor disturb her until she pleased. And indeed, just after the espousal supper, our Lord proceeded to the garden to be in agony, and was afterwards crucified; and after the crucifixion, there was a mournful and awful silence in the Church: so that the Church, his mystical body, in one sense, may be said to have then rested or paused while his body continued in the grave; supported by the promises of God, and infolded in his everlasting arms. And, in chap. viii. 5, she

is seen coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon, or trusting in her beloved, or with him, as pillars of smoke. chap. iii. 6.

And after the crucifixion, she is become the happy, the beloved bride of her Lord: who gives directions that she be not disturbed until the proper time. As if he had said, “ I have now espoused my Church by laying down my life for her, and am now resting in the grave; let therefore my Church be quiet and rest in my love until the proper time of my resurrection, when I will return unto her from the dead, and she shall rejoice, and her joy no man taketh from her.” The imagery of this verse is beautifully pastoral.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. II. 8. “ The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

9. My beloved is like a roe, or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the window, shewing himself through the lattice.

10. My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

11. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over
and gone;
12. The flowers appear on the earth; the time
of the singing of *birds* is come, and the
voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
13. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs,
and the vines *with* the tender grape give
a *good* smell. Arise, my love, my fair
one, and come away."

VER. 8. "The voice of my beloved," &c. The Church now speaks, and seems to prophecy of our Lord's first coming in the flesh. She, as it were, hears his voice; and calls to behold him coming, and that swiftly, or bounding over the mountains and hills. And these mountains and hills are probably the figurative mountains, Jew and Gentile, mentioned in the scriptures: or, he, as it were, comes leaping in the prophetic word of truth from Eden to Abraham, to Jacob, to David, &c. &c. She sees him with the eye of prophecy, coming to call her as a Church; coming cheerfully and readily to seek and to save her. Of this coming the Psalmist had before prophesied, "Then said I, lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God," Psalm xl. 7, 8: and, in

this passage, as in others, did he, as it were, look through the lattice and shew himself. And she seems to dwell upon this subject, by describing what her beloved then said unto her through the following verses.

Ver. 9. “ My beloved is like a roe,” &c. She carries on the allegory, and describes him as coming swiftly, or as a roe, or young hart; and then as standing behind the Gentile wall, or, as it were, ready to leap over it at the appointed time; or as standing behind the wall of partition which divided the Jewish from the Gentile, or Christian Church, and ready to break it down by his atonement: and further, as looking forth at the windows of, or shewing himself through, the Mosaic lattice, in the prophetic types and shadows of him contained in the law of Moses, and in the whole of the Old Testament scriptures.

Ver. 10, 11, 12, 13. “ My beloved spake,” &c. “ rise up,” &c. “ and come away.” Having spoken of the beloved as coming and standing shewing himself, she now informs us of his conversation with her; as if it were through a window, or from behind a lattice; or probably, through the prophecies of the Old Testament. He calls her to arise, as from a careless or

unconverted state, or from the midst of her alienated brethren, and to come away from them to himself, as at the first preaching of the gospel: informing her that, at this time of joy at the Bridegroom's voice and presence, she should consider her winter of expectation and darkness as past, the rain or troubles of her cloudy unconverted state as over and gone, verse 11; that her gospel spring, or time of the flowering of early flowers and the singing of birds (both expressive of the joy and progressive growth and increase of the Church and her young converts, here compared to flowers and birds), was come, verse 12; and that the fig-trees and vines of her vineyard were in a growing and prosperous state, verse 13: and, therefore, urges her to arise, and come to him. In these beautiful prophetic verses, an allegory is continued from winter, into spring and the beginning of summer, the latter being the most delightful times of the year: and the spring has been considered as the chief season of love; in the early part of which birds choose their mates, and the flowers begin to appear on the earth; after which appears the cooing turtle. And here Christ, the Royal Turtle-Dove, appears in the Gentile lands of Judea and

Galilee, cooing for his mate, his beloved Gospel Church, whom he had destined for his bride, and whom, in the 14th verse, he calls his dove: and even the land of Judea was then become literally a Gentile land, being then under the dominion of the Romans. That Christ is himself figured by the Turtle, seems apparent from the 14th verse, which now follows; as he begins it by calling his Church his Dove; and the meekness, the chastity, and conjugal love of doves are particularly remarkable.

Bishop Patrick, in his Annotations on the 10th and 11th verses, observes, “In these verses Solomon represents his voice speaking to them by the prophets, (though he himself was not come) and calling them to him, as if he was just appearing. For by the *winter* and the *rain*, I understand with Theodoret, τὸν πρὸ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ χρόνον, *the time before his coming*: when the Gentile world was buried in dismal darkness; and the Jews themselves saw things only through clouds: and neither of them had much of the warmth of the Divine law.” And on the 12th verse, “here follows a description of the spring: which is set forth by three things; *the appearing of the flowers*, which had lain as if they had been dead; *the*

singing of birds, and the voice of the turtle. Which, as Aristotle observes, (*lib. viii. Histor. Nat. cap. 3.*) disappears in winter, and comes forth again when the spring is a little advanced: and therefore is here very properly mentioned in the last place, among the notes of the spring. Which being the time of all others most welcome to shepherds, for the feeding of their flocks, and for all manner of pleasures, represents, as the same Theodoret conceives, *the joyful time of our Saviour's coming.* When a new world appeared, and there was a greater abundance of Divine blessings, especially of the Spirit, poured forth; which the Chaldee paraphrast takes to be meant by the *voice of the turtle*, which is a kind of dove; in the form of which the Holy Ghost descended at our Saviour's baptism. And then the *singing of birds* may be applied to the songs of the heavenly host, at his birth."

CHRIST TO HIS CHURCH.

Ch. II. 14. "O my dove, *that art* in the clefts of the rock, in the secret *places* of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet *is* thy voice, and thy countenance *is* comely."

As if he had said, “ O my amiable Church, whom I shall hereafter espouse and marry, thou art in the clefts of the rock, the rock of Israel; thou art ingrafted in my affections, and secretly hid in the hidden ascending places, or stairs, of my prophetic scriptures: I your turtle-dove now call you to be my mate, and therefore command you, by my prophetic word, to shew yourself, and to let me hear your voice in the sweet accents of prayer and praise; for sweet indeed is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.”

The Church is often, in this Song, compared to a dove: and the principal reason is supposed by Bochart to be “ to signify her to be his only beloved; and that he alone also is most dear to her. For in doves there is a wonderful love (observed by many authors) between those that are once paired; who never part, but keep faithful the one to the other. And so are a fit emblem of the Church, whom the apostle saith he had espoused to Christ, as a chaste virgin. 2 Cor. xi. 2.” *Bp. Patrick's Annot.* They are moreover innocent and harmless, chaste and modest.

The secret places of the stairs no doubt allude to the beautiful prophecies given of the

Lord and his Gospel Church, throughout the prophetic writings of the Old Testament, the exact meaning of many of which was hidden until the proper and appointed times of their discovery; which were like so many steps, stairs, or ascensions leading unto Christ and his Bride. Of which he seems here to inform her, calling upon her to shew herself, and to come forth, or to shew herself and thus confirm the prophecies concerning her, and to hold communion with him; as by prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, which are always most acceptable to God and his Christ.

CHRIST TO HIS COMPANIONS.

Ch. II. 15. "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines *have* tender grapes."

THIS verse is supposed by Bishop Patrick to be spoken by Christ to those to whom he had given the care of his Church: and in this view, his commands to his apostles might be here implied; and this would be conformable to the grammatical form of the word rendered *take*, it being in the masculine gender and

plural number, importing *take ye men*. Take us the foxes, convert the wicked Jews and Heathen to us, or to the Church. That it cannot be spoken to the Church seems evident from the grammatical form. But it may be spoken to the companions and friends of the Bridegroom.

אֶחָזוּר־לָנוּ, *Ehhezu-lanu*, literally renders *take to*, or *for us*: and the word twice rendered *vines*, properly signifies *vineyards*, which may figuratively signify *the vines* thereof: and the prefixed ו, rendered *for*, more commonly signifies *and*: and סְמָדָר, *semadar*, signifies the *small grape* which immediately succeeds the flower; which may be called *tender*. So that according to these significations, this passage might read thus, *Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vineyards, and our vineyards (shall yield) the tender grape*.

Now the fox is an insidious, cruel, and mischievous animal; and hence wicked men are compared to foxes: and our Lord called the wicked Herod a fox; but he was not a *little* one. And they may be more or less mischievous or hurtful, according to their size, age, strength, subtilty, &c. And all unconverted people may be compared to foxes, who, when

converted, may be said, as here, *to be taken*. As if our Lord, speaking to his apostles, his companions, had said, “we will convert our impenitent brethren who hate us, and would endeavour to draw the young converts from us, or would hurt these tender plants, or the small grapes of the true vine of Israel.” Foxes would also, by rooting up the tender young vines, prevent them from bearing grapes.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. II. 16. “My beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his: he feedeth among the lilies.

17. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bether.”

THESE verses may be supposed to be spoken some time before the breaking forth of the Gospel-day, or before the appearance of John the Baptist to announce the approach of his Lord.

Ver. 16. “My beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his.” The literal rendering of the original prophetic words is, *my beloved is for me, and I am for him*; that is, at the good and appointed

time. Both will continue faithful to their intentions and promises.

In endeavouring to discover the sense of these two verses, it is to be remembered that, in the 8th and following verses to the 14th, she had taken a prophetic glance of her beloved coming towards her, leaping upon the mountains like a roe, standing behind the wall, and looking through the lattice; and that she mentions his conversation with her: and, in the 16th verse, she, as it were, consoles herself in his absence, or until the proper time of her espousal, by a firm trust in the promises contained in the word of God, that sure word of prophecy on which she relies, and in which it is written that she shall certainly be his espoused bride, and he her beloved bridegroom. Yes: her beloved is *for her*; and she *for him* at the proper appointed time; she as fully believes it as if it was already come to pass: in which she is further confirmed in that he feedeth his flock among the lilies of Israel, where he may always be found; namely, in the prophetic word, as in the writings of Moses, David, Isaiah, &c. these superb and fragrant lilies of this land of the spiritual Israel; where his flocks will always find the fat and verdant

pastures of Israel, in which they may safely repose. Psalm xxiii. 2. Thus firmly trusting that her espousals will certainly be at last accomplished, she, in the 17th verse, seems to desire him to turn from the wall of partition, the time not being yet come of his appearance, and to appear in the different places of his prophetic scriptures as a roe, or a young hart, or like them moving up and down, backwards and forwards, upon the figurative mountains of the word; until the Gospel-day was about to break forth, as when John, his harbinger, should appear, and declare the approach of the Bridegroom; at whose voice, when he had actually come, John greatly rejoiced. The law and the prophets were unto John: who came, as a morning star, proclaiming the approach of the bright Gospel-day; which began to break as soon as Jesus, the glorious Sun of righteousness, appeared, gradually dispelling all the mists and fogs of Jewish traditions, all the shadows of Jewish night, and gradually bringing in the clear and shining Gospel-day.

“He feedeth among the lilies.” To feed, *viz.* his flock, “is to have his abode among them.” *Bp. Pat. Annot.* And the Church and her members are compared to lilies, roses,

other flowers, &c. and they were probably represented by the lily-work in the Temple, under the Old-Testament dispensation. Here the word rendered *lilies* is in the masculine gender; probably, by way of eminence, as meaning some distinguished members of the Church. If the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New, are here figured by the lilies, the Church may then mean that her Lord would remain present with her, either in his prophetic word, by which he feeds his flock, or in teaching among his apostles and Christians; that is, until the proper time, the time when the types and shadows were to pass away.

Ver. 17. "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn," &c. The time of the breaking of the Gospel-day has been already noticed. The *shadows* are, no doubt, the types and shadows of the Mosaic dispensation, which were the shadows of good things to come; but, which were to be abolished at the death of Christ, when all the types and shadows concerning that great Personage, and his full, perfect, and acceptable sacrifice, would, as it were, flee away by being fulfilled: and, in the morning of the resurrection, this Sun of righte-

ousness would break forth in glorious splendour, illuminating the moral world with his light, and filling the Church with his glory.

The *mountains of Bether* are believed by Bishop Patrick to be the mountains mentioned in ver. 8. That they are not common, but figurative mountains, seems fully pointed out by the name given to them in this verse; there being no literal place thus named in scripture. The same good Bishop observes, “Bether is the same with Bethel, the two letters, ב and ל, being easily and often interchanged, as Bochartus hath observed in many instances.” But there seems to be no necessity for this conjecture; as the present reading agrees best with the scope of the prophecy. The word בֵּתֵר, *bether*, signifies *division*, (as in the margin) or *a part divided*: and therefore, as the Old-Testament scriptures are divided into separate books, which may be compared to as many figurative mountains and hills divided from one another, though all are more or less connected; so may they be justly styled *mountains of Bether*, or of *division*. Of those mountains and hills, some are greater, some smaller, and some are more ancient than others. How venerable and ancient appears mount *Ajob*, or

Job! How graceful and comely seems *Har-tehillim*, or *mountain of praise* and thanksgiving, the book of *Psalms!* How gracefully majestic and glorious appears *Har Jeshuagh*, or *mountain of salvation*, the book of *Isaiah!* These divided books all prophecy of one and the same Lord; who is God over all, blessed for ever.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH.

- Ch. III. 1. " By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.
2. I will rise now, and go about the city, in the streets, and in the broad ways, I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.
3. The watchmen that go about the city found me: *to whom I said*, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?
4. *It was* but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I

held him and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me."

IN the former chapter we have seen a prophecy of the last supper, and of the rich gospel banquet there provided; and of its overcoming effects upon the Church. And the present chapter seems to begin with the same awful night; in which her beloved was betrayed, and carried before the Jewish high priest and rulers. And during this time the Church must have been in the greatest anxiety and distress; being full of ardent affection for her Lord, and anxiously desiring his presence, and the ratification, or sealing of the deed of espousal, upon which all her happiness depended. We have seen her overwhelmed at the banquet. And it may be supposed that she retired to her bed of sorrow and affliction: on which, in solemn and sorrowful meditation on his great love for her, and what he was to suffer for her sake, and considering that the time of sealing the deed was now at hand, she begins to seek him (that is in thought), or to desire the presence of him whom her soul loved, or that she might find him to bring him

into her mother's house. But she finds him not. He had retired with his apostles to Gethsemane. And this absence seems to give occasion for what is said in the first five verses of the present chapter: in which the love of the Church for her Lord, her anxious search after him, and the blindness of the Jewish watchmen, are beautifully described; as also, her finding him whom her soul loved, and holding him until she had brought him into her mother's house, even into the chamber of her who conceived her.

This introduction into the Jewish Church, at the espousal of her Gospel Daughter, seems to have been signified by the rending of the veil of the Temple, at the death of Jesus; and therefore, the events just described must, chronologically, have happened but a short time before his crucifixion and death: and they seem, as above mentioned, to have begun on the night before, or on the Thursday night after the Paschal supper. For it appears from the gospels, that on that evening, the Lord, having supped with his apostles, and instituted the sacrament of his last supper, and delivered many affectionate exhortations to them, and prayed with and for them, went out with them into the

garden of Gethsemane; and that, having spent part of the night in prayer, and in agony, until the time of his apprehension, he was afterwards seized and carried before the chief priests, the scribes, and elders of the Jews; who, though they found no fault in him, delivered him unto Pilate the Roman governor, who condemned him to be crucified: and that, for this purpose, he was led away by the soldiers and the multitude to Calvary, a place without the gates and walls of Jerusalem, where they put him to death. We shall now proceed to a more particular examination of these four verses.

Ver. 1—4. “By night on my bed,” &c. Now, sometime before the morning of Friday, the Church determines to remain no longer in afflicting meditations, but to rise from the bed of sorrow, and begin an active search in Jerusalem for her beloved. She goes about in the streets and broad ways of the city, or about all the broad and narrow ways of the Jewish Church with all its ceremonial worship; but finds nothing to equal the personal or spiritual presence of her Lord. She seeks him, but finds him not. She asks the watchmen of Jerusalem, or of the Jewish Church, or the chief priests, scribes, and pharisees, if they

had seen him whom her soul loved. But, alas! they knew him not; and had, therefore, thrust him from them, and sent him out without the city to be crucified; and probably gave a very reproachful answer, or spake disrespectfully of her beloved. She, indeed, does not here tell their answer, though it is probable she relates the treatment she met with in the 7th verse of the 5th chapter. She passes but a little from them, when she finds him, holds him, and brings him into her mother's house, the true spiritual Jewish Church; or, passing on from the Jewish rulers, and her notice being, as it were, attracted by the crowd conveying Jesus to be crucified, she joins them, just without the gates of Jerusalem, as they were proceeding to Calvary, and finds him among them. That it was without the city, seems declared in the 8th chapter, ver. 1. She holds him, as her intended bridegroom, or remains with him until the moment of expiration; when, the espousals being accomplished, she brings him into her mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived her; or into that spiritual chamber typified by the holy of holies of the temporal temple, even within the veil, to receive the regal crown, as

the King of Sion, ch. iii. ver. 11. For the espousals of Christ and his Church were to take place at the moment of his death, when also he was to become the King of Sion, or the King Solomon spoken of in the same 11th verse, ch. iii. : and as it is there also mentioned, that he was crowned by his mother, in the day of his espousals ; so must it be believed that, in a spiritual sense, this took place in the house of the Church's mother, and of his own mother, in this day of the gladness of his heart, ver. 11 ; namely, in the true Jewish mother-Church after the atonement was made : and his entry with her into their mother's spiritual house seems to have been represented as above noticed, by the rending of the veil of the natural temple ; as thus intimating, that she, his now-espoused bride, had brought him even into the innermost chamber of her who conceived her.

Bishop Patrick, considering the house to be the literal temple, observes ; “ *Cheder corathi, the chamber of her that conceived me, I take to be the inward part of that house ; or the most holy place.*”

The Jewish Church, by crucifying Christ, brought about this espousal with her daughter,

the Christian Church ; and as he is also a son of the true Jewish Church, she is, in the 11th verse of this 3d chapter, called his mother. He is now, therefore, as it were, brought into her (and his) mother's house, into the true Jewish Church, and into her chamber, the holy of holies ; and she crowns him as the King of Sion, now become the espoused Bridegroom of her daughter, the Christian Church : and he was now her prophetic Son, who had faithfully declared his Father's will and name in the great congregation ; the great High Priest of our profession, who, by one acceptable offering of himself, had finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24 ; and finally, the royal Son of David, who had now reared up the spiritual tabernacle of David, and become the glorious and everlasting King of Sion.

She is, therefore, now betrothed to her Lord ; he having purchased her by his own blood : and it is he whom her soul will for ever love. And, at this time of the ending of her Lord's sufferings, she would greatly rejoice ; as knowing his great love for her, and the many gospel blessings which, by his death, he had procured

for her; thus purifying her from all iniquity, and presenting her to himself a glorious bride, whom he had now espoused, and was to marry at the proper appointed time: and he, having finished all his labours and sufferings for the redemption of his people, would now also rejoice in his spirit;* and it would therefore be the day of the gladness of his heart, Song iii. 11, in which he was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. Psalm xlv. 7. And she, as glorying in her Lord, might triumphantly call to mind and repeat the charge he had given, and that in his own words, ch. ii. 7; that, at this time of espousal, she should not be disturbed until she pleased; or, that she should be permitted to enjoy this sacred season in communion with him, or in holy meditation on his word, and in thanksgiving and prayer; and it has been before shewn that the interpretation of ch. ii. 7, as the words of Christ, becomes necessary that it may agree with the grammatical construction of the original; and the time here intended, or which she might naturally

* He, once before, is said to have rejoiced in his spirit; which seems to have been at his taking a prophetic glance at his own ultimate triumph over Satan and all the power of the enemy.

wish to set apart for the purpose of communion with her espoused Lord, now brought into her mother's chamber, and for receiving her mother's instructions concerning her general conduct (as alluded to, ch. viii. 2, 3; Psalm xlv. 10, 11), may be believed to be that which passed between the death and resurrection of Christ. But it may be here observed, that, though the Lord was thus, immediately after his death, spiritually present with his Church, his body was laid in the tomb, and remained there for the time appointed according to the scriptures; and that, therefore, it might be conjectured that the charge given in the 5th verse of this chapter, which is verbatim and literally the same as in ch. ii. 7, is given by *her* to the daughters of Jerusalem, concerning his body, that they should not disturb nor awake *him* until he should please; as intimating, that he would himself rise from the dead at the appointed time. But, though this reasoning would seem very natural, yet, as the grammatical construction clearly points *him* out as the speaker, and *her* as the person spoken of, I prefer the explanation given under ch. ii. 7.

How the espoused Bride and Bridegroom are employed, just after the espousal, seems

intimated in the 2d verse of the 8th chapter, the 11th of the 3d, and in the 45th Psalm; which psalm seems to have been indited by the Holy Spirit, chiefly to point out the divinity of Christ, his coming in the flesh and preaching, his regal dignity, the triumph and durability of his Church and kingdom, his gladness in the day of the espousal of his Church, his being embalmed, &c. &c.

In the 8th chapter of this inspired Song, and 2d verse, the Bride having mentioned the bringing into her mother's house, it is said, "*who* would instruct me;" namely, that *her mother* would then instruct her, as seems to be the most natural meaning of the passage. The original word is תלמדני, *telammedeni*; which is considered by the English translators to be the 3d pers. sing. fem. fut. of *pihel*, with the pronominal affix, and signifying, *she shall instruct me*. But Pagninus and Montanus rather consider it as the 2d per. sing. mas. fut. *pihel*, with the same affix, and render "docebis me;" or, *thou shalt teach me*, judging it to be our Lord who was to instruct her; a sense which the original will also bear, as the form of the Hebrew word is exactly the same in both. But the former seems preferable, as being more

accordant with the prophetic passages of scripture, where the mother-Church is giving the instructions: and it is to be remembered, that whatever instruction she may convey, it is originally from the Lord, by his good Spirit. The instruction which her mother then gave to her seems to be contained in these words: "Hearken, O Daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he *is* thy Lord, and worship thou him." Psalm xlv. 10, 11. And no better directions could be given by the Jewish mother-Church to her daughter, the Gospel Church, than these. She advises her to consider, or meditate upon, and listen to her good admonitions; namely, those contained in the ancient prophets, and enforced by John the Baptist, and by the Lord himself: that she should also forget her natural Jewish origin, or all the external ceremonial forms of worship used by her people; and accept of her espoused Bridegroom, as her Lord, whom she was now to worship and obey: and informs her that then he, the glorious King of Sion, would greatly desire her beauty, namely that which he had put upon her; having, by his death, purified her

for himself, as a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, or any blemish or defect whatever. Moreover, there may be here a certain reference to that most glorious state of the Church, when the Lord shall come to marry her, and to establish her in righteousness.

And the return of love by the espoused bride to her Lord, at the time mentioned, ch. viii. 2, seems to be expressed by the causing him to drink of her own wine, for she seems here to liken herself to a pomegranate, yielding the juice of which this wine was to be made: or, she will present to him the grateful incense of spiritual prayer, praise, and thanksgiving for the unspeakable mercies and benefits conferred upon her and her members, by his espousal; while she humbly trusts in the truth of God for the performance of all the good things graciously promised to her, and thus reposes herself infolded in the everlasting arms of his word. His New-Testament left arm is now under her head, and his Old-Testament right hand and arm do embrace her.

In chapter iii. the day of espousal is said to be the day of the gladness of his heart, being the day in which his mother crowned him King of Zion: and, in the 45th Psalm, just before

the description of his garments smelling of myrrh and aloes, &c. as after his being embalmed, he is said to be anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, as would happen at his espousal, or when he had completed the promised redemption ; and, in verse 15, she and her virgin companions are said to be brought to the king with gladness and rejoicing ; which, however, may have a prospective reference to the bringing again of the Jews, &c.

CHRIST.

Ch. III. 5. “ I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.

6. Who *is* this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant ?”

VER. 5. “ I charge,” &c. This verse being *verbatim* the same as ver. 7 of chap. ii. and therefore the grammatical construction being the same, I consider it as spoken by the Bridegroom, and as having a like signification,

For the Church being now in her mother's house with her beloved, he adjures the children of Jerusalem that they should not disturb her until she herself pleased. Bishop Hall, though in chap. ii. 7 he considers the Church to speak of her Saviour, concludes that, here, Christ speaks of her. *In loc.*

Ver. 6. "Who is this," &c. מי זאת, *mi zoth*; or, who is she? Here a new prophetic view is given; seemingly, of the mystical procession of the Bride and Bridegroom from Calvary, just after their espousal, as coming out of the spiritual wilderness of Judea, like pillars of smoke, perfumed with all the fragrant incense, or merits, of the atonement: and in verses 7 and 8 she speaks of the grave of her Lord, and the guard about it, as when his body remained in the tomb: and this latter circumstance not only proves the exact time to which the prophecy applies, but that their coming from the wilderness was that of the espousal, and not of the resurrection.

זאת, the word rendered *this*, is the demonstrative pronoun feminine; as intimating *this woman*, or the Church, of whom the Bridegroom here speaks, as seems evident from comparing this verse with verse 5, of chap. viii.

where he says, “ *I raised thee up :*” he is, therefore, the speaker.

The words מי זאת, *mi zoth*, occur three times in this beautiful inspired Song ; here, in verse 10 of chap. vi. and verse 5 of chap. viii. In chap. viii. they are rendered, “ Who is this,” as here ; but, in chap. vi. “ Who is she.” And there may be some propriety in making a distinction in these versions, as the Masoretic punctuation of these two words in chap. vi. differs in some degree from that of the other two, they being connected by *maccaph* in the former, but not in the latter : which shews the accurate attention of the great and excellent men who translated the English Bible. It may also be observed, that, in chap. viii. the question is concerning the Church coming up from the wilderness leaning upon, or trusting in her beloved ; and here, concerning the same as coming from the same place with her beloved, under the figurative appearance of pillars of smoke ; both prophetic of one and the same time : but, in chap. vi. the question seems asked by the Beloved concerning the Bride, at, or about the time of her marriage to the Lamb ; when it was granted to her to be arrayed in her bridal robes. Rev. xix. 7, 8. In

the present chapter, the bridegroom asks, "Who is this?" &c. as if to call to mind her present beauty, the beauty which he had now put upon her, as the newly-espoused bride of Christ: and he describes the appearance of their ascent to be such as can with no propriety be applied to any literal person or persons whatever: but which, when taken in a spiritual sense, produces a meaning the most significant and beautiful. It seems to be the Church herself who is here represented as coming out of the wilderness (with her beloved); and if so, with their attendants also, the children of the spiritual Jerusalem, male and female; which seems to be implied, as the Hebrew word, rendered *pillars*, is in the plural, and not in the dual number. The appearance is said to be like pillars of smoke; perhaps alluding to the smoke generally arising from the offering of sacrifice and incense. And one might be considered as the smoke from the Lord's sacrifice of himself; another, as the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the Church, coming with her beloved from the cross; while others of the latter kind, from the attendants and different bodies of Christians in and about the temporal Jerusalem

might also be ascending to God, thanking him for his great redemption of them, and praying for his direction and blessing under the awful circumstances in which they were placed. And though *zoth*, rendered *this*, is in the feminine singular, and *גלה*, *gholah*, the Hebrew word rendered, *that cometh* (literally *ascending*, or that ascendeth), is also in the feminine singular, as if only one person was ascending or coming, and that *the Church*; yet this one person is compared to *pillars* of smoke, meaning more than *one*. And, that her beloved was with her, is fully declared in chap. viii. 5; where the same prophecy seems to be repeated, with illustration and addition; which seems also to be implied here by the word rendered *pillars* being in the plural number. And as she must remain at Calvary with her beloved until his death, to be then espoused to him; so must their procession proceed from thence. And whether we consider Judea *literally*, as under the Roman yoke, or *figuratively*, as a barren spiritual wilderness, in either of these senses might she be said to be coming out of the wilderness: and the whole is to be considered in a spiritual sense. They proceed then mystically from Calvary, which is situated

without the city of Jerusalem, at the moment of his death : and they are now seen, with their attendants, as pillars of smoke, coming out of the estranged, Gentile wilderness of Judea, into her mother's house, for his coronation, as mentioned in chap. iii. 11 : and we have seen that the Jewish mother was both his and her mother. They are said to be perfumed, as was the custom of the East on all festive occasions, with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant ; or with the fragrant perfumes of the intercession, offering, and merits of Christ. And as the work of redemption was now finished, this was a day of festivity and joy to our adorable Redeemer, even the day of the gladness of his heart. May not the pillars of smoke, as an indefinite number, also have some allusion to the glory of God displayed on this occasion, by the great earthquake, the rending of rocks, &c. which happened? Matt. xxviii. 2 ; xxvii. 51, 52, 53. And the smoke of the glory of the Lord is mentioned in other parts of scripture.

Myrrh is a fragrant gum-resin, and was used with various other sweet-smelling substances, in the composition of the holy anointing-oil, used for the consecration of the tabernacle, and all

the other sacred things, as well as the high priest and his sons, to the service of God; of which it formed a chief ingredient, being considered as one of the principal spices. Exod. xxx. 23. Therefore, the being perfumed with myrrh, or, as it were, smelling of the holy anointing ointment commonly used on those occasions, may signify that our great High Priest had now suffered death, and was anointed to his priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, Heb. v. 5—10; vi. 19, 20; vii. 17; an unchangeable priesthood, as he ever liveth to make intercession for us. Ver. 24, 25.

Frankincense is a resinous, inflammable, and aromatic substance: and of it, with other sweet spices (to which the powders of the merchant might refer), a rich perfume was prepared, called a *perfume* or *sweet incense*; some of which was to be burnt before the mercy-seat, where God was to meet the priest who offered it, and accept of it as an atonement for the people. Exod. xxx. 34, 36; Lev. xvi. 13, 17, 33. And, on the great day of atonement, the high priest entered within the veil with the blood of the sacrifices; and also with incense, to burn it before the Lord, that the cloud of incense might cover the mercy-seat. Lev. xvi.

12, 13. And incense was used at other particular times: for, when the plague had begun among the people, Aaron was commanded by Moses to take a censer, and put fire thereon from off the altar, and to put on incense, and go and make an atonement for the congregation. Numb. xvi. 46. And he did so; and the plague was stayed. And we read in Luke, i. 8—10, that while the priest was burning incense in the Temple, and the cloud ascending, the people were praying without, or sending up their prayers to God, together with the smoke of the incense. Hence David prays that his prayer may be set forth before his God as the incense, and that the lifting up of his hands be as the evening sacrifice, Psalm cxli. 2; most probably alluding to that all-sufficient incense and sacrifice offered up by our Redeemer, which was offered at the exact time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, or at three o'clock; when he expired upon the cross: and his sacrifice having been thus offered just at the moment of the beginning of the offering of the typical daily sacrifice, sufficiently shewed that the latter was no longer necessary. In like manner, respecting the incense, the elders are said to have “golden vials full of

odours which are the prayers of the saints," Rev. v. 8: and, in the same wonderful book of prophecy, much incense is given to an angel, or messenger, under the gospel dispensation, to offer with the prayers of all saints; and the smoke of the incense ascends, with the prayers of the saints, before God, chap. viii. 3, 4. And further, with the meat-offering was offered frankincense, which was burnt upon the altar of burnt offering for a sweet savour unto the Lord. Lev. vi. 15.

Therefore, the being perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, and all the powders of the merchant, may figure the great merits of the death and mediatorial intercession of Christ, as being highly fragrant, of sweet savour, and most acceptable to God: as if intimating, that, with his own blood and merits, Jesus had now, on this great and ever-memorable day of atonement, entered within the veil, as was signified by the rending of the veil of the Temple at his death, and was now become our eternal intercessor, or great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Christ having thus, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself up without spot to God; we are now to offer up our prayers, praises,

and thanksgivings to God by him, or in and through his all-prevailing name. Heb. ix. 14: xiii. 15.

And as, for the suffering of death, he was to be crowned with glory and honour, Heb. ii. 9; so we now see him, as espoused to his bride, coming from Calvary with her, both perfumed with the fragrant perfumes of his all-sufficient merits and atonement, to be thus crowned by his mother in this day of the gladness of his heart. Song iii. 11.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. III. 7. "Behold his bed, which *is* Solomon's; three-score valiant men *are* about it, of the valiant of Israel.

8. They all hold swords, *being* expert in war: every man *hath* his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night.

9. King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.

10. He made the pillars thereof *of* silver, the bottom thereof *of* gold, the covering of it *of* purple; the midst thereof being paved *with* love for the daughters of Jerusalem.

11. Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown where-

with his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.”

VER. 7, 8. “ Behold his bed,” &c. The bridegroom having prophetically spoken of the bride as coming out of the wilderness, or of her departure with him from Calvary ; she, in like manner, points to his grave, in which the body of her Lord was deposited, after being embalmed with myrrh and aloes. To the bed, or grave, of Jesus Christ, the spiritual Solomon here intended ; surrounded with a royal guard, every man having his sword with him, because of fear in the night ; a guard, of the valiant of Israel. *They all possess, (each man) a sword, being skilled in war.* It was a new tomb in which no body had ever been laid ; and was, therefore, exclusively his tomb or bed. And the guard spoken of seems to be the guard of Roman soldiers which was demanded of Pilate by the chief priests and pharisees, to watch the tomb of Jesus, lest his disciples should come by night and steal him away, Matt. xxvii. 62—64 ; which was granted to them. ver. 65, 66. And it is believed by some, that the number of Roman soldiers, thus appointed as the royal body-guard of the King of Zion, who

were all valiant experienced soldiers, was sixty, as here mentioned. *Bishop Porteus' Lect.* While others suppose that a determinate number is here mentioned for an indefinite one: but this is of little consequence, as the prophecy was most accurately fulfilled. But, it may be asked, if these men were Roman soldiers, how could they be said to be the valiant of Israel? If they were present at the death of Christ, as they no doubt were, and were then converted to Christianity, then they would be members of the Church, and of the spiritual Israel: which they most probably were. But they may, in another sense, have been the valiant of Israel: as I purpose to shew hereafter, or in another publication.

Ver. 9, 10. "King Solomon," &c. Jesus Christ, the spiritual Solomon, having at his death become the King of the Jews, or of his people of the spiritual Israel, and having then espoused them as his mystical body or Church, is now spoken of by his title, and said to have made to himself a chariot; which, from the description, can be no other than his Christian Church, though concerning the signification of the word אפריון, *appirjon*, rendered *chariot*, there are various opinions. Pagninus renders,

“*ædificium,*” a *building*. Montanus, “*thalamum sponsarum,*” a *bride*, or *bed-chamber*. Bishop Patrick, *an open chariot*, as if for Solomon and his queen to ride in. Some consider it a *bed*, as in the margin; others, *something carried on wheels*, and therefore a *chariot*, having a bed or cushion in it. Of all these renderings, that of Pagninus seems to be the best; namely, a *building*, such as is the Church: which reminds us of the words of the apostle, spoken concerning our heavenly habitation, “We have a building of God, a house not made with hands:” and, in like manner, this house is made by the Lord Jesus. But the word אפריון, *appirjon*, seems to me to have a more beautiful and determinate meaning. It seems to be a compound word, composed of אפר, *apher*, *velamen*, vel *tegmen*, or *covering*; and יון, *jon*, *columbus*, or *dove*: and its proper signification to be, a *dove-house*, or *cote*. And a house full of doves would be full of innocence, fidelity, chastity, and love. This is, therefore, a most beautiful, though most simple emblem of the Church, which beautifully agrees with the pastoral imagery generally used in this admirable prophetic Song; and was very appropriate in her beginning, or more

lowly estate. Yet David speaks of her as the palace of the King. Psalm xlv. 15. And the prophet Isaiah, when speaking of the quick conversion of the Jews, mentions them as doves flying to their windows, or into the Christian Church, or dove-house. ch. lx. 8. The Church is also called a dove, in the Song, ii. 14; and her eyes are said to be doves. ch. i. 15; iv. 1.

King Solomon made himself a chariot, a dove-cot, or a church, of the wood of Lebanon; or of the fragrant and durable woods of his own royal forest, of his own planting; of true Jews after the spirit, or of Christian converts. He made the pillars thereof of fine patriarchal and prophetic silver; the bottom thereof of the choicest apostolic gold; and he covered the whole with purple, the emblem of his own eternal royalty, she having been purchased by the shedding of his precious blood; the midst of it being paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem. And the Church is said by the apostle to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. Eph. ii. 20, 21. And here the foundation and supporters are said to

be gold and silver, or very excellent, as are the apostolic and prophetic; and the covering of royal purple, emblematic of the royalty of the bridegroom, as the King of kings, and Saviour of his people.

