

A  
DISSERTATION  
ON THE BOOK OF  
**REVELATION:**

DEDICATED TO THE AUTHOR'S FRIENDS  
IN AMERICA.

BY JAMES GRAY,  
*Of the County of Longford, Ireland.*

*For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. Rom. xv. 4.*

*Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.*

*1 Tim. iv, 15.*

NEWBURGH:

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FOR ROBERT GILBERT.

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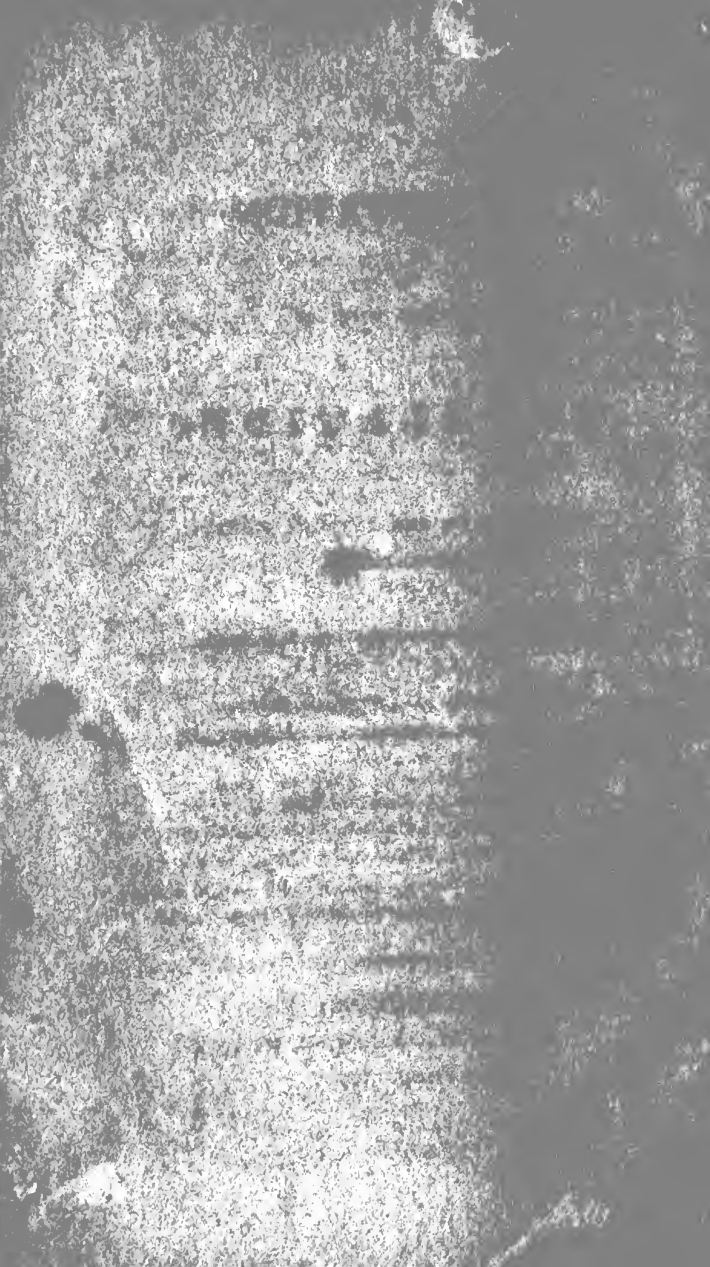








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FOR ROBERT GRAY.

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1818.