And as the New Jerusalem is said to be the bride, the Lamb's wife; she must be considered as one and the same with the Church spoken of in this inspired Song. She is indeed the same Church; who, as we have seen, was betrothed to Christ at his death, and is to be married to him at his coming to convert the Jews and to establish his Church. We may, therefore, expect to find some correspondence in the structure of the house just mentioned, and that of the New Jerusalem. The bottom or under part of this, which supports the whole and forms the floor of the dove-house, is said to be gold: and the street of the New Jerusalem is pure gold, as it were transparent glass; or, it is shining like unto the finest burnished gold. Rev. xxi. 21. So also may we conclude, that the internal surface of the bottom of the dove-house is in some sense similar, or in the same polished state, or like unto transparent glass: so that the doves may see themselves as in a looking glass, and see whether they are

doves of Christ. And, if every convert will examine himself by the writings of the apostles and evangelists, he will clearly perceive whether he is walking according to the regulations of the house, or the commandments of Christ. And the law of this house, round about, is most holy. Ezek. xliii. 12.

It may also be observed, that the floor of the Temple of the literal Jerusalem was overlaid with gold. 1 Kings vi. 30.

The apostles were the “founders of the Christian Church by Christ’s immediate commission and authority.” *Lowman*. And the twelve foundations of the walls of the New Jerusalem had in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Rev. xxi. 14.

“The covering of it,” &c. מרכבו, *mercabo*. This word might also be rendered, *the seat of it*; or, *the chariot of it*, meaning such an open chariot as was used in the days of Solomon, of which the seat formed the upper part. And there is a *covering*, a *seat*, and a *chariot* mentioned under the law, which are one and the same thing, to which reference may here be made: namely, the *covering* of the ark; which constituted the mercy *seat* where God met with his people, between the cherubim which were

placed upon this covering and made out of the same piece of beaten gold; and this covering, or mercy seat, was also called the *chariot* of the cherubim. 1 Chron. xxviii. 18.

Now the ark and the mercy seat were of equal dimensions as to length and breadth. But, respecting the former, it was commanded, to “make upon it a crown of gold round about.” Exod. xxv. 11. And the mercy seat was to be put upon the ark thus encircled by its crown, which rising above the ark would also surround the edges of the mercy seat. And a royal chariot-seat crowned as was the ark, and covered with purple, the emblem of redemption through his blood, and of eternal royalty thereby obtained, seems to be the covering of the dove-house here intended: and as, under the Old-Testament dispensation, God spake with his people from above the mercy-seat; so, under the New, the Lord Jesus, having procured their redemption, is become their head; and now, in the most exalted place of his Church, occupies his royal seat as the crowned King of Zion. And it seems to be at this time of his exaltation, and just after his resurrection from the grave, that she desires the daughters of Jerusalem to go

forth and behold their King, as in the following verse.

And the Lord is her crown of rejoicing. And Isaiah, speaking of the returning of his people in the latter days, says, “ In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty unto the residue of his people. ch. xxviii. 5. And Jesus, for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour. Heb. ii. 9.

Thus seated in his royal seat, does the King of Zion guide, direct, and protect his Church. He is the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.

Having described the bottom, the pillars, and covering of the dove-house, the prophet next takes a view of the inside. And תוך, *toc*, the word here rendered *midst*, also signifies *within*, the *inner part*, &c. So that, by תוכו, *toco*, *the midst of it*, may be here meant, all its internal surfaces, including the clefts or recesses for doves; that they were paved, or covered, or lined with love. This meaning seems further confirmed by the sense of תוך, *toc*, in Zech. v. 4, as thus expressed by Dr. Taylor; “ *in the midst*, shall penetrate into every part, *of the house.*” *Concord*. And in this way does the

Lord, by his Spirit, walk in, through, and amongst his people ; thus penetrating into every part of his Church.

“ Paved,” &c. רצפה, *ratsuph*, here rendered *paved*, is the preterite participle of רצה, *ratsaph*; the principal signification of which is, *to spread out*, or *extend*, as a coverlet on a bed, a carpet on a floor, the hanging of a room, &c.: and hence, from it is formed a noun, in the feminine form, signifying a *pavement* composed of stones spread out. Considering, therefore, *ratsuph* in the sense of *extension*, and as in connection with תוכו, *toco*, in the sense above given, the passage might signify that all the internal parts of the dove-house were *lined* or *covered*; namely, with love for the daughters of Jerusalem. So that the literal rendering might be, *the inside thereof, lined with love*, &c. And this extended covering of love may be considered as being formed of the Old and New-Testament records, with all the gracious and affectionate mottos and inscriptions therein contained ; with which the hearts of all true Christians are deeply penetrated. How beautiful are the following! “ I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.” Jer. xxxi. 3.

“ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” John xv. 13. “ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Rom. viii. 35. “ Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.” Rev. i. 5. “ He will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love.” Zeph. iii. 17. “ As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.” Isa. lxii. 5. “ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.” Rev. iii. 19. “ My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,” &c. Heb. xii. 5, 6.

As the bottom was before noticed, and seems to include a spiritual meaning analogous to that just mentioned, no pavement or spreading of a carpet seems necessary for it: and therefore, the *extension* of the latter covering round the other internal parts and surfaces of the house seems to be the true meaning of רצוף, and preferable to *paved*, in this place. And the gracious promises and other inscriptions might be engraven in the golden covering of the inside of the house. And it will be remembered, that the inside of the Temple of Solomon (including the floor also) was over-

laid with gold, 1 Kings vi. 21, 30; fitted, in many places, to carved work of cherubin, palm-trees, and open flowers. Chap. xxix. xxxii. xxxv. Some have considered the paving of love here spoken of as the covering of the couch of the palanquin, worked by the daughters of Jerusalem, in token of their love and regard for Solomon. *Parkhurst* on רצף. But the whole of the structure of this building is said to be his own workmanship. Mr. Parkhurst further observes, "Or perhaps the words in Canticles may import that the *coverlet* was wrought with *little sentences* or *mottos* expressive of the *amiable* qualities of the bride, and of Solomon's love to her," *ib*: and he refers to Harmer's outlines of New Com. p. 126, 177, applying his reasoning to the literal Solomon and his queen, and to the coverlet of the litter in which he supposes they were carried. The idea of the sentences, applied and explained as above, seems correct and beautiful; namely, as being inscriptions from the sacred records, and concerning Christ and his Church. And the love of Christ to his people is fully declared in the word of God.

Now the meaning of the whole seems to be, that the Lord Jesus made his Gospel Church

himself, of Jew and Christian converts, made so by his Spirit, and founded on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, he himself being the head or covering of all: and that it was lined with love, as found in the Old and New-Testament records, in the precious promises and doctrines therein contained. And into the holes, or secret places of this house, do the Christian doves come for comfort and protection, and to receive the affectionate admonitions and directions of their Lord.

Ver. 11. "Go forth," &c. Here the bride calls to her companions, to go forth and behold King Solomon, or Christ, her betrothed Lord and King, as if now risen from the dead; with his crown wherewith his mother, the Jewish Church, crowned him, in the day of his espousals, or at his death, in that day of the gladness of his heart.

As the 7th and 8th verses mentioned the bed, or grave of Jesus, the spiritual Solomon, and the guard about it, as after his death and when his body was there deposited; and as, in the 9th and 10th, he is spoken of as King Solomon who had made himself a Church, or who had espoused her to himself as at his death, when also (and not before) he became

the King of the spiritual Sion : so we may reasonably conclude, that, when in ver. 11, the daughters of Zion are desired to go forth and behold King Solomon with his crown, he has now risen from the dead, and therefore, that this is a prophecy of the Lord's appearing just after his resurrection from the dead. They are to behold *King Solomon* with *his crown*, most probably his regal crown wherewith he was crowned at his death ; and having then also accomplished the redemption of his Church and espoused her, this was the day of his espousals, and that of the gladness of his heart. And as, in this verse, another day is mentioned in which the crowning and espousals took place, it seems evident that the espousal took place at his death, and not at his resurrection,

CHAPTER IV.



CHRIST TO HIS ESPOUSED BRIDE.

- Ch. IV. 1. "Behold, thou *art* fair, my love ; behold, thou *art* fair ; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks : thy hair *is* as a flock of goats that appear from mount Gilead.
2. Thy teeth *are* like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing ; whereof every one bears twins, and none *is* barren among them.
3. Thy lips *are* like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech *is* comely : thy temples *are* like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.
4. Thy neck *is* like the tower of David, builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.
5. Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.
6. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.
7. Thou *art* all fair, my love ; *there is* no spot in thee.

8. Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.
9. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, *my* spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.
10. How fair is thy love, my sister, *my* spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!
11. Thy lips, O *my* spouse, drop *as* the honeycomb: honey and milk *are* under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments *is* like the smell of Lebanon.
12. A garden inclosed *is* my sister, *my* spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.
13. Thy plants *are* an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard;
14. Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:
15. A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon."

As the figurative language used in this chapter is rather difficult, I shall give the

reader a general outline of what I conceive to be the sense of the whole, beginning with a recapitulation of part of the foregoing chapter.

The prophet, having, in the last six verses of the 3d chapter, spoken of the Church as mystically coming from Calvary just after the death of her Lord, perfumed with the excellent fruits or fragrance of his ministration and atonement; of the grave of Jesus, and the royal guard of valiant men about it, and of the reason for their attendance; and of the house of the Bridegroom, now King of Zion, of its simple, though excellent, and very beautiful structure, and the royal entertainment there provided for the daughters of Jerusalem; and called the latter to behold their Lord and King, as when risen from the dead, and wearing the regal crown wherewith his mother crowned him at his death, the time of his espousals; begins this 4th chapter with a description of the espoused Bride, which may be considered as spoken by her Lord when in her mother's chamber, just after the espousal, and after he had redeemed her by his own blood, and sanctified her by his Spirit. He begins with a description of her person; and she is said to be very fair. He next

describes her eyes, as doves ; and her hair, or covering, as a flock of goats (redeemed sinners) that had appeared, or returned from mount Gilead (or, as it were, from Calvary) the land of balm, and of the great spiritual Physician ; and her teeth as sheep shorn, or, as members now shorn of their Jewish ceremonies or Gentile idolatries, or of all their evil devices and intentions, as being now washed from their sins in his blood, and become fruitful in good works ; also her lips, temples (or rather cheeks), and neck, ver. 1—5 ; informing her that until the day should break, or breathe, and the shadows flee away, he would get him to the mountain of myrrh, and hill of frankincense ; or, as it were, to the mountain of sacrifice, and hill of prayer, where prayer and atonement were offered up ; probably as intimating that he would, as it were, return to Calvary, or that he would not yet appear as at his resurrection, but would remain in the sepulchre for the appointed time. He again speaks of her beauty, as being all fair and without spot, verse 7 ; and calls her to come with him from the Lebanon of Judea, and the whole land of Gentile Esau, verse 8 ; calling her now, for the first time, by the name of *spouse*,

ver. 9 : and he proceeds, giving a most magnificent description of her glorious and increasing excellencies and beauties, verses 10—15 : and, lastly, verse 16, she expresses her desire, that the north and south winds may blow upon her garden, that the spices thereof may flow out, or that the excellence and fragrance of her members, her Christian converts, may appear ; and that her Lord would visit his garden, and eat of or enjoy the pleasant fruits of his own atonement ; and he is to inherit the praises of Israel. And being now betrothed, and conversing with her betrothed Lord, she may be supposed to have laid aside her veil, that he might admire those beauties of her countenance which he had graciously given her, and which he is now describing.

Ver. 1. “ Behold thou *art* fair.” She is fair, or most beautiful, as is expressed by the repetition. She is fair, from the beauty which her Lord hath graciously put upon her. For he gave himself for her, that he might sanctify and cleanse her, and present her to himself a glorious Church. She is now adorned with the beauty of holiness : and no sublunary beauty excels or equals the beauty of an holy soul ; which often diffuses an amiable and

distinguished lustre through every feature of the countenance of the person who possesses it. Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. *See Levit. xix. 2; 1 Pet. i. 16.*

“Doves’ eyes.” This passage, when literally rendered, is, *thine eyes are doves*; or are beautiful, innocent, and full of truth, fidelity, and love. *See on i. 15.*

“Within thy locks.” The word rendered *within* also signifies *behind*; or, more literally, in this place, *from behind*: and that rendered *locks*, is in the singular number, and might be rendered *lock*, or *veil*, or other covering, as a *braid* of hair, or lace; probably bearing allusion to some fashion of wearing some of the latter over the eyes and cheeks in the days of Solomon; or probably to a veil covering the whole face.

“Thy hair *is* as a flock of goats that appear from mount Gilead.” The land of Gilead was a very fertile land, producing excellent pasture for cattle, Num. xxxii. 1; and was part of the first possessions given to the children of Israel after their departure from the land of Egypt. ver. 40. It was, moreover, a land of balm, Jer. viii. 22; xlvi. 11; and of the great prophet Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. 1; and so highly

favoured of God, that the king of Judah's house is said to be the Lord's Gilead, the head of his Lebanon, or of the house of the natural Israel. Jer. xxii. 6. And so may the royal house of Jesus, the King of the spiritual Judah, and head of his Church and people Israel, be compared to Gilead; he is also the great Physician, who healeth his people with the balm of his own blood.

Therefore, when Jeremiah is prophesying of the conversion of the Jews, or of Israel, he says his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Gilead, Jer. l. 19; or, in that place where their souls shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness: and the first possessions of the spiritual Israel are given to Christ, the spiritual Benjamin, the man of his Father's right hand; Benjamin shall possess Gilead, Obad. 19: and when the Jews are converted, they are to feed in Bashan and Gilead, on the spiritual mountains, and in the rich spiritual pastures of Israel, as in the days of old, Mic. vii. 14: and Zechariah, speaking of the same, says, "I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon," chap. x. 10; namely, into the land of the spiritual Judah and Israel, that they may delight themselves in the Lord, and be

fed with the heritage of Jacob their father. Isa. lviii. 14.

The hair is a great ornament to a woman, and a covering: and Jerusalem is to put on her beautiful garments; and to clothe herself with her sons and daughters, as with an ornament. Isa. xlix. 18. And flowing hair, compared to a flock of goats that have appeared, or come up from mount Gilead, may figure a train of converts, which have just accompanied the Church from Calvary, or mount Gilead; and as just healed by the great Physician, by the balm of Gilead, the blood of Christ.

Ver. 2. “Thy teeth *are* like a flock shorn,” &c. It is through or between the teeth that the word passes in speech; and through the members of the Church of God, who are the sheep of his pasture, is the word of truth sent for edification and purification; and, in this sense, it seems prophesied of Christ, as the Shiloh of Judah, that his teeth shall be white with milk, i. e. of the pure word of truth for the nourishment of his lambs. Gen. xlix. 10, 11.

The flock now seen with the prophetic eye is shorn: and the word, *even*, inserted by the translators of the English Bible, to convey

what they conceived to be the meaning of the passage, seems superfluous. These sheep are shorn of their old fleece of Jewish types and shadows, of useless ceremonies, vain traditions, all superfluity of naughtiness, and all extraneous comforts and trusts; and solely relying upon their God and Saviour for salvation and complete redemption through his blood, they believe that they shall soon be further clothed with the new fleece of the gospel of Jesus Christ, being now brought into the fat pastures of the Shepherd of Israel; who feedeth his flock like a shepherd, who carrieth the lambs in his bosom, and gently leadeth those who are with young: and the new wine of the Gospel was not to be put into old bottles. They have come up from the washing, literally, as by Pag. and Mont. “*de lavacro,*” from the washing place or pool: they are white, having been washed in the blood of the Lamb.

These sheep bear twins, and none is barren among them; or no one is bereaved (Mont. “*orba,*” *bereaved,*) of her children by abortion. So Christian converts, washed with the blood of Christ, and the water of the regeneration of the Spirit, are all zealous for the service and honour of their God; each bringing one or two

young converts, and all bringing forth fruits meet for repentance.

Ver. 3. “Thy lips *are* like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech *is* comely.” The lips are naturally of a red colour, and scarlet is the brightest and most beautiful red. Scarlet was used in the curtains of the Tabernacle, and in the garments of the high priest: and has been much worn by kings, princes, nobles, and other great men, in all ages. It therefore naturally conveys the ideas of greatness, grandeur, majesty, and beauty: and may therefore be highly applicable in the description of the colour of the figurative lips of the royal spouse of Christ, the Lord of lords, and King of kings: while the closeness of the lips (which seems intimated by the narrow line of scarlet thread), and the comeliness of speech, may beautifully figure the wisdom, the virtuous circumspection, the probity, the sanctity, the sweetness and modesty of the same royal bride. She is wise, she refraineth her lips; she is virtuous, and openeth her mouth with wisdom, Prov. x. 19. xxxi. 10, 26: she keepeth the door of her mouth, and speaketh not unadvisedly with her lips; she speaketh no guile, and giveth no feigned, flattering, nor lying words; but she

knoweth what is acceptable; yea, her speech is comely, and her lips drop as the honey-comb. Prov. x. 32. Song of Songs iv. 11. Prov. xvi. 21, 24. Her lips are the lips of truth which shall be established for ever, Prov. xii. 19: She giveth goodly words, Gen. xlix. 21; even the good words of God, which are sweeter than honey and the honey-comb. Psalm cxix. 103. xix. 10.

And the scarlet colour may have some reference to the atonement, as procuring for the spouse eternal royalty; or, as making her a king's daughter, Psalm xlv. Song vii. 1, the betrothed bride and intended wife of the great Prince of heaven and earth.

“Thy temples,” &c. The original word, rendered *thy temples* in the English translation, is רַקְתָּךְ, *rakkathec*; or רַקְהָ, *rakkah*, a noun feminine, in the singular number, with the affix ך; which has been rendered differently by different translators, and by some in the plural, and by others in the singular number, though the Hebrew is singular. The English translators render “temples,” in the plural number, probably considering the meaning to be that each temple resembled a piece of pomegranate. Montanus and Stockius render “tempus,” in

the singular; the LXX, Μηλόν σου, *thy apple, or cheek*, from its resemblance to an apple; the Vulgate, “genæ tuæ,” *thy cheeks*; Pagninus, “gena tua,” *thy cheek*, in the singular, which seems to be the true rendering in this place, and preferable to *temple*. For considering that the bridegroom is now admiring, and describing the beautiful countenance of his newly-betrothed bride; and that her temples, which would be not only covered with her hair, but, most probably, with some beautiful cap or other covering, would not, according to the rules of similitude and proportion, in any respect resemble a portion of fresh pomegranate; and considering that her cheek would be accurately figured thereby; we may conclude that the latter is the true meaning of the word. For, the prophet having spoken of her hair, her eyes, her teeth, and her lips which cover the teeth, and her speech, is naturally led to the cheeks, from their connection with the lips and mouth, and particularly as a principal part of the countenance, and of the mouth by which the sentiments of the heart are expressed. So that one cheek is said to be like a piece of pomegranate, or like to that half of the pomegranate which grows towards the sun,

a portion of which thereby becomes of a beautiful red colour, surrounded with more or less of white; “Sicut fragmentum mali punici, quod est rubicundum in parte opposita soli. Ita genæ tuæ.” *Bibl. Max.* This would well express the idea given of the bridegroom’s countenance, in the 10th verse of the 5th chapter, that he is “white and ruddy:” and the same is probably meant to be here expressed concerning the bride; or, that she had beautiful ruddy, or rosy cheeks, surrounded with a fair or white and delicate skin. And, if one cheek be considered as half a pomegranate, the two will form the figurative pomegranate spoken of in the 8th chapter, ver. 2: and the wine of the juice said to proceed from it, may beautifully figure the fragrant, exhilarating, and refreshing communion between Christ and his Church, through the word of truth. And white is an emblem of innocence; red, or ruddiness, of royalty.

“Within thy locks;” or rather, *behind*, or *from behind* thy lock or veil; that is, thy veil being now laid aside. Bishop Lowth renders, “Thy cheeks are like a piece of pomegranate within thy locks.”

Ver. 4, 5. “Thy neck is like the tower of

David," &c. "Thy two breasts," &c. In these verses, the figurative neck and breasts of the Church, as naturally attached to the head and face before described, are particularly mentioned: the neck as the tower of David, the breasts as two twin roes. And, as the Lord is the head of his Church, her neck, on which the head naturally rests, may be the spiritual Judah, or that part of it which formed the beginning of the Christian Church, of which also he is King, or head: and the breasts are naturally connected with, or attached to, the neck and head. Having spoken of these parts of the spouse, he informs her that he should get himself to the mountain of myrrh, &c. ver. 6: and then concludes the description of her person by a general declaration that she was all fair, and that there was no spot in her. ver. 7.

Now the spiritual Judah, or the Christian Church, at the time of the preaching of Christ, seems to be spoken of by the prophet Micah as the tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, to which the first dominion was to come: "And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of

Jerusalem." And then did the neck of the Church, or the strong hold spoken of by this latter prophet, become like the tower of David which was builded upon mount Zion, strong, grand, and impregnable; a tower which hath baffled every attempt of the enemy to storm it, and against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

The tower is " builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men."

Now the tower being a spiritual tower, it may naturally be inferred, that the armour thereon is also spiritual; and the number mentioned is, most probably, a definite, for an indefinite one. Shall we then say, that the bucklers and shields here mentioned are those of faith, and all the other spiritual guards mentioned in the word of truth, which were used by the Old-Testament worthies, those mighty men of valour, and which remained to be used by those of the New Testament? These shields, together with the sword of the Spirit, which is also to be found in this armoury, seem to be mentioned by St. Paul, in the following words: " Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the

whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Ephes. vi. 10—18. It was by this armour that the mighty men of the spiritual Israel were enabled, in all the progressive ages of the Church, to conquer their spiritual enemies.

These bucklers and shields are hung up; as those mighty men who used them have finished their warfare, and have retired from the field,

But they are of excellent temper, of eternal durability, and ever ready for the use of the Christian soldier; and cannot become useless. It was with this armour that the Christian martyrs fought so valiantly, and thereby bade defiance to all the power of the enemy.

Ver. 5. “Thy two breasts,” &c. Attached to the neck and under it are the two breasts, like twins: and nothing could more beautifully figure the two sacred volumes by which the Lord’s Church is fed, or the two Testaments, the Old and the New, the two figurative breasts of the Church, in which is contained the pure milk of the word by which the flock of Christ is fed, nourished, and supported. They are, as it were, twins, or a pair of sisters, between whom there is the most intimate affinity and affectionate connection; and the truth of the one is confirmed by a certain correspondent agreement of the other, the one exhibiting the word of prophecy, the other the fulfilment thereof. Bishop Hall observes, “Thy two Testaments, which are thy two full and fair breasts whereby thou nursest all thy faithful children, are as two young roes; twins, for their excellent and perfect agreement one with another,” &c. *In loc.* They are likened

to two young roes that are twins. To two עפרים, *ghopharim*, or *young fawns*, or *roes*, to two beautiful and lovely young creatures, which are said to be *twins* of צביה, *tsebijah*: and, as the rendering of the English translators is complete without this word, it seems probable that they either overlooked it, or considered it as idiomatic, and only expressive, with *ghopharim*, of what they have rendered. But it seems not to be idiomatic; though *tsebi* signifies a *roe*, and though *tsebijah* is generally stated in Lexicons as the feminine form of *tsebi*; but rather seems to be a compound word, composed of the two following, צבי-יה, *tsebi-Iah*, signifying *a roe of Jah*, or of *Jehovah*; a rendering which is highly expressive of the great Source of the Old and New Testament Revelation. And if this rendering be admitted, I shall be able to shew, that the glorious name of *Jah*, the contraction of that of *Jehovah*, is three times (according to the number of the three persons in the ever-blessed Trinity) mentioned in this inspired Song: namely, in this 5th verse, in chap. vii. 3, and in viii. 6, as will be seen in their proper places.

I may further remark, that though the word צבי, *tsebi*, is generally given in the Lexicons as

masculine, it is notwithstanding shewn, by their rendering, to be both masculine and feminine; as they render “caprea,” f. *a roe*, and “capreolus,” m. *a young buck*.

Shall we then render, *Thy two breasts are like two young roes, twins of a roe of Jah*; and conclude that the mother-roe here figured is the *wisdom of God*?

In further illustration of this subject the reader will here remember, that the Old-Testament Church only ended at the death of Christ, when he betrothed his bride, her daughter, and entered upon his kingdom. But the business of the New Testament, or the New-Testament scriptures, may be said to have begun with John, as before mentioned. And it seems to have been prophesied that our Lord should, just after the atonement, be placed between these two figurative breasts, Song i. 13, or between the two Testaments of his word then distinctly formed, though the New Testament was not then written.

They are said to *feed* among the lilies; and the lilies are the members of the Church: and to feed, in one sense, is to take nourishment for support and increase; and the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles, and the Revelation

of St. John were added to the substance of the New-Testament volume; and the whole was written after the death of our Lord. And, as it was his meat and drink to do the will of his heavenly Father, so also may it be figuratively spoken of the two breasts of the Church: they feed the lilies of the Church, and are themselves preserved and supported by them: and the divine light of truth contained in them shineth brighter and brighter to the perfect day. They feed among the members of the Christian Church: and wherever these members are, the Bible will assuredly be found, if they can by any means procure one; as it is by the consoling and comforting word of God preserved in his Church, that their faith is strengthened, and that they are enabled to persevere in their Christian course: they suck of the breasts of her consolations, and are satisfied therewith. Isa. lxvi. 11.

Ver. 6. "Until the day break," &c. The bridegroom having given the above description of his bride, as immediately after her espousals, or when he is brought into her mother's house, as at his death, breaks off abruptly to inform her, that until the day break (literally, until the day *breathe*, as in the margin), and the

shadows flee away, he will get him to the mountain of myrrh and hill of frankincense ; and then returns to his subject in the 7th verse.

The day here intended seems to be the day of the gospel dispensation, or of the spiritual kingdom of our Lord, which began at his death, and which may be said to have visibly breathed at his resurrection from the dead ; when this glorious Sun of righteousness arose, and when all the Jewish types and shadows concerning him, and all the prophecies respecting his death and burial, the time he should remain in the grave, and his resurrection were finally fulfilled, and the shadows did wholly flee away. For it may be here observed, that though these types and shadows were chiefly fulfilled at the death of Christ, yet as his resurrection, and his coming in his kingdom immediately after, were also prophesied of, and still remained to be fulfilled, the breathing of the day, and the fleeing away of the shadows here mentioned, may particularly allude to the visible breathing of the day above described in the morning of the resurrection.

We have before spoken of the nature of myrrh and frankincense, and the uses to which they were applied under the law, and in what

sense they have been figuratively mentioned in this Song. And in this place the mountain of myrrh and hill of frankincense may figure that all-sufficient sacrifice of himself which our great High Priest, after the incense of strong and fervent prayer, offered up for the sins of the world ; while his Church, or mystical body, was offering up her prayers before God at the foot of the cross. These were offered up on mount Calvary, and may be here called mountain and hill. Jesus, immediately after his death, mystically entered the Jewish mother-Church with his bride (who had just before found him and held him until then, Song iii. 4.), her daughter, having just betrothed her : and their mystical procession from Calvary, just after his expiration, or when he and his Church are perfumed with the excellent odours of the atonement and prayer, and when the smoke of the incense is, like figurative pillars, or palm trees, ascending up before God, is hence compared to these pillars coming up from the wilderness. And it seems to be at the time when in her mother's house, that he gives the beautiful description of her mystical body contained in the first five verses of this fourth chapter : and he informs her in this sixth

verse that he would get him to the mountain of myrrh and hill of frankincense, or to Calvary where his dead body remained hanging upon the cross; thereby giving a lesson to his Church in all future ages, and pointing to his sacrifice and merits, or to his blood as the true balm of Gilead, the great sovereign remedy for every spiritual disease under which she may labour. She is therefore thus referred to his great and all-sufficient atonement and prayer through the same; to which she should always have recourse, when, as here, her Lord withdraws his presence from her, until the sun of his grace and favour again arise upon her, and the shadows of the night of tribulation flee away. Let her members go to Calvary, and look upon their crucified Saviour.

Ver. 7. "Thou art all fair," &c. The bridegroom having, in the foregoing verse, as it were, reminded his newly espoused bride of his great love in giving himself for her, and of the virtues of that atonement, and the efficacy of prayer, comes now to finish his present description of her person by declaring that she is all fair, or wholly beautiful, and without spot. She was now beautiful indeed, being clothed with the garments of salvation, and covered with the

robe of Christ's righteousness, Isa. lxi. 10: and she was also perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, and all the powders of the merchant, as we have above explained, Song iii. 6: and she rejoiced in the Lord her God.

Of the state of the Church, as described in this 7th verse, the apostle Paul particularly speaks, in his epistle to the Ephesians, as before mentioned, in these words: "Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. v. 25, 26, 27. She is now, therefore, betrothed: and in the next verse is, for the first time, called *spouse*.

Ver. 8. "Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse," &c. The bridegroom having betrothed his bride, and being delighted with that beauty which he had put upon her, gives that general description of her countenance and person, which we have seen in the first five and seventh verses of this chapter: and he begins this 8th verse by a call to her to come with him (or rather, by saying prophetically

that she shall come, the verb being in the future in the Hebrew) from the estranged world, &c. now calling her *spouse*: and, in the following verses, he proceeds with a further description of the person and excellencies of his newly-betrothed bride, whom he calls to come with him from the Jewish Lebanon, and the neighbouring Gentile nations, ver. 8, &c. He declares his love for her, ver. 9; his satisfaction with her affectionate return, ver. 10; and with her excellence and fragrance, ver. 11; and speaks of her as a garden, a paradise, producing the choicest trees and aromatic shrubs, yielding the most fragrant flowers and delicious fruits, with all the chief spices, ver. 12, 13, 14; and finally, ver. 15, describes her fertility and future extension, by saying that she is a very fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, which will, as it were, flow in streams from this spiritual Christian Lebanon, this mountain and forest of the Lord, So that this 8th and the following verses, to the 15th inclusive, may be considered as spoken by the bridegroom to the bride, in her mother's house, just after being betrothed.

He calls her, for the first time, *spouse*: and desires her to come with him from the Lebanon

of the natural Israel, or from her own people and her father's house, Psalm xlv. 10; and also from the gentile surrounding mountains, or powers, those lions' dens, habitations of ravenous beasts, those mountains of prey: or to leave the gentile and estranged world, and enter her gospel state as the espoused bride of Christ; when she is to follow her Lord through good report and bad report, or wherever his providence may direct.

The temporal Lebanon was a very large and lofty mountain which separated Syria from Palestine; and contained some forests of excellent and fragrant cedars, of the most noble and stately appearance, and having the most beautiful foliage, with some noble firs, and many other choice forest trees. And hence the people of the natural Israel were considered as the Lord's Lebanon, or his choice forest; which was once beautiful, fragrant, and fertile: and the palace which Solomon constructed at Jerusalem for himself, having in its structure much cedar wood from mount Libanus, and (perhaps chiefly) as being the palace of the house of Israel, was called the house of the forest of Libanus, or Lebanon. Lebanon was also a gentile mountain on the borders of Israel; and

might, therefore, well figure the gentile, alienated state of the Jews at the time of our Lord's crucifixion; while her coming from the other mountains mentioned, which were also gentile mountains bordering on Judea, might figure the first calling of the Gentiles and their accession to the Church. Whether the names Amanah, Shenir, and Hermon, have any other spiritual meaning, may be better understood hereafter.

She is also to come from the lions' dens, (literally as by Pagn. and Mont. "de habitaculis," *from the habitations* of the lions,) and from the mountains of the leopards. And, in the 7th chapter of Daniel, the four great over-ruling gentile nations are represented by four wild beasts; or, by a lion, a bear, a leopard, and another terrible monstrous beast; all strong, wild, and fierce beasts of prey; which, as such, are sometimes represented as having devoured Jacob and the vineyard of the Lord. And hence, these great gentile powers or mountains are sometimes called *the mountains of prey*.

The Gospel Church, therefore, is now called to leave these mountains, and also the unfruitful mountains of the natural Judea and Israel, and to follow her espoused Lord: or she is to leave

all these wild and barren places, or people, and to become the fruitful bride of the Lamb, fruitful in good works; and in the increase of her members, who all bear twins, and none is barren among them.

Ver. 9. "Thou hast ravished," &c. In the margin, it is "taken away my heart." Here the bridegroom expresses his most sincere and strong affection for his bride; and says that, with one of her eyes, and with one chain of her neck, she had ravished his heart: thus, as it were, recounting how he first became in love with her.

Now as the light of the body is the eye, and as the two volumes of the sacred scriptures are the light, or eyes, of the Church, whereby the whole body-mystical is illuminated and instructed; so the one eye here-mentioned seems to be that volume of light and truth by which the Jewish Church was enlightened, and in which Immanuel greatly delighted. In this volume he found written, "Lo I come to do thy will, O my God," Psalm xl. 7; and he came, as reported in the beginning of the New Testament by St. Matthew, chap. i. 18, 21, 23. And this prophecy, and its recorded fulfilment, form a beautiful chain of prophecy; and there

are many others of a like kind, which form so many beautiful chains by which the Old and New Testaments are connected together, which might become as many chains about the bride's neck. And indeed any instructive portion of the Old-Testament revelation might, according to Prov. i. 8, 9, form a similar chain. But it seems probable, that the one chain of her neck to which the bridegroom more particularly alludes, and which so ravished his heart, is that law or instruction of her mother given in the 10th and 11th verses of the 45th Psalm; by acquiescence in which, as might be expressed by exhibiting it round her neck, according to the divine law of Proverbs, chap. i. 8, 9, she shewed herself ready to become his espoused bride. The advice of her mother is thus expressed, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he *is* thy Lord, and worship thou him." Psalm xlv. 10, 11. She is to attentively hear, and to meditate upon her words; and she is to forget her Jew and Gentile people and kindred, and to become the royal bride of Christ, who will then

greatly desire her beauty, and whom she is then to worship and obey.

Shall we then conclude, that the bride, adorned with all that grace and beauty which the Lord had graciously bestowed upon her, appeared at the Paschal supper with this one chain upon her neck; thus declaring her readiness to obey her mother and to become the spouse of the King of Zion, her beloved and adorable Lord, whom she would for ever worship and obey: and that it was this readiness and affection shewn by the bride which had ravished his heart with the desire of being espoused to her, as mentioned in this 9th verse of the Song; all which he may now be recalling to mind after the espousal has taken place?

And David says of the holy scriptures, “Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path,” Psalm cxix. 105: and Solomon, “For the commandment *is* a lamp; and the law *is* light.” Prov. vi. 23. And by them does God enlighten, direct, and comfort his people Israel. So that the instruction of her heavenly Father, and his law given by the mother-Jewish Church, become the ornaments of the daughter, and chains about her neck. Prov. i. 8, 9.

From this view of the subject, there seems no good reason for supposing that the Hebrew text is here incorrect, as has been thought by Dr. Hodgson and Dr. Percy; and if not, the critical remarks of the former, and the addition of the latter, both become unnecessary.

Ver. 10. “How fair is thy love, my sister,” &c. Here the bridegroom expresses his conviction of the bride’s most ardent love for him, the term *love* being expressed in the plural number, in the Hebrew; and that it is of the purest kind. And as the Gospel Church is the daughter of Jerusalem, and Christ also a Son of the Jewish Church, and therefore both descended of the Jewish mother; so may the former, though the betrothed bride of Christ, be still called his chaste and beloved sister.

This strong affection (again expressed in the plural) of the bride is better than wine; it is more pleasing, and more exhilarating to the royal bridegroom than the most enlivening cordial. And the smell of her ointments, than all spices: or, the sweet-smelling virtues and fragrant odours of the prayers of the betrothed Church, now anointed by the Spirit with all the fragrance of the atonement, are better than all spices, than all the natural spices of

Arabia ; even better than all the spices or perfumes of the temporal tabernacle and temple, or the cedar wood thereof: though the last were types of those better things which were to appear under the Gospel dispensation.

Ver. 11. “Thy lips,” &c. In this beautiful verse, the excellence, the sweetness, and the truth of her words and doctrine seem to be figured; and the fragrance of her members, which equals that of the cedars and other sweet-smelling woods of Lebanon. David says, “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth.” Psalm cix. 103. The word of God is also compared to milk: and St. Peter says, “As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby,” 1 Peter ii. 2; and this passage seems fully to shew that the breasts of the Church are the two Testaments, as above explained. And milk and honey have been spoken of as figurative of the richest and best produce of any place or country. Hence the Jews were promised to possess a land flowing with milk and honey, Exod. iii. 8; which are said to be the glory of all lands: and indeed it is probable, that the honey and milk mentioned in the present

verse, was the glory ultimately alluded to by Moses, in this promise; namely, the glory of the Gospel land. And, in the Proverbs, the knowledge of wisdom to the soul is compared to honey and the honey-comb to the taste. chap. xxiv. 13, 14. So that all the precious truths of the Gospel may be here resembled or compared to honey dropping from the lips, and honey and milk flowing from under the tongue of the Church; for the nourishment and support of her children.

The smell of her garments are as the smell of Lebanon; or the virtues and graces of her members (which are her clothing, for she is said to clothe herself with them, Isa. xlix. 18), who, through the Holy Spirit assisting them, offer up acceptable prayer, praise, and thanksgiving to God in and through their Redeemer, are esteemed in his sight as most fragrant; and the prayers of the saints are considered as odours in the sight of God. Rev. v. 8. Bishop Patrick observes, that, “from the trees in the forest of Lebanon came many sweet spices, probably frankincense.”