*Southern District of NEW-YORK, SS.*



BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the nineteenth day of October, in the forty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America, ROBERT GRAY, of said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as Proprietor, in the words and figures following, to wit:

*A Dissertation on the Book of Revelation. Dedicated to the Author's friends in America. By James Gray, of the County of Longford, Ireland.*

*For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Rom. xv. 4.*

*Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. 1 Tim. iv. 15.*

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the time therein mentioned." And also to an Act, entitled "an Act, supplementary to an Act, entitled an Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

JAMES DILL,  
*Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.*

# DEDICATION.

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*To my Relatives and Friends in  
the United States of America.*

Dearly Beloved,

I take the liberty to offer, for your inspection, the following remarks on the Revelation. The religious establishments in this country are so powerful, that to avoid their persecuting principles, I must live unknown in the land of my nativity. That America may for ever enjoy the blessings of every spiritual and temporal good, is the sincere prayer of your constant friend,

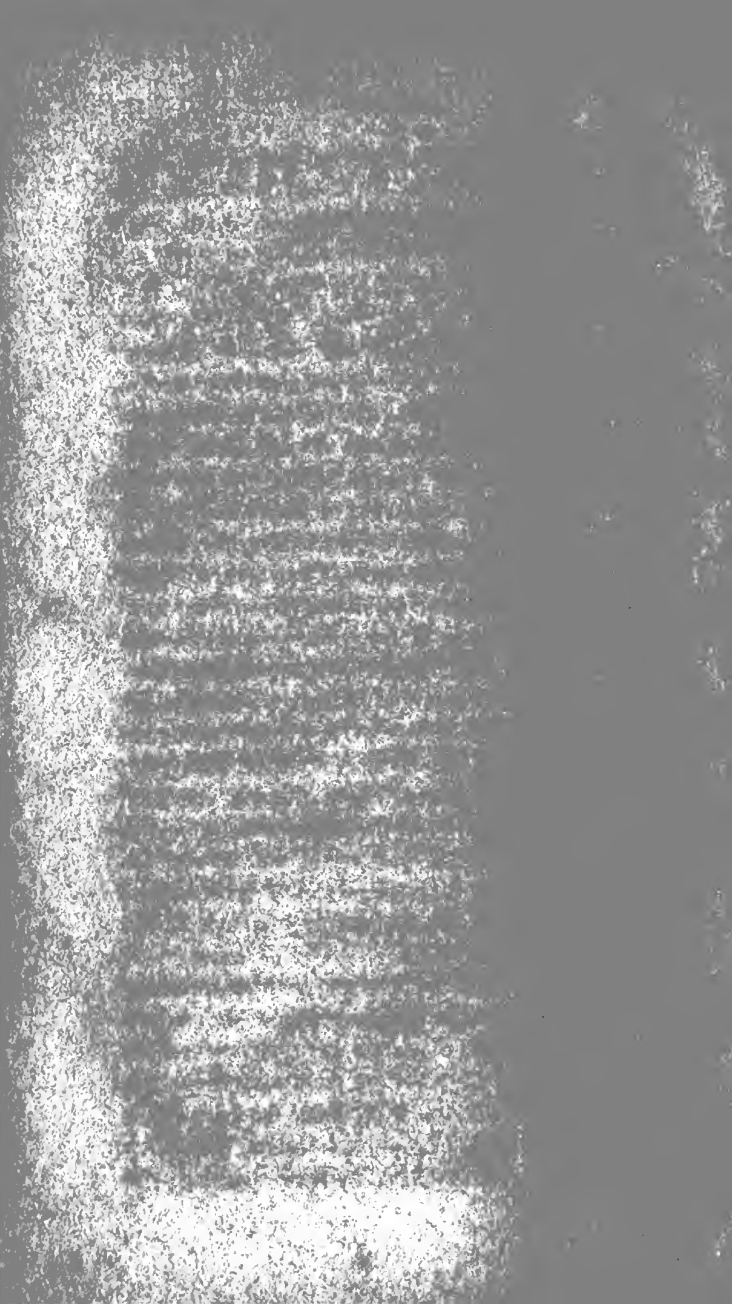
in the faith

and fellowship

of the gospel,

**JAMES GRAY.**

*April 20th, 1818.*





## PREFACE.

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I AM descended from poor, but virtuous parents, who taught me to read, and write, and had me instructed in the rules of arithmetic, and a feeble knowledge of geometry and geography. In my youth, I was inured to hard labour of various kinds, and had little time for literary improvement; a farm; and family cares then succeeded, which were also impediments to it: This being truly my situation, I hope, that if truth appears in these pages, it will apologize for the want of style, and elegance of language. Being totally unacquainted with the learned languages, I have adhered chiefly to that contained in the scriptures, which was also, through the whole of this little work, my principal guide. A strong conviction of the truths contained in the scriptures, and a blessing promised to those who read, and keep the sayings contained in this extraordinary book, has urged me, at my leisure hours, to attempt an explanation of those divine mysteries, which God, in his mercy, through Christ Jesus, has given to mankind.