Ver. 12. “A garden inclosed,” &c. She is protected by God from injury, who gives his angels charge over her to keep her in all her

stages : and, as the fiery chariots were round about Elijah to protect him, so is Christ always present with his people ; yea, even to the end of the world. For as the mountains *are* round about Jerusalem, so the Lord *is* round about his people, from henceforth even for ever. Psalm cxxv. 2.

She is a spring shut up, a fountain sealed : or she is a spring, גַּי, *gal*, “ fons,” or *fountain* of the waters of life, invisible, kept safe and protected from defilement ; she is the depository of the oracles of God. And as the book mentioned in Revelation, and sealed with seven seals which were only opened in succession, seems to represent the holy scriptures, Rev. v. 1 ; so the being shut up and sealed here may have some reference to the sealing up of the various prophecies until the time appointed for their discovery. This sealing of prophecy is particularly mentioned in Daniel : “ Shut thou up the vision ; for it *shall be*” (rather, *shall not be known*) “ for many days.” chap. viii. 26. And again : “ the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end.” chap. xii. 9. And this sealing up imports, that, from the manner in which they are related, or from other causes, they shall

not be discovered until the time appointed: and thus the wisdom of the wise is confounded, as no human learning, no human wisdom can unlock the sealed book of prophecy until the appointed time of its discovery.

Ver. 13, 14. “Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates,” &c. They are *a paradise or an orchard* of fruit-bearing trees, producing beautiful, delicious, and salutary fruits: some refreshing and exhilarating, some of the most odoriferous kinds, and others medicinal, fragrant, and aromatic; all emblematic of the people of the Lord, who are all active and fruitful, each diffusing his salutary and fragrant virtues and influences all around him. The trees of the Lord are full *of sap*; the cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted. Psalm civ. 16.

Ver. 15. “A fountain of gardens,” &c. The bridegroom now finishes this most grand, sublime, and beautiful section in the beautiful words of the present verse; in which seems expressed, that the Christian Church should be a fountain, or source of many assemblies, or churches of believers, who should derive their origin and support from her; and also a well or reservoir of living waters, which should

flow in streams from her gospel Lebanon; which last is spoken probably in allusion to the literal mount Libanus, which is said to have given origin to several rivers.

Now the Lord dwells in his Church, and she is thus become that well of living waters; namely, the living waters of his Spirit and word. To that fountain Jesus himself called the Jews, John iv. 10, 11, 15; vii. 37, 38; as did Isaiah, under the Old Testament times. chap. lv. 1. And the Lord complains, by Jeremiah, that his people had then forsaken him, the fountain of living waters, chap. ii. 13: and St. Paul says, in his epistle to the Ephesians, that "Christ had died for his Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." chap. v. 25, 26. And when the redeemed tribes of Israel are seen standing before the throne of God, it is said that the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and that God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Rev. vii. 17; see also Rev. xxi. 6; xxii. 1, 17. "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is

athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." *Amen!*

And this is a glorious privilege, purchased for us by our Redeemer, that every man may come if so disposed, however great a sinner he may have been. Let no man, therefore, say, or think, that he is predestinated to damnation: as he here sees, that whoever will may come and take of the water of life, and that freely.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. IV. 16. "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, *that* the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."

Now the wind is the natural emblem of the Spirit of God, whose various operations in the Church and in the world are as different and as invisible to us as are the origin and destination of the winds. The north wind is cold and constricting; and though it restrains vegetation, and is very trying to the strength of the plants, and hurtful when boisterous and high, is, notwithstanding, when moderate, strength-

ening to the plant: and hence, when a more congenial wind succeeds, the plant thrives better, and proceeds in more luxuriant vegetation. The south wind, on the contrary, is warm, moist, and relaxing; and hence more favourable for the growth of plants, and for the production and shedding abroad of their aromatic parts. The one, therefore, as severe, disagreeable, and trying, though in the end salutary and strengthening, and the other as congenial and encouraging, may well represent the various operations of the Spirit of God in the Christian Church, under her present state of trial and probation: and the experienced Christian knows the good effects resulting from trial in adversity, and the necessity thereof; as “tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed.” Rom. v. 3, 4, 5. May not the sense of the former part of this verse, considered as the operation of the Holy Spirit, be thus expressed? ‘Come, north-wind of adversity, of trial, of persecution, and of all other troubles; Come, thou south-wind of prosperity, or of the sweet and powerful influences of the Spirit; and blow upon me, or among my Christians, that their virtues

of faith, patience, perseverance, &c. may appear, and discover themselves in the peaceable fruits of righteousness; and that I may thus, by these alternate trials and encouragements, be enabled to bear up, under all the future misfortunes and trials which the enemy may bring upon me.'

"Let my beloved come," &c. She entreats his presence among her converts, to enjoy the fruits produced by his atonement and the inspiration and influences of his Holy Spirit: and he immediately answers, as in the first verse of the fifth chapter, which follows; he comes. And this coming seems to be as at the resurrection; as he speaks of having gathered his myrrh and his spice, as most probably alluding to those with which his own body was wrapped after his death by the members of the Church: which pious act, or mark of attention to her Lord was, as it were, the first fruits of his newly betrothed Church. And as he had told her that he should get to the mountain of myrrh, &c. iv. 6; so is it probable that this 16th verse should be considered as spoken during his absence, or between his death and resurrection; and that it primarily refers to the troubles, and succeeding joy of

that period: and the latter part may be considered as spoken just before the resurrection.

CHAPTER V.

CHRIST.

Ch. V. 1. "I am come into my garden, my sister, *my* spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

HE is come into his garden, or among his people, the men of the spiritual Judah, his pleasant plants; or he is returned from the tomb, where he, as it were, gathered his myrrh and spices, John xix. 39, 40. He has eaten his honey-comb with his honey; or he has much delighted in the honey of the word, or in doing the will of his heavenly Father, under all circumstances; and, in having finished his work, he has rejoiced with much joy: and it

was prophesied of him that he should eat butter and honey, or the butter and honey of the good scriptural land, that he might choose the good and refuse the evil. Isa. vii. 15. He has drunk his wine with his milk : or the rich exhilarating and comforting wine and milk of his word and spirit ; and he now rejoices in being crowned with that glory and honour declared in his word. As if he had said, ‘ I am now returned again to my Church and people from the grave, after having, by my death, made an atonement for their sins, and thus secured for them all the glorious and rich promises made to them in my word, comparable to honey, wine, and milk ; come, therefore, O my friends, my beloved friends, and eat, and drink abundantly thereof.’ The same pleasing prophetic invitation is given by the prophet Isaiah ; while he also mentions these inestimable blessings, and the great Captain of our salvation by whom they were procured. ch. lv. 1, &c. And the wine may also figure the joy felt by our Lord just after his death, (in the day of his espousals, that day of the gladness of his heart, Song iii. 11.) from having fulfilled the will of his Father, and accomplished the salvation of his people, and pro-

cured for them all the gospel blessings : of which he wishes them now to partake, in the fullest manner, as expressed in the latter part of the verse. He calls them to eat of the tree of life, and to drink of the living waters of his word and spirit. And, at the coming of the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost, the Church drank plentifully, yea abundantly of the spiritual drink of the Spirit. The friends of Christ here mentioned are his people, the members of the true Church, or those who walk in the way of his commandments. John xv. 14.

Having spoken to his bride in this verse as if just arisen from the grave, she is in the second verse represented as if asleep at the time ; being probably overwhelmed with grief at his absence.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. V. 2. "I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my beloved that knocketh, *saying*, open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled : for my head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night,

3. I have put off my coat ; how shall I put it on ? I have washed my feet ; how shall I defile them ?
4. My beloved put in his hand by the hole *of the door*, and my bowels were moved for him.
5. I rose up to open to my beloved ; and my hands dropped *with* myrrh, and my fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.
6. I opened to my beloved ; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, *and* was gone : my soul failed when he spake : I sought him, but I could not find him ; I called him, but he gave me no answer.
7. The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me ; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.
8. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him that I *am* sick of love."

IN the 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th verses, the prophet, under the figures of the Church's sleeping on her bed, her Lord's knocking being wet with the dew of the night, and her fingers dropping myrrh upon the handles of the lock, continues the prophecy of the Lord's return to

his Church just after his resurrection from the dead; shewing also the time thereof. In the 6th, she opens to him, but he has withdrawn himself: she seeks him, but finds him not; calls him, but he gives no answer. In the 7th, the treatment she received from the watchmen and keepers of the walls of the city is declared. And in the 8th, she charges the daughters of Jerusalem with a message to him, if they shall find him.

Ver. 2. "I sleep," &c. This verse begins a new paragraph: and the Church, under the afflicting circumstances of the death and burial of her beloved, may be believed to be now very sorrowful. She is represented as being in bed, the bed of sorrow, and probably as on the night before the resurrection, which seems to have taken place about the break of day: and she appears to have been so sorrowful and troubled, that, though asleep, her thoughts were much employed about him whom her soul loved. And perhaps this was the most comfortless time the Church ever experienced.

In this prophetic dream or vision, she hears her beloved: he knocks, desiring her to open; and saying, that his head is filled with the

dew, and his locks with the drops of the night : but being very slow in opening to him, though her bowels were moved for him, he withdraws himself ; and his spouse, having gone to open the door, finds that her hands dropped myrrh upon the handles of the lock, ver. 3—5, namely, of the myrrh with which the body of her Lord (who was her head) was embalmed at his burial ; which, as flowing from her head, would naturally flow down over her whole body, and therefore drop from her hands and fingers upon the handles of the lock.

He knocks, having his head and locks wetted with the dew and drops of the night ; and that, after he has gathered his myrrh and his spice, as in the first verse : which seems to be a prophecy of his resurrection from the dead, after having had his body wrapped in linen with myrrh and other spices as when laid in the grave ; and of the time when it happened, as while yet night, or probably about or just before the break of day : though the hands dropping with myrrh may also have allusion to the atonement, as well as to the resurrection ; the benefits of both of which were now applied to the Church.

Now, it is related by the Evangelist John,

that the body of Jesus was embalmed with myrrh and aloes (accounted principal spices by the Jews), and laid in the grave, soon after his death, xix. 39—42; and that, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the sepulchre “while it was yet dark,” and found that her Lord had risen, xx, 1, 2, 14; St. Mark says, “very early in the morning,” and “at the rising of the sun,” xvi. 2; when, she found he was risen: and Matthew, “as it began to dawn.” xxviii. 1. So that our Lord’s resurrection seems to have taken place in the night of our Saturday, before or about the sun-rising of our Sunday; according to this prophecy, and its fulfilment as recorded by the evangelists just quoted.

If he had not risen in the night, it could not be said that his locks were wet with the drops of the night: though we must remember that the twelve hours of the Jewish night did not expire till six in the morning. Bishop Patrick observes, “there were two sorts of dew; *the morning dew*, which was soon gone, Hos. vi. 4, xiii. 3, and that *dew which fell in the night* and lay long, and wet those who were in it very much.” *Annot.*

Ver. 3. “I have put off my coat,” &c. Here

the natural inactivity of the most pious and best disposed Christians, on some occasions, seems accurately pointed out. The Lord knocks; we hear; but we regard not, or make many excuses.

Ver. 4, 5. "My beloved put in his hand," &c. Notwithstanding her carelessness, or rather inactivity about her dearest and most important concerns, and her inattention to her best friend and benefactor, he is still gracious, and still advances. Her bowels of compassion and affection are at last moved. She rises to open to her beloved, and her hands and fingers drop sweet-smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock: which may signify that she also had gathered her myrrh; or that now there had been applied to her all the efficacy and virtues of the atonement and resurrection.

Ver. 6. "I opened," &c. She opens to her beloved; but as she did not open when he knocked, and probably in order to rouse and prove her affection, he had withdrawn himself, and had disappeared: she is so much affected, that there remains no spirit in her, yet she seeks him, but finds him not; she calls him, but he gives no answer: and this seeking and calling seems, as it were, at or about the door of the

house where she is ; or similar to the seeking mentioned, chap. iii. 1, before she went abroad in search of him.

Ver. 7. “ The watchmen that went about the city,” &c. The original renders *in the city*. The spouse begins this verse with the same words as in the 3d verse of the 3d chapter ; and we may, therefore, and for the reasons above stated, conclude that this verse is a continuation of the same prophecy ; for it is not here said that she *went out* to seek her Lord as she had done in the 3d chapter, and 2d verse ; on the contrary, we find that, after a conversation with the daughters of Jerusalem, her attendants, they are only proposing to go with her in search of him in the 1st verse of the 6th chapter. May we not then conclude, that the account given in this 7th verse is a continuation of the prophecy contained in the 3d chapter, of the treatment she received from the watchmen of Jerusalem whom she then met ? chap. iii. 3. If so, then the following general outline of this and the following verses of this 5th chapter, and of the first of the 6th, may assist the reader in judging of the whole.

The watchmen find her, as in chap. iii. 3 ; they smite and wound her in the person of her

Lord, who is over all to the Church, and her covering ; and the Romans, the keepers of the walls, take away her veil, or this covering, by crucifying her Lord. In verse 8, she adjures the daughters of Jerusalem, if they find her beloved, to tell him that she is sick of love ; a sufficient reason why she does not go herself. In verse 9, they address her as the fairest among women, and therefore she was now betrothed and covered with the beautiful garments of salvation, and the robe of righteousness ; and ask what her beloved is more than any other beloved, that she so particularly charges or adjures them concerning him : and in the following verses, she describes him. And, in the 6th chapter, and 1st verse, they address her in the same manner, and ask her whither her beloved is gone or turned aside, and say, that they will seek him with her.

Therefore the relation contained in this 7th verse may rather be considered as an account of what she had suffered from the watchmen in her last excursion ; with the addition of a circumstance which had not taken place until after she had left the watchmen ; namely, that of the crucifixion, or the taking away of her Lord, or head, or covering, by the keepers

of the walls of Jerusalem. As if she had thus addressed her companions: ‘My Lord has just been kindly knocking, and calling to me, and I was too slow in opening to him; and when I did, he had withdrawn himself, and was gone. And when I last went in search of him, the watchmen smote me, and wounded me, and the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me: I therefore adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, to tell him that I am sick of love, and therefore cannot go again in search of him.’ And it seems probable that the subject of the watchmen is here introduced to enable her to relate the whole of their conduct, or to finish the prophecy.

They are said to be the watchmen that *go about in the city*; but they are not the *true watchmen*; for had they been, they would have acted differently; they would not have smitten, mocked, and spit upon, scourged, wounded, and finally crucified their Lord. They smote and wounded her in the person of her Lord, whose mystical body she is, as recorded by the evangelist, Matt. xxvi. 31, 67; xxvii. 26, 29, 30; and as was foretold by the prophets, Zech. xiii. 7, and Micah v. 1, and Isaiah l. 6;

and the Romans, the keepers of the walls, to whom the Jews were then subject, crucified her Lord, and thus took away her head, or covering, or veil. For though the crucifixion of Christ was occasioned by the Jews, the Romans gave the sentence, and carried it into execution. Now Christ is head over all to the Church, which is his body. Eph. i. 22, 23: and he, as her Lord and superior, was thus taken away from her, as Elijah was taken from Elisha; of which latter event the sons of the prophets ask Elisha in these words, “ Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day?” 2 Kings ii. 3.

The rending of the veil of the Temple will here naturally come into mind, Matt. xxvii. 51; and those who caused the death of Christ also occasioned the rending of the veil; which was rent at the moment of his death: and this veil concealed, or covered the holy of holies, which Christ, at his death, laid open, as figured by this rending of the veil. But this covering of the holy of holies was not the covering of the Church as a body of people. I should therefore rather consider the veil of the spouse mentioned in this 7th verse as meaning her

Lord as taken away from his Church to be crucified.

The chief priests, scribes, and elders of the Jews endeavour to insult the spouse, and to do her every kind of injury in their power; and their hatred to the Gospel Church is well known. But the more they revile and persecute her, the more is she made known, and her excellence discovered. Bishop Patrick, in his Annotations on the 8th verse, observes, that, notwithstanding all the ill usage she receives from her enemies, and the adverse circumstances in which she is placed, her love remains the same, and her desires for his presence remain undiminished.

Ver. 8. “I charge,” &c. This verse must be acknowledged to be spoken by the bride to the daughters of Jerusalem, concerning the bridegroom, as he is particularly mentioned. The literal rendering is, *I have adjured* (or *I have charged*) *you, children of Jerusalem, if ye shall find my beloved, what ye shall tell him; that fainting with* (or *sick of*) *love am I.* The Septuagint asks the question *τί απαγγείλητε αὐτῷ;* and so also does Pagninus, who gives the literal translation of the Septuagint, “*Quid*

narrabitiser?" *What shall ye tell him?* And the margin of the Bible renders *what*. In the form of a question, it is strictly conformable to the original; and seems very beautiful, as implying that the spouse's mind was so intent in search of her beloved, that she scarcely knew what she did or said. As if she had thus addressed the children of Jerusalem, 'If ye should find my beloved; (let me think, for I am almost distracted,) what shall ye tell him? (tell him) *that I am sick of love;*' or, '*that fainting with love am I.*' This seems natural and beautiful. That she does not go herself seems evident; as, having just mentioned the ill usage she received when she went last in search of him herself, she now charges the children of Jerusalem to deliver her message, if they should see him; as also from the nature of the prophetic vision. She is, as it were, lost in thought, and therefore asks what they shall tell him: but immediately recollecting herself, she desires them to tell him her real state, that she was sick of love: and, in this view, the strong affection of the spouse, and the distracted state of her mind, seem to be beautifully expressed by the prophet.

I may here remark, that the former part of

this verse is the same in the Hebrew as that of the 7th verse of the 2d chapter; literally rendering, *I have adjured you children or daughters of Jerusalem*; and though the Church is a figurative woman, and the daughters and sons her figurative children, and though the word rendered *you* is in the masculine gender; yet, as she speaks in this chapter as if in her chamber, the rendering *daughters* is preferable: though the word rendered *you*, as being in the masculine gender, may point out that the Church or bride of Christ is a mystical body, composed of sons and daughters; and that, whether men or women, they are all children of Jerusalem, and espoused to Christ.

In this verse, therefore, she addresses her companions, the daughters of Jerusalem, and adjures them, if they find her beloved to tell him that she is sick of love: which induces the companions to inquire a little more particularly concerning her beloved, and wherein he excelled any other of the excellent and beloved sons of the Church; as in the following verse.

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM TO THE CHURCH.

Ch. V. 9. “What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, O thou fairest among women? What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, that thou dost so charge us?”

THESE young converts, though fully sensible of the excellent beauty of the spouse, as the betrothed bride, were not yet sufficiently acquainted with the excellency of Christ: they had not yet seen his beauty, which she in the next and following verses endeavours to describe. And it may be here observed, that, as the Church is the mystical body of Christ, we may probably find, in the following beautiful figurative description of his person, some particular resemblance to that given in the Song, of the person of the bride.

THE CHURCH TO THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

Ch. V. 10. “My beloved *is* white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

11. His head *is as* the most fine gold, his locks *are* bushy, *and* black as a raven.
12. His eyes *are as the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* fitly set.
13. His cheeks *are as* a bed of spices, *as* sweet flowers: his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh.
14. His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires.
15. His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance *is as* Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.
16. His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

THIS beautiful description of the beloved seems to be given by the Church to the daughters of Jerusalem, some short time after our Lord's resurrection from the dead: when, after having finished his prophetic office, he had redeemed his people, and become our great High Priest, and the glorious King of Sion. He is described as if arrayed in all the glory and beauty of his priestly and kingly apparel, and as possessed of all those distinguished virtues and excellencies, and all that

beauty and fragrance by which he far excelled all the sons of men. His crown indeed is not here mentioned : but it was prophesied of him, by the prophet Zechariah, that he should build the (spiritual) temple of the Lord, bear the glory, and be a priest upon his throne, thus ; “ He shall build the temple of the Lord ; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne ; and he shall be a priest upon his throne : ” chap. vi. 13. And his own spiritual temple, or Gospel Church, he built, as we have before seen, chap. iii. 9, 10 ; and he is now become the great High Priest of our profession, after the order of Melchisedec, and the everlasting King of his people.

As High Priest, he officiated when he offered up himself as the unspotted Lamb of God for the sins of the world ; and he has now entered into heaven for us, where he ever liveth to make intercession for his people : and he became King as soon as this sacrifice was offered up, or at his death ; when also his espousals took place, and in which day he was crowned by his mother the spiritual Jewish Church. Song iii. 11.

In this passage (Song iii. 11,) our Lord is spoken of as *King Solomon*, and as appearing

with his crown, with which he is said to have been crowned, not on this day of his appearance, but on the day of his espousals, on some day before. We have therefore considered the time of his appearing with his crown, as that of his first appearance after his resurrection. But no mention is there made of the other parts of his dress: and perhaps the prophecy contained in that 11th verse was chiefly intended to point out the kingly office, the time of becoming King, and the coming in his kingdom after his resurrection from the dead; which coming seems spoken of in other prophecies.

But, in the present description of the beloved, the crown is not noticed; as if to call our chief attention to his priestly office and investment, which had not been before exhibited: though, as before observed, these offices are both performed by the same glorious person; and may also be conjoined in the figurative representation. Or, was the crown omitted to direct us to the more particular consideration of the superior personal excellencies of the beloved? Indeed the gospel crown is a crown of glory; and Jesus, for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour. Heb. ii. 9.

In considering this figurative description as

referring to the high-priesthood of our Lord, it will be necessary to call to mind the directions given to Moses concerning the garments of the high priest under the law, which he was to wear while officiating in his office. In *Exod.* xxviii. Moses is commanded to take Aaron, his brother, to minister in the priest's office; and to make for him holy garments for glory and for beauty, ver. 1, 2: which were a breast-plate, an ephod, a robe, a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle, ver. 4. And these were formed of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen; with precious stones set in gold, bearing the names of the children of Israel. ver. 6, &c. The ephod and girdle, and the breast-plate were made of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen, ver. 6, 8, 15; the robe, all of blue, ver. 30; and the coat and mitre, of fine linen. ver. 39. And the order in which they were put on seems to be the following. First, the coat, which was girded on with a girdle; then the robe: over which was put the ephod, with its shoulder pieces, which was girded on with its curious girdle; and upon it and fastened to it was put the breast-plate, having in it the *Urim* and *Thummim*. *Lev.* viii. 7—9: and then the mitre, &c.

The ephod had two shoulder pieces, upon which were placed two onyx stones, on each of which were engraven the names of six of the tribes of Israel, both together containing the names of the twelve tribes; which names Aaron was to bear before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial of them. *Exod.* xxviii. 12. And, in the breast-plate of judgment, were set settings of precious stones, twelve in number, having the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraven upon them; and thus was Aaron to bear the names of the children of Israel upon his heart, when he went into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually: and these precious stones thus engraven, which were set in four rows, are called the *Urim and Thummim*, *ver.* 30; which names seem to be used by Moses to figure the spiritual priesthood. *Deut.* xxxiii. 3.

Therefore the Jewish high priest, when in the ministration of his office, wore on his heart and on his shoulders the precious stones above mentioned as the representatives of the children of Israel for a memorial before God. He wore two set in gold upon his shoulders, and twelve upon his heart; which,

with the garments of various colours, would be glorious and beautiful.

But how much more glorious and beautiful is the clothing of our High Priest mentioned in this description, 14th verse, whose hands (which according to the Hebrew manner include the arms and shoulders), and body seem covered with gold and precious stones! And, though only the beryl and tarshish are mentioned, it is probable that they stand for all the different kinds of precious stones, of all the various colours which exist in the world: which, set in gold and worn over an ivory-coloured vest or tunic, would be most glorious and beautiful. And as the precious stones worn by the high priest under the law figured the tribes of the natural Israel; so may these and the jewellery, with which the garments of our great High Priest are adorned, figure his people of the spiritual Israel, those lively stones mentioned by Peter, 1st Epistle, ii. 5.

We may therefore consider that the circles of gold round the arms filled with tarshish or the beryl, and the overlaying of sapphires over the body of the beloved, refer to those legal emblems, as shewing that our great High

Priest also carried upon his arms and his heart, yea, even upon his whole body, his people of the spiritual Israel into the holiest of all before their God: and that he thus set his Church as a seal upon his heart and arm, according to her wishes expressed in the 8th chap. and 6th verse of the Song.

And these emblems, as here used, may also point out that our Lord was now both Priest and King over the house and kingdom of God. In this view, and particularly with respect to the kingly office, he seems to be figured by Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, as mentioned by the prophet Isaiah, xxii. 22—24. He is indeed the spiritual Eliakim, the faithful servant of his Father; and he came into this world to do his will, and to finish the work which he gave him to do: and immediately after his death, the government of the spiritual Jerusalem was committed into his hand; and he is now a father to the inhabitants of the spiritual Jerusalem and house of Judah: and, bearing the key of the spiritual house of David, he opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man can open, as expressed in Revelation, iii. 7: and he is for a glorious throne to his Father's house, having at his death become the King

of Sion, and thus raised up again the tabernacle of David that was fallen, Amos ix. 11, Acts xv. 16; on whom also was hung all the glory of his Father's house, which he now bears, as prophesied by Zechariah, as we have above seen. chap. vi. 13. Compare this application to Eliakim, mentioned by Isaiah, with the above texts, and with John xvii. 4, 8. Matt. xxvii. 37. xxviii. 18. Rev. i. 5, 6. In this view of the beloved as the spiritual Eliakim, we may consider him in the present figurative representation, as after he has become the King of the spiritual Jews, or of the spiritual Jerusalem, as covered with all the glory of the house which he himself has made, Song iii. 9: and we have before seen that by the same representation, he is also pointed out as the great and merciful High Priest of our profession, bearing his people upon his heart and arms. And it seems probable that, to the description here given by Solomon of the beloved as High Priest, the prophet Isaiah particularly refers, when prophesying of the next appearance of this royal bridegroom as at the time of the marriage of the Lamb, when it is granted to the bride to be ready.

The passage of Isaiah to which I allude is contained in the 61st chapter: in which the day of vengeance upon the adversaries of the Lord is announced, ver. 2; and comfort and joy are promised to his people, ver. 3, to whom also many other kind promises are made. And, in the 10th verse, the Church answers, in the following words, thus prophesying of the glorious appearance of the bridegroom, and of her own adorning on that occasion. “ I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels.” But the part which refers to the bridegroom seems much more expressive in the original; and not only to point out the kind of ornaments here alluded to, but also to refer to the great High Priest of our profession, as at the time of the marriage of the Lamb, when arrayed in the glorious apparel of his priesthood, as he is represented in this Song, v. 10—16: and we read of a great sacrifice in Bozrah, which he will sacrifice at

this time. Isa. xxxiv. 6, when also he will appear in his glory, as the Son of man. Matt. xxiv. 30.

Now the Hebrew words rendered “as a bridegroom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels,” are כחתן יכהן פאר וככלה תעדה כליה *cehhathan jecaken peër vecaccallah taghdeh celeha*: which literally render, *as the bridegroom will be High Priest in glory, and as the bride thou wilt cause adorn with her jewels.* And thus rendered they clearly point out that the ornaments, here spoken of in the English translation, are the ornaments or glorious apparel of the priesthood; and may refer to the beautiful description in the Song now under examination. Indeed the margin explains, by rendering *jecaken peer*, “decketh as a priest.” But I must here observe that the original may also point to another glory, the glorious appearing of the Son of man, when he comes to execute his sacrifice in Bozrah.

We shall now proceed to consider this beautiful figurative representation of the countenance, person, and garments of the beloved more particularly, portion by portion: and as it is wholly figurative, by being considered as

such, all the supposed ideas of indelicacy (for which there is no real foundation) immediately disappear.

Ver. 10. “ My beloved *is* white and ruddy.” This description is similar to that given of King David, about the time of his being anointed King over Israel, when it is said that he was ruddy, of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to, 1 Sam. xvi. 12; and to that when he fought with Goliath the Philistine, when it is also said that he was ruddy and of a fair countenance, chap. xvii. 42: the whole intimating that his countenance was beautiful, and his general appearance excellent.

White and red are emblems of innocence and royalty; and when properly disposed, or blended together, tend to the formation of a most beautiful countenance. And these images, with that of being the chiefest of ten thousand, may figure the purity, holiness, beauty, grandeur, majesty, and excellence of Jesus: who is altogether lovely, verse 16; and fairer than the children of men. Psalm xlv. 2. The white may also particularly figure the innocence and purity of the Lamb, while the red may have particular respect to the atonement, or shedding of his precious blood,

and to his succeeding royalty. And, in the Revelation, the personified word of God is seen clothed with a vesture dipped in blood. chap. xix. 13.

This description of the countenance of Christ seems to correspond, in some degree, with that of the cheeks of the spouse. chap. iv. 3.

“The chiefest among ten thousand.” He is indeed the chief of all the children of men, in majesty, excellence, and glorious beauty.

The word דגל, *dagul*, here rendered *the chiefest*, is the preterite participle of the verb דגל, *dagal*, which signifies *to erect a standard*, “*vexillum erigere*;” and therefore *dagul* literally renders, *that hath been lifted up as a standard*, “*vexillatus*.” See *Buxtorf*: and, if applied to a man, would figuratively point him out as some distinguished chief or captain; and hence the rendering in the English Bible. And if the *mem* prefixed to the following word be rendered *above* as in Deut. xvii. 20, the meaning will be that he was lifted up *above ten thousand*; or, if the number be considered as indefinite, it may import that he was lifted up above all, as was the Captain of our salvation upon the cross: and he was to be thus lifted up that he might draw all men unto

him. John xii. 32. And Bishop Patrick thinks that the “expression of his being chief (or *lifting up the standard*) *over ten thousands*,” may refer to his conquest of the world unto him. *Annot.*

When directions were given for the encampment of the children of Israel in the wilderness, they were to arrange themselves about the tabernacle in four divisions, by four different standards: and the standard of the camp of Judah, which was eastward, was the first, by which all the men of the east division were to encamp. And in like manner are the children of the spiritual Israel to arrange themselves under the royal standard of Judah, which was erected on mount Calvary by the great Captain of our salvation. To this standard, this דגל, *degel*, of his Lord let every man repair, and encamp: and let the Christian soldier keep his eye fixed on his Captain, and follow him wherever he commands, and to whatever point he may direct. He is the great leader and commander of his people, Isa. lv. 4: the root of Jesse, which stands for an ensign of the people, chap. xi. 10: the Shiloh of Judah, Gen. xlix. 10: and the Son of David, the King Solomon, of whom it is said, “For

unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever." Isa. ix. 6, 7. Let us therefore take up our cross and follow him.

Ver. 11. "His head, the most fine gold," &c. Gold, being the best and most precious of all metals, the word may be here used to figure the Godhead of Christ: and the apostle, speaking of superiority and subordination, says, "the head of Christ is God," 1 Cor. xi. 3; and hence the great value and excellence of himself, his word, and his atonement: for it was by virtue of the Godhead, which was over or superior to the manhood in which the former resided, that our redemption was accomplished, and the infinite blessings which are continually flowing to his Church procured. Mr. Good observes, "The term *golden* was equally used by Asiatics and Greeks, to denote consummate excellence and beauty."

“ His locks *are* bushy, *and* black as a raven :” which, as forming a striking contrast with the white and ruddy countenance, would be indeed beautiful. And it is said that, in those countries, shining black hair was accounted majestic, and a token of courage and fortitude : and, with a pure, clear complexion, it was esteemed beautiful. *Bishop Pat. Annot. :* and the whole would be beautifully graceful and majestic.

Ver. 12. “ His eyes *are* as *the eyes of* doves,” &c. In the beautiful description of the eyes of the beloved given in this verse, their beauty, purity, and sanctity are fully implied. The whole is highly figurative, and requires the greatest attention in endeavouring to discover its true meaning ; which we shall now humbly endeavour to find.

בַּיּוֹנִים, *cejonim*, literally renders as *doves* : and so the LXX, ὡς περιστεραὶ, *sicut columbæ* ; and Pagninus and Montanus “ *sicut columbæ.*” The Arabic version is “ *veluti duæ columbæ,*” as *two doves* : but *jonim*, here rendered *doves*, and to which the eyes of Christ are compared, is not in the dual, but in the plural number. Munster renders, “ *similes sunt (oculis) columbarum,*” *are like the eyes of doves* : and the

Tigurine version, “*quales columbarum,*” as of doves : and the English translators, finding that עינים was not in the dual number, have rendered “as *the eyes of doves;*” but as the word rendered doves is prefixed by the כ similitudinis, and the similitude seems to be to doves themselves, the propriety of this rendering may be doubted; and indeed it seems to be disproved by the sense of the passage, as the eyes of doves cannot be said to wash any thing, though doves may. They indeed say *washed*, as do the LXX, and others; but the grammatical form of the word thus translated will not admit of this rendering; nor can the words rendered *fitly set*, be so translated, but by the most forced interpretation, though this rendering is countenanced by Munster and others, and adopted by our translators. The literal rendering seems to be, *his eyes are like doves*; who are afterwards said to be *washing*, not *washed*, as will soon be seen.

If therefore we consider the doves here mentioned as emblems of the Holy Spirit in his sevenfold or plural capacity, as sitting upon the different channels or reservoirs of the waters and milk of the word, as contained in the different books of the holy scriptures,

which like the river of God are always full of water; then the sense and grammatical construction, as to *jonim*, will well agree, and a beautiful meaning be produced: and it seems more conformable to the sense of the whole passage, where the Spirit (with his influences) seems to be distinguished from his inspired word (which latter seems to be here spoken of as water and milk), to render *reservoirs*, than *rivers* of water, as the latter imply waters flowing, which these only do when impelled or caused to flow by the influence of the Spirit, who takes of the things of Christ, and shews or applies them unto us.

על-אפיקי, *ghal aphike*, the words translated, “by the rivers,” might also be rendered *upon the channels*, or *reservoirs* of waters: as a very primary sense of על, *ghal*, is *upon*, and it is so rendered by the LXX, the Vulg. Tigur. Munst. Mont. and others; and the noun אפיק, *aphik*, seems to come from the root אפק, *aphak*, which signifies in general *to put a force upon, constrain*; though only found in Hithpahel, in which it is rendered *to put a force upon, or restrain one’s self*; and also *to constrain, or force one’s self to act*. Parkhurst. So that *to constrain to act, and to restrain from acting,*

seem to be the primary senses : and the noun קִפְיָא, which is in the hiphil form, may either signify *an effusion*, or *flowing caused*, as an effusion, a torrent, or a river of water ; or a *restraint caused*, as by *the channel* of a river which restrains the waters from overflowing, or by *a basin*, or *reservoir* of water, which holds the water, or restrains it from going off.

Stockius says it may mean, *a receptacle* of the waters which a torrent has rolled down ; “receptaculum aquarum, quas torrens devolvit.” *Clav. Ling. Sanct.* The LXX render, ἐπὶ πληρώματα, *super plenitudines*, *upon plenitudes* ; Aquila, ἐκχύσεις, *effusiones*, *effusions* : the Vulgate, “super rivulos,” *upon the rivulets* : the Arabic version in Bib. Max. “super piscinas aqua plenas,” *upon pools full of water* : Tigur. “super alveis,” *upon the channels* : Mont. “super torrentes,” *upon the torrents* : Munst. “juxta rivos,” *by the rivers* : Pagn. “juxta effusiones,” *by the effusions* : and the Engl. “by the rivers.”

רחצות בחלב, *rohhatsoth behhalab*, here translated “washed with milk,” are rendered by the LXX λειουσμένοι ἐν γάλακτι, *lotæ in lacte*, *washed in milk* ; by the Vulg. quæ “lacte sunt lotæ,” which *have been washed with milk* ; by Munst.

“*ceu loti essent lacte,*” *as if they had been washed with milk.* But *rohhatsoth*, here translated *washed*, is the present participle, and therefore renders *washing*, and cannot be rendered *washed* according to this grammatical form: therefore, all the above translations are erroneous in this respect. The following renderings come nearer to the literal sense of the original, though not wholly correct: namely, Vers. Tigur. which renders “*quæ se abluunt lacte,*” who *wash themselves with (or in) milk*; Vers. Arab. “*lacte se lavantes,*” *washing themselves with milk*; and Pag. and Mont. “*lavantes se in lacte,*” *washing themselves in milk.* Of these latter renderings, the last is the best; and is strictly literal, if the *se* is omitted.

We would therefore render *lavantes in lacte*, or *washing in*, or *with milk*: which will imply one or both of two senses which seem naturally to arise from the due consideration of the passage; for the doves, as representatives of the Holy Spirit presiding over his own inspired word, may be here represented, 1st, as washing sinners with the water and milk of the word by the powerful application of the gracious promises therein contained, as for example the following, “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth

us from all sin;" 2dly, as washing or clearing of one part of the holy scriptures by another, as various parts of scripture mutually illustrate each other, until all darkness about their meaning disappears. They are washing with the milk of the word: and in the 4th chapter and 2d verse, and in the 6th and 4th, the young converts having been washed by the Spirit and word, and by the blood of Christ, are compared to a flock of sheep that are come up from the washing.