I know that I shall be charged with maintaining Arian principles. What the doctrines of the Arians of the fourth and fifth centuries were, I know not, as their writings were destroyed by the apostates, in the after ages; but this I know, that under the third sound of the gospel trumpet, the salutary waters, (or truth,) were made bitter to mankind, by false teachers; for

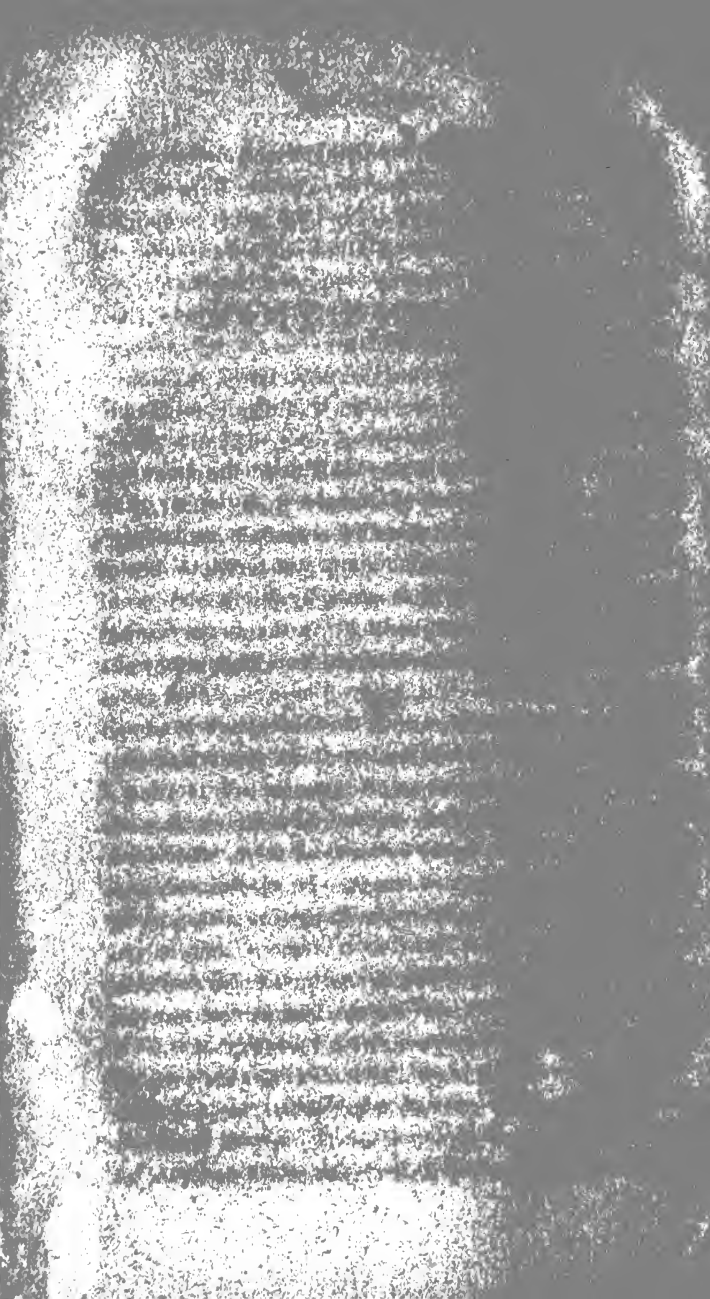
John himself, in his epistles, complains of it, and Peter and Paul foretold the same. Under the fourth sound, the third part of the sun, (or gospel light,) was smitten; the third part of the moon, (or brotherly love,) suffered the same fate, and the third part of the stars, (those once faithful luminaries of the church,) became dim, and lost their former lustre; on which account, there were three woes, or calamities, to afflict the christian world, under the three succeeding sounds, by reason of its apostacy from the truth; for under the fifth sound the bottomless pit was opened by Constantine; smoke, or gross ignorance and error, arose out of it, and the first woe commenced, under the locusts, or numerous false teachers of those days; they also formed an uncharitable creed, at their first general council at Nice, A. D. 325.

Under the sixth seal, the man of sin grew to full stature, wearing his triple crown, attended by his six hundred and sixty six bishops, and two hundred millions of the inferior orders; these are all considered by the prophet as murderers, gross idolaters, and persecutors, and they would not repent; these brought on the second woe, and the Athanasian creed is also the basis of their faith.

The seventh sound produced Protestantism, with its brilliant rainbow of seven colours, or its seven principal sects; and rainbow like, great part of it was invisible, as it remained under the horizon of primitive purity and perfection; for which reason John was not permitted to write, or take notice of its little book, which it held up for the instruction of mankind; it was sweet in John's mouth, to see any departure from the errors produced by the sixth sound; but his belly was

made bitter, or he was filled with bitter reflections, at finding Protestants not supporting genuine christianity, therefore, he was informed, that he must prophecy again, before many peoples, nations, tongues and kings; or in other words, we must go back, and seek instruction from him. These also support the Athanasian doctrines, and began the third woe.

Let Arianism be what it may, by a careful examination of this wonderful book, we shall find holy John always charging the western, or Athanasian church with guilt and error; for it was the eighth head of the Romish beast, and was (or arose) from the seventh, or christian imperial head, and is doomed to perdition. See also, how he condemns the scarlet whore, who filled the earth with her abominations, and see also, previous to the millennium, how the beast and false prophet are to be thrust down into hell; and see also, how the Omnipotent Jehovah is to be praised for thus judging her. May the Sovereign Ruler of universal nature, hasten the time, when all things shall become new, and the new Jerusalem be built on the sure foundation of the law, and the gospel!



## INTRODUCTION.

THIS extraordinary book leads us to the knowlege of God, of Christ, and of ourselves: By it we may perceive what true and revealed religion is, and wherein it consists: By it the counsel, and foreknowlege of God is in part revealed to man, by the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ; and by it the saints of God are enabled to view the things which have, and must come to pass.

By the providential care of God, this book has been on record above seventeen hundred years, and will continue so for the generations to come. It is written in such characters, that neither its heathen, or anti-christian enemies could understand them, whereby it escaped their destructive hands. Many eminent men of the later ages have mistook its true meaning, by endeavoring to bend it, as their various inclinations or opinions led them. It is given by the Eternal Author of truth, and therefore, an ardent and zealous enquirer after truth can acquire a knowlege of it.

The writer of the book of Revelation is the prophet John; he was the disciple whom Jesus, in a peculiar manner, loved, and by whom he received his heavenly education. According to the Mediator's promise, he

came under the inspiration, or guidance of God on the day of Pentecost; in consequence of which, many mighty works were done by him; the same accompanied him in the isle of Patmos, upwards of sixty years after, and enabled him there to write this amazing book. All accounts agree, that he lived to a very advanced age, that he outlived all the other disciples, and thus, from his great age, and heavenly endowments, he was best qualified to write the things which he saw, and the things which are, or then existed, and the things which should be hereafter.

In imitation of his highly exalted Master, he says little about the temporal affairs of this evil world; he seems to rest satisfied with the predictions of the old prophets, concerning the fate of empires, states, and kingdoms; he scarcely mentions the afflictions which he endured, though it may be presumed, that they were many, except in one place. See chap. i. 9. "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." His gospel, and epistolary writings, are of a pure, and spiritual nature, his prophetic pieces are interwoven with the grandest appearances in nature. In short, it hath a language peculiar to itself, without the knowlege of which, it is impossible to understand it; it may be called a learned christian science, and different from all the other learned sciences, and when time, numbers, and descriptions are given, it is done with such accuracy, as to convince mankind, that the words of this prophecy are true.