ישבות על-מלאה, *josheboth ghal milleth*, here translated *fitly set*, render literally, *sitting upon plenitude* or *fulness*; the word rendered *plenitude* being, according to the Masoretic punctuation, in the singular number. The margin renders, *sitting in fulness*, and thus explains, "that is *fitly placed and set as a precious stone in the foil of a ring.*" The LXX, who probably read *milloth* in the plural, render καθήμεναι ἐπὶ πληρώματα, *sedentes super plenitudines*, *sitting upon plenitudes*, or *abundance*; the Vulg. "et resident juxta fluentia plenissima," and *abide* or *rest by the fullest streams*; Munst. "juxta inclusuram (gemmarum);" Tigur. "sedent ad plenitudinem," *they sit at, or upon fulness*; Vers. Arab. in Bib. Max.

“super piscinis aqua refertis,” *upon pools filled with water*; Mont. “mauentes super plenitudinem,” *abiding upon plenitude*: but, *sedentes super plenitudinem*, or *sitting upon plenitude* or *fulness*, seems to be the most literal.

Having thus considered the literal rendering of the principal words, I shall proceed; and endeavour to discover the sense of the passage.

As the light of the body is the eye, therefore the eyes of the Church, the mystical body of Christ, and those of the beloved may be considered as the illuminators of their respective bodies: and this illumination is produced by one and the same Spirit of God; but with this grand and essential difference, that the illumination of the body of the beloved is by his own Spirit dwelling in him; whereas that of the Church is by the Spirit of Christ her head, and by his inspired word. For all the illumination, and all the gifts and graces of the Church, are from and through Christ.

Now the beloved, whose eyes are here described, is the Lord Jesus, God and Man, the Lamb of God, who by the once offering up of himself was to take away the sins of the world: and in the Revelation of St. John, this

Lamb is seen in the midst of the throne of God, having seven eyes, which are said to be the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth, or the Holy Ghost in his sevenfold or universal presence and operation, including his illumination; and these seem also spoken of as seven lamps of fire burning before the throne. chap. iv. 5. These seven eyes of the Lamb are also mentioned by Zechariah, as being upon that one stone which the builders rejected, chap. iii. 9; and Daniel saw a certain man, who was most probably the representative of the Lord Jesus, whose face was as lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, chap. x. 5, 6: Jesus is also seen in vision by St. John, having his eyes as a flame of fire, Rev. i. 13, 14, 18; and the personified word of God is seen having the same eyes, chap. xix. 11—13: and the Spirit of God appeared to the apostles and disciples, on the day of Pentecost, as cloven tongues of fire, sitting upon each of them. Moreover, the Lamb is said to be the light of the new Jerusalem. Rev. xxi. 22.

In the passage now before us, the same blessed Spirit of Christ seems to be mentioned as the eyes of Christ, and in his manifold or universal capacity to be represented as doves

upon the waters and milk of his own inspired word: and it is by the operation of the Spirit that the Church is enlightened, cleansed, and sanctified.

That the word is compared to water appears from various passages of scripture; and particularly from Ephes. v. 26; Isaiah thus compares it to water, wine, and milk; "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price," &c. That it is the word which is meant is evident from what follows in the same chapter, and from the following short quotations from it: "Hearken diligently unto me," &c. "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live," chap. lv. 1, 2, 3: and the words which Jesus spake were spirit and life. John vi. 63. Indeed, as the influences of the Holy Spirit in converting, cleansing, and sanctifying the people of God are frequently compared to water, and as all scripture is given by the inspiration of the same Spirit; so may the holy scriptures be compared to water in the passage now under consideration. And the apostle Peter calls the divine word spoken by the inspiration of the Spirit,

the milk of the word, 1 Peter ii. 2; and, by it, converts are fed and nourished.

So that, in this place, the Holy Spirit and his blessed influences upon, and in, or by his inspired word, here compared to *water* and *milk*, seem to be spoken of as the eyes of Christ; which are said to resemble doves upon the rivers or reservoirs of the water of the word, washing with the milk of the word, and sitting upon the plenitude thereof: and these reservoirs, or different books of scripture, like the river of God, are always full; and the Holy Spirit will always preside over them. Indeed the divine word, as contained in the holy scriptures, may be said to be a reservoir of living waters, which have proceeded from the throne of God, even from the inspiration of his Holy Spirit; a reservoir, which is always full, and whose streams will continue to flow from age to age, even to the end of time, under the guidance of the good presiding Spirit. The doves are said to be washing *with milk*, the milk of the word: and, in illustration of scripture, and in bringing passages from one book, or from one part to another in order to clear up or illustrate the meaning, the Spirit may be said to be washing or clearing up, or elucidating

one part with another with this milk of the word.

So that according to this explanation, the sense seems to be highly beautiful, and more full than that contained in the English version.

The verse will, according to the above sense, read thus, *His eyes are like doves upon the reservoirs of waters, washing with milk, sitting upon the fulness thereof.*

Ver. 13. "His cheeks," &c. להי, *lehajav*, the word rendered *his cheeks*, is formed of the noun להי, *lehhi*, and the pronominal affix ו, *vau*; and the primary signification of *lehhi* is, according to Mr. Parkhurst, the *lower jaw-bone* of an animal; so called from its *smoothness*, Jud. xv. 15, 16: and, when spoken of man, he says, it may sometimes be rendered *cheek*. In Isa. l. 6, where the treatment of our Lord by the Jews is foretold, the plural of *lehhi* is rendered cheeks, importing those parts of the face which cover the jaw-bones, and where the hair grows; as it is there said that he gave his "cheeks to them that plucked off the hair:" it is also rendered *cheek* in Lamentations, chap. iii. 30; "he giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him:" and in these passages, and in 1 Kings xxii. 24, and 2 Chron. xviii. 23, Stockius concludes that

this word signifies *the anterior part of the face*, where the teeth are placed, and to which blows are wont to be applied; “*anteriorem faciei partem, ubi dentes consistunt, et cui colaphi infligi solent.*” Therefore, in the fullest sense, it may import not only the cheeks, but also all the lower, anterior, and lateral parts of the face, on which the hair grows, including also the jaw-bones and the teeth: meaning, in short, the jaw-bones (including the teeth that grow in them) and what covers them. So that by the word *lehhajav*, in this verse, either the jaw-bones, or their coverings, might be meant: and we shall soon see that probably both were intended. The LXX render Σιαγόνας ἀντῆ, *his cheeks*, or *jaw-bones*. Vulg. “*genæ illius,*” *his cheeks*: Tigur. “*ejus maxæ,*” *his cheeks*: Munst. “*genæ ejus,*” *his cheeks*: Mont. “*maxillæ ejus,*” *his jaw-bones*.

ערוגת, *gharugath*, here translated *bed*, meaning a garden-bed in which plants grow, is a noun fem. in the singular number, from the root ערג, *gharag*, the radical idea of which, according to Parkhurst, seems to be, *to stretch, stretch out, or extend*; and he considers the sense of ערוגת in this verse, as being *an extent of ground, a bed, or plat* wherein spices grow,

and that this sense is supported by Aquila and Symmachus, and the Vulgate: and it is also by the Tigurine version, and Rab. Salom. in Bib. Max.: and from the same radical idea, it may also signify an *extended line* or *furrow*; and Pag. and Mont. render “sicut *linea sulci* aromatis,” as a *line of furrow*, &c. and they seem both to be intended in this passage; the former, as describing the external lower, anterior, and lateral parts of the face, with the beard growing thereon; and the latter, the teeth in the jaw-bones. If therefore the word *lehhi* be considered as comprehending in its signification the jaw-bones, and that part of the face which covers them upon which the hair grows; then the latter *extended* surface may here be compared to a *garden-bed*, and the hair to sweet aromatic plants growing in it; and thus will be given a beautiful description of the external features of the lower parts of the face just mentioned of the beloved: while in the *extended* furrows of the jaw-bones are placed the teeth, which may be here referred to as *towers* of an aromatic composition; or, as in the margin, “*towers of perfumes.*” And it is here worthy of remark, that the teeth of the beloved are not spoken of in any other part of

this description; though they are particularly noticed in that of the person of the bride, chap. iv. 2; and, that the description of the cheeks, properly so called, seems to have been included in that general one of the countenance given in the 10th verse, by saying that he was *white and ruddy*; which also would well agree with the description of the cheeks of the spouse; namely, that each was like a piece of pomegranate, which, as before explained, is also white and ruddy.

מִגְדֵּלוֹת מֵרְקָחִים, *migdeloth merkahhim*, the words here rendered “sweet flowers,” literally signify *towers of aromatic or spicy compositions*: Montanus renders “*flores aromatum*,” *flowers of aromatics*: and as by the compound spoken of, an aromatic or sweet-smelling composition is meant, so *merkahhim* may be here rendered *aromatics*; or, *migdeloth merkahhim* may be rendered, as in the margin, *towers of perfumes*: but probably *towers of spicy compounds* would be more conformable to the sense of the original; which seems to describe the teeth, as arranged in their sockets in the jaw-bones, as if each tooth was formed of a paste, or composition of spicy substances, probably such as were used in the compo-

sitions prescribed in the law. **Exod. xxx. 23, 24.** And if each tooth was a mass or pastil of such aromatic perfume, the whole mouth and palate would be highly fragrant, as thus described in the 16th verse, “his mouth is most sweet.”

These figurative teeth may be considered as eminent members of the mystical body of Christ, redeemed by his atonement, and washed with the milk of the word, sweet, and fragrant; and through them the breath of the Spirit and milk of the word passes, by which also they are nourished and supported: and it is by the sweet, breathing gales of the Spirit, and the rich milk and honey of the word, that the members of the Christian Church are enabled to produce their spicy fruits. And we have already seen, that in the beautiful prophecy of Jacob concerning the Redeemer, his teeth are described as being white with milk; the milk of his own word. **Gen. xlix. 12.**

The term, *towers*, may figure the fulness of the fragrance of the distinguished servants of God, and of the beloved: and the Church's great fulness and fertility seem to be figured, in the 8th chapter, by her breasts being described as *towers*, ver. 10.

Now, according to the above investigation, the literal rendering of this portion of the verse will be, *his jaws are as a bed of spice, as towers of spicy compounds*; importing that the fleshy covering of the jaws with the hair growing thereon is the bed of spice, and that the teeth in the jaw-bones are the towers of spicy compounds here intended: but, as the word here rendered *jaws* is also rendered *cheeks* (and, in the singular, *cheek*), in various parts of scripture, it might be so translated in this place; though here, the latter rendering seems not to give the full sense of the original.

If, in another view, we consider the teeth in the jaw-bones as aromatic plants, such as are described as growing in the garden of the Church, chap. iv. 13, 14, planted in a furrow, and yielding sweet flowers or other aromatic substances, a similar fragrance will be produced, and a like sweetness of the mouth.

Bishop Patrick considers the cheeks as implying those parts of the face so called, where the hair grows: and says, the hair “may aptly be compared to the *flowers* or the *sproutings* and *buddings* of plants and trees:” and, “so I understand *migdaloth* (which we translate flowers) to signify *buds*, putting forth

like little *towers*." *Annot.* But the hair seems to be comprehended in the bed of spices.

"His lips *like lilies*," &c. Or, *his lips, like lilies, dropping flowing myrrh*. As the beautiful white garden lilies are no doubt those here spoken of, they will well figure the beauty of the lips of the beloved : while the lilies dropping sweet-smelling, or flowing, *i. e.* the choicest myrrh, may figure the fragrance and excellence of the word of God, and of the atonement made by the beloved ; as his speaking gracious and goodly words, and fragrant and excellent gospel truths of atonement and mercy by his death. And when he was on earth, it is said, that all wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, Luke iv. 22 : and many are the precious promises contained in the word of God. He was the Prophet like unto Moses ; and, like that of Moses, his doctrine dropped as the rain, his speech distilled as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, as the showers upon the grass. Deut. xxxii. 2.

Ver. 14. "His hands *are as gold rings set with the beryl* ; his belly *is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires*."

"His hands," &c. The hands are the ex-

tremities of the arms: and in holy scripture, they often stand for the whole arms, as they seem to do in this place. Bishop Patrick says, they “comprehend the arms and shoulders.” This passage may be thus literally rendered; *his hands are as circles of gold filled with tarshish*. That is, his hands and arms are completely encircled with gold rings set with tarshish, or with precious jewels. What particular kind of jewel the word *tarshish* literally signifies, is not yet generally agreed upon; some considering it as a jewel of one colour, and some of another. Buxt. and Eng. think it the beryl; Jerome, either the chrysolite or carbuncle. But, as before intimated, it may probably stand for itself and other precious stones.

Mr. Parkhurst thinks תרשיש, *tarshish*, is, “from תר, *tar*, to go round, and שש, to be vivid or bright in colour, a kind of precious stone, the *chrysolite* of the ancients:” and says, that the LXX, and other Greek versions, so render several times, and the Vulgate; and that it is so called from its fine gold yellow colour; and that it is also the topaz of modern jewellers.

“His belly,” &c. On this passage Bishop Patrick observes, “it is not only against the

rules of decency, but against the very scope of this discourse, to fancy that any of those naked parts of the body are here described which are not commonly exposed to every body's view: for the spouse is desired to tell, by what marks this person might be *discovered*:" and he could not be known by the former. But it will now be seen that in this description every expression is most pure and holy, and has some beautiful spiritual meaning.

The Hebrew word here rendered *belly*, generally signifies *the "bowels, or inner parts of the animal body, from their comparatively lax or loose texture."* *Park.* It is considered by Rabbi D. in Pagn. to comprehend all the viscera or bowels; as well of the thorax or chest, as of the abdomen or belly: which opinion seems to be confirmed by Psalm xl. 8, where it is rendered *heart*, when compared with other parts of scripture. It may also figuratively signify "the innermost recesses of the mind; the affections; tenderness, pity, compassion." *Dr. Taylor.* Here, with reference to the whole bowels, it may probably be used figuratively for the trunk of the body which contains them. For the spouse is now giving a description of the whole person of the

beloved: and having already mentioned his head and hands, (including the arms) with their coverings of jewellery, she seems now to speak of the appearance of his body as if clothed in a white tunic, or like unto fair glossy ivory, covered with sapphires or precious jewels; and afterwards proceeds to speak of his lower extremities, which she compares to pillars of marble supported by feet of the best, or most solid gold. Therefore the rendering of this word might be, *his body*; and the sense of the passage, *his body* is as *bright* or *glossy ivory covered with sapphires*, or *precious stones*; that is, his body is covered with a tunic of the colour of ivory covered with precious jewels. And as the hand is sometimes mentioned in scripture for the whole arm, and the leg for the whole lower extremity; so may the word *מע*, *meghi*, be here rendered *belly*, as in the English translation, as intending the whole *bowels* and *body* of the beloved.

This word was probably chosen by the Holy Spirit, to remind us of the loving kindness and tender mercies of our God and Saviour; or of the tender mercy of our God, as thus mentioned by the evangelist, *διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους*, which

literally renders *by the bowels of the mercy* of our God, as in the margin. Luke i. 78. And in the prophet Isaiah, we read of the sounding of the bowels and the mercies of God towards his people. chap. lxiii. 15. See also Jerem. xxxi. 20 : and the apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Colossians, admonishes them to put on bowels of mercy, kindness, &c. chap. iii. 12.

“*Is as bright ivory,*” &c. *תשע, gheseth,* here rendered *bright*, is a noun masculine from *תשע, ghashath,* which signifies *to shine, look glossy,* &c. and therefore may be literally translated *glossiness* or *brightness* : see Parkhurst, who thinks the glossiness, as of ivory, is intended in this place as referring “to the *glossy white tunic* which covered the belly of the royal bridegroom,” which he thinks was variegated with spots of *blue* and *gold*; observing that *white* and *blue* were royal colours, as in Esth. viii. 15 : and in this latter passage the royal apparel of Mordecai is mentioned as consisting of blue and white, a golden crown, fine linen, and purple. And the high priest’s robe was of blue.

The sense then may be, *his body* is as *glossy* or *bright ivory* : and there is a melting softness in the colour of ivory which might counte-

nance the idea of the reference to the tender mercies of God and of the Saviour above mentioned.

“Overlaid with sapphires.” That is, *covered*, or rather *set thick* with sapphires. The ספיר, *sappir*, or *sapphir*, is “a kind of *precious stone*, a *sapphire*, so called, perhaps, from the number of *gold-coloured spots* with which it is beautified. So the LXX Σαπφειρός, and Vulg. “sapphirus.” Pliny informs us, that “the *sapphire* glitters with *golden spots*, that they are of an *azure* or *sky-blue* colour, but rarely intermixed with purple,” &c. *Parkhurst*.

The tunic, therefore, which covered the body of the beloved, was of ivory-white, thickly set, or covered with sapphires, precious stones of blue and gold. All this would be very beautiful indeed: but more than external beauty seems to be here intended, as I shall now endeavour to shew.

Besides the external beauty and glory here described, the glossy ivory-white garment may figuratively represent the holiness, the purity, the innocence, and excellence of the beloved; his unspotted righteousness, as being holy, harmless, and undefiled, the Lamb of God without blemish; and his compassionate ten-

derness for his people, as having the bowels of the mercies of our God : the glossy ivory being a beautiful emblem of holiness, innocence, and peace, joined with compassion and mercy.

And the Lord Jesus as our great High Priest, or his representative, is seen by the prophet Daniel clothed in linen, as at the time of his offering up himself for us : or when his right hand and his left hand, or his arms were lifted up as then extended upon the cross, and when, by his death, the literal daily sacrifice, mentioned in the 11th verse, was taken away, chap. x. 5, 7. xii. 7, 11 ; and therefore in the 7th verse of this 12th chapter, a beautiful prophecy of the crucifixion seems to be given in figurative representation, as we have before noticed. *See page 170.* From these prophetic representations of Daniel, we may contemplate our great High Priest, when he offered up himself as that one all-sufficient, and highly-acceptable sacrifice for the sins of the world, as officiating clothed in the fine linen of his own spotless righteousness. But, in the representation given in this 5th chapter of the Song, ver. 10—16, we may consider him as the consummated High Priest of our profession, clothed in the sacerdotal garments of his

gospel priesthood, which is after the order of Melchisedec : for it is given, in the prophetic narration, after the atonement has been made, when he appears carrying his people, who seem figured by the gold, the beryl or tarshish, and the sapphires ; as if clothed in those priestly garments in which he was to appear before his God and Father for them as their great Mediator. And it is said of him, that he will carry the lambs in his bosom : and here they seem represented as on his hands or arms, and upon his body, even upon his bowels. And how blessed is it to be near the bowels, the affection, and mercy, of a compassionate Saviour ! This favour, this mark of affection, is anxiously requested by the Church in these words of the 8th chapter of the Song, to which the reader has been already referred ; “ Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm : for love is strong as death,” &c. ver. 6 ; which is probably spoken with reference to the engravings of the names of the twelve tribes of Israel upon the precious stones, which were to be like the engravings of a signet, and to be worn upon the heart and shoulders of the high priest ; and perhaps to this passage of the Song, as before noticed.

He appears as if invested with the Thummim and Urim of Levi, as was prophesied of by Moses, Deut. xxxiii. 8. For the Levitical priesthood of Aaron, with all its legal ordinances and worldly sanctuary, was only to continue until the death of Christ; when a change of the priesthood was to take place, and when our Lord was to become a High Priest of the new order above mentioned, to whom the Thummim and Urim of Levi were to be transferred. Of this transfer Moses thus speaks, “And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim *be* with thy Holy One, whom thou didst prove at Massah, *and with* whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah. Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor know his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant. They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar.” Deut. xxxiii. 8—10.

It is observable that, in Exod. xxviii. 30, and in Levit. viii. 8, when Moses is speaking of the Urim and Thummim under the Levitical law, Urim is first mentioned; whereas in this

prophecy, which speaks of their being given to the great High Priest of the New Testament, Thummim is placed first. May not this be intended to shew that the perfection spoken of by the apostle, Heb. vii. 11, was now to be communicated to the Church? And the ministers and people of the Lord, figured by the precious stones seen in the passage of the Song now under consideration, would be truly perfect through the imputed righteousness of their Redeemer.

That this prophecy of Moses refers to our Lord as the *Holy One* with whom the Thummim and the Urim of Levi was to be, seems evident from comparing Psalm xvi. 10, with Acts ii. 27. And in this passage of Deuteronomy it is prophesied, that the perfections and illuminations of the priesthood of Levi should be with this Holy One, ver. 8; whom, on account of the blindness of his eyes, Levi (the Jewish priests) could not see, when he appeared at Jerusalem: nor would Levi acknowledge his converted brethren; nor did he know the apostles, the spiritual Levites, and his brethren also, who at this time of the Church were to succeed him in teaching and judging the people, and in offering up spiritual sacrifices to

God, through their Redeemer, the great High Priest of their profession; who were therefore, in that sense, his children, who were to observe the word and keep the covenant of their God, and thus by being the faithful priests and ministers of God, to fulfil the covenant of Levi, ver. 9. And it was this Holy One, and his apostles, who were to teach Jacob and Israel the judgments and law of God, as mentioned in the 10th verse. And our Lord, when he offered himself up as one whole, perfect, and acceptable sacrifice, sent up before God the sweet incense of his prayers and mediation for his people; and the apostles and ministers of the Church were afterwards to teach Jacob and Israel the judgments and law of their God. ver. 10.

But it is also to be observed, that our Lord, as the true Levi after the Spirit, possessed within himself all the perfection and all the illumination of Levi, being the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, John i. 9. The apostles and ministers of the word were to offer up the spiritual incense and sacrifice of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving to God, and to teach the Church to do so: but all was done in and by their great Chief Priest, the Saviour of his people, who ever liveth to

make intercession for us ; and who hath procured for us the illumination of his Spirit and word, and every good and every perfect gift. By him, therefore, let us come with confidence to the throne of grace, and offer up to God the spiritual sacrifices of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

It appears then, that from the time of the death of our Lord, the Levitical priesthood of Aaron and his sons was abolished, or taken away from them ; and all the spirituality of their ministration, and all the perfection and illumination thereof, were transferred to Jesus Christ, the great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and to his apostles and ministers of the New Testament ; they being the spiritual house of Aaron and of Levi spoken of in some parts of scripture, of which the temporal houses of Aaron and of Levi were types. They were to teach Jacob, the natural house of Israel, wherein he had offended, and the righteous judgments of God on account of their iniquities and unbelief ; and also the spiritual Jacob and Israel, or the Christians, the law of their God contained in the two Testaments of his word : all which they did, and continue to do to this day, in the New-Testament volume.

That the natural Levitical priesthood was now abolished, seems virtually acknowledged by Levi in the person of Joses, or Barnabas, the Levite, who having become a Christian, sold his land and brought the money and laid it at the apostle's feet. Acts iv. 36.

The following additional remarks may further illustrate the subject of the Levitical priesthood, literal and spiritual; and shew in what sense Levi may be spoken of as under the gospel dispensation, and even at a time not yet come.

Before the coming of our Lord, the priests of the Levitical priesthood had corrupted the covenant of Levi; as is fully declared by the prophet Malachi, the last of the prophets and messengers under the Old-Testament dispensation, chap. i. 6—10, 12, &c. ii. 1, 8: who denounces contempt and punishment against these wicked priests, while he sees with the eye of prophecy, that, notwithstanding this great deviation from the covenant of Levi, the name of the Lord should be great among the Gentiles, and, that in every place incense should be offered to his name, and a pure offering, chap. i. 11; or that, in every place among the nations of the habitable world, the incense and

sacrifice of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, should be offered to him, as under the gospel dispensation. For notwithstanding the wickedness of the Jewish priests, the priesthood remained, and the true Levites after the Spirit observed the covenant of Levi until the death of Christ; to whom, as his Holy One, and the successor of Levi, (though he was of a different tribe, and was to change the priesthood to a new and more perfect order), the Thummim and Urim of Levi was at this time transferred, and with it all the spiritual perfection of the priesthood of Levi; leaving all the external typical and ceremonial worship, which was now become unnecessary. And our High Priest was of a new order; namely, of the order of Melchisedec, an order of eternal and unchangeable priesthood, as he ever liveth to make intercession for us, and that in the presence of our God.

As therefore all the spirituality of the priesthood remained, and now remains in the Christian Church, whose apostles and ministers were the successors of the Levites, the ministering servants of God, they seem to be called the children of Levi in the beautiful prophecy of Moses just mentioned. They are therefore his

spiritual children, and in them the covenant of God with Levi is still continued. Mal. ii. 4. This seems fully agreeable to scripture, though the Levitical ceremonial priesthood was abolished at the death of Christ; for, when God had commanded the Levites to be separated from their brethren of the children of Israel, and to be given to him to minister before him, he gave unto Levi the covenant of an everlasting priesthood. Therefore it is prophesied that the priests, the Levites, that minister unto God, shall never want a man to stand before him. Jer. xxxiii. 18, 21, 22: and the house of Levi is spoken of as existing at a period of the Church not yet come.

Now this 14th verse, according to the above explanation, will read thus, *His hands are as circles of gold filled with tarshish; his body as bright ivory set thick with sapphires.*

Ver. 15. "His legs are as pillars," &c. It is worthy of remark, that here, in describing the person of the beloved, the lower extremities which support the body, are called *legs, upon bases, or on feet*; whereas hereafter, in speaking of the lower extremities of the spouse, the figurative woman, they are called *thighs*, as joined to the trunk of the body. chap. vii. 2.

So that in the former case, the leg with its base stands for the whole extremity; and in the latter, the thigh. And in chap. x. of the Revelation, the feet are made the representatives of the whole of the lower extremities, "his feet are as pillars of fire." ver. 1. And we have seen that the hands sometimes stand for the arms and hands, or for the two upper extremities. Now the lower extremities are the supporters of the body; and being in the form of *pillars* with *bases*, they are so called in this place. Their being of beautiful white marble, with their bases of gold, will well figure their beauty, excellence, and durability.

"Set." מִסְדָּיִם, *mejussadim*, here rendered *set*, imports that they are *firmly placed*; which may be implied in the word *founded*, which is a principal signification of the root from which this word comes. It is so rendered by Vulg. Pag. and Mont. "fundatæ," *founded*.

"Upon sockets." It has been well observed that the term *sockets* does not properly express the original Hebrew, which rather signifies *bases*; and this word seems preferable, as the *feet* seem to be the *bases* alluded to, which cannot with propriety be called *sockets*, there being nothing similar to the insertion in a

socket, in the articulation of the ankle joint, and nothing in the original passage to support that interpretation. Some, according to the language of Architecture, have rendered *pedestals*; but as the feet are not detached, but are continuations of the pillars, the literal rendering, *bases*, appears to be the best. The meaning seems to be, that the lower extremities are compared to pillars having the feet for their bases, and the latter being, as it were, the natural foundation from which the former are continued, and upon which they rest: and upon these two pillars, with their bases, is the whole fabric supported.

Therefore the literal rendering seems to be that adopted by the Vulgate, by Pag. Mont. and others, “super bases,” *upon bases*.

“Of fine gold.” The Hebrew word thus rendered is פז, *phaz*, which is believed to come from the root פזז, *phazaz*, the ideal meaning of which is *solidity, compactness, strength*: and as gold is a most solid substance, and as the finest gold is the most compact or solid; so פז, *phaz*, as a noun, signifies *pure or fine gold*. See *Parkhurst on פז*. Gold is also the first among the metals in beauty, excellence, and durability. The rendering therefore of this

passage may be, *his legs* are as *pillars of marble founded upon bases of solid or fine gold*. A description which conveys ideas of the greatest beauty and excellence, with the firmest durability. The bases of fine gold may metaphorically signify the Divinity, as well as the perfection and the purity of the walk of our adorable Saviour; and the Godhead was the true foundation of all the virtue and excellence of the sacrifice which he offered up, and of the priesthood which he fulfilled. And thus did he, through the eternal Spirit, offer himself up for the sins of his people. Heb. ix. 14.

“His countenance is as Lebanon,” &c. Having finished the more particular description of her beloved, she now speaks of his countenance, or rather of his general appearance; but probably including the face or countenance. Bishop Patrick says, “or rather his *aspect*, his whole *appearance*, as the Hebrew word may signify, *was as stately as Lebanon*.” It is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars: or it is grand, majestic, beautiful, and excellent. Now the literal Lebanon was a lofty mountain, on which grew many of the most stately, beautiful, and verdant cedars; with a great variety of other lofty trees, bearing a different foliage from that

of the cedars, and thereby forming an agreeable and beautiful contrast and variety: and the cedars were as remarkable for their excellent fragrance, as for their beautiful and verdant foliage, than which nothing is more pleasant to the eye. And the beauty, fragrance, and excellence of the cedars of the Lord's spiritual Lebanon, of his own royal forest, which he himself has planted and nourished, are not less conspicuous: and the glory of Lebanon was to be added to the Church. Isa. xxxv. 2. Hos. xiv. 5, 6, 7.

Ver. 16. "His mouth *is* most sweet; yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

"His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely." The literal rendering of these words is thus accurately given by Montanus, "Palatum ejus dulcedines, et totus ipse desideria:" and the sense, by the English translators, is expressive and beautiful. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips. Mal. ii. 6. Grace was poured into his lips, Psalm xlv. 2; yea he was the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, John i. 14; and it is said that all wondered at

the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, Luke iv. 22; and sweet and gracious were the words of truth spoken by the Lord. He is indeed lovely: and we love him because he first loved us, 1 John iv. 19; and greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, John xv. 13. He was fairer than the children of men, Psalm xlv. 2.

Having fully described the appearance and excellencies of her beloved, she concludes by an address to her companions, in these words, “*This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*”

This glorious Personage, therefore, is the beloved of the Church, the friend of sinners, Luke vii. 34, the good Shepherd of Israel who giveth his life for the sheep, John x. 11; the great Prince of heaven, to whom the Father hath committed all power in heaven and in earth, Matt. xxviii. 18; our Lord and our God, to whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, to the glory of God the Father. Isa. xlv. 23, &c. Rom. xiv. 9—12. Phil. ii. 10, 11.

CHAPTER VI.



THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

Ch. VI. 1. "Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? Whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee."

LITERALLY, and we will seek, &c.

Having heard the full description of the beauties and glorious excellencies of the beloved, the Christian converts begin to become more affectionate, and more desirous of seeing their Lord: and they are highly sensible of the graces and beauties of the Church which he had now bestowed upon her. They ask whither he is gone, and wish to accompany her in search of him, not intimidated by the accounts of the ill usage of the Jewish watchmen: and she answers in the following verse.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. VI. 2. "My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

3. I *am* my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies."

Ver. 2. "My beloved," &c. The Lord's garden is his Church, or people; who are fed in the fat pastures of the Old and New-Testament scriptures, by Jesus, the good Shepherd of Israel, who feedeth his flock like a shepherd, carrieth his lambs in his bosom, and gently leadeth those that are with young, Isa. xl. 11: and the different churches, or congregated bodies of his people, may be here compared to the beds of a garden in which grow a number of aromatic plants yielding their spicy fragrance. He is gone down to feed his people; and to gather lilies, or to bring new converts to his Church. Or, he is gone down to his own pious assemblies, the members of his Church, who are looking unto God and their Redeemer according to the scriptures; and it is by the word, preached or read, that he feeds his flock, and gathers lilies or converts to himself and to his Church.

Bishop Patrick observes, "*to feed*, in the Hebrew, is either to do the office of a shepherd to his flock; or relates to his communion with his people, mentioned chap. iv. 16, v. 1; which may be the meaning also of gathering

lilies :” and further, “ *to feed* may relate either unto himself or unto others ; for there are examples of both : of the former, Gen. xli. 2. Job i. 14 : of the latter, Gen. xxix. 7, 9. xxxvii. 12.”

And he thinks that it should be taken in the latter sense here ; and supposes that “ it signifies doing the office of a shepherd : and that he is said *to feed among the lilies*, as in the Revelation, *to walk in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks*, *i. e.* there to have his conversation, to take up his abode with them, &c. as he often says in the gospel of St. *John*, (xiv. 23.) that he would with those who love him and keep his commandments.” He is always in his gospel church among his Christian lilies, and gathering daily unto her such as shall be saved. And he feedeth them, as the good Shepherd of Israel, who leadeth Joseph (his people Israel) like a flock, Psalm lxxx. 1, and he hath given his life for the sheep.

Ver. 3. “ *I am my beloved’s*,” &c. Literally, *I am for my beloved, and my beloved is for me.* In this 3d verse she, as it were, consoles herself for the absence of her beloved, by the consideration that, notwithstanding his ab-

sence, she was his espoused bride, and that he was her betrothed bridegroom, and would be hers, as at the marriage of the Lamb. Rev. xix. 7. And the form of expression in the original seems beautifully to intimate that, though they were betrothed to one another, yet the matrimonial union had not then taken place: as she does not say I am now the married wife of my beloved; but only ‘I (am) *for* my beloved, and my beloved *for* me,’ namely, at the appointed time. Rev. xix. Yet while he is feeding among the lilies, though in an invisible manner to her, she is sure of his affectionate attention to her, and to her members: and their mutual love and continued regard for one another are fully expressed in this and the preceding verse. And when Christ is among his Christians, he is delighted with their beauty, and fruitfulness, and is, as it were, refreshed by their fragrance; or by their virtues and graces, and by their prayers and thanksgivings; by that beauty, fruitfulness, and fragrance which he, by his word and Spirit, hath graciously given to them.

Now these two verses seem to describe, in a concise general view, the state of the Church here on earth, from the ascension, or depar-

ture of Jesus, to the conversion of the Jews as a nation, and their union with the Christian Church: to which glorious event, the prophet proceeds in the following verse.

He is personally gone to heaven: but he is spiritually present in his Church, or garden, and in all her gardens, or separate assemblies; for wherever two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst of them, **Matt. xviii. 20**: there he rejoices in their fruitfulness and fragrance, there he feeds them with the milk of the word by his Spirit, and there also he is constantly gathering his elect, or lilies, into the Church. The Church therefore rejoices in this his spiritual care and conduct towards her; being fully satisfied with his unalterable love for her his espoused bride, and patiently waiting for the marriage of the Lamb, and the time when it shall be granted to her to be ready for the appearance of her Lord. **Rev. xix. 7, 8.**

CHRIST,

Ch. VI. 4. "Thou *art* beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah,
comely as Jerusalem, terrible as *an army*
with banners.

5. Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me : thy hair *is* as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.
6. Thy teeth *are* as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and *there is* not one barren among them.
7. As a piece of a pomegranate *are* thy temples within thy locks.
8. There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.
9. My dove, my undefiled is *but* one ; she *is* the *only* one of her mother, she *is* the choice *one* of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her ; *yea*, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her."

IN these verses the Lord speaks of the Church as about the time of the conversion of the Jews, and their union with the Christian Church ; and probably as in prophetic contemplation, or just before it was to take place, or, as about the time when it is granted to her to be prepared for her Lord's coming. Rev. xix. 7, 8. He views the bride, as now about to be adorned with the natural Israel, or the Jews, under the name of Tirzah ; the ancient residence of the ten tribes, or of Ephraim, the

first born (*i. e.* according to appointment) of the house of Joseph, under whom the Jews are to be ranged and reckoned, after their conversion: and as being herself with them comely as the spiritual Jerusalem, or prepared as a bride adorned for her husband: and terrible, as the united armies of Jews and Christians with erected ensigus or banners, ver. 4, when that union has taken place. He speaks of his strong affection for her, as at this time, ver 5; and of these converts as being healed in Gilead, or washed from their sins, and become fruitful, and numerous, ver. 5, 6, 8: and of the beauty, unity, and excellence of the bride under this state of her existence. ver. 7, 9.

Ver. 4. "Thou art beautiful," &c. *Thou art beautiful, my love, as Tirzah (or Thirtsah),* &c. Now Tirzah was the chief city of Ephraim, or of the ten tribes of Israel, and the residence of their kings until Samaria was built. It was, therefore, grand and beautiful in the times of their prosperity. And Bishop Patrick observes, that "the very original of the word signifies as much as *urbs amabilis*, or a city that pleaseth one." And Jerusalem was the most beautiful city of Judah, and of

the whole country: and was called by Jeremiah the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth, Lam. ii. 15; and was considered by Pliny as the most famous city in the East. *Bishop Patrick.* And while Judah and Benjamin remained faithful to God, and were living according to his commandment, and while the temple remained in its beauty, as under Solomon, Jerusalem was most beautiful, and comely. We have now two ascending steps of a climax, which might have respect to the quiet and peaceable states of Samaria and Jerusalem; and the army with banners might have allusion to the armies of Judah and Israel, when roused to a just and necessary war, and sent against the enemies of the Lord, in which cases they would be terrible indeed: and, if so, then we shall have a complete climax, which might be thus expressed, ‘Thou art beautiful, O my love, as the royal city of Tirzah, comely as the holy and beautiful city of Jerusalem, and terrible as the bannered armies of the Lord of Hosts.’

This may be considered as the more literal sense of the verse in reference to the Church, as describing her appearance at the time of the conversion of the Jews as being grand and

beautiful : while the following spiritual import may also be implied. Now, as this seems to be spoken about the time of the conversion of the whole of the natural Israel mentioned in various parts of scripture under the name of Ephraim, and of their junction to the spiritual Judah now existing in the Christian Church ; and as the New Jerusalem will then begin to appear in great glory : we may consider Tirzah as figuring the whole house of the natural Israel, or the Jews, the house of Joseph ; and Jerusalem, as representing the spiritual Jerusalem, the spiritual house of David, to which the tribes of the natural Israel are to be brought ; and the bannered army, as figuring the united army of Jews and Gentiles, as existing in the Christian Church after the conversion of the Jews. As if he had said, ‘ Thou art beautiful, my love, as Israel, my natural Israel, the sons of my servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose iniquities I have forgiven ; comely as Jerusalem, my spiritual Sion ; and terrible as the united army of my Jew and Gentile Church, which will appear at the conversion of Israel, and my final union with my Church as at that time.’

“ Terrible as an army with banners.” “ These

words may be rendered, *dazzling as bannered hosts*. The word translated *terrible*, properly signifies *amazing*, exciting awe and consternation." *Bp. Percy, in notes Ch. Fam. Bib.*

Ver. 5. "Turn away thine eyes," &c. This seems to point to that brightness of scriptural light and knowledge which will appear about this period. As if he had said 'The light of my two Testaments is now so bright and amiable, as shewing that the time is just come for the enlargement of my Church by the conversion of the Jews, that they begin to excite such compassion and inward workings in her favour, that I am overcome; turn them therefore away from me, until the appointed time be fully come:' as if her eyes were so very beautiful as to almost induce him to marry her before the set time. But the marriage was to take place soon after; and he immediately begins to describe the new converts as washed flocks, having become members of the Church, ver. 5, 6: which seems to be alluded to in the 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th verses; where also he informs us how he was wholly overcome, and his affections so secured as to become the immediate Saviour of his people, as in the 13th

verse, when they are commanded to return, or are converted.

He now proceeds, as if describing the converts as come up from Gilead, the land of balm and of the great spiritual Physician; and as if just washed in the blood of the Lamb, and as being all fruitful, ver. 5, 6; and describes the beauty and excellence of the countenance of the Church, with this addition, ver. 7. And the figures used in this description have been already briefly noticed.

In the 8th verse, he seems to speak of the converted Jews and Gentiles which will then be added to the Church, as so many queens, concubines, and virgins, and, as it were, a royal train attending on the bride; and, in the 9th, of his bride, or the Christian Church, as being his lovely, and undefiled one (who had never forsaken him as the former Jewish Church did her husband) the only and choice one of her mother (the true Jewish Church): as intimating, that there is only *one* true church, and *that, the Christian*; and that, therefore, the Jews on their conversion are not to look for a restoration of their temple-service. The number of queens is said to be sixty, and that of

the concubines eighty. That these are definite, for indefinite numbers is believed by Bishop Patrick and others. Do they give the exact proportion of converted Jews, and converted Gentiles who will then be added to the Church: or, is the proportion of Jews to the Gentiles as 60 to 80? Or, do they figure different whole peoples, states, or countries, of different ranks and degrees, who will then be brought to the knowledge of God? The virgins are said to be without number; or they are a very great number; and all the true virgin converts, after their conversion, will have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, or will have accepted the mercy offered in and through the death of their Redeemer, and will therefore be members of the true Church of Christ: and they will have then come out of great tribulation; as, at the time of the deliverance of the Jews and others, there will be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation. Dan. xii. 1. And the time of the sealing of the Jews for their deliverance or conversion is described in the 7th chapter of Revelation; after which description, John sees an innumerable company of all nations, "a great multitude which no man could number," ver. 9, with white

robes and the palms of victory in their hands, as the redeemed of the Lord. ver. 10.

The virgins, having become the daughters of Jerusalem, and having seen and acknowledged their gospel mother-church as the one, and only true catholic church, bless her, or *call her blessed*: yea, the queens and the concubines saw and acknowledged her, and all praised her. They are now all converted, and joined with the true Church, and will join with her in praises and thanksgivings to God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb that was slain for them.

CHRIST.

(IN CONTINUATION.)

- Ch. VI. 10. “ Who *is* she *that* looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, *and* terrible as *an army* with banners ?
11. I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, *and* to see whether the vine flourished, *and* the pomegranates budded.
12. Or ever I was aware, my soul made me *like* the chariots of Ammi-nadib.
13. Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee.

What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies."

Ver. 10. "Who *is* she," &c. The bridegroom having, in the 4th verse, given a short, but very beautiful description of his betrothed bride, as about or just before the time of the conversion of the Jews, and afterwards mentioned the great accession to the Church, which will take place at their conversion, and the praises which will then be bestowed on her by the converts, ver. 8, 9; proceeds, in this 10th verse, resuming, as it were, the subject; and going back to just before this accession, or to the morning of the conversion of the Shulamite, he describes her appearance as if it were now the time when it was given to her to be prepared for her Lord. Rev. xix. 7, 8. She looks forth as the morning, the morning or dawn of her millennial state; fair as the moon, as the moon of the Jewish Church in her best estate during the Old-Testament dispensation; and clear as the gospel Sun of righteousness, under the Christian, or New-Testament dispensation. And this description seems to agree with the following beautiful prophecy of Isaiah, and to be applicable to the same time. "More-

over, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." Isa. xxx. 26. And both prophecies may probably intimate some great increase of light and knowledge which will appear in the gospel Church at this time. That the prophecy of Isaiah refers to the time of the conversion of the Jews, is evident; as it is to be in the day that the Lord receives them again into favour.

"Terrible," &c. Terrible as the united army of Jews and Gentiles with Christ at their head, as the mighty God, the Lord of hosts; an invincible host, most awful and terrible, which nothing can withstand.

Ver. 11, 12, 13. In these verses, he informs his companions how he was overcome with the beauty of his Church, that beauty which he had graciously put upon her preparatory to their union; and how he became the Deliverer of the Jews, and the Husband of his Church, the time of the marriage of the Lamb being then come.

He went down into the Church, to see the fruits of his low, humble, afflicted, and despised

people, the Jews and Gentiles: and almost before he knew, or ever he was aware, he determines to convert them, as mentioned in the 12th verse; where it is said that his soul made him the chariots of Ammi-nadib, or made him ready to convert, or to bring his people the Jews and others to himself. This is the day of his power, and his people are made willing; and his soul being thus moved for them, he commands the Shulamite to return, as in the 13th verse. “Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee.” He then asks the companions, what they would see in the Shulamite: and they answer, “As it were the company of two armies:” or that they would see the multitude of the Jews and Gentiles come to be united in the Christian Church, as one company under their Lord. So that the going down into the garden to see the low and afflicted state of his people, seems to be a prophecy of the mystical coming of the Son of man, which is also foretold by all the other prophets. At which coming the Jews are to be converted, and to be joined with the Christian Church, and the New-Jerusalem Church-state is to commence; which also is the time of the marriage of the Lamb, just

before which it will be granted to his bride to be prepared for her union with her Lord, Rev. xix. 7, 8: and it seems to be at this latter time that our Lord, going down into the garden, and seeing her thus prepared, becomes all at once ravished with her beauty, and figuratively becomes the chariots of his willing people; or he, as it were, takes them up and brings them to himself, as by the commands above-given: which agrees with these words of the Psalmist, “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” Psalm cx. 3. In this great day of the coming of the Son of man, he will make them willing; he will give them the disposition and power, and they will come to him.

Ver. 11. “I went down,” &c. He goes down into “the garden of nuts:” the words גנת אגוז, *ginnath egoz*, here rendered “garden of nuts,” according to Mr. Parkhurst, rather means “a garden kept in order by *lopping* or *pruning*, hortos putatos. *Tremel:*” considering it to come from the root ג, which signifies *to cut off*, *away*, &c. According to Stockius, it is derived from ג, *guz*, *abscindere*, *to cut off*, &c. Here the radical idea of the word *egoz* seems to be clearly given, as importing the being *cut off*; *removed*, or *separated*, as branches from a tree:

which may be applied to the Jews as a nation *cut off*, or *separated*, for a season, from the true Israel of God now existing in the Christian Church, according to the reasoning of St. Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, chap. xi. But a *cutting off*, when applied to a people, may imply, either a complete *cutting off*, as by the judgments of God; as by war, pestilence, &c.: or an abscission only for a certain time. In the former sense, if the cutting off be for the improvement or correction of the people for their good, the idea of Mr. Parkhurst may be contained: and in this sense many a time has God visited the Jews with the rod of punishment for their sins, and many an awful pruning has that nation at various times undergone, and may still undergo, before, and about the time of their conversion. But the primary signification, in this place, seems to be, that it is the garden that is *cut off*, or the garden of the natural Israel, the Jews after the flesh, that is now separated or cut off from the Christian Church: and the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel. To this vineyard or garden our Lord seems to go down, to see its state; and, before he is aware, he converts them.

Now St. Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, compares the Jew and Gentile nations to two olive-trees; the true olive-tree, and the wild: and compares the Jews when rejected for a time on account of unbelief, and the Gentiles when called and received into the true Church, the former to branches broken off from the true olive-tree, and the latter to the wild olive grafted in amongst the branches of the true olive-tree; exhorting the Gentiles not to be high-minded, but to fear, lest God, who spared not the natural branches, should also cut them off. Rom. xi. Here then is a *cutting off*, according to the radical idea given by Parkhurst and Stockius, which seems to point out the primary meaning of this passage; as being a garden, not *of nuts*, but that has been *cut off*, or *separated*; meaning the Jewish people. This seems to be confirmed by the context. For, the bridegroom, having, in the 4th, and following verses, spoken of the glorious beauty of the bride, as if at the time when it is granted to her to be ready for the coming of the bridegroom to marry her, mentions the great increase of, or addition that will be made to, the Church at this time, when there will be queens and concubines, and virgins without

number, ver. 8; and declares that (notwithstanding all these accessions) his undefiled, or spotless Church is but one, the only one of her mother, who shall be generally praised, ver. 9; again mentioning her beautiful, glorious, and terrible appearance (terrific indeed to her enemies), as if on the bridal morning, ver. 10; and he now, ver. 11, goes down into the garden here-mentioned, to examine the branches that have been thus *cut off*, but which are now about to be grafted in again, to see in what state they are, and whether they are likely to bring forth fruits in the proper season; and his bowels begin to be moved for his people, and almost before he knows, or ever he is aware, he becomes their Deliverer, or commands them to return; “Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, and we will look upon thee.” For, though the unbelieving Jews were cut off from the true Israel, and sent away for a season, by reason of unbelief, whilst the Gentiles who believed were admitted into the Church; the Jews are to be again joined with the true Israel, or are to be brought into the Christian Church, at the time of the marriage of the Lamb; and so, according to the apostle, all Israel shall be saved. They will be saved, as

their fathers were from the former Egypt, who were brought forth, and baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; though, by reason of their unbelief, and departure from God, the greater number (indeed all but faithful Joshua and Caleb) died, or were cut off in the wilderness, and were not permitted to enter into Canaan. So also the Jews, their children: they will be converted and received into the Christian Church by baptism, and be thereby entitled to all the privileges of the gospel, if they will comply with its conditions declared in the holy writings; or, if they will turn to the Lord with true heart and full purpose of obedience, having a lively faith in the Lord Jesus, their Deliverer, and follow the directions prescribed to them on another occasion by God, as is recorded in their own law, in these words: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways: then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." 2 Chron. vii. 14. The faith here intended is not that dead faith possessed by devils, who believe and tremble, nor that assent which reason may give to the plan of salvation

without any fruits: but a lively faith which worketh by love, and exciteth to all good works; to purity of heart, and holiness of life and conversation; that faith which worketh by love towards God and benevolence towards man. But should they not comply, nor follow on to know, and to obey, and to serve the Lord, they will afterwards be punished, unless they repent and turn unto God. For as for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, God will lead them forth with the evil doers; but peace shall be upon Israel, upon the true Israel of God.

St. Paul, in the same epistle, relates how the Jews are to be delivered, in the words found written in the Septuagint translation of Isa. lix. 20, excepting *one word*; as in the LXX we read ἕνεκεν σιων, *propter* Sion, *on account of* Sion, and in the epistle to the Romans, ἐκ σιων, *out of* Sion. The coming *out of* Sion, and the coming *on account of* Sion, are both conformable to the prophetic scriptures: though, in this text of Isaiah, the Redeemer is said to come לציון, *tsijon*, “to Sion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob” (though the prefixed *lamed* may also be rendered *propter*); which he did when he ap-

peared at Jerusalem, and will again do when he comes to convert his people the Jews, and to marry his Church: and indeed the going down into the Jewish garden to convert them, might be said to be a coming of the Deliverer *out of* Sion into this separated garden. The words of the LXX, as a translation of this text of Isaiah, are not according to the Hebrew, (which is accurately rendered in the English Bible): but being conformable to scripture, and the Septuagint version being that which was more commonly used at Rome at that time, St. Paul, probably wishing to be well understood by the Romans, might choose to deliver his doctrine as written in that translation: and the manuscript which he then had might have read *verbatim* as he has written. He would therefore say, *as it is written*, “There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob,” Rom. xi. 26; and the rendering of Isa. lix. 20, is found in the Septuagint version at this day.*

The Deliverer, the Lord Jesus, will come in the clouds of heaven, as he himself has prophesied (and as I shall humbly endeavour to

* Vid. Compl. which renders ἀπὸ σιών, which may be rendered *ex*, or *out of* Sion.

demonstrate in a future essay, now nearly ready for the press,) and deliver the Jews out of the spiritual Egypt, in which they now live.

“ To see the fruits of the valley,” &c. literally, *to look upon the shootings, or, the fruits of the valley; to see whether the vine has budded, whether the pomegranates have flowered.* He visits his Jewish people, or goes down into this separated garden, to view the plants thereof; and, as at his coming to convert the Jews, to see in what condition it is, and whether the plants are in a healthy, vegetative state, or likely to produce fruits in their seasons: and when the Lord appeared in the bush to Moses, he said, “ I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry,” &c. and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, &c. Exod. iii. 7, 8. So here, the Lord being about to deliver them a second time, comes down into the Jewish garden. The time of nuts (which are late in coming to maturity) is not yet come, and he does not say that he expects any; yet he becomes compassionate, and brings the nut-bearing trees into his Christian orchard, not doubting that they will produce their fruits at the proper season: or

he converts his Jews and others; and probably many (for our God and Saviour abounds in mercy) with whom he found no fruits. When, he also comforts his faithful, poor, afflicted people, and causes their hearts to rejoice: and he subdues their enemies under their feet.

Ver. 12. "Or ever I was aware," literally, as in the margin, *I knew not*. "My soul made me the chariots of עמי נריב, *ghammi nadib*;" or *of my willing people*. *Ghammi nadib* are two distinct words, literally rendering, *my people made willing*, *nadib* being in the hiphil form, importing *caused to be willing*; or having the disposition given to them by God; who worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure: and thus was the above prophecy of the Psalmist fulfilled. His people are willing, and ready; and he, as it were, takes them up in the chariots of his commands, and brings them unto mount Sion, the holy Jerusalem, his Christian Church.

In the Greek translation of the LXX, this 12th verse begins with the following passage, which is also found in the end of the 12th verse of the next chapter: but it seems to have been erroneously copied into the present verse, as it interrupts the natural course of the sub-

ject, and does not agree with the context, nor with the prophetic time to which it alludes; though it has been introduced from the LXX into the Arabic and Ethiopic versions. *See Good, notes p. 167.* The passage is, *Εκει δωσω τους ματους μου σοι*, or as in the 7th chapter of the English Bible, “there will I give thee my loves;” which cannot with any propriety be considered as spoken by the Bridegroom, nor, in this place, by the Church.

Ver. 13. “Return, return, O Shulamite,” &c. This name, which is in the Hebrew *Shulammith*, and should be rendered either *Shulammite*, or *Shulammith*, as in the original, seems to be here given to the Jews, or to their nation, when called to return from their present captivity, to be united with the Christian Church; when the structure and beauty of the bride, as represented in the 7th chapter, will be complete, and when she will be united to her Lord: who will then abide with his Church and people in a more eminent degree than he had before done, though not visibly, for ever. Concerning this name there are various opinions; some considering it as a proper name, and others as an appellative. But from its structure and termination it evi-

dently appears to be a proper name, and, as here found with the ה prefixed, of the same form as השונמית, *hashshunammith*, rendered *the Shunammite* in 2 Kings iv. 25; as intimating, that she was an inhabitant of Shunem. ver. 8. Those who consider it as a proper name either suppose it to be taken from the literal Jerusalem, formerly called Salem, and given to the Christian Church, as the new Jerusalem; or from the same, and referring to the wife of the literal Solomon; or render erroneously, as shall soon be shewn: and those who view it as an appellative render, *O perfect one, peaceable one, &c.* Bishop Patrick says, that Sulamith is as much as to say, *Jerusalamith*, Jerusalem having been formerly called "*Salem*, which carries peace in its signification;" which he thinks "is a fit name here for the Church, the New Jerusalem, built by Christ himself." Vatablus thinks it an adjective noun, signifying, "*Jerosolymitana*," or *Jerusalemite*. Mr. Parkhurst, with reference to a former Jewish wife of the literal Solomon, and as being a native of Jerusalem, would express *Salemite*, leaving out the ך as in many of Dr. Kennicott's codices. The LXX render (erroneously) συναμιτις, *Su-*

namitis; and have been followed by many of the older editions of the Vulgate, and many Latin codices, (and many of the ancient fathers, *Tirin.*), who read Sunamitis, or *Sunamite*: the present Vulgate reads, “Sulamitis,” or *Sulamite*. The Syriac renders “Silomitis,” or *Silomite*; as referring to the wife of Shilomoh, or Solomon. *Vid. Bib. Max.* Menochius thinks the spouse is called Sulamitis (as in the Vulgate) from Solomon, as if *Salomonia*. *In. Bib. Max.* Grotius says, “Sulamitis, id est Solomonis uxor.” The Tigurine version reads *Schulamith*, explaining in the margin that this word signifies *pacific, perfect, whole, happy*.

Now all these names, excepting the erroneous ones found in the LXX and its followers, proceed from the same Hebrew root שלם, *shalam*; which signifies *to make whole, entire, complete, perfect, to finish, have peace, be at peace, &c.* *Parkhurst*: and the name *Shulamith*, as applied to the Jews on their turning again and being united with the Christian Church, may be expressive, not only of their being restored to peace and favour; but, of the integrity and completion of the Church, when Jew and Gentile shall be united together

under the spiritual Solomon, their Lord and King; as we shall now endeavour to point out.

Now it was prophesied by our Lord that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled, Luke xxi. 24: and at this time, when the great accession mentioned in various parts of scripture is made to the Church, by the conversion of many Gentiles together with the Jews, will that fulness of the Gentiles spoken of by St. Paul be come in; and the natural Israel of the whole of the twelve tribes, as many as shall turn unto the Lord, be saved, or joined with the spiritual Israel in the Christian Church. And for this purpose, the Deliverer will come down (mystically) into the Jewish garden, and call the Shulamith to return, and will thus turn away ungodliness from Jacob. When this comes to pass, the spiritual Jerusalem will cease to be trodden down; and all of the Jewish nation who sincerely turn to God will become inhabitants of the New-Jerusalem Church-state. So that the name *Shulamith* may be expressive of this change of state, or may intimate that she is now become an inhabitant of *Shalom*, or of

Salem, the dwelling place of the Most High; or that she is one that is now placed in perfect peace, as having found *Shalom*, *peace*, or favour with God, Song viii. 10: and it was not unusual to give new names to individuals, on changing their condition, or entering upon a new state, as expressive thereof; of which many examples might be given. It is also worthy of remark, that the unity of the Church, or flock of Christ, cannot be perfect until the two flocks, Jew and Gentile, are united under the good Shepherd of Israel, in the Christian Church; which, therefore, cannot be complete without our Jewish brethren: and the multitude of Jewish and Gentile converts which will at this time be brought into the Church, seems to be necessary to complete the glorious figurative woman described in the next chapter; and these seem to be compared to the loins, body, and lower extremities, which must necessarily be joined to complete the structure: and the junction of these parts to those of the head, neck, and breasts, which had been before described, chap. iv. then form the complete bride now prepared for her husband; and this junction is described as being the work of a workman, or of a cunning or

experienced workman, and is even the work of God himself.

The commands given being, "Return, return," it is implied that the person spoken to is either gone, or has been sent away: which was the case with the Jewish people. They departed from their God, and some were sent away into Assyria, where they were reckoned among the Gentiles, and remain as such unto this time: while the Jews of the other two tribes, of Judah and Benjamin (who lived at Jerusalem when our Lord visited them), on account of a like departure from the God of Israel, had their city destroyed, and were themselves dispersed among the nations; and they have continued among them as wanderers unto this day. But the Jewish nation, the sons of Jacob and Joseph, which had Jerusalem for their chief city, whither the tribes of the Lord went up to worship the God of their fathers, is, according to the prophetic records of truth, to be brought back again, and to be added to the Christian Church, the spiritual Jerusalem: "when all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Rom. xi. 26: and

he will also come to Sion, and unto them, that turn from transgression in Jacob. Isa. lix. 20. They are said in scripture to come from the north, and from the south, from the east, and from the west: and the command is four times given; probably with reference to these four quarters of the world, or to shew that this is the great bringing-back spoken of in scripture. But whither are they to be brought, or to return? Not to the literal Judea and Jerusalem, though some may return thither; as these would not contain them, nor probably afford a square foot of land for each of the Jews of the natural Israel now existing on the earth: but to the Christian Church, which will, after this union, be glorious; and will rapidly proceed to fill the whole earth. And, when all the sinners upon earth are either converted to God, or swept from the earth, the Jews, the men of the spiritual Judah and Israel, the pleasant plants of the Lord, will inhabit the whole earth, under their (invisible) Redeemer. Then shall the people be all righteous, they shall inherit the land for ever, as branches of the Lord's planting, the work of his hands that he may be glorified.

“That we may look upon thee:” literally,

“ *and we will look upon thee.*” If the persons here alluded to by the personal pronoun *we* be the glorious and ever blessed Trinity, this latter passage contains a promise of the most consoling kind. And when Solomon, at the dedication of the temple of Jerusalem, was intreating the Lord for his blessing upon his people, he prayed that the eyes of God might be open upon his house day and night, 2 Chron. vi. 20; and God promised him that his eyes should be open, and his ears attent unto their prayers, &c. and that his eyes and his heart should be there perpetually. chap. vii. 15, 16. Probably the three divine Persons here promise to look upon her with the eye of compassion and mercy; with such a look as David requested when he thus prayed for himself, and for the final redemption of Jacob; “ Look upon mine affliction, and my pain: and forgive all my sins. Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles,” Psalm xxv. 18, 22; or, such as when the Lord was about to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines by Saul, “ For I have looked upon my people,” 1 Sam. ix. 16: or with such a look as God bestowed upon the children of Israel when in the former Egypt, when he was about to deliver

them; for it is said that then, “ God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto *them*.” Exod. ii. 25. And at this time of their being called to return out of the spiritual Egypt, in which they now dwell, God will, in like manner, have respect unto them.

“ What will ye see in the Shulamite?” Or, *What will ye men see in Shulammith, or in the Shulamite?* The answer is, “ As it were the company of two armies.” Or two armies joined together in one company. This answer seems to be another figurative description of the Jews; as I will now endeavour to shew.

It will be remembered that ten tribes of the twelve of the natural Israel were carried away captives into Assyria in the 6th year of Hezekiah king of Judah; and were placed in Halah, and Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. Or, they were carried out of the land of Israel, and planted into the land of Assyria, as gentile inhabitants of the same; and they may be considered as spiritual Assyrians, or as living in that gentile land to this day; in which also they will remain until the coming of the Lord to deliver them, by

calling them to return.* So that though they are really Jews, of the seed of Abraham, they are also Gentiles; and at the time of conversion, this wonderful people, being both Jew and Gentile, will yet appear as one Shulamite returning to the God of Israel, to be united to the Church. Therefore, though considered as *two armies*, they will form but *one company*.

Or if, at the same time with the Jews, there should be brought into the Church a multitude of Gentiles with them; though evidently *two* distinct people or armies, they will, in like manner, form but *one* company. But the former explanation, as referring wholly to the natural Israel which was *cut off*, but is now called *to return*, seems to be the true one.

It may be worthy of remark, that, long after the carrying away of the ten tribes into Assyria, the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin were also dispersed by the Romans, the remote successors of the Assyrians: and they also will return with their brethren.

* I do not mean that the ten tribes are now living in the literal Assyria, but in spiritual Assyria, or in spiritual Egypt, which spiritually mean one and the same estranged, gentile land in which God is not known: and I hope I shall soon be permitted to point them out, and to say, Behold them!

And when the converted Jews of the natural Israel are thus united with the Christian Judah, and become one nation upon the spiritual mountains of Israel, under the spiritual David mentioned by the prophets, or under their Lord and Redeemer, they will be ready and willing to fight the battles of the Lord: and he being at their head (not personally), they may then justly be called the armies or hosts of the Lord: and here also the united Christian Church might be considered as one company; though as being composed of two armies, *viz.* of the spiritual Judah, and the converted natural Israel.

CHAPTER VII.

- Ch. VII. 1. "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs *are* like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.
2. Thy navel *is like* a round goblet, *which* wanteth not liquor: thy belly *is like* an heap of wheat set about with lilies.
3. Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes *that are* twins.

4. Thy neck *is* as a tower of ivory; thine eyes *like* the fish-pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.
5. Thine head upon thee *is* like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king *is* held in the galleries.
6. How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!
7. This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters *of grapes*.
8. I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell [of thy nose like apples;
9. And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth *down* sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak."

THE Gospel Church, who was betrothed, or espoused to Christ at his death, and then became his bride, is now just become the wife of the Lamb, Rev. xxi. 7, 8, and has just entered into her New-Jerusalem Church-state: and the inspired prophet, as in the person of the bridegroom, gives a full description of her person as

at this time, or just after the conversion of the Jews ; when, according to the language of the apostle, Eph. vi. 15, she is shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, ver. 1 ; which implies that she is also clothed with the garments of salvation, with the robe of righteousness, Isa. lxi. 10, and the beautiful clothing mentioned in the 45th Psalm, 13, 14, as that in which, at this time of her marriage, she was to be brought to the king. And though no mention is made of her other clothing, excepting her shoes, it is fully implied : though it is chiefly the internal glory spoken of in the same psalm, ver. 13, which is to be here described, or that of the different parts of her figurative structure, probably including her internal economy.

But in speaking of her person as one figurative woman, we contemplate her as clothed with her beautiful garments ; and as glorious, noble, and majestic in her appearance, and perfect and upright in her structure.

This description seems as it were given on her wedding day, just after the solemnization of the marriage, or as just after the reception of the Jews again into favour, together with the Gentiles, and their junction with the Christian

Church. And it is worthy of notice, that this is a fuller and more particular description of her person than he had before given; that in the 4th chapter extending only from the head to the breasts, ver. 1—5; and this, comprehending the whole person of this figurative woman, her stature being now perfected by the addition and union of the Jews: and also, that the description here given begins with the feet, proceeding upwards; whereas the former began at the head, going down to the breasts: all which will be more particularly considered hereafter.

She now appears in her complete person, with all that internal glory mentioned in the 45th Psalm; which is now to be described. But she is a mystical woman, and of a very different structure from a natural woman: though, in a figurative sense, there may be a resemblance in many of the particulars. This glorious woman has a head like Carmel, the vineyard of the Lord: her eyes are like fish-pools, and her nose as the tower of Lebanon; and her whole body as a teeming womb, having in its centre a living fountain for the vivification and nourishment of her offspring: and her thighs, meaning the loins, thighs, legs, and feet,

or from the loins downwards, which are the lower parts of her structure, without which the person can neither be said to be complete nor perfect, seem to figure the Jewish and Gentile people, which, probably in a conjoined state, as already observed, will be brought into the Church at the conversion of the Jews.

Ver. 1. "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!" &c. "the joints of thy thighs," &c. The Christian Church has now received the great addition of the Jews, the natural seed of Abraham, who, in the last chapter, were called to return; together with a great flow of the Gentiles, called by St. Paul "the fulness of the Gentiles," Rom. xi. 25: and this great addition, which was necessary to complete the structure of the figurative woman, as here described, and as now introduced into a more perfect state, seems to be here figured by the two lower extremities, as connected together by the lower parts of the body, from the loins downwards, including the loins also; all which lower parts of her structure having been joined with the upper parts, at the time of the conversion of the Jews, form the perfected mystical woman here represented. For the Hebrew word here rendered

thighs, also signifies *loins*, and *sides*, Gen. xlvi. 26. Exod. i. 5. Levit. i. 11; and seems therefore to include all the parts just mentioned: and its primary reference to the thighs (commonly so called), which according to the Hebrew manner include the legs and feet, may more clearly shew the scope of the prophecy, as meaning the Jew and Gentile extremities; or that remnant which should be saved.

Now the Jews are at this time a separated people, living in the land of spiritual Egypt, or Assyria; but still acknowledging the God of Israel, and his holy law, which was graciously given to their fathers, and the truth of which gift they have, for numerous ages, witnessed, and been ready to seal with their blood. These Jews are now looking to God for deliverance; and his sure word of prophecy, contained in their Hebrew scriptures, declares that he will cause them to return; and that he will come to all of those who turn from transgression in Jacob. In those scriptures they are frequently described as two nations, Judah and Israel; and, at first sight, it might be imagined, that these two nations of Israel formed the two limbs or extremities here mentioned. But when the natural Israel is sealed for conversion,

they are spoken of as the forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel; and the tribes are mentioned by name, Rev. vii. 4, 5, &c. : and it is more conformable to the reasoning of St. Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, and to many other passages of scripture, to consider the two extremities (as joined together by the pelvis and loins) as representing the Jews and Gentiles in a conjoined state returning to their God: and, if we consider the Jews as now living in the gentile land of Assyria, they are, as we have shewn, both Jews and Gentiles in a certain sense; for they are Jews, the natural seed of Abraham, and the ten tribes may be considered as Gentiles until their conversion. In this way, though they are both Jews and Gentiles, yet they are still one people. But as it is declared, that the Jews are to be scattered far off among the nations, and that the Gentiles are to bring all the Jews as an offering to the Lord at the time of their own conversion, when the glory and fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, like a flowing stream, Isa. lxvi. 20, 12; we may readily believe, that a great number of Gentiles, now living in unbelief, together with the unbelieving Jews, will, at one and the same time, be

brought into the Church ; and that they will constitute the two extremities with the pelvis and loins here described. For God will have mercy upon both Jew and Gentile : and hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all. Rom. xi. 30—32. Here from the 33d verse, St. Paul, in contemplation of the rich mercies which will then be bestowed, and of the wisdom and knowledge of God, is almost lost in gratitude and admiration. Verse 33—36.

When therefore this great accession of Jews and Gentiles shall have been made to the Christian Church, then will the structure of the figurative woman be complete, as she is presented in this 7th chapter : when the whole will form but one body, fitly framed and joined together as the holy temple of the Lord, with all the wonderful economy thereof. Then will the Jew and Gentile remnant have been brought into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, under Christ the head ; from whom, and by whom, the whole body is joined and compacted together, Eph. iv. 12, 13 ; and then, as is beautifully expressed by the Psalmist, will the brethren dwell together in unity. Psalm cxxxiii. 1 : and then also

will this figurative woman appear, as now seen, in all the glory of her incipient millennial Church-state; shod, as here mentioned, with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and therefore clothed with the garments of salvation.

In the 4th chapter of this Song, a description of the Church in her betrothed state is given: and the prophet, beginning at the head, proceeds downwards to the breasts inclusive; and goes no further with his particular description, but concludes by declaring that she is all fair, and that there is no spot in her; which description may be considered as including the whole structure of the upper parts of the body, to the last vertebra of the back inclusive; as well of the parts described, as of those attached to them, though not mentioned particularly: while the lower parts of the body from the breasts downwards, comprehending the belly, loins, pelvis, and lower extremities, were omitted in description, or left until the time of the marriage of the Lamb; when, by the great accession of the Jews and Gentiles, which would take place at that time, her structure would be completed, and the description of her person fully given, as in the present chapter.

These two descriptions were probably thus given, to shew the greatness of the addition which would at this time be made to the Christian Church: and if this addition be in proportion to the whole Christian Church then existing, as the lower parts of the body, from the last vertebra of the back downwards, (as above described,) are to the upper, how great and how glorious will this work be! Surely it will be the work of a *workman*: the work of GOD alone.

Now, the Jews having been called to return in the end of the 6th chapter, their addition to the Christian Church has been made, and the full description of that internal glory of her person, mentioned Psalm xlv. 13. is here given, as when she is become the beloved wife of the Lamb; or immediately after the conversion of the Jews, and therefore after she has been arrayed in the fine linen robe of her Redeemer's righteousness, as in Rev. xix. 7, 8, and clothed in the beautiful and excellent embroidered or golden-worked clothing of the Holy Spirit, as in Psalm xlv. 13, 14. So that, though the structure of the body itself of this mystical woman is here particularly given, it is not to be considered as uncovered, though the body and

its clothing are to be distinguished : and the king's daughter is all glorious within, and her clothing is of wrought gold. Psalm xlv. 13.

She is now shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, Eph. vi. 15 ; or the Jews and Gentiles being now converted to Christ, and joined with the Christian Church, are become his people, united under him, the great and good Shepherd of Israel, and a glorious Church ; and they are all prepared and ready to execute the commands of their Lord, and to walk in the way of his commandments.

She is here called the Prince's daughter : and she is the daughter of our Immanuel, the great Prince of heaven and earth, who made her what she is, who raised her up under the apple tree, Song viii. 5, and who now admires the beautiful structure, which he himself has formed. In the 45th Psalm, ver. 13, she is called the king's daughter, and he her Lord : and she is the daughter, as well as the beloved bride of our King of Sion, ver. 13, 11, as just mentioned. Her clothing is said to be of wrought gold ; and she is all glorious within. ver. 13. She is a glorious woman : and being sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and washed by the blood of the Lamb, she is made perfect

through the favour of her Lord, and, as it were, restored into the paradise of God : and as her whole mystical body, which is composed of her members, the redeemed people of the Lord, is, as it were, a teeming womb, each individual Christian being anxiously engaged in bringing new converts to the Church ; no particular organs of generation are necessary, and none exist : and it is to be particularly remembered, that she is a figurative woman, and that the description here given is wholly figurative ; though it seems to be the body itself and its integral parts which are here spoken of, and not the dress, (excepting the shoes), and the body and its covering are distinct. So that in speaking of the parts of the body of this mystical woman, no indelicacy is either shewn or intended ; as will evidently appear by a due consideration of the figures used, and of their application. Let us not therefore presume to dictate to the good Spirit of God, in what language he is to address his people ; but let us, with humble and upright hearts, search for the hidden treasures of the word of life, that we may profit thereby, and endeavour to benefit others. And though, in other parts of the holy writings, this woman is

described, (as about the same prophetic time,) as clothing herself with her children, comparable to gold, silver, and jewels, who are then considered as her ornaments and garments, Isa. xlix. 18, lxi. 10; yet here, the figures seem evidently borrowed from the body itself; but the king's daughter is all glorious within, Psalm xlv. 13; is all fair, and no spot in her, Song v. 7: and the general economy of the Church of Christ at this glorious period seems to be contained in the description, as well as the beauty and unity of the whole.

“The joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.” The *joints* (or rather *joinings*) are said to be *מַעֲשֵׂה*, *maghaseh*, a work: and, as every proper work implies design and execution, *לְחַמְמִיקָה*, here rendered *joints*, may signify a work performed according to some previous deliberation or design; a work of art: and this work concerns *the thighs*; or all the lower parts of the body above described. But they are spoken of when under new circumstances; or as when conjoined with the upper parts, and together with them forming one united body, now accounted worthy of particular description. Therefore it seems probable, that the

work here mentioned refers to that by which this change of state has been brought about; namely, the union of the lower with the upper parts of the body, or of the Jews and Gentiles with the Christian Church: which seems much more reasonable, than to suppose that it refers to the form or particular structure of the thighs, sides, and loins themselves. This work, or junction, which could be designed and executed only by the Almighty Architect, is here contemplated as accomplished: and it may be truly said to be both curious and beautiful; even *as jewels*, or fine worked jewellery, where every rule of fitness, proportion, and beauty has been observed. So that the Bridegroom seems here to admire that wonderful work, the union of Jews and others with the Christian Church, which he had before ordained, spoken of by all his prophets; and commanded and accomplished in the last chapter. And “we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus,” Eph. ii. 10: “in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord.” ver. 21.

Now this union seems to be expressed by the words חֲמוּקֵי יָרֵכַי, *lhammuke jerecajic*, here rendered “joints of thy thighs;” a ren-

dering which is worthy of some consideration, as the word *hhammuke* is considered of uncertain signification. See *Taylor's Concord*.