In the first chapter, he calls this book, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him." The intention of it was, "to shew unto his servants

things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel," or by divine influence, "to his servant John," who was the writer; when written, John directs it to the seven churches which are, or were then, in Asia. In this chapter, he places God as the great first cause of all things; and next the Redeemer, as supreme Head over the churches, as all power and judgment over them was committed to him.

The second and third chapters contain the charges given to the Asiatic churches; where any error appeared, they are severely reprov'd, and all are exhorted to perseverance and steadiness in the truth which they received, and an eternal reward promised, for their encouragement.

In the fourth chapter, the Eternal Jehovah is represented, as God over all, and seated on the throne of universal nature. He cannot be described otherwise than by the four great attributes, or perfections, which constitute his essence; these are frequently called the four beasts. Around the throne was a rainbow, emblematic of his covenants with man; also around the throne were twenty four seats, and on these seats sat twenty four elders, figurative of the twelve tribes of Israel, who received the law, and of the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ, who witnessed the gospel, and propagated it.

The fifth chapter presents to the understanding, how the revelation of God's will came to man, by the Lord Jesus Christ, under the emblem of "a book in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne, written within," to shew how it would operate on the righteous, in their inner man, "and on the back side," to reveal the wrath of God to all who disobeyed it. This book was "seal-

ed with seven seals," and none could open them but He who was ordained of God for man's redemption. He, the Redeemer, is represented as a Lamb that had been slain, figurative of the sacrifice made for man's salvation. He "stood in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts," by which we may learn, that the power, mercy, wisdom, and providence of God were made manifest in him, for man's deliverance. "And he stood in the midst of the elders," as the believers' friend and Mediator. "He had seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God;" these are the bountiful gifts of God in Christ, and freely sent forth to the saints. Verse 12. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!"

In the sixth chapter, the Redeemer commences his important mission. On opening the first seal, he shews that purity of principle, whereby the children of God are enabled, by divine grace, to "go forth conquering, and to conquer." They had a bow given them, figurative of their spiritual armor, and a crown, as the reward of their triumphant warfare. On opening the second seal, ambition, vain glory, the love of conquest, and all the evils pertaining to a military life, are discoverable; for to him who acts on this bloody principle was given a great sword. On opening the third seal, covetousness, hypocrisy, and evils of this nature, would appear, under the pretence of justice, if not restricted by human laws. On opening the fourth seal, intemperance, with all its train of ghastly evils, may be enumerated, by which men are going on in the way of death and hell. On opening the fifth seal, persecution is held in abhorrence, by a holy and just God. On



opening the sixth seal, the fatal effects of popery are discoverable.

In the seventh chapter, we find that persecution from every quarter must cease, and the Jews, those ancient favorites of the Most High, are called in, and engrafted into Christ's kingdom. The seventh seal accords with this, as it ends in silence. Thus ends the first view which God has favored us with, under the opening of the seals.

In the eighth and ninth chapters, we are favored with another view of things, past, present, and to come, under the sounding of seven trumpets; which is the seven different ways whereby the gospel has been delivered and received. The first was to the Jews, the second to the gentiles; the third by the instructors which arose after the apostles' days, whereby the salutary waters of the gospel were made bitter; the fourth by the teachers which next arose, and obscured gospel light, and brotherly love, which caused the churches to fade in their lustre; the fifth began under Constantine the Great, who opened the bottomless pit for the clergy, and began the first woe; the sixth is the long reign of popery, by which commenced the second woe; the seventh protestantism, which brought on the third woe.

The tenth chapter gives us a beautiful history of the reformation, under the metaphorical appearance of a rainbow, with its seven colours, or sects; its seven thunders, or doctrines, and its little book of instruction; but John could not be permitted to write, or approve of them; and the book when eaten, or its contents digested, only caused bitter reflections. He was

then informed, that he must prophecy, or teach again, which shews that the doctrines produced by the reformers are defective.