חמק *hhamak*, the root from which the word חמוקי, *hhammuke*, here rendered *joints*, comes, is variously rendered by translators and interpreters. The LXX render ῥυθμοι, *moduli the measures or proportions* (of thy thighs); or, as explained by a learned man “ ῥυθμοι, seu *aptitudines, commissuræ,*” or *fitnesses, the closures, or close joinings*; “ nam” (continues he) “ ῥυθμος est quicquid ex arte fit,” (intimating that the Greek word used by the LXX signifies *whatever is made by art, or a work of art*), *Joan. de la Haye*: and Schrevelius gives a similar sense; for having given the significations, “ *Rythmus, et concinnitas,*” he adds “ *quicquid certo modo et ratione fit: α ῥύω, traho; ut sit tractus æquabilis.*” So that the signification of the Greek word, used by the LXX in rendering חמוקי, *hhammuke*, here given by these two learned men, as being *a work of art*, appears to exactly agree with what seems to be the true radical idea of the Hebrew root חמק, *hhamak*; namely, *to work, or execute a work of art, as before ordained, or designed, according to that ordination or design*: and the word *hhammuke* being a noun

in the participial and *pahul* form, and in the plural number, may, according to this ideal meaning, signify some *things* or *work executed*, the result of such previous ordination or design : and as the joinings or graffings of the Jews and others with the Christian Church, may be considered as a very beautiful and wonderful work ; so may they be here compared to works of jewellery of the most curious and beautiful kind, “ the work of the hands of a cunning workman.”

That the learned reader may more fully judge of the difficult passage here rendered “ joints of thy thighs,” I shall now state some of the principal various readings which have been given by interpreters, including those above given, either extracted from their works, or from other books which I have at hand.

Sept. ῥυθμοί, “ moduli ; seu aptitudines, commissuræ.” *Joan. de la Haye.* *Cald.* “ quam pulchri sunt pedes Israel,” &c. “ et filii eorum qui egressi sunt de fœmore eorum pulchri sunt sicut lapides pretiosi.” *Syr.* “ forma femorum tuorum.” *Arab.* “ structuræ partium feminum tuorum.” *Vulg.* “ juncturæ feminum tuorum :” *Ita Munst. Clarius, Rob. Steph. 1533, et Pagn. per R. Steph. 1557. Pagn.* “ vertebræ :” *Ita*

Mont. et Castel. Malv. “diversiones feminum tuorum.” *Besson.* “vertibula crurum tuorum.” *Cocceius,* “περιζωματα, quæ ambiunt femora tua.” *Tigur.* “conceptus feminis tui.” *Jun. et Tremel.* “Ambitus:” *Ita Stockius, Buxt. &c. Cleric.* “commissuræ.” *Dr. Taylor,* “ambitus:” and he remarks, “*joints of thy thighs* is of uncertain signification.” *Parkhurst,* “drawers:” and (in *Bates*) “acetabula.” *Bates,* “The turnings, the fine shapings, or make of thy sides.” *Levi,* “the turning of thy thighs.”

The following comments on the Vulgate, by *Menochius* and *Tirinus*, may be also worthy of notice. *Menoch.* “*junctura femorum, inquit Cassiodorus, est conjunctio duorum populorum in una fide.*” *Tirin.* “*juncturæ, &c. id est, lumbos habes non imbecilles, non distortos,*” &c. *In Bib. Max.* I may here observe, that the conjecture of *Cassiodorus* that the juncture of the thighs means the conjunction of two people into one faith, is very remarkable.

Of all these renderings of *hhammuke*, “*juncturæ,*” and “*commissuræ,*” seem to be the best: though *insertiones, the insertions*; or, *insitiones, the ingraftings*, seem preferable, and to give a more full sense of the original in this place;

and I consider the last as the best of all, as being more accordant with the reasoning of St. Paul on the grafting in again, or the conversion, of the Jews. Rom. xi. 23.

This apostle, in the same epistle to the Romans, when speaking of the casting off of Israel, or of the Jews, for a time, and of their future junction with the Christian Church, speaks of them as branches of the true olive-tree, which, though broken off for a season, were to be grafted in again, as God was able so to do. chap. xi. 17, 23—27.

Of this *grafting in* then of the Jews and others into the Christian Church, after it has been accomplished, does the prophet seem to speak in the words here rendered the “joints of thy thighs;” as the Hebrew word, rendered *joints*, means, as we have seen, some things performed *בין דוק*, *min lhok*, *by ordination, reasoning, or design*, &c. or a work of art; which might rather be here rendered *the joinings, junctures, insertions, graftings in* “of thy thighs;” taking *the thighs* in the full sense of the Hebrew, as meaning the loins, sides, and lower extremities: and as, in the uniting of the lower parts of a natural body, from the loins downwards, with the upper parts, there would be various

joinings, as that of the vertebræ of the loins with those of the back, and the other joinings round the body; so, in the figurative application to the Church of Christ, whose members, form the different Christian Churches throughout the world, the plural number may apply to the joining of Jews and Gentiles to the different Churches of the countries in which they may reside at the time of their conversion.

Therefore the wonderful union of the lower with the upper parts of the body, the junction of the Jew and Gentile remnants with the Christian Church, which has just been effected by his own mighty power, and the general fitness and beauty of the whole thus conjoined, seem to be what the Bridegroom is now contemplating and admiring.

“The work of the hands of a cunning workman.” By some, of *an excellent workman*: literally, by the hands of *faithfulness*, of a *faithful workman*: even by the hands of our God and Saviour. He has, by his prophets, promised to join the Jews with the Christian Church; and he is faithful who promised, and will do it.

אמן, *aman*, is the Hebrew word here rendered “cunning workman:” and in the Revelation,

iii. 14, our Lord styles himself the *αμην*, *amen*, the faithful and true witness. He is also the faithful and wonderful workman here intended.

Ver. 2. “Thy navel *is like* a round goblet, *which* wanteth not liquor,” &c. literally, *which shall not want*.

This second verse seems to give a beautiful figurative description of the fruitfulness of the Church, in the period of her history here foretold, and of the internal provision made for the vivification and support of her members: her whole belly being here represented as a teeming womb, exhibiting a multitude of infantile converts just produced; and having in its centre a plentiful supply of liquor, probably of the living waters of the Spirit, for their comfort, nourishment, and growth, and the continuation of their spiritual life. The heap of wheat, or young converts, are set about with lilies, or beautiful Christian plants of full growth, which have produced their fruitful fragrance. And this description is very applicable to the beginning of the New-Jerusalem Church-state, just after the conversion of the Jews and Gentiles; when almost an innumerable number (a heap) of young converts just made, or who have been just vivified by

the good Spirit of God, and brought into the Christian Church, and become integral parts of her structure, are mentioned as lying at the fountain, as if waiting for further supplies of the vivifying waters of the Spirit of life. And it is prophesied by the Psalmist, that there shall be an heap* of corn in the earth, high upon the hills, whose fruit shall shake like Libanus. lxxii. 16. *Prayer-book*: which seems to refer to the time when the Lord's house will be raised above the gentile mountains and hills, Isa. ii. 2; and to that to which the prophet Solomon alludes, in the grand prophetic description of the Church given in this 7th chapter; when the Jews will have been converted, and the fifth and last monarchy, or that of Jesus Christ, or of God, will be raised above the four preceding gentile kingdoms: or, when the people of our Lord shall begin and gradu-

* In the Psalms of the Bible it is rendered *an handful* of corn; and the Hebrew word is תַּבַּח, *pissath*, signifying *a handful, a small portion, &c.* meaning properly, *a diminished portion, i. e.* in respect of the whole: it is there rendered, by Pagninus, "pugillus," *a handful*, as by the English translators; and by Montanus, "particula," *a small portion*. But it evidently refers to the same prophetic time; though the Hebrew word in the Song is different, and literally signifies *an heap*, as it also does in Ruth, chap. iii. 7.

ally proceed to the time, when “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to” (them, the spiritual offspring and) “the people of the saints of the Most High.” Dan. vii. 27.

The belly, which, in the natural body, contains the womb, in which the child grows and is nourished until its birth, is said to be an heap of wheat, or as if having just produced an almost innumerable number of young ones : and its centre, or the navel, to be like a round goblet that wanteth not liquor ; or, that is furnished with what is proper for the preservation, growth, and nourishment of the wheat, or of the progeny. The wheat I consider as emblematic of young converts just made and brought into the Church, and now constituting a part of the structure of the Church of God. They are without doubt living grains of wheat, probably just brought from the straw by the threshing of the judgments of God ; which, having been first vivified by the living waters of the Spirit, are here presented in the body of the Church. They will therefore certainly germinate and become fruitful, by the watering and cherishing of the good Spirit of God.

The navel, here compared to a round goblet, is that round concavity in the centre of the belly, which is formed partly by the natural formation of this particular part of the abdomen, but chiefly by the falling off of those vessels by which the circulation was carried on between the child and its mother, and by which it was nourished while in the womb; but which, becoming unnecessary after its birth, naturally fall off in a few days. But this communication between the child and its mother, was by the navel of *the child*, for the nourishment of its *own body*, in its fœtal state: whereas, in the present case, if the round goblet be considered as containing the necessary support of the surrounding progeny, the communication would be from that of the mother to her offspring. But it is to be particularly remembered, that she is a mystical woman, representing the Church of Christ; and we here observe a well-supplied central goblet, or fountain. Indeed, the navel, as here represented, may be considered in *two* points of view: 1st, as *a centre of the belly*, having liquor for the nourishment and growth in grace of her offspring, just produced and appearing as a heap of wheat surrounding it; 2dly, as *a centre of*

the body, exhibiting that, within herself, she possesses a fountain for the benefit and support of her members. She is a fountain sealed, Song iv. 12 : so that no man can taste of the vivifying waters unless the fountain is unsealed by the Spirit of God ; or by him who has the key of David, and who opens and no man can shut. But when the Jews are to be converted, this fountain is opened to them by their great Deliverer, and his good Spirit. Zech. xiii. 1.

The whole belly being described as an heap of wheat, or of young converts, or as a teeming womb, having a supporting fountain in its centre, the word here rendered *belly* cannot, with propriety, as to the primary sense, be rendered *body* ; the former being the seat of the womb in the natural body, in which the child remains till birth, as above described, and there being, when compared with the foregoing prophetic narration and the context, a particular connection with respect to the numerous offspring here represented, and the time of their production : yet this goblet may also figuratively represent that, in the midst of the Church there exists a fountain of living waters, for the vivification, sanctification, and preservation of her offspring.

If the rendering of the margin, “that wanteth not *mixture*,” be admitted, the mixture may refer to the blood of atonement, with the washing of water by the word, and sanctification of the Spirit; which, although different, agree in one, as it is written; “there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” 1 John v. 8. It is the Spirit that first quickeneth, and then carrieth on the Christian work unto the end, by blessing and making effectual the appointed means: for having convinced the sinner of sin and of his need of the Saviour, by the application of the word, he leads him to the blood of atonement, and to the baptismal fount, applying all the justifying, sanctifying, and purifying influences, procured by the Redeemer to his soul; and abides with him, guiding and conducting him safe to the end of his journey.

In this view this one goblet or fountain might represent the three following washings, spoken of in the Holy Scriptures, which are all used for one and the same ultimate end, the complete salvation of sinners, or of fallen man. 1st, The washing by the living waters of the Spirit and the Word, by which a convert is

called and quickened or born again. 2dly, The baptismal washing, by which he makes his visible entry into the Christian Church, becoming thereby entitled to all the Christian privileges of communion and fellowship with the Church. 3dly, The washing in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, of the precious blood of Christ. And these tend to produce the vivification, sanctification, purification, and justification required in the true convert : and thus do these three, the Spirit, the water, and the blood bear witness, that the convert is a child of God and a member of his true spiritual Church.

Now we read, that except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, John iii. 5 : and that it is the Spirit that quickeneth ; and that the words of Christ are spirit and life, chap. vi. 63 : and, that Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it ; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, Eph. v. 25, 26 : and in the Revelation, that they who came out of great tribulation, and had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, served God in his temple ; and that the Lamb should feed

them and lead them unto living fountains of waters, Rev. vii. 14—17; no doubt of his Word and Spirit: and, in the description of the New Jerusalem, it is said that a river of the water of life proceeds out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb, chap. xxii. 1: and in this Song, iv. 12, the Church is said to be “a spring shut up, a fountain sealed;” and when the Jews are to be converted, and the kingdom again to be restored to Israel, and the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem who crucified their Lord are to be forgiven their iniquities, and they, with the whole of the natural Israel, to be received into the Christian Church: it is said, “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness,” Zech. xiii. 1: which in the primary prophetic sense, and according to the context, may import that in that day, the Christian Church, that fountain spoken of by Solomon, will be opened to them, provided with all the blessings of the gospel, which they may possess if they choose; which fountain and some true converts seem here exhibited under the figures of a goblet of liquor and an heap of wheat; and the true convert readily acknowledges that it is, by the

offering up of the Lamb of God for the sins of the world, that he becomes entitled to all the privileges of the gospel.

But when these true converts are made and joined to the *spiritual Church*, or are born again, and produced as her progeny, and by baptism become members of the *visible Church*; others will, most probably, join the visible Church with them, be baptized, and become members thereof, without having any lot or part in the true spiritual Church, as they will not accept of the gospel blessings though placed within their reach. This seems probable from the following words of the Psalmist; “As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; *but peace shall be upon Israel;*” as well as from daily experience in the visible Church. But their unbelief and ingratitude will not disturb the peace of the Christian Church: and their punishment is fully declared.

But I must remark, that, as a prophetic history of many circumstances concerning the atonement has been already given in the Song, the goblet of liquor may here more particularly refer to the living waters of the Holy

Spirit, spoken of throughout the Bible, and particularly in the beautiful texts of scripture above-mentioned : which seems the more probable, from the time to which the prophetic description of the Church here given seems to apply, namely, to that just after the conversion of the Jews ; when our Lord has become the husband and head of his Church, as here represented ; and when the harvest of the world has commenced, and the most abundant fruits of the atonement have begun to be brought into the Church. Matt. xiii. 30 : in which description, her internal economy, and resources for the nourishment and preservation of her offspring, seem to be figuratively and most beautifully pointed out. And her members, having been drawn to her by the Holy Ghost, and justified by the blood of atonement, are here exhibited as around a fountain containing every thing necessary for their comfort, and for the preservation of their spiritual life : and our Lord hath said (and probably having this second verse in view) “ He that believeth on me, as the scriptures have said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water :” which, it is said, he spake of the Spirit, which they that believed should receive. John vii. 38, 39.

In attending to the figurative import of this verse, the reader will perceive the beautiful analogy which seems to exist between the natural life of the human subject while living concealed, and hidden in the womb, or before it is born into the world, and the spiritual life of the soul of a converted Jew before he discovers himself, or appears as the converts now do ; that is, visibly in the Christian Church, or as vivified and ready to germinate and produce his fruit, by becoming an active member. While he remains hidden and concealed, he is, as it were, in the womb of the Church, though converted, or quickened by the good Spirit of God : but when he appears in the body of the Church, as the young converts seem here represented, and, as it were, waiting, or petitioning for fresh supplies ; he may be considered as a new born babe, visible and desiring the sincere milk of the word, and fresh supplies of the Spirit of God, that he may grow thereby, and be enabled to proceed in his Christian course : and in the following verse are described the figurative breasts for furnishing the pure milk of the word.

“ Set about with lilies.” The Hebrew word here rendered lilies, is in the masculine gender ;

probably to intimate that the plants here mentioned are strong and vigorous, of masculine power, and therefore capable of producing most excellent fruit.

As lilies and wheat are gathered and brought home in the time of harvest, they may probably also point out the time to which the prophecy applies, as being about or after the beginning of wheat harvest. *See on Dudaim, towards the end.*

Ver. 3. "Thy two breasts," &c. The figurative breasts of the Church have been already considered as the Old and New Testament Scriptures; which yield the milk of the word for the nourishment of the Lord's people. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

Bishop Hall observes, "Thy two Testaments, which are thy two full and comely breasts, by whose wholesome milk thou nourishest all thy faithful children once born into the light, are, for their excellent and perfect agreement, and their amiable proportion, like two young roes."

They are "like two young roes *that are twins:*" or literally, "like two young roes, twins of a roe of Jah." Which mother-roe, we have conjectured (on Song iv. 5.) to be the wisdom of God; and they are given to the

Church by Jehovah: and their similarity, agreement, and correspondence, shew them to be twins; and their nature and subject clearly demonstrate, that they are descended from God, and given to the true mother-Church, the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all, Gal. iv. 6; of which the prophets and apostles were members. If the above rendering be admitted, this is the second time that the name *Jah* has occurred in this Song of Songs. *See on chap. iv. 5.*

Verse 4. “Thy neck *is* as a tower of ivory.” Ivory is white, solid, and durable: and an ivory tower may be emblematic of innocence, beauty, strength, and majesty; and may fitly figure the excellent beauty and glory of the neck of the Church at this time. *See on chap. iv. 4.*

“Thine eyes *like* the fish-pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim.” The eyes of the Church have been already explained (on Song i. 15.) as being figurative of the Old and New Testament scriptures, by which the Church is illuminated. They are here compared to fish-pools; which are places containing water, into which fish are drawn, or put to feed, and in which their life is preserved: and the two

Testaments, or books of Divine Revelation, which are reservoirs of living waters, by which the souls of men, drawn by the good Spirit of God, are nourished and preserved, may be, in this sense, compared to fish-pools, or pools of water: and the apostles, Peter and Andrew, were to be made fishers of men. Matt. iv. 18, 19. They were, by the preaching of the word, and the Divine blessing attending it, to catch men in the gospel net; and to bring them into the Church of Christ, to be fed and nourished by the waters of the Word and Spirit of God.

ברכות, *berecoth*, here rendered *fish-pools*, is, in Eccles. ii. 6, rendered simply *pools*: and these pools were for watering king Solomon's gardens. *Ibid.* But there might be, and probably there were, fish in them, as is very common in gardens; and probably hence the rendering of the English translators in the present verse: though in rendering the same word in 2 Kings xx. 20, where it is found in the singular number, and where it is said that king Hezekiah "made *a pool*, and a conduit, and brought water into the city," they render simply *a pool*.

From these and other passages of scripture,

it seems apparent, that this word signifies *a collection, or reservoir of water, or a pool*, and probably, below the surface of the earth, either at the head of a fountain, or in a proper situation for the supplying of a city with water; or in a garden, for holding fish, or watering the garden, or for any other useful purpose: whether supplied from a spring, or fountain, from a river, or from the clouds of heaven. And the holy writings seem to be called by the Psalmist, “the still waters,” xxiii. 2: and they are, in other places of scripture, compared to water.

Mr. Parkhurst renders בִּרְכָה, *berecah*, “a reservoir, or pool, where waters, as it were, couch, or lie:” as he thinks the ideal meaning of the root בָּרַךְ, *baruc*, from which this noun comes, is to couch, or lie down, as a beast on its knees, to rest; as found in Gen. xxiv. 11, and there given by the LXX, and Vulgate.

They are said to be fish-pools “in Heshbon;” here considered as the name of a place. And a city of this name is mentioned in Joshua xiii. 10, 17, 21; which seems to have been the capital city of the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and where he resided; but which was given to the tribe of Reuben, with other

cities, by Moses, after the conquest of the kingdom.

It was probably a very splendid city, and the one primarily alluded to in this passage: and perhaps there were pools, or reservoirs there, of clear, serene, and salutary waters, and of singular excellence: and probably the waters were so transparent as that their contents might be clearly and distinctly seen. If so, they might figure the reservoirs of the waters of the word of God, as contained in the Old and New Testaments; and probably intimate, that, at the period of the Church here described, the contents of these two blessed books of Divine Revelation should be as clearly discovered and explained, or as clearly seen as the contents of these literal pools of water.

But we proceed to take another view of the subject, by considering Heshbon as an appellative, and tracing the ideal meaning of the Hebrew word so rendered: from which another beautiful sense seems to arise, as intimating what kind of pools is here intended; namely, that they are pools in true philosophy, or reservoirs of the knowledge and wisdom of God.

The noun חשבון, *hshabon*, comes from the root חשב, *hshab*, the principal significations of which are to *think, reckon, or reason*. But its primary sense seems to be, *to think with wisdom, or rationally*: and therefore implies the proper, wise, and rational exercise of the human mind in examining and considering the things which come under its cognizance, whether natural or moral, in our endeavours to discover the true cause and nature thereof. In this exercise was Solomon engaged when he was endeavouring to find out wisdom, and the knowledge which would result from his inquiries, or the true philosophy of things. “I applied mine heart,” says he, “to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, וחשבון,” *vehshabon*, “and the reason of things:” or rather, and *the result* (of my inquiries); or *the knowledge* naturally arising from such an investigation, the philosophy of the objects of his study. Eccles. vii. 25.

חשב, *hshab*, has also many other particular significations; but all seem to arise from the radical or primary sense *to think rationally, or wisely, or to think*: as, “*to consider, reflect upon, judge, study, design, devise, contrive, invent, to be skilful, or ingenious in any work,*” &c.

Dr. Taylor. The following significations may be given from Parkhurst, “*to add, superadd one thing to another, to put together,*” &c. “*to count, reckon, compute, by adding several things together,*” &c. “*to reckon, think, to lay one’s thoughts together,*” &c.

Now the rational soul, while busy in its inquiries into the cause and nature of things, thinks, and reasons, by adding one thing to another, and comparing one train of reasoning with another, that it may find out *hhashbon*, or the result of its inquiries, or *the philosophy* of the objects of its study: and in verse 27, of the same viith chapter of Ecclesiastes, *hhashbon* is rendered *the account*; the “*computation finished,*” being evidently *the result* of the whole of the preacher’s reckoning, or reasoning, which he endeavoured to find by adding one thing to another. Indeed, *hhashbon* has been called *philosophy*; as thus explained by Pagninus; “*supputatio: ratio propter quam quis aliquid aut id ipsum sic fecerit, quo nomine vocatur, Philosophia. Eccles. vii. 25.*”

The sense in which the English translators understood *hhashbon* in Eccles. vii. 25, seems to be thus given by Dr. Taylor, “*The reason, cause, or ground of things, as they are the*

object of thought and study.” But from a careful consideration of this and the 27th verse, and from comparing them together, it seems apparent, that a previous rational investigation took place, and the addition of one thing to another, before the preacher attained to *hhashbon*, or to the sum total of the knowledge he was in search of, or the result of his inquiries; and as it may be believed, that, in his previous search after wisdom, mentioned in the 25th verse, of which *hhashbon* was the result, the cause and nature of the objects of his study were included; so we may consider *hhashbon* as the result of the previous investigation, as the knowledge thereby obtained. Therefore, in this 25th verse, it may signify the knowledge acquired by a wise and rational investigation of the wisdom of God, in the creation, preservation, and ultimate uses of the objects of research; or the true philosophy thereof.

This sense of *חשבון*, *hhashbon*, seems to be further confirmed by the following analysis, which I beg leave to state for the reader’s consideration. If the root *חשב* * *hhashab*, be thus

* Be not startled at my etymologies. For I am aware that in the land of etymology are many quicksands, many slip-

dissected, א ב ש, and the three component letters considered as representatives of the three following words *asher ben hhoemah*; the literal and primary signification of *hhashab* will be, *quod in vel cum sapientia*, or *which is in or with wisdom* i. e. to think *with wisdom*, or *wisely*; and that of the present participle, *hhosheb*, thinking, i. e. *wisely*; and of מַחְשָׁבָה, *mahhashabah*, *thought*, i. e. *with wisdom*, or *acuteness*, &c; and if *hhashbon* be considered as composed of the following words, *hu nin hhosheb*, it will signify *he the Son of wise-thinking*;

perly and sandy foundations: but I also know, that in it are some firm, adamantine rocks, some sure foundations, which are as firm and as durable as the truth and wisdom of God. If we can, by our investigations, discover these; the words, or the subjects of our inquiry, will be found placed upon the most solid and permanent bases; upon foundations which will last as long as time, and prove as unchangeable as the truth itself. The subject is therefore worthy of most mature consideration, and of our best endeavours to make progress therein. On all these accounts, in my humble attempts to discover the meaning of Scripture, I try to find the true radical idea of the Hebrew word, and on it I endeavour to build my superstructure.

The etymons offered in this little volume are submitted for consideration. I could present more, but the necessary circumspection requires, that these should first be examined and judged of.

or it will import that it is *the result of proper rational investigation*: and may here refer to the thinking used in the investigation of wisdom, including the whole course from beginning to end: and all the steps taken in the course of our inquiries are as many exertions of the mind which at last lead us to *hleshbon*, to the end of our reckoning, to the final result, including all the knowledge acquired from the beginning of our research. The signification of this Hebrew root and its derivatives, according to the above analysis, seems to be given by the English translators in Exod. xxxi. 4, xxxv. 32, 35, and many other places; all which passages imply the thinking with wisdom.

This passage, therefore, of the Song, might be thus literally rendered, "*Thine eyes are pools in philosophy, by the gate,*" &c. They are collections of the waters of the Spirit, reservoirs of the wisdom of God: and it will be allowed by all who have duly considered them, and are capable of judging, that there is more wisdom, more true philosophy contained in the Bible, than in any other book which they ever saw, or ever heard of: and it may rationally be believed, as will in time be evidently seen, that in it are hidden treasures of wisdom and know-

ledge, which will agreeably and profitably occupy the mind of man in the investigation of them, even to the end of time. And it seems very probable that the radical principles of some of the principal, if not of all the sciences, may be finally discovered among the hidden mysteries of Divine revelation.

Moreover, the law or revelation of God, contained in the Old and New Testaments, is the wisdom of God, the true philosophy, not that falsely so called : and it furnishes the reasoning, and motives, and is the daily guide and director of the people of God ; their bread, their water, their life, and the length of their days ; their joy and delight, in which also they meditate day and night. In Eccles. vii. 27, *hhashbon* is, as we have seen, rendered *the account*, it being the result of the preacher's reasoning or reckoning : so, in this passage of the Song, besides the literal sense of the name of a place, it may figuratively represent, that all the reasonings contained in the whole of the revealed word of God, as completed and now existing in the Bible, are consistent with true philosophy, or the reason of things ; the whole being the result of successive revelations, or *additions*, graciously given to us

during the progressive ages of the Church, until the whole was completed; containing also the gracious *thoughts* of our heavenly Father towards us, with the prophetic *reckonings* of the times which should pass over the Church, even to the end of the world.

Their situation is said to be “by the gate of Bath-rabbim.” בת־רַבִּים, *bath-rabbim*, consisting of two Hebrew words joined together by *maccaph*, has been considered by the English translators as a proper name: and, thus considered, it may literally refer either to the royal city, or palace of Sihon, the king of the Amorites above mentioned; as pointing out the situation of the literal pools, as being by the gate of the city, or palace of the king and his family. But there may be also a spiritual meaning in these words, which may be discovered by considering them distinctly. Thus considered, they literally render, *The Daughter of the Great Ones*.

Now, the new and living way into the Church of Christ is in and through the merits of the Lord Jesus; who is therefore said to be the Door and the Way. And in opening the Bible at the beginning of St. Matthew’s Gospel, we find the history of the nativity, and then of

the life, sufferings, and death of Jesus : and by this gate we may enter, and trace all the glorious truths, in these great reservoirs of wisdom and knowledge, the Old and New Testaments ; which may individually be considered as a congeries of philosophic pools, as every separate book of scripture may be considered as one pool ; and the Hebrew word rendered fish-pools, is in the plural, and not in the dual number. The Old and New Testament scriptures, therefore, seem to be the figurative *pools*, and the entrance between them the figurative *gate* here spiritually alluded to. And the Church of the living God, the daughter of the heavenly Jerusalem, seems to be the daughter here intended : and she is the daughter of the Great Ones, the three Great and Glorious Persons in the One Great and Undivided Jehovah. They made her what she is.

“Thy nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon, which looketh toward Damascus.” Thy nose is the foremost, and most prominent feature of thy face, and is majestic, noble, graceful, &c. It is turned towards Damascus, or towards the land of Canaan : for the Jews were to be carried beyond Damascus, Amos v. 27 ; and being now converted, their conversion

seems to be here figuratively declared by the attitude of the countenance, it being now turned about : and they are now seeking the Lord their God, and asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward. Jer. l. 4, 5.

Ver. 5. “Thine head upon thee *is* like Carmel,” &c. Now the head of the Church is Christ, the King of the spiritual Judah and Israel : and, as before shewn, he sits enthroned in his word, between his twenty-four elders or princes, his prophets and apostles ; and he has always the noblest and loftiest place, being seated or held in the prophetic and apostolic galleries : having also always the chief place in the affections of his church and people. The house of Christ is said to have beams of cedar and rafters of fir, chap. i. 17 ; which have been considered as apostolic beams and prophetic rafters : and the Hebrew word, here rendered *galleries*, comes from the same root as that rendered *rafters* (and where the margin renders *galleries*) in the above quotation. And of the lofty and wide-spreading prophetic cedars of the Old Testament, with the stately wide-branching apostolic firs of the New, may be formed galleries, for the central and elevated throne of our King of Sion. So that

the King being held in the galleries, may primarily and prophetically allude to the situation of our Lord as King and Judge of his people of the spiritual Jerusalem, according to the following beautiful description given by David in Psalm cxxii: "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David," 3, 4, 5. And the thrones seem to be those of Christ, as the great King and spiritual David; and of his apostles and prophets, as the ministers of the Lord, and of his word by which his people are to be judged. And, at this time, the natural Israel and the spiritual Judah will be united together; and the spiritual house of David will exist in great majesty and glory.

The word Carmel, if composed of כרם, *cerem*, and אל, *el*, will signify *vineyard of the Lord*: and the natural mount Carmel was a pleasant, fertile, and lofty mountain, in the inheritance of Judah, having its head covered with excellent trees, flowers, &c. It might, therefore, in one sense, figure the dignity, the greatness,

the majesty and beauty, of the Head of the Church, at the time to which this prophecy applies. It was on this mountain that the great contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal took place; and where the latter were destroyed, and the Lord and his people triumphed over them, 1 Kings xviii: and in like manner will the Lord and his people triumph over his and their enemies, in the great and terrible day of the Lord; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. 2 Thess. i. 10.

But there is another view of this passage, naturally arising from a different etymology of the word כרמל, *Carmel*, which seems to throw much light upon the whole passage; as pointing out that it is Christ, *the exalted of God*, who is here represented as the Head of his Church. This etymology is produced by the following analysis of the Hebrew word; which word, when resolved into כרם אל, *ce ram El*, will signify *like the exalted of God*. And our Lord, according to the prophetic narration, has just converted the Jews and married his Church, and therefore is now become her Husband and Head, and “him hath God ex-

alted with his right hand, *to be* a Prince, and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts v. 31. "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii. 9—11.

"And the hair of thine head like purple," &c. The hair which grows upon, or proceeds from the head, has been before mentioned as the covering of the woman, and St. Paul says, if a woman has long hair it is a glory to her; "for *her* hair is given her for a covering." 1 Cor. xi. 15. And the hair being like *purple*, or of a purple colour, may refer both to the royalty of the bride, and to the means by which that royalty was procured, namely, by the shedding of the precious blood of Christ.

Therefore, according to the second etymology, and the general explanation, the sense of this verse may be thus expressed; 'Thy Lord, the exalted of God, is now become thine Husband, or Head; and the hair of thine head, flowing down from it, and covering thee,

is, as it were, the royal mantle of thy Lord, the mantle of eternal royalty, purchased for you by his blood; whereby all your members, all your sons and daughters, are become princes and princesses, being made kings and priests unto God: he is now become your Husband, your Head and Protector, and will for ever remain in that exalted situation as the King of his spiritual Sion, in the midst of his people; who will no doubt give him the first and highest place in their affections.'

Moreover, this is now the time when the excellency of Carmel and of Sharon, and the glory of Lebanon are to be given unto the Church. Isa. xxxv. 2. And when the house of the natural Israel, this vineyard of the Lord of hosts, will appear, as under the tribe of Ephraim, the first born, the birthright of the natural Israel having been given to Joseph.

Ver. 6. "How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!" As if he had said: 'How fair, and how pleasant hast thou been, or art thou, O my love, in the delightful exercise of sacred and sweet spiritual communion with your Saviour and your God.'

Bishop Hall thus paraphrases, "Oh how beautiful and lovely art thou therefore, O my

Church, in all thy parts and ornaments! How sweet and pleasant art thou, O my love, in whatsoever might give me true contentment!"

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Ver. 7. "This thy stature," &c. She is of a beautiful and stately structure like to the palm-tree; having breasts like clusters of the fruit thereof; or, as after, of grapes, ver. 8, yielding the choice wine of the Spirit, with the rich milk of the Word.

Bishop Hall thus paraphrases, "The two breasts of thy Testaments are like two full juicy clusters, which yield comfortable and abundant refreshing." *Ibid. p. 289.*

Now the palm-tree is an upright, tall tree; always green, flourishing, and fruitful. Hence it is said that the righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree. Psalm xcii. 12. And the Old and New Testaments furnish not only precious and rich fruits of the Church; but also the wine and milk of celestial truth, which is vivifying, refreshing, and comforting; even more so than all the created enjoyments which have been granted to the sons of men. It is this wine and milk, which the Lord's people are called to come and buy, without money and without price. Isa. lv. 1.

Ver. 8. 9. "I said I will go up," &c. 9. "for my beloved," &c.

The Hebrew words הוֹלֵךְ לְדוּדֵי לְמִשְׁרָיִם, *holec ledodi lemesharim*, in the 9th verse, are rendered, "for my beloved, that goeth *down* sweetly;" but this is a very strained interpretation, which can only be considered as exhibiting the sense in which the translators understood the passage. In Psalm xvii. 2, they have rendered *mesharim* "the things that are equal," or *upright*; and therefore, this Hebrew noun being in the masculine gender and plural number, may signify *the men that are upright*, or *the upright ones*: which last seems to be the true meaning in this passage of the Song; and it is rendered *upright*, in this sense, Song i. 4. I would therefore render, *flowing for my beloved one, and for the upright ones*, the people of the true Israel of God, or the "men of pure sentiments, and sincere affection towards God." *Vitring. in Parkhurst*: which may intimate, that all the glorious things promised in the Revelation, or in the upper or latter parts of the Divine Word, all the precious and exhilarating gospel-blessings, even the choice wine of the word of truth, will flow to the Church and her mem-

bers, after the marriage of the Lamb, in abundance, producing the most vivifying and cordial effects; even as those of wine which maketh glad the heart of man.

Now, the Lord had said by his prophet that he would marry his Church, or become her Lord and Head: which seems to be here implied by the going up to take hold of the boughs of the palm-tree; which has no boughs but at its top or upper part. And now, (when he is actually married, or when he has ascended and taken his seat as the Head of his Church) her breasts shall be as clusters of the true vine, yielding the choicest wine of comfort and consolation for his beloved people: and the smell of her nose shall be most refreshing and fragrant; and the roof of her mouth, or the latter and upper parts of the prophetic and apostolic word, be most gratifying for the members of the Church whom the Lord loves; and shall even cause sleeping sinners to awake and speak the praises of their God. And Daniel, speaking of the conversion of the Jews and others from the death or sleep of sin to newness of life, says, “and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.” chap. xii. 2. And St.

Paul, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. v. 14. And so will many sleeping sinners be roused by the wine of the good news of the conversion of Israel; and by the glorious things revealed by the beloved apostle in the Revelation, which forms the last portion of the word of God.

In the 2nd chapter, and 3d verse of this Song, the bride sits down under the shadow of the apple-tree, her Lord, the tree of life; and his fruit was sweet to her taste: and this fruit was her accustomed food. And here, her nose smells like apples, like the fruit on which she feeds. The smell of apples is also grateful, fragrant, and refreshing.

Now in the beautiful figurative representation contained in the first nine verses of this chapter, which have been just noticed, we have a most magnificent prophetic description of the glorious state of the Church, just after the conversion of the Jews, and their union with the Christian Church; and of the many choice, rich, and fragrant gospel-blessings which will be bestowed upon her about this period, when many of the most glorious and most precious promises of God will be fulfilled; when also

the sleeping gentile world will be roused, the face of the covering taken away from all nations, and when the kingdom shall be the Lord's. And now, the breasts are to yield not only milk, but wine, of the best, most vivifying, and refreshing kind: and now also, the bread-corn of the tree of life shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids. Zech. ix. 17. How glorious is all this!

How glorious also, and how excellent, are the state and internal economy of the Church at this time! 1st, Her Lord is now her Husband and Head, covering her and his people with the royal purple mantle of redemption, and crowning her with loving kindness and tender mercies. 2dly, In the centre of her body there is a perpetual spring, or fountain, for the vivification, comfort, consolation, and preservation of her members. 3dly, Her breasts furnish the sincere milk of the word, for the growth and nourishment of her offspring; even her two Testaments of the word of life, and of true philosophic truth, yielding also the choice Israelitish wine, for the exhilaration of the tribes of Israel. How good is our God and Father to us his ungrateful children!

THE CHURCH.

- Ch. VII. 10. "I *am* my beloved's, and his desire *is* toward me.
11. Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.
12. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, *whether* the tender grape appear, *and* the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.
13. The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates *are* all manner of pleasant *fruits*, new and old, *which* I have laid up for thee, O my beloved."

THE 10th verse, concisely and beautifully, expresses the mutual love of the newly formed Church, and her Lord, and the happy state of the Church at this time, when she has become the married wife of the Lamb. Rev. xix. 7: and it was prophesied by David, that the King should greatly desire her beauty. Ps. xlv. 11.

Ver. 11. "Come, my beloved," &c. This may probably allude to the going forth for the conversion of the unconverted world, which may remain in that state after the conversion of the Jews. And Jerusalem is to be as unwall'd

towns for the multitude of men: and even the whole world, from one end of the earth even unto the other, will, in no very long time after the conversion of the Jews, be converted unto the Lord.

“Let us lodge,” &c. Bishop Patrick observes, that the word *nalinah*, *let us lodge*, signifies to tarry, and to make one’s *dwelling* or *abode* in a place. Psal. xci. 1: and that it may be applied to the settling of the gospel in those regions where it was but newly planted—but more particularly so where it has never been heard of. So that according to these observations, this passage may refer, either to the confirming of the newly converted Jews, or to the conversion of other nations not yet converted. And the next verse may particularly point out the activity of the Church in this business; as being early, or as hastening to accomplish the work.

The Hebrew word *בכפרים*, *baccepharim*, here rendered *in the villages*, rather signifies *among the cophers*; though the sense of both renderings is nearly the same; the former signifying the habitations of Christians, and the latter the Christians themselves; namely, the more exemplary and fruitful Christians.

Ver. 12. “ Let us get up early,” &c. As if she had said, ‘ Let us also go to the places which have already received the word, and are bringing forth the fruits thereof; or to the churches, to the pious habitations, or countries of Christians; to see whether they are putting forth penitential buds, continue growing in grace, or flourishing, and producing Christian fruits meet for repentance: and there will my people render unto thee the sacrifices of righteousness, with the grateful fruits of praise and thanksgiving; and thus will I express my sincerest and most ardent loves. Let us get early, let us be diligent in so doing.’

Ver. 13. “ The mandrakes,” &c. The Hebrew word **דודאים**, *dudaim*, has been translated very differently by different interpreters; some rendering *mandrakes*, others *violets*, *lilies*, *jessamines*, *lovely flowers*, *citrons*, &c. &c. These different renderings have arisen from the uncertainty which exists as to the kind of plant here intended, and that even among the Jews themselves. But it is more commonly rendered *mandragoræ*, or *mandrakes*; and is first mentioned in Gen. xxx. 14; where they are said to be brought by Reuben from the field, in the days of wheat-harvest; and smell is

ascribed to them in this passage of the Song. And the Hebrew word הַדּוּדַיִם, *haddudaim*, of the present verse, rendered *the mandrakes*, is also, by the LXX, rendered *ὁι μανδραγόραι*, “mandragoræ,” or *the mandrakes*: and by the Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic translators, by Pag. Mont. Castell. and others, “mandragoræ,” or *mandrakes*. But Joan. Clericus renders *dudæa* (emiserunt odorem suum), converting the Hebrew word into a Latin. Thomas Malvenda retains the Hebrew word, and renders *dudaim* (dederunt spirationem). Those who consider *mandrakes* as the proper rendering, have generally thought that it was the fruit, or apple, which was here intended: which some have described as beautiful and odoriferous; while others speak of the smell as being particularly disagreeable. So that their accounts by no means agree, but are even contradictory; and many of their conjectures concerning its virtues are erroneous. In the 30th chapter of Genesis it is said, that in the days of wheat-harvest, Reuben brought home to his mother some *dudaim*, there rendered *mandrakes*. But the time of wheat-harvest, and of the budding of vines and pomegranates mentioned in this 7th chapter of the Song, ver. 12, was,

according to Tremellius, too early for the mandragoræ, or mandrakes, to be ripe ; though others think differently. Tremellius and Junius, therefore, considering that flowers, not fruit, were here intended, render “ amabiles flores,” *lovely flowers* : and others, as before observed, have conjectured the kind of flowers alluded to, some rendering *violets*, others *lilies*, &c. But though it may be difficult to determine what the *dudaim* were, and whether they were fruit, flowers, or plants which Reuben brought home ; it seems of no consequence as to the spiritual sense intended in this passage of the Song, the property of fragrance or sweet smell being there implied. Tremel. and Jun. think they were lovely on account of their elegance and odour. Pfeifferus, that they were a kind of flowers remarkable both for their colour and smell, and probably the lily, *vid. Stock. Clav.* : and our Lord speaks of the lilies of the field, as being more gloriously arrayed than even Solomon in all his glory ; and they have a very fragrant smell. And Rauwolfius relates, that, in Syria, lilies and other fragrant and pleasant flowers commonly flower in the fields among the corn. *Ibid.* That they were not violets seems evident, as the

latter flower much earlier than the harvest in that country.

As therefore authors are not yet agreed concerning the kind of plant, would it not be proper, with Malvenda, to retain the Hebrew word, and say, *the dudaim*, instead of *the mandrakes*, until this shall be clearly discovered?

It seems highly probable that the conclusion of Tremellius is correct; that flowers are intended, and those very beautiful and fragrant, and therefore *lovely flowers*. And if it be believed that the word *dudaim* is formed from דוד, *dod*, a love, or *beloved one*, which will therefore include the idea of *loveliness* (whether it refer to the plants, the flowers, or the fruit,) either as to their nature, appearance, or odour; then *dudaim* might be rendered *the lovelies*, and might include various kinds of excellent, beautiful, and sweet-smelling flowers, or fruits: and it is to be remembered, that every lovely fragrant plant is an emblem of a member of the true Church of Christ; and all her members are fertile, fragrant, and lovely, in the eyes of their God, and of their brethren.

The ideas entertained by some learned men, and now commonly believed by the people in general, that the *dudaim* are plants or

fruits which promote conception or cause women to be fruitful, or to bear children; and that Rachel, who had expressed a most impatient and improper desire for children in the first verse, for which she had been very properly reprov'd by her husband in the second, did, notwithstanding that reproof, covet the *dudaim* which Reuben brought home, on account of this supposed virtue; seem altogether erroneous, the virtue being imaginary, and even unascrived to the mandragoræ or mandrakes (the supposed plants or fruit) in those days, and long afterwards, *vid. Song* vii. 13, *Hippocrat. Oper.*: and those ideas concerning Rachel are wholly unwarranted from the short history contained in Gen. xxx, which is no doubt inserted for some wise reasons, and probably to furnish a figure which might be properly used in the present text of the Song, to point out the precise time to which the prophecy applies; and which it does as accurately as if a volume had been written upon the subject, as will soon be shewn.

To endeavour to do away the erroneous ideas above stated, and to discover the kind of plants intended in Gen. xxx. 14, and in

this passage of the Song, we will briefly consider, first the rendering of the word *dudaim*, and then the history itself, as recorded in the former chapter.

In Gen. xxx. 14, it is said, that Reuben went and found **דודאים**, *dudaim* (in the English Bible rendered *mandrakes*) in the field: and the LXX render *μῆλα μανδραγόρων*, or *apples of mandragoræ*, or of *mandrakes*. But they have no authority from the Hebrew for this translation, which can only be considered as a conjectural, paraphrastic rendering, such as may be found in many other places; and which may probably have arisen from an imaginary virtue having been ascribed to those apples, and from some vague conjectures concerning the wishes of Rachel in desiring to possess them. But though, at first sight, or from a superficial view of the subject, the LXX might readily fall into this train of reasoning concerning the plants alluded to by Moses, and also of the intentions of Rachel, as have many great and good men since their time; yet, when the sacred history is more attentively considered, and compared with the generally acknowledged nature of the *mandragoræ*, it will, I conceive, evidently appear,

that their ideas are not warranted by Moses, and that the plants alluded to were not the mandrakes, nor their fruit, the apples mentioned; which, instead of possessing the fragrance implied in the Song, are, on the contrary, so very disagreeable in their smell, that their common Chaldee and Syriac names are believed to be derived from a Chaldee and Syriac word which signifies *a he-gout*. *Parkhurst*; a name bearing no resemblance to that of the Hebrew, *dodaim*, or *dudaim*, which bears in it the idea of *loveliness* or *pleasantness*: and their smell, as mentioned in the passage of the Song now under consideration, can be no other but a fragrant or sweet smell; as no other plants, flowers, or fruits, but sweet and lovely ones, can represent the members of the true Church of Christ, or be found within her garden; for her plants are described as an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits, cophers with nards, &c. chap iv. 13.

Moreover, though any erroneous ideas, which Rachel, as a frail, fallible woman, might have taken up, might have been mentioned, merely as other historical facts, in the history given by Moses, Gen. xxx.; it cannot be believed that the beautiful figurative de-

scription, found in this passage of the sacred and prophetic records in the Song of Songs, would be taken from them, or be founded upon her erroneous and sinful conceptions. But we do not perceive that she did entertain the ideas ascribed to her; which may be principally founded upon the above translation of the LXX, which has been so generally followed: nor does the mention made of the *dudaim* in the 7th chapter of the Song, countenance the idea that, in the days of Solomon, they were believed to be the mandrakes, or that the latter possessed those virtues which were only long after ascribed to them, but which are believed to have no foundation in fact.

But whatever properties may be ascribed to the mandrake, or its fruit, it is first necessary to know assuredly that this is the true rendering of *dudaim*, or that it is the plant spoken of by Moses. But if it be proved that the mandrake, whether plant, flower, or fruit, is unpleasant and unwholesome, and that it has a most disagreeable smell; it cannot answer the description given of the *dudaim* in the Bible, and therefore cannot be the plant intended.

Let us now consider the history, as related by Moses in this 30th chapter.

In the preceding chapter, we are informed that Leah bare four sons unto Jacob, while Rachel continued barren. And in this chapter, verse 1, Rachel, seeing that she bare no children, envies her sister, and expresses a most reprehensible impatience for them, for which she is severely reprov'd by her husband in the 2d verse; who directs her to Him of whom alone cometh the fruit of the womb. It has been observed by many excellent and learned men, that a great desire for children was common among the married Jewish women, in hopes of bringing into the world that Great Personage in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed: which may account why, notwithstanding the reproof of her husband, Rachel's desire for children still continued; but it was accompanied with prayer to God, though she adopted an unlawful expedient, not uncommon in those days. She gives her maid to her husband, that she may have children by her, ver. 3, 4: and Bilhah bare a son, ver. 5; and Rachel acknowledges that God had heard her voice, ver. 6, thus acknowledging that she had intreated him for

the increase. Bilhah gives Jacob another son, ver. 7; whom Rachel seems to consider as a gift from God, as the result of her wrestling with her sister; most probably in prayer to God, that he would grant her another son; as seems implied from the name she gives him. She calls his name נפתלי, *Naphtali*, ver. 8; which literally signifies, as thus analysed, נ פתל י, *the son of my wrestling*. From which it seems probable, that she had profited by the reproof of her husband, and was looking up to God alone for children. Leah, seeing that she herself ceased to bear, and probably perceiving that the device of Rachel to procure children by her maid-servant was successful, also gives her maid Zilpah to her husband, who bare first Gad, and then Asher. ver. 9—13.

We are now brought to the 14th verse, when Reuben the eldest son of Leah, then probably twelve or thirteen years of age, finds the dudaim.

Ver. 14. “ And Reuben went in the days of wheat-harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son’s mandrakes.”

Reuben goes in the days of wheat-harvest; and finds *dudaim* (here rendered *mandrakes*,) in the field : or, he goes out among the reapers, and, while they are proceeding, collects, very probably, some of the choicest, most beautiful, and fragrant flowers (whether flowers or fruit is of no consequence as to the figurative use made of this history in the Song of Songs : it is only to be particularly remembered that they were fragrant, and found in wheat-harvest,) from among the corn, or perhaps from the intermediate spaces, or from the sides of the corn-field ; and brings them to his mother. Rachel seeing them, and being most probably delighted with their beauty and fragrance, requests some of them from Leah : and Leah, wishing to obtain a favour for them, addresses her as related, ver. 15 : and Rachel, having promised a certain compliance with her wishes, obtains the *dudaim* ; which she probably meant to present to her husband as a mark of her affection. But we read of no improper or sinful idea being entertained by either of these pious women respecting the *dudaim* ; which, had they possessed, or been then supposed to possess the prolific virtues which were afterwards ascribed to the mandragoræ, would without

doubt have been retained by Leah, for she was as desirous of an increase of family as was Rachel. But though they both wished for children (and particularly Rachel, who had never had any), which was natural to married women, and particularly to Jewish women, for the reason already given, and also because among them barrenness was esteemed a reproach; they were looking up to Him of whom cometh children and the fruit of the womb. For we are told that God hearkened unto Leah, and that she conceived, ver. 17; and that some years after he also hearkened unto Rachel, and that she also conceived, and bare (the illustrious) Joseph, ver. 22, 23: whose seed are now become a multitude of nations in the midst of the earth. And this is one of the various examples recorded in Scripture of the goodness of God to pious women to whom he had not granted children until a late period after marriage.

Moreover, we particularly observe that when God is pleased to hearken unto Leah and Rachel, and to give them children, as in ver. 17, 19, and 22; they both acknowledge the Almighty Donor, as in ver. 18, 20, and 23. Therefore, there is no foundation whatever

in this history for believing, either that Reuben brought them home as medicinal plants, flowers, or fruit, or that Rachel had any wish for any thing medicinal ; or that she made any use of them for the supposed purposes. On the contrary, after making the proper allowance for the great desire of the Jewish women for having children, for the reasons before given, and properly noticing the particular sinful impatience of Rachel, and the unlawful devices they both fell upon ; we find that, in other respects, particularly in their looking up to the Supreme Giver of all things, these pious women, these renowned mothers in Israel, furnish examples not unworthy of imitation by the fair daughters of Britain, and by their Jewish sisters and daughters in all future generations.

We shall now proceed to shew more fully that the mandragora cannot be the plant here intended, and that the prolific properties ascribed to it have no existence in truth, but are founded either in inattention, or wickedness, or in the grossest superstitions.

We have already said that the LXX, who wrote about 284 years before the birth of our Lord, have rendered the *dudaim*, mandragoræ, in Gen. xxx. and Song vii. And the plant

mandragora had been mentioned before their time by Hippocrates, who lived long before them: who, in Sect. iv. *de locis in homine*, prescribes for persons labouring under great affliction and dejection of mind, a certain portion of the root to be taken in the morning, but in less quantity than that it should excite madness. His words are, “μανδραγόρου ρίζαν πρωτ̄ πιπίσκειν ἔλασσον ἢ ὡς μαινέσθαι, mandragoræ radicem propinato, minore tamen pondere quàm quod furorem excitet.” And in the same place, for the cure of convulsion, or spasm, he recommends, with other methods and things, the root of mandragoræ, under the same restriction. Again, when treating *De morbis mulierum*, lib. I. sect. 5, and when pointing out “Quod menses detrahat,” he recommends the juice of mandragora, ὀπὸν μανδραγόρου, and other things for a particular application, which he calls Προσθετὸν ἐνεργόν, “Medicamentum subditiuum efficax:” and also speaks of other medicines, and of the root of mandragora as being more effectual. And, after a few more observations, he proceeds to another head, namely, “Conceptum juvans;” under which I can find no mention of the mandragora, or its fruit. It seems therefore probable that, in the days of

Hippocrates, the imaginary properties afterwards ascribed to this plant had not been thought of.

The mandragora is an herbaceous plant, of a strong and disagreeable smell, and of an unwholesome nature; producing sleepiness, stupidity, alienation of mind, madness, &c. and death: and though it has been used in medicine, as have many other poisonous plants, yet it may be doubted whether it possesses any very considerable medicinal virtues, though some have been ascribed to it. Brookes (*Nat. Hist.* vol. vi. p. 253-4.) observes, that *the fruit has a strong nauseous smell.* Parkhurst in *דדא*. And Maundrell (*Travels*, Mar. 24.) was told by the Samaritan chief priest, that “the mandrakes were plants of a large leaf, bearing a certain sort of fruit, in shape resembling an apple, growing ripe in harvest, but of an *ill savour*, and not *wholesome*.” adding a most convincing proof of vulgar credulity respecting the imaginary prolific virtue. *Ibid.* Mr. Parkhurst adds a note, which tends to confirm the accounts commonly given of the disagreeableness of the flower and fruit, and to more fully shew that this plant cannot be the one intended in the Bible. He says, “On account of the

Fetid smell of the *mandrakes*, whether fruit or flower, or both, I apprehend they had their Chaldee and Syriac names יברוחין and יברוחא, *jabrohhin* and *jabrohha*, from Chald. and Syr. ברוחא, *a he-goat. Ib.* And Tremellius says they are called *jabrochin* by the Arabians, from their *goatish odour*, “*ab hirqino odore;*” a name very opposite to that of *dudaim*.

Concerning the many wonderful virtues which have been ascribed to the mandragora, or mandrake, the following opinion of a physician, recorded by Herbelot. *Bibl. Orient.* p. 141, appears to convey what seems to be the truth upon this subject: “*Lutfalla-alhalini*, who was a physician, assures us, that all the wonderful things that have been written of this plant are fictions,” &c.; “and that all the uses to which they” (the mandrakes) “are applied are vain and superstitious.” See *Calmet’s Dict. of the Bible*.

Whether the imaginary prolific properties ascribed to them took their rise from an erroneous view of the above 30th chapter, and the translation of the LXX apparently founded upon such a view, I know not: but, by the time of Dioscorides and Pliny, or in the first century, some erroneous, improper, and super-

stitious notions seem to have existed concerning them, *vid. Diosc. lib. iv. c. 71, and vi. c. 16. Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. xxv. c. 13*: and these notions were afterwards enlarged upon (*see Parkhurst and Hesych.*) and have been continued by the arts of wicked men, and the credulity and ignorance of others, even to this very day, *vid. Matt. in Diosc. Gerarde by Johnson* (who makes some excellent remarks on this subject), *and others*: while many great and learned men, capable of judging, have not taken the trouble to inquire whether these things were so; or have taken them for granted, from certain virtues having been ascribed to the mandragora by medical and other writers.

Dr. Taylor, under מן, states as its third signification, *mandragoræ*, according to the rendering in the English Bible, and that more commonly given; but from his exposition, he evidently concluded that very different plants, fruit, or flowers, were spoken of by Moses. His remarks I shall here add, as they may probably tend to illustrate the present subject. “*Mandragoræ*, some lovely fruit or flower. Celsus is persuaded it is the fruit of the lote-tree, the *lotus cyreniaca*, called in *Africa* and

Asia, sidra and *nobak*. A small tree like the *acacia*, with leaves and flowers resembling those of the *jujub*, bearing little round aromatic apples, in flavour and taste so delicious, they are fit only for the table of princes. The *Turks* suppose it is one of the trees in *Paradise*. It grows in *Judea* and *Syria*, bears fruit both in spring and autumn; but the spring fruit seldom comes to perfection by reason of the latter rains falling in *April*. One of the old *rabbies* saith, this fruit is the *dudaim* *Rachel* was fond of; and the *Talmudists* were acquainted with it under the name of *rimin*. See divers accounts of it, ancient and modern, in *Olav. Cels. Hierobot.* Part i. p. 20, &c. *Homer. Odys. ix. l. 94. Hiller. Hierophyl.* Part i. p. 268." And such fragrant, fruit-bearing trees, might certainly figure the members of the Christian Church: but it may be questioned, whether the latter part of the history will agree with that of the *dudaim*, and the time in which they were found.

Upon the whole, we would conclude, that the word *dudaim*, here rendered *mandrakes*, imports some beautiful and sweet-smelling plants; of which *Reuben* gathered some flowers or fruits, and carried home to his

mother, in the days of wheat-harvest: that Rachel, admiring either their excellence, beauty, or fragrance, therefore desired to have some of them: that the same plants are again mentioned in this 13th verse of the Song, as having given *smell*; which can only imply a fragrant or sweet smell, whether of the plants themselves, or of the flowers or fruit, as being figurative of members of the true spiritual Church, or their fruits; the prayers of whose members are considered as odours ascending up to God, which will be offered up about the beginning of the Church's harvest, with increased earnestness, Rev. v. 8. viii. 3, 4; and there is no example in scripture where a fetid, nauseous, and poisonous plant is used as a figure for a member of the Church of God. It is therefore probable, that the *dudaim* were such plants as above described, yielding sweet-smelling flowers, or fragrant fruits, at the time of wheat-harvest: and that they are mentioned here, chiefly to point out the time to which the prophecy refers; namely, the time of the harvest of the Church, or when the reapers have begun to reap the wheat into the Church-garner of the Lord: which is the exact time above mentioned, as this harvest

begins with the conversion of the Jews. The words נתנו־ריח, *nathnu reahh*, here translated “give a smell,” render literally *have given smell*, or *odour*; and so *Mont.* “dederunt odorem:” which seems important, as clearly pointing out that the wheat-harvest of the world has begun, and that the Jews have been converted, according to the general idea given of the time to which this 7th chapter refers, and as before explained. Shall we then read this passage thus? *The dudaim have given their odour*: that is, the reaping, or the bringing in of the lovely spiritual flowers and fruits together with the wheat into the garner of the Church has commenced; and the converts have sent up the odours of their prayers, and their praises and thanksgivings to their God and Saviour. And this may further explain the 2d verse; where we find the heap of wheat set round with lilies.

“And at our gates *are* all manner of pleasant *fruits*, new and old,” &c. The word מגדים, *megadim*, here rendered *pleasant*, and supposed to mean *pleasant fruits*, renders also *precious*, as in Deut. xxxiii. 14. So that this passage might read *all manner of precious fruits or things*. And the pleasant, or precious

fruits or things, new and old, which are here said by the Church to be laid up for our Lord at their gates, may refer to the fruits of the Old and New Testaments, the two spiritual mountains of Israel upon which the flocks of the Lord feed, and which yield the choicest fruits, new and old, for the nourishment of the tribes, which may be considered as at the gates or entrance into the Church. And Moses, in his beautiful prophetic blessing, seems to allude to the same in these words; “for the precious fruits *brought forth* by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills,” &c. Deut. xxxiii. 14, 15. And Ezekiel, when speaking of the spiritual temple of the Lord, or the new Jerusalem, and of living waters as coming from under the threshold of the house, and forming a great river, says, “And by the river, upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed; it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for

meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine," chap. xlvii. 12 : which seems to be a beautiful figurative account of the Old and New Testament writers, and the source of those living waters which nourished them, and made them produce their everlasting leaves and fruits for the nourishment and healing of the nations. And they are trees new and old, producing their fruits according to their months and kinds ; namely, twelve patriarchal or prophetic trees on one side, and twelve apostolic trees on the other ; watered by the living waters of the Spirit, which issue from the sanctuary of God. And our Lord observes, " every scribe *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things* new and old." Matt. xiii. 52.

" *Which* I have laid up for thee, O my beloved." The Hebrew word צפנתי, *tsaphanti*, literally renders *I have hidden* ; and so *Pagn. & Mont.* " abscondi." And the passage may probably refer to some prophetic truths which may be sealed or hidden until the time to which the prophecy refers, or to soon after the conversion of the Jews (which will also be within the time of the end, Dan. xii. 4,) ; as if hidden

or laid up until this time of our Lord's more especial presence in his Church.

Being now brought by the prophetic history to the time of the marriage of the Lamb, or to the very day, and, as it were, just after it has taken place; we may proceed to state some texts of scripture which speak of the glorious things which will be bestowed upon the Church at this period of her history, when the Jews and Gentiles are united together; and which shew what the bride may now expect from her Lord and Saviour, at this time of favour and redemption, and of her more intimate union with him, according to the gracious promises made in his holy word, which he will now begin to bestow upon her, and proceed to fulfil in due time and order.

We have seen (p. 286,) that when the Lord comes as bridegroom to marry his Church, he will be gloriously arrayed, and, as it were, in the vestments of his gospel priesthood, and that the bride will then be clothed with the garments of salvation, covered with the robe of righteousness, and adorned with her jewels, the precious sons and daughters of Sion, comparable to fine gold, jewels, &c. When also the Lord will come in his own most awful majesty

and glory in behalf of his people, and, as it were, carrying them upon his heart and arms, according to the desires of his Church expressed in the 8th chapter, ver. 6, or as seems to be figuratively represented in the 5th chapter, as before pointed out under chap. v. 14, &c.: even bearing them upon his bowels; as with bowels of mercies, and as the mighty God with his powerful arm for their deliverance. The Lord will then, also, come to take possession of his general kingdom. “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” Dan. vii. 27. “And the Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name One.” Zech. xiv. 9. *See also*, Ps. xlvii. 2, 7. And, in that day, he will assemble her that halteth, and gather her that has been driven out and afflicted; and will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: “And the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.” Mic. iv. 6, 7. “The Lord shall reign for ever,

even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations." Ps. cxlvi. 10. "Then shall Israel rejoice in him that made him, and the children of Zion be joyful in their King." Ps. cxlix. 2. He will then "come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," 2 Thess. i. 10; and to inherit all nations, Ps. lxxxii. 8. "For all the earth shall worship him, and shall sing unto him; they shall sing praise to his name." Ps. lxvi. 4. The Lord will then dwell among his people in a more particular, though not in a visible, manner. "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord," Zech. ii. 10; *See Rev.* vii. 15: and again, "I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies." Zech. i. 16. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee *is* mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing." Zeph. iii. 17. They are now become his people, and he their God: and the Lord will now delight in his spiritual Sion, the Christian Church, his spiritual Jerusalem, as thus declared by his prophet Isaiah; "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken: neither shall thy land any more be termed

Desolate : but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah : for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For *as* a young man marrieth a virgin, *so* shall thy sons marry thee : and *as* the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, *so* shall thy God rejoice over thee." Isa. lxii. 4, 5. And again, "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord : and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." ver. 12. Again ; "and thou" (the Church, the men of the spiritual Israel) "shalt rejoice in the Lord, *and* shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel." chap. xli. 16. The Lamb will then "feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters : and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. vii. 17. And the prophet Jeremiah thus speaks of the spiritual blessings ; "And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord." Jer. xxxi. 14. And now may be said "the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. xxi. 3, 4.

It is further said by John, "I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely," *ib.* ver. 6; and, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son." ver. 7. He will bless his people with all blessings temporal and spiritual, such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither the heart of man conceived, Isa. lxiv. 4; "with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb;" with blessings which extend, even to "the utmost bound of the everlasting hills." Gen. xlix. 25, 26. The eternal God will be their refuge, and will embrace them in the everlasting arms of his loving-kindness and tender mercy. "Happy *art* thou, O Israel: who *is* like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who *is* the sword of thy excellency!" Deut. xxxiii. 27, 29. How glorious is all this, and how good and gracious is our God!

Having now proceeded, in our outline of examination, through the seven foregoing chapters of this beautiful inspired prophetic Song, which, as the reader has seen, has brought us up, in the prophetic history, to

the conversion of the Jews, and the New-Jerusalem state of the Church, with a view of which, even the sacred volumes themselves close; we pass on to a similar consideration of the eighth and last chapter, in which there seems to be a recapitulation of some of the chief prophecies mentioned in the former chapters, with some additional circumstances, and also other prophecies, including that concerning the conversion of the Arabian nation; as we shall endeavour to point out.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHURCH.

- Ch. VIII. 1. "O that thou *wert* as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! *when* I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised.
2. I would lead thee, *and* bring thee into my mother's house, *who* would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.
3. His left hand *should be* under my head, and his right hand should embrace me."

VER. 1. "O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother!" Literally, *Who will give thee as a brother to me, sucking the breasts of my mother?* This seems to be a prophecy, spoken by the prophet Solomon, in the person of the Church, referring to some short time before the first coming of Christ; when she earnestly desires the appearance of her Lord at Jerusalem, when he would be engaged in the delightful employment of reading and meditating upon his own sacred word, spoken by his servants the prophets; and thus sucking the milk of the word contained in the blessed books of scripture, the figurative breasts of her mother, the true Jewish Church; for she is her legitimate daughter, and her Lord, as a son of the same mother is in this sense her brother. She is anxious for his coming to call her to be his Church as in the beginning of the Song, chap. i. 2, though not expressed in the same words.

"When I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised." The margin renders, *they should not despise me.* The literal rendering is, *I shall find thee without* (in extra), *I shall kiss thee, also they* (masc.) *will not entertain contempt for me.* It

seems to be a prophecy referring to the time when her Lord and Saviour is, by the wicked Jews, delivered over to the Romans to be crucified, when she finds him without the city in his way to, or at Calvary; and being, at the moment of his death, espoused by him as his bride, by his thus engaging to marry her at the time of the marriage of the Lamb; she affectionately accepts the promise thus graciously given to her, and sealed with his blood, and thus embraces or kisses her Lord; which being a very lawful and proper return, would not merit the contempt, but the high approbation of the sons and daughters, the children, of Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. "I would lead thee," &c. The time of Christ's death being the time of his espousals to his Church, he then immediately enters within the veil, here represented as a bringing by her into her mother's house, or place of habitation. And it is said that her mother will instruct her: or she will tell her what she is to do, as in Psalm xlv. 10, 11, as we have already had occasion to mention, and shall further see hereafter: and we have seen that it is at this time that she will bestow upon the bridegroom, her beloved son, the

crown alluded to in the 11th verse of the 3d chapter. We have also seen, that, at the moment of the death of Christ, the Christian dispensation properly began and the Jewish dispensation ended: and that this was the exact time of his espousals, the day of the gladness of his heart; when he should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied; and when the redemption of his people would be accomplished, or wholly finished.

This bringing into her mother's house was mentioned in the 4th verse of the 3d chapter: and the instructions of her mother to her on this occasion seem to be thus beautifully expressed by the Psalmist, David, as before noticed; "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him." Psalm xlv. 10, 11.

She advises her to forget the literal Jews, her own people, and the house of Jacob her father after the flesh, and as being now betrothed to her Lord, to worship him alone. And he, having become King of Sion at the same time, is crowned by his mother as re-

lated in the 3d chapter, in this day of his espousals, this day of the gladness of his heart. Song iii. 11. And thus would the Jewish Church instruct her gospel daughter, as mentioned in the verse now under examination. *See a more particular consideration of this passage, p. 197-199.* Moreover, this bringing-in was also figured by the rending of the veil of the temple, at the moment of the death of the Beloved, when, as just observed, he became the crowned King of Zion, the espoused Bridegroom of his Church.

“I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.” Bishop Patrick observes, that the Hebrew word here rendered *spiced*, denotes the fragrancy or delicious odour of the wine, by which, as much as by their taste, the best wines are discerned: and this may be the sense intended by the English translators, that the wine was spicy or aromatic. But the literal rendering is *of wine of composition of the juice of my pomegranate*; that is, *of wine prepared from the juice, &c.* And we shall soon see that this wine was composed of the fragrant prayers, praises, &c. of the Church.

In the last chapter, the Gospel Church is

compared to a palm-tree, ver. 8; and it seems to be this Church which was figured by the palm-trees which Solomon carved on the walls and doors of the temple, with cherubim, the emblems of the providence of God, as it were, attending her, 1 Kings vi. 29, 32, 35; thus exhibiting, by prophetic emblems, that glory which should be afterwards revealed. That the cherubim are hieroglyphic emblems of God's good providence, I think I have clearly proved in a short essay which, I hope, will soon appear.

In the present passage, the cheeks (with the mouth) of the Church seem to be figuratively spoken of as a pomegranate yielding juice for making fine flavoured, or compound wine; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. And the joy of Christ at his having finished all his sufferings, and accomplished the redemption of his people, have been before mentioned: and his joy, and the returns of love, joy, gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving rendered by the Church at this time, may be here figured by the causing him to drink of the wine prepared from the juice, or of the new wine of her pomegranate.

Now, the Church's cheeks, which with the

lips form a chief part of the mouth, seem in the 4th and 6th chapters of the Song, to be compared to a pomegranate, together forming, as it were, the figurative pomegranate spoken of in this place which was to yield juice: and praise is said to be the fruit of the lips, Heb. xiii. 15; and the honey, milk, and wine of the word may be said to flow from the mouth of the Church. *See Song*, iv. 11. Therefore what flows from her mouth may be figuratively said to be the juice of her pomegranate, of which the new wine which she was to present to her beloved was made; being beautifully figurative of the prayers, (odours, Rev. v. 8.) praises, and thanksgivings of the Church and her members, as being highly odorous and grateful to the beloved, and such as she knew would be acceptable to him, and add to the gladness of his heart.

Ver. 3. "His left hand," &c. Then the left, or New-Testament hand, or arm, should be under her head; and his right, or Old-Testament hand, or arm, should embrace her. The former would, as it were, support her; while the other would, by all the gracious mercies and promises therein contained, embrace her. And, in the next verse, the beloved gives com-

mand that she should not be disturbed, but should be permitted to enjoy those endearing tokens of his love, as long as she pleased.

CHRIST.

Ch. VIII. 4. "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor wake *my* love, until he please.

5. Who *is* this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple-tree; there thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth *that* bare thee."

VER. 4. "I charge you," &c. This verse, literally rendered, reads thus, being of a similar construction with chap. ii. 7: *I have charged you, O children of Jerusalem; for why shall ye stir up, and why awake the lovely one until she please?* Therefore the charge here given is by the bridegroom concerning the bride. The margin reads, *Why should ye stir up, or why,* &c.

Ver. 5. "Who *is* this," &c. That this verse is spoken by him appears evident from the context. It seems to correspond with the 6th of the 3d chapter, and to refer to the same time:

or to describe, as it were, the procession from Calvary, that low, barren, gentile wilderness, into her mother's house; and the bride, as leaning upon, or as supporting herself by faith and trust in, her beloved: while her Lord is, as it were, recounting how it happened that she was raised up and became his espoused bride; namely, that he raised her up under the apple-tree, and that there her mother that bare her brought her forth. This history might refer either to the raising-up of the Church just after the fall, by the gracious promise to Eve, the then representative of the Church, or to the raising-up of the daughter of the Jewish Church, the Christian Church, under the preaching of the Lord Jesus himself; compared to an apple-tree, as in Song ii. 3: or it may refer to both. But as this was the time when the promise made in Eden was in great part fulfilled, it seems probable that particular reference is made to the first raising-up in Eden. While Adam and Eve continued in innocence, they constituted the true Church on earth: but having fallen by sin, the Lord, by his promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, became her surety; and thus was the true Church

raised up in Paradise. And as the Lord loved her with an everlasting love, and had therefore purposed before her fall to save her; so it may be said that under the very fruit tree, most probably an apple-bearing tree, where she sinned by eating of the fruit, he again restored her to favour; and that there the mother-Church, anxiously travailing with sorrow of heart for her sin, did thus, by the grace and mercy of her God and Saviour, produce her redeemed daughter: and though there have been several states of the Church, the one succeeding the other, and the successor being considered as the daughter of her who was before; yet the true Church, the Church of the living God, has been but one succession of redeemed people, and it has existed from the beginning of the world; of which Adam's one beloved Eve may be considered as a type. Moreover, the bride is now espoused, and "by the exercise of a lively faith she reclines herself upon Christ, her only refuge and strength;" *Fry*: she is trusting in the name of the Lord, and staying upon her God. Isa. l. 10.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. VIII. 6. "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love *is* strong as death; jealousy *is* cruel as the grave: the coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which hath* a most vehement flame.

7. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.
8. We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?"

THESE three verses may be supposed to be spoken by the bride to her Lord, sometime between her espousals and our Lord's ascension into heaven; and in contemplation of his being about to leave her, *i. e.* personally, for a long time.

Ver. 6. "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm." This may be spoken in allusion to the Jewish high priest's bearing upon his shoulders and heart precious stones, having the names of the twelve tribes

of Israel engraven upon them like the engravings of a signet, when he went into the holy place, before the Lord: and also in allusion to chapter v. 14, of this Song. The first part of the verse may be contemplated both as a prophecy and a prayer. Viewing it as a prophecy, she may be considered as thus addressing her Lord, ‘ Though thou art about to leave me personally and ascend up into heaven, thou wilt notwithstanding set me as a seal upon thine heart and arm, or thou wilt remember me, love me, and defend me from all evil.’ As a prayer, the Church entreats her Lord that he would set her as a seal upon his heart and arm: or that he would keep her for ever in his remembrance, so as to perform all the gracious promises he had made to her and concerning her in his holy word; and that he would guide her by his right hand, and protect her by the mighty arm of his power, and by it also bring to her the promised salvation, Isa. lix. 16, Psa. lxxvii. 15, and ultimate settlement in peace, as at the marriage of the Lamb: and the objects requested seem to be wished for until that time, from the mention which is made just after of that jealousy which Christ will exercise in

favour of his Church when he comes to marry her, Isa. lxiii. 5; and hence probably the intimation of the same prophet, lxi. 10: and, as our Lord was then about to ascend up into heaven, it may be believed that her request also implied her wishes that he would be her great High Priest and Intercessor with God, by thus bearing her upon his heart and arm before her heavenly Father, as a memorial of her.

“ For love *is* strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave:” Here the Church seems to acknowledge the great love which her Lord had already shewn for her by laying down his life for her; and, by prophetic anticipation, to glance at that jealousy which he will exercise in favour of her, when he cometh in the clouds of heaven to convert the Jews, and to punish his enemies; or, when he thus cometh to marry her who was then betrothed. Then will God be jealous for his holy name, Ezek. xxxix. 25; he will be jealous for his land, and pity his people, Joel ii. 18. His jealousy shall burn like fire, Psalm lxxix. 5: The Lord shall then go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war; Isa. xlii. 13: in the fire of his jealousy, and in his fury will he then appear, Ezek. xxxvi. 5, 6.

“The coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which hath* a most vehement flame.” The coals are said to be coals of עֵשׂ , *esh*, or of fire, שְׁלֵהֲבֵתִיָּה , *shalhebethjah*, rendered by the English translators, “*which hath* a most vehement flame.” This latter rendering has probably arisen from their agreeing in the opinion, that the word literally renders *the flame of Jah*, i. e. *the greatest, or most vehement flame*; and considering the ש as merely prosthetic, according to the custom of the Chaldees. But it seems more probable that the ש here placed in the beginning of the word (which, as the representative of אֲשֶׁר , *asher*, might also have been rendered *which*) is the representative of עֵשׂ , *esh*, and a repetition of the word which just went before; and that the word *shalhebethjah* is a compound of the three following words: namely, of עֵשׂ , *esh*, fire, לֵהֶבֶת , *lahebeth*, flame; and יְהוָה , *Jah*, or *Jehovah*: and rendering together *the fire of the flame of Jah*; intimating, according to the sense given in the English Bible, *the most vehement fire and flame*. Here the name of *Jah* seems to be mentioned for the third time in this Song. See on iv. 5, & vii. 3.

Ver. 7. “Many waters cannot quench,” &c. Here the power and force of love, that is,

of the Lord's love for his Church and people, is most beautifully described. And she seems convinced of his firm affection; and that, if even she should be almost overwhelmed with trials and afflictions of various kinds, with the proud waters of the wicked, Psal. cxxiv. 5, and the floods of ungodly men, Psal. xviii. 4; Isa. lix. 19, yet he would not forsake her. And he hath said by his prophet Isaiah, "When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." chap. xliii. 2. And in like manner will he preserve her under all trials and afflictions, and also in that awful time when, by the fire of his jealousy, he shall burn up his enemies: "when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I *am* the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." *Ib.* 2, 3. He is God as well as man: and he will then come in the power of his Godhead, travailing in the greatness of his might, mighty to save.

"If a man would give," &c. And if the strong wicked man would, in that day of jealousy, of storm and tempest, give the whole substance of his house for the love of Christ,

or to be a member of his true spiritual Church, it would be utterly despised.

The prophet having in the seven foregoing verses of this chapter, given some general outlines of prophecy, from before the coming of Christ to the conversion of the Jews, or to the time of the Lord's fearful coming in jealousy for his Church and people: he proceeds in the person of the espoused bride to speak of a little sister who has no breasts; or who is not yet ready for marriage, or conversion, but who is to be spoken for at some future time.

Ver. 8. "We have a little sister," &c. This prophecy has been commonly referred to the calling of the Gentiles, as at the first coming of Christ: but, as the Gospel Church is the speaker, it must refer to some other church, or sister; and, in point of time, it will not agree with that period.

The speaker is the Gospel Church, who has now been betrothed, and who is to be married at the coming of Christ to convert the Jews; and she here speaks of some other Church, (or people) who is also to be spoken for, or to be converted. The little sister, therefore, must be some other distinct people who are to be converted to Christ. And, as there is

only one nation which is considered as a different people, and as brethren to the Jews and Gentiles, namely, the Arabian people, it seems probable, that the Arabians are intended by the little sister here mentioned.

In tracing the origin of the Arabian nation, we find that Ishmael was the son of Abraham by his bond-maid Hagar: and that God promised to Abraham, that of Ishmael he would make a great nation, because he was his seed. Gen. xvii. 20; xxi. 13. And it was prophesied of Ishmael, before he was born, that he should be a wild man; that his hand should be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and that he should dwell in the presence of his brethren, Gen. xvi. 12: and it is afterwards said, that God was with the lad; that he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness (in Arabia), and became an archer. xxi. 20. And having married an Egyptian, he begat twelve sons, who became the heads of all the Arabian tribes. xvii. 20. So that Ishmael was the father of the Arabians; and he dwelt in the presence of Jacob and Esau, who also were sons of Abraham and Isaac, and his brethren.

Therefore, considering Ishmael as the father of the Arabian nation; Jacob as that of the

Jews ; and Esau as the father of the Gentiles : they were all descended of Abraham, and therefore brethren : and it is well known that the Arabians have remained a distinct nation and people to this day ; living in the face of their Jew and Gentile brethren, and alternately contending with them. And therefore the Gospel Church might, with no impropriety, speak to her Lord (a Jew by birth) of their wild Arabian sister ; and of the day of her conversion, when all the flocks of Kedar will be gathered unto the Lord, and when the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto him, and come up with acceptance on his altar, Isa. lx. 7 ; or when the whole Arabian nation, here figured by Kedar and Nebaioth, who were sons of Ishmael, shall be converted to Christ : though, as an unconverted nation, it has no breasts at present, but the dry and empty breast of the Alcoran.

The bridegroom answers her question in the following verse.

CHRIST.

Ch. VIII. 9. "If she *be* a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she *be* a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar."

WHETHER she be a wall, or a door, she is to form a part of the royal house of the restored, or renovated Jew and Gentile Church, at or after the marriage of the Lamb. She is either a wall or a door: and, as the Gospel Church, in the next verse, declares herself to be a wall, the little sister may rather be considered as the door, which is to be enclosed with boards of cedar, or with the royal and fragrant timber of the Lord's forest, or with the green and fragrant trees of her Lord's planting in the Christian Church.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. VIII. 10. "I *am* a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.

11. Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand *pieces* of silver.

12. My vineyard, which is mine, is before me : thou, O Solomon, *must have* a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.”

VER. 10. “ I *am* a wall,” &c. Here, the Church seems to speak of herself as just before the time of marriage ; when she is become as a wall, strong, firm, and durable ; probably as the wall upon which the palace of the new Jerusalem is to be built : and of her breasts, as towers, or as in the most full and perfect state : at which time she finds שלום, *shalom*, *peace*, or favour ; that peace of God which passeth all understanding. And the whole may be supposed to be spoken of that state of the Church when she is about to receive the greatest favours of peace and happiness from her Lord ; even the fulfilment of all the gospel-blessings of that period. It will then be granted to her to be ready for the reception of her Lord, Rev. xix. 8 : and she will then immediately become the new Jerusalem, or enter into the state of her existence so called. Rev. xxi.

Ver. 11. “ Solomon had,” &c. The Hebrew word ישׁ, *ish*, here rendered *every one*, might be so rendered according to the Hebrew idiom ; as it is, and that properly, in various parts of

Scripture. But its primary signification is a *man*; which seems to be the meaning in this passage. And the word נתן, *nathan*, here rendered *he let out*, rather signifies, in this place, *he delivered*; and so Mont. "tradidit." Therefore the following rendering of this verse seems nearer to the sense of the original. *Solomon had a vineyard in Baal Hamon: he delivered the vineyard unto keepers; a man for the fruit thereof, or in (the season of) its fruit, shall bring a thousand of silver.*

Now the Church has been Christ's, or been intended for him, in all ages of the world; as well under the Old-Testament dispensation, as under the New. Under the former, the Jews, as his Church and the depository of his oracles, were planted and hedged off from the heathen (the Baal Hamon, or *multitude of Baal*, here intended,) by God, the great householder, as is expressed in the parable. Matt. xxi. 33. And it seems to be this vineyard, the vineyard of Christ, the spiritual Solomon, of which the Church here makes mention: and he is the King of the spiritual Sion.

God, having planted it, delivered it to keepers; or to Moses, and Aaron, and the elders of the Jews; and to their successors;

and at the time of his Son's, or Christ's coming in the flesh to receive of the fruit, the keepers were the Scribes and Pharisees (who sat in Moses' seat), the chief priests, and elders. To these keepers had God then delivered it, in trust; that they should obey his voice, take care of, and nourish the plants, and render to him the fruits thereof in the season.

But the rendering *let out* seems to give a different meaning, and might imply that the vineyard was let out for hire, and, that for the rent thereof, the occupiers might appropriate the plants or their fruits to their own use, or plant other vines for those already planted. But this cannot be the sense of the passage; which seems to signify, that the Jewish vineyard was only delivered to them in trust, as before explained.

And it is required of those whom the Lord appoints over his vineyard, whether king, priests, or rulers, that they be found faithful, and fruitful in good works; that they should nourish and multiply the plants, by endeavouring to make every vine produce one or more silverlings or young vines, or converts to their Lord. But the keepers of the Jewish vineyard, at the season of rendering the fruits, or at the time of the appearance of John, the forerunner

of his Lord, had no fruits to render ; and therefore ill-treated the Lord's messenger, and murdered him, as they had done many other messengers before him. And when our Saviour, the heir, appeared, they used him in like manner, casting him out of the vineyard, and crucifying him without the city : as is beautifully expressed in the above-mentioned parable.

Ib. 37—39. Mark xii. 2—8. Instead of obeying their Lord, and preserving his plants and fruits, they had neglected the vineyard, and made the word of God of none effect by their traditions : and hence their conduct. And, as it cannot be doubted that God foresaw that these keepers would thus neglect the vineyard, and bring no fruits ; so we cannot expect that his servant, the inspired Solomon, should say that they would bring each a thousand pieces of silver for the fruit thereof : though this seems implied in the English translation.

But it seems more probable that the rendering, *a man*, is here intended : and the man alluded to, I conceive to be John the Baptist ; who, at the fruit season, or towards the end of their stewardship, of their dispensation, should bring a thousand silverlings, young vines or converts to the Church : probably using a

definite for an indefinite number. And Zacharias, the father of John, was informed by the angel before he was born, that he should turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God : and the success of John, in preaching repentance and remission of sins, is fully recorded in the New Testament.

The Jewish dispensation having ended with the death of Christ, the Gospel dispensation then commenced ; and the members of the Christian Church, or those under the latter, seem to form the vineyard (namely, of the spiritual Israel,) of which the bride makes mention in the following verse, which we now proceed to consider.

Ver. 12. " My vineyard," &c. The Hebrew word here rendered *a thousand*, is האלפ, *ha'elep*, which, as including an emphatic *he* prefixed, ought rather to be rendered *the thousand*: and it is so rendered by the Rev. Mr. Fry. *Canticles, &c. Lond. 1811.*

The following is a more literal rendering of this verse ; and it seems to convey a fuller sense of the Hebrew. *My vineyard, which is for me is before me : the thousand for thee to bring, O Solomon ; and two hundred for the keepers of its fruit.* This vineyard, which she here more

particularly calls her own, or sees to be for her, and now views with the eye of prophecy as if it was then before her, seems, as above observed, to be the Christian vineyard or Church; which has its fruit season, as well as had the Jewish Church. And this season seems to me to be that of the Lord's mystical coming to convert the Jews, to call the Christians to an account of their conduct, and to marry his betrothed bride, when it will be granted to her to be ready; and when a new, and most glorious state of the Church will immediately succeed. And as, before our Lord's first coming, or when the time of the fruit drew near, Matt. xxi. 34, a man was sent to announce his approach, and to bring much fruit to the Church, and to the Lord; so is it probable that another man will be sent by God to announce the latter coming of Christ, and who may be graciously enabled, by God, to bring *the thousand* here mentioned to his Lord; or his ministry may be so blessed, that, like the former forerunner of Christ, he may bring many converts to the Church, or that proportion of fruits assigned to him. The keepers of this vineyard are not, like those of the Jewish vineyard, inactive or unfaithful; but they

are to bring *two hundred* silverlings, or the proportion assigned to them, (most probably a *definite* for an *indefinite* number,) being no doubt endowed with powers sufficient for this end. But the Solomon here intended, is to produce or bring five times as many: for the Church, by permission and appointment of her Lord, appoints to him *the thousand*, or a like number as that which the former man mentioned in the text, and whom I have conjectured to be John the Baptist, was to bring; and *two hundred* for the keepers of the fruit. And as the whole vineyard belongs to the bridegroom, and all the fruits thereof are by him and for him; so is it probable that the Solomon mentioned in this verse is another Solomon, who, in some way or other, will fulfil this figurative description, and to whom this limited portion of work, and no doubt of proportional power, is assigned. It is a Benjamin's portion; being *a thousand* or five times as much as the two hundred assigned to the keepers: and to whom much is given, of him much will be required. Is this work and portion designed for the Benjamin mentioned in the Psalms as the ruler of the Jews, as about or soon after their conversion? And is he first

to announce the coming of his Lord, the deliverance of the captive Jews, and the marriage of the Lamb; and then to be set over the natural Israel? For as they are to be then converted, and to have a temporal prince, a captain of the hosts of the Lord under him their mighty King of Sion, set over them; and as he will, in some strong sense, be a son of David, as was Solomon, probably a bud of the mighty horn of the spiritual David, or some Christian minister. Psa. lxxviii. 27. cxxxii. 17. Jer. xxx. 21. xxxiii. 17, 21, 26. Is it not probable that this man may be here meant; and that the large comparative portion here allotted to him, may also refer to those gifts graciously to be conferred upon him, in order to enable him to perform with propriety the arduous duties of the station in which he will be placed; that he may first bring the thousand to the Church, and then rule with justice and equity?

That another Solomon is here intended, seems further probable from the general opinion of the Jewish doctors; who consider the name of Solomon to refer to the Messiah in every other place of this inspired Song, excepting in this one place. Bishop Patrick

observes, “ And, that Solomon” (the literal Solomon), “ not any other person, is here intended, Maimonides himself agrees; who in his Treatise of the *Foundation of the Law*, c. viii. hath these words: *Wheresoever you meet with the name of Solomon, in the book of Canticles, it is holy, as the rest of the names there are; save only in that place, a thousand are to thee, O Solomon,*” &c. *Annot.* That the name does not refer to the first literal Solomon is most evident, in as much as this is a prophetic Song, wholly referring to the latter days; and therefore the Solomon here mentioned must either be the Messiah, or some Christian man, or son of this great spiritual David: and, if the latter, it would seem most probable that he who is to be set over the natural Israel after their conversion is the person here intended, who might very naturally be figured by the name of Solomon, the name of the king of the natural Israel: and this man seems to have the high honour of being figuratively pointed out in many other parts of scripture. And it is said by Isaiah, that the little one shall become (or literally, *shall be for*) a thousand, and the small one (for) a strong nation. chap. lx. 22.

CHRIST.

Ch. VIII. 13. "Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear *it*."

THE Lord here, as by prophetic anticipation, calls to his Church, who by her members is the inhabitant of the gardens or churches of Christians, informing her that the companions (*i. e.* of the bridegroom) are hearkening to her voice; and requests her to cause him to hear it. Which, prophetically considered, may be supposed to be spoken about the present period of the Church in which we now live; when the ministers of God are looking for the conversion of the Jews, and when we may also look for that of the Arabian sister, and for the marriage of the Lamb; and when he wishes to hear their prayers for the redemption of Israel. And the expression, *cause me to hear*, may probably imply a command that she should be urgent in prayer, or like the importunate widow, that the Lord would fulfil his promise and accomplish these desirable events. And the Church is, in several parts of scripture,

required to entreat the Lord to this effect; and she is furnished with words for this purpose. Ezekiel, speaking of the conversion of the Jews, says, "Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do *it* for them." chap. xxxvi. 37. And Zechariah, concerning the same time and events, "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain," chap. x. 1; or he will send all kinds of spiritual blessings: he will pour water on the dry ground; he will convert the Jews. And Isaiah tells her what to say; "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we *are* all thy people." chap. lxiv. 1, 9. But more particularly the Psalmist thus teaches the captive Jews how they should pray at this time; "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest *between* the cherubims, shine forth. Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, and come *and* save us. Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to

shine; and we shall be saved.” “Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt,” &c. “Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts, look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch *that* thou madest strong for thyself.” “Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the Son of man *whom* thou madest strong for thyself. So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.” lxxx. 1, 2, 3, 8, 14, 15, 17, 18. And the Psalms abound with prayers and meditations adapted for this time, “Oh that the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.” Psalm xiv. 7: the natural seed of Jacob, or the Jews, shall rejoice; and the Christian Israel shall be glad.

We have already shewn that the Church is required, in various parts of scripture, to pray for the redemption of Israel, and the establishment of the spiritual Jerusalem: and God says by his prophet Isaiah, “I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, *who* shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye

that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." lxii. 6, 7. And our Lord may probably have had this prophecy more particularly in view, when he delivered to his apostles, who were at that time the watchmen of the spiritual Jerusalem, his own prayer, and commanded them to use it when they prayed. And it furnished the most concise and appropriate words for them, and for the Lord's ministers, their successors in office: and when his kingdom is come, and his will is generally done upon this earth as in heaven, then will the new Jerusalem exist in all her glory, and be the praise and joy of the whole earth.

THE CHURCH.

Ch. VIII. 14. "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart, upon the mountains of spices."

IN the last verse, she was desired to pray to her Lord: she obeys, and, in this verse, entreats him to make haste and come: or, to come *quickly* as prophesied in the Old and

New Testaments, upon the mountains of spices here mentioned, probably the Old and New Testaments, the fragrant mountains on which the flocks of the Lord are fed ; or to come and marry her, that she may enjoy all the glorious things promised in his holy word. And, that she prophetically refers to this time, seems evident from the correspondence between the prayer of this verse, and the aspirations of the evangelist and prophet, St. John, in the end of the Revelation, chap. xxii. 17, 20 ; and this verse may probably be one of those passages of scripture to which John alludes, when he says, “ the Spirit and the bride say, Come ; ” and the answer to this urgent request of the bride seems to be given in the 20th verse, in these words, “ Surely I come quickly.” And let the Church now say, “ Amen ! Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Bishop Patrick observes, that this Song seems “ to conclude as it began ; with a desire that the Messiah would come, and make good all those things that had been represented in these raptures.” *Annot.*



THE
SONG OF SOLOMON,
IN THE
POETIC FORM.

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THAT the reader may more easily judge of the division adopted in the foregoing Outline of Examination of this beautiful inspired prophetic Song, and of the respective Speakers in the Dialogue, the whole Song in the poetic form is now added, according to what seems to be the natural division of the Hebrew. And having carefully examined the poetic lines of the Hebrew of Dr. Kennicott, and compared them with those of the English now given; whenever I found any difference in their form or contents, I have distinctly stated the lines according to Dr. Kennicott's Hebrew, by giving the English of the Doctor's Hebrew lines by themselves, in the same English version just after the regular statement: by which the reader can readily judge of the whole. Therefore, all the former English poetic lines

may be considered of the same length as those of Dr. Kennicott's Hebrew, and as containing the same sense, or the English translation thereof; excepting where they are afterwards distinctly noticed as being the English according to the Hebrew of Dr. Kennicott.

This addition will, I hope, prove acceptable and useful; as by exhibiting the whole book in one connected view, its numerous and distinguished beauties will be more clearly seen, admired, and valued.

The chapters and verses of the Song proceed regularly according to the margin: there is therefore no interruption in the dialogue from the beginning to the end of the Song.

THE
SONG OF SOLOMON,

IN THE
POETIC FORM.



THE PREFACE.

CHAP. I.

VERSE

1. THE Song of Songs, which *is* Solomon's.

THE CHURCH.

2. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth:
For thy love *is* better than wine.
3. Because of the odour of thy good ointments,
Thy name *is as* ointment poured forth,
Therefore do the virgins love thee.
4. Draw me, we will run after thee:
The King hath brought me into his chambers:
We will be glad and rejoice in thee;
We will remember thy love more than wine:
The upright love thee.

THE CHURCH TO HER COMPANIONS,
THE DAUGHTERS OF THE SPI-
RITUAL JERUSALEM.

CHAP I.

VERSE

5. I *am* black, but comely, O ye daughters of
Jerusalem;
As the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of
Solomon.
6. Look not upon me, because I *am* black,
Because the sun hath looked upon me:
My mother's sons were angry with me;
They made me keeper of the vineyards;
But mine own vineyard have I not kept!

THE CHURCH TO CHRIST.

7. Tell me, O *thou* whom my soul loveth,
Tell me where thou feedest,
Where thou causeth *thy flock* to rest at noon?
For why should I be as one that turneth aside
By the flocks of thy companions?

CHRIST TO HIS CHURCH.

8. If thou know not, O thou fairest among women,
Go thy way forth in the footsteps of the flock,
And feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

CHAP. I.

VERSE

9. To my horses in the chariots of Pharaoh,
Have I compared thee, O my love!
10. Comely are thy cheeks with rows of *jewels*,
Thy neck with chains of *gold*.
11. Rows of gold will we make for thee,
With studs of silver.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

8. And feed thy kids
Beside the shepherds' tents.

THE CHURCH.

12. While the King *is* in his circle,
My *spike-nard* sendeth forth the smell thereof.
13. A bundle of myrrh *is* my beloved unto me:
He shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.
14. My beloved *is* unto me as a cluster of copher
In the vineyards of En-gedi.

CHRIST 'TO HIS CHURCH.

15. Behold thou *art* fair, my love;
Behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves' eyes.

THE CHURCH TO CHRIST.

CHAP. I.

VERSE

16. Behold thou *art* fair, my beloved, yea pleasant:
Also our bed *is* green.

CHRIST TO HIS CHURCH.

17. The beams of our house *are* cedar,
And our rafters of fir.

THE CHURCH.

CHAP. II.

VERSE

1. I *am* a rose of Sharon,
A lily of the valleys.

CHRIST.

2. As the lily among thorns,
So *is* my love among the daughters.

THE CHURCH.

3. As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood,
So *is* my beloved among the sons.
In his shadow I greatly delighted, and sat down ;
And his fruit *was* sweet to my taste.'

CHAP. II.

VERSE

4. He brought me to the banqueting house,
And his banner over me *was* love.
5. Stay me with flagons,
Comfort me with apples :
For I *am* sick of love.
6. His left hand *is* under my head,
And his right hand doth embrace me.

CHRIST TO THE COMPANIONS OF BOTH BRIDEGROOM AND BRIDE.

7. I have charged you, *O ye* children of Jerusalem,
By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not up, nor awake
The lovely one, until she please.

THE CHURCH.

8. The voice of my beloved! behold him!
He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping
upon the hills.
9. My beloved is like a roe, or a young hart :
Behold, he standeth behind our wall,
He looketh forth at the windows,
Shewing himself through the lattice.
10. My beloved spake, and said unto me ;
Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

CHAP. II.

VERSE

11. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over
and gone;
12. The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of the singing of *birds* is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
13. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs,
And the vines *with* the tender grape give *their*
smell.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

8. The voice of my beloved! behold him!
He cometh, leaping upon the mountains,
Skipping upon the hills.
9. My beloved is like a roe,
Or a young hart:
10. Rise up, my love,
My fair one, and come away.
11. For, lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over *and* gone;
13. Arise, my love,
My fair one, and come away,

CHRIST TO HIS CHURCH.

14. O my dove, *thou art* in the clefts of the rock,
In the secret *places* of the stairs:

CHAP. II.

VERSE

Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy
 voice ;
 For sweet *is* thy voice, and thy countenance *is*
 comely.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

Let me see thy countenance,
 Let me hear thy voice ;
 For sweet *is* thy voice,
 And thy countenance *is* comely.

CHRIST TO HIS COMPANIONS.

15. Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the
 vineyards,
 For our vineyards *have* the tender grape.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

Take us the foxes,
 The little foxes that spoil the vineyards.

THE CHURCH.

16. My beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his :
 He feedeth among the lilies.

CHAP. II.

VERSE

17. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away,
 Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe,
 Or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bether.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

17. Or a young hart,
 Upon the mountains of Bether.

THE CHURCH.

CHAP. III.

VERSE

1. By night on my bed I sought him whom my
 soul loveth :
 I sought him, but I found him not.
2. I will rise now, and go about in the city,
 In the streets, and in the broad ways,
 I will seek him whom my soul loveth :
 I sought him, but I found him not.
3. The watchmen that go about in the city
 found me :

To whom I said,

- ‘ Saw ye him whom my soul loveth ?’
4. *It was* but a little that I passed from them,
 Until I found him whom my soul loveth :
 I held him, and would not let him go,

CHAP. III.

VERSE

Until I had brought him into my mother's
house,
And into the chamber of her that conceived me.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

1. By night on my bed
I sought him whom my soul loveth :
2. I will rise now, and go about
In the city, in the streets, and in the broad ways.

CHRIST.

5. I have charged you, *O ye* children of Jerusalem,
By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not up, nor awake
The lovely one, until she please.
6. Who *is* this that cometh out of the wilderness,
Like pillars of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
With all powders of the merchant?

THE CHURCH.

7. Behold his bed, which *is* Solomon's :
Threescore valiant men *are* about it,
Of the valiant of Israel,

CHAP. III.

VERSE

8. They all held swords, *being* expert in war:
Every man *hath* his sword upon his thigh,
Because of fear in the night.
9. King Solomon* made himself a dove-cote,
Of the wood of Lebanon.
10. He made the pillars thereof *of* silver,
The bottom thereof *of* gold,
The covering of it *of* purple;
The midst thereof being paved *with* love,
For the daughters of Jerusalem.
11. Go forth, *O ye* daughters of Sion,
And behold King Solomon, with the crown
Wherewith his mother crowned him,
In the day of his espousals,
And in the day of the gladness of his heart.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

8. Every man *hath* his sword upon his thigh, be-
cause of fear in the night.
9. The King made for himself a dove-cote,
Solomon, of the wood of Lebanon.
10. The bottom thereof *of* gold, the covering of it
of purple;

* In this verse Dr. Kennicott has placed *וְלִמְנָח* in the beginning of the second line, instead of its being the last word of the first; which, though it divides the Hebrew more regularly, seems not to be correct: I have however stated it in his form, as usual, that the reader may judge.

CHAP. III.

VERSE

The midst thereof being paved *with* love, for
the daughters of Jerusalem.

11. Go forth, *O ye* daughters of Sion, and behold
King Solomon,
With the crown wherewith his mother crowned
him,
In the day of his espousals, and in the day of
the gladness of his heart.

CHRIST TO HIS CHURCH,

(NOW HIS ESPOUSED BRIDE).

CHAP. IV.

VERSE

1. Behold thou *art* fair, my love ;
Behold thou *art* fair ;
Thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks ;
Thy hair *is* as a flock of goats,
That have appeared from mount Gilead :
2. Thy teeth like a flock *of sheep that are* shorn,
Which have come up from the washing ;
Whereof every one bear twins ;
And none *is* barren among them.
3. Like a thread of scarlet *are* thy lips,
And thy speech *is* comely :
Like a piece of a pomegranate
Is thy cheek within thy locks ;
4. Like the tower of David *is* thy neck,
Builded for an armoury ;

CHAP. IV.

VERSE

- A thousand bucklers hang thereon,
 All shields of mighty men.
5. Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes that
 are twins,
 Which feed among the lilies.
6. Until the day breathe, and the shadows flee
 away,
 I will get me to the mountain of myrrh,
 And to the hill of frankincense.
7. Thou *art* all fair, my love ;
 And *there is* no spot in thee.
8. Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse,
 With me from Lebanon :
 Look from the top of Amanah,
 From the top of Shenir and Hermon,
 From the lions' dens,
 From the mountains of the leopards.
9. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, *my*
 spouse ;
 Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine
 eyes,
 With one chain of thy neck.
10. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse !
 How much better is thy love than wine !
 And the smell of thine ointments than all
 spices !
11. Thy lips, *O my* spouse, drop *as* the honey-
 comb :
 Honey and milk *are* under thy tongue ;

CHAP. IV.

VERSE

- And the smell of thy garments *is* as the smell
of Lebanon.
12. A garden inclosed *is* my sister, my spouse;
A spring shut up, a fountain sealed.
13. Thy plants *are* an orchard of pomegranates,
With pleasant fruits; cophers, with nards:
14. *Spike-nard*, and saffron; calamus, and cinna-
mon;
With all trees of frankincense, myrrh, and
aloes;
With all the chief spices:
15. A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters,
And streams from Lebanon.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

1. Behold thou *art* fair, my love; behold thou *art*
fair;
3. Like a piece of a pomegranate *is* thy cheek
within thy locks.
5. Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes
That are twins, which feed among the lilies.
8. From the lions' dens, from the mountains of
the leopards.
13. With pleasant fruits;
Cophers, with nards:
14. With all trees of frankincense,
Myrrh, and aloes;

THE CHURCH.

CHAP. IV.

VERSE

16. Awake, O north wind ; and come, *thou* south ;
 Blow upon my garden, *that* its spices may
 flow out.
 Let my beloved come into his garden,
 And eat his pleasant fruits.

CHRIST.

CHAP. V.

VERSE

1. I am come into my garden, my sister, *my*
 spouse :
 I have gathered my myrrh with my spice ;
 I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey ;
 I have drunk my wine with my milk :
 Eat O friends ; drink,
 Yea drink abundantly, O beloved.

THE CHURCH.

2. I sleep, but my heart waketh :
It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh,
Saying,
 ‘ Open to me, my sister, my love,

CHAP. V.

VERSE

- My dove, my undefiled ;
 For my head is filled with dew,
And my locks with the drops of the night.'
3. I have put off my coat ;
 How shall I put it on ?
 I have washed my feet ;
 How shall I defile them ?
4. My beloved put in his hand by the hole *of the*
door,
 And my bowels were moved for him.
5. I rose up to open to my beloved ;
 And my hands dropped *with* myrrh,
 And my fingers *with* sweet-smelling myrrh,
 Upon the handles of the lock.
6. I opened to my beloved ;
 But my beloved had withdrawn himself, *and*
 was gone :
 My soul failed when he spake :
 I sought him, but I could not find him ;
 I called him, but he gave me no answer.
7. The watchmen that went about in the city
 found me ;
 They smote me, they wounded me ;
 The keepers of the walls took away my veil
 from me.
8. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
 If ye find my beloved,
 What shall ye tell him ?
Tell him, that I am sick of love.

‡ ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINE.

CHAP. V.

VERSE

2. Open to me, my sister,
My love, my dove, my undefiled;
8. What shall ye tell him? *Tell him* that I am
sick of love.

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM TO THE CHURCH.

9. What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved,
O thou fairest among women?
What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved,
That thou hast so charged us?

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

9. What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved,
O thou fairest among women?
What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved,
that thou hast so charged us?

THE CHURCH TO THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

10. My beloved *is* white and ruddy,
The chiefest among ten thousand.

CHAP. V.

VERSE

11. His head *is as* the most fine gold,
His locks *are* bushy, *and* black as a raven :
12. His eyes *are* as doves upon reservoirs of
waters ;
Washing with milk, sitting upon fulness.
13. His cheeks *are* as a bed of spice, *as* towers of
spicy compounds ;
His lips, *like* lilies, dropping sweet-smelling
myrrh :
14. His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl ;
His belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sap-
phires.
15. His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon bases
of fine gold ;
His countenance *is* as Lebanon, excellent as
the cedars :
16. His mouth *is* most sweet ; yea, he *is* altogether
lovely.
This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

10. My beloved *is* white and ruddy, the chiefest
among ten thousand.
16. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O
daughters of Jerusalem.

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

CHAP. VI.

VERSE

1. Whither is thy beloved gone, O fairest among women?

Whither is thy beloved turned aside? And we will seek him with thee.

THE CHURCH.

2. My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spice,

To feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

3. I *am* my beloved's, and my beloved *is* mine :
He feedeth among the lilies.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINE.

3. I *am* my beloved's, and my beloved *is* mine :
he feedeth among the lilies.

CHRIST.

4. Thou *art* beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah;
Comely, as Jerusalem ;

Terrible, as *an army* with banners.

5. Turn away thine eyes from me,

CHAP. VI.

VERSE

- For they have overcome me :
 Thy hair *is* as a flock of goats,
 That have appeared from mount Gilead :
6. Thy teeth, as a flock of sheep
 Which have come up from the washing,
 Whereof every one beareth twins,
 And not one *is* barren among them.
7. As a piece of a pomegranate
Is thy cheek within thy locks.
8. There are threescore queens,
 And fourscore concubines,
 And virgins without number.
9. My dove, my undefiled *is but* one ;
 She *is* the *only* one of her mother,
 She *is* the choice *one* of her that bare her :
 The daughters saw her, and blessed her ;
 The queens and the concubines, and they
 praised her.
10. Who *is* she that looketh forth as the morning,
 Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, *and*
 Terrible as *an army* with banners ?
11. I went down into the garden of nuts,
 To look upon the fruits of the valley ;
 To see whether the vine flourished,
 And the pomegranates budded.
12. Or ever I was aware, my soul made me
Like the chariots of my willing people.
13. Return, return, O Shulamite ;
 Return, return, and we will look upon thee.

(TO HIS COMPANIONS.)

CHAP. VI.

VERSE

What will ye see in the Shulamite?

THE COMPANIONS OF THE BRIDE-
GROOM.

As it were the company of two armies.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

7. As a piece of a pomegranate *is* thy cheek
Within thy locks.

CHRIST.

CHAP. VII.

VERSE

1. How beautiful are thy feet with shoes,
O prince's daughter!
The joints of thy thighs *are* like jewels,
The work of the hands of a cunning workman.
2. Thy navel *is like* a round goblet,
Which shall not want liquor;
Thy belly, *like* an heap of wheat
Set about with lilies.
3. Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes, *that*
are twins:

CHAP. VII.

VERSE

4. Thy neck *is* as a tower of ivory;
Thine eyes *like* the fish-pools in Heshbon,
By the gate of Bath-rabbim;
Thy nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon,
Which looketh toward Damascus:
5. Thine head upon thee *is* like Carmel,
And the hair of thine head like purple:
The king *is* held in the galleries.
6. How fair, and how pleasant art thou,
O love, for delights!
7. This thy stature is like to a palm-tree,
And thy breasts to clusters *of dates*.
8. I said, I will go up to the palm-tree,
I will take hold of the boughs thereof;
And now, thy breasts shall be as clusters of the
vine,
And the smell of thy nose like apples;
9. And the roof of thy mouth as the best wine,
Flowing for my beloved one, *and for my up-
right people*,
Causing the lips of those that sleep to
speak.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

1. How beautiful are thy feet
With shoes, O prince's daughter!

CHAP. VII.

VERSE

3. Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes,
 * Twins of a (female) roe.
8. I said I will go up to the palm-tree, I will take
 hold of the boughs thereof :

THE CHURCH.

10. I *am* my beloved's, and his desire *is* towards me.
11. Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field ;
 Let us lodge among the cophers.
12. Let us get *up* early to the vineyards ;
 Let us see if the vine flourish,
Whether the tender grape appears,
And the pomegranates bud forth :
 There will I give thee my loves.
13. The dudaim give a smell,
 And at our gates *are* all manner of pleasant
fruits,
Both new and old,
Which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINE.

12. *Whether* the tender grape appears, *and* the
 pomegranates bud forth :

* In order to shew the reader the exact division of the Hebrew as by Dr. Kennicott, it became necessary to give the present statement of this verse ; which, in form, differs from the English translation. See *before on this verse*.

THE CHURCH.

CHAP. VIII.

VERSE

1. O that thou *wert* as my brother,
That sucked the breasts of my mother!
When I should find thee without, I would kiss
 thee;
Yet, I should not be despised.
2. I would lead thee, *and* bring thee
Into my mother's house, *who* would instruct me:
I would cause thee to drink of the wine,
Prepared from the juice of my pomegranate.
3. His left hand *should be* under my head,
And his right hand should embrace me.

CHRIST.

4. I have charged you, O children of Jerusalem;
For why should ye stir up, and why awake
The lovely one until she please?
5. Who *is* this that cometh up from the wilderness,
Leaning upon her beloved?
I raised thee up under the apple-tree:
There thy mother brought thee forth;
There she brought thee forth *that* bare thee.

THE CHURCH.

6. Set me as a seal upon thine heart,
As a seal upon thine arm;

CHAP. VIII.

VERSE

- For love *is* strong as death ;
 Jealousy *is* cruel as the grave,
 The coals thereof *are* coals of fire,
 Fire of the flame of Jah.
7. Many waters cannot quench love,
 Neither can the floods drown it :
 If a man would give all the substance of his
 house for love,
 It would utterly be contemned.
8. We have a little sister,
 And she hath no breasts :
 What shall we do for our sister,
 In the day when she shall be spoken for ?

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

6. The coals thereof *are* coals of fire, fire of the
 flame of Jah.
7. Many waters cannot
 Quench love,
 If a man would give all the substance of his
 house
 For love, it would utterly be contemned.

CHRIST.

9. If she *be* a wall,
 We will build upon her a palace of silver :

CHAP. VIII.

VERSE

And if she *be* a door,
We will inclose her with boards of cedar.

THE CHURCH.

10. I *am* a wall, and my breasts like towers :
Then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.
11. Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon :
He delivered the vineyard unto keepers ;
A man, for the fruit thereof, shall bring
A thousand *pieces* of silver.
12. My vineyard which *is* for me, *is* before me :
The thousand *are* for thee *to bring*, O Solomon,
And two hundred for those that keep the fruit
thereof.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINE.

A man, for the fruit thereof, shall bring a thousand *pieces* of silver.

CHRIST.

13. Thou that dwellest in the gardens,
The companions hearken to thy voice :
Cause me to hear *it*.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

The companions hearken
To thy voice: cause me to hear *it*.

THE CHURCH.

CHAP. VIII.

VERSE

14. Make haste, my beloved,
 And be thou like to a roe,
 Or to a young hart,
 Upon the mountains of spices.

ACCORDING TO DR. KENNICOTT'S HEB. LINES.

Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like
 To a roe, or to a young hart.

FINIS.

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