In the eleventh chapter, under the measuring of the temple, the altar, and them who worship therein, is shewn the distinguishing marks between those who worshipped God in spirit, and in truth, and those who depended on the merit of their works, and the power of the church for salvation; it also contains the prophesying, death, and resurrection of the two witnesses, or the preservation of the law, and the gospel, by the reformers, with other circumstances relative to that memorable event.

By considering the twelfth chapter, we shall find, First, the beauty, purity, and heavenly attire, of the primitive church. Secondly, the conflicts, and afflictions, that it endured, by satan, and its other enemies. Thirdly, the woman's, or church's flight into the wilderness, for twelve hundred and sixty years. Fourthly, the war between the Arian and Athanasian sects; the first headed by Michael, and the second by satan. Fifthly, the defeat of satan, and his schemes afterwards to seduce the woman, or true church. Sixthly, her only protection, in those days, was under the wings of the Greek, or eastern Emperors. And seventhly and lastly, the dragon is still wroth with the woman, and the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The thirteenth chapter gives us, First, a history of Rome from its foundation, to the wounding to death of its seventh head, in the year, 475. Secondly, the healing of this deadly wound, by the eighth, or uni-

versal papal head. Thirdly, that this eighth head is a blasphemer of God, and a persecutor of the saints. Fourthly, that he was to continue in power forty two months, or twelve hundred and sixty years. And fifthly, his number, or the number of his brethren, the bishops, who supported, and exercised his power before him.

The fourteenth chapter exhibits, First, a true church on mount Zion, or Jerusalem, founded by the Lord Jesus Christ, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. Secondly, the founding of the gentile churches by the apostles, with the doctrines taught them. Thirdly, the fall of Babylon, or the Romish church, from the faith first delivered to it. Fourthly, the severe condemnation of the Eastern against her for doing so. Fifthly, the rise and progress of the Lutheran church. Sixthly, of the Calvinistic church. Seventhly, of Presbyterianism, and how it condemned and banished Prelacy out of Scotland, for the space of sixteen hundred furlongs.

The fifteenth chapter presents us with a great sign in heaven, or among the heavenly minded, whereby we may observe, First, the happy state of those professors of christianity, whom popery could not seduce. Secondly, their faith, for they sung the song of Moses, the servant of God, and of the Lamb. Thirdly, they behold the manifestation of God's judgments against the wicked. Fourthly, that the wicked are the cause of the vials of wrath being poured out upon them. And fifthly, that they so obscured the temple, or scriptures of truth, that no man was able to enter, or discover the truths contained therein until the vials should all be poured out.

By perusing the sixteenth chapter, we find, First, that none of those vials began to be poured out, until popery was established. Secondly, that five of them were pouring out at the reformation. Thirdly, that the sixth began soon after the reformation, and involved the protestants in it, by the Armageddon work, or horrors of war. Fourthly, that the seventh is pouring out promiscuously, at present, on all parties. And fifthly, that none of those vials are yet empty, neither will they be, until mankind begin to pay that tribute of adoration and praise to God, for judging the great whore, who corrupted the earth.

The seventeenth chapter gives us a curious and accurate description of the great whore, and of the beast, which carrieth her; of the ten kings, who gave their power and strength unto the eighth head, or papal beast; that these shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, and that they shall, in God's appointed time, begin to hate the whore, and shall make her naked and desolate, and at length consume her.

The eighteenth chapter contains, First, the total destruction of Babylon, and the several causes of it. Secondly, the excessive grief and lamentation of her clergy on account of it. Thirdly, even the kings, and great men of the earth, join in the general mourning. Fourthly, her merchandize is despised, for no man buyeth it any more. Fifthly, the general joy among the saints, and servants of God, for his avenging judgments on her. Sixthly, that her overthrow will be of a violent nature, and beyond the possibility of recovery. And seventhly, that in her was found the blood of saints and prophets, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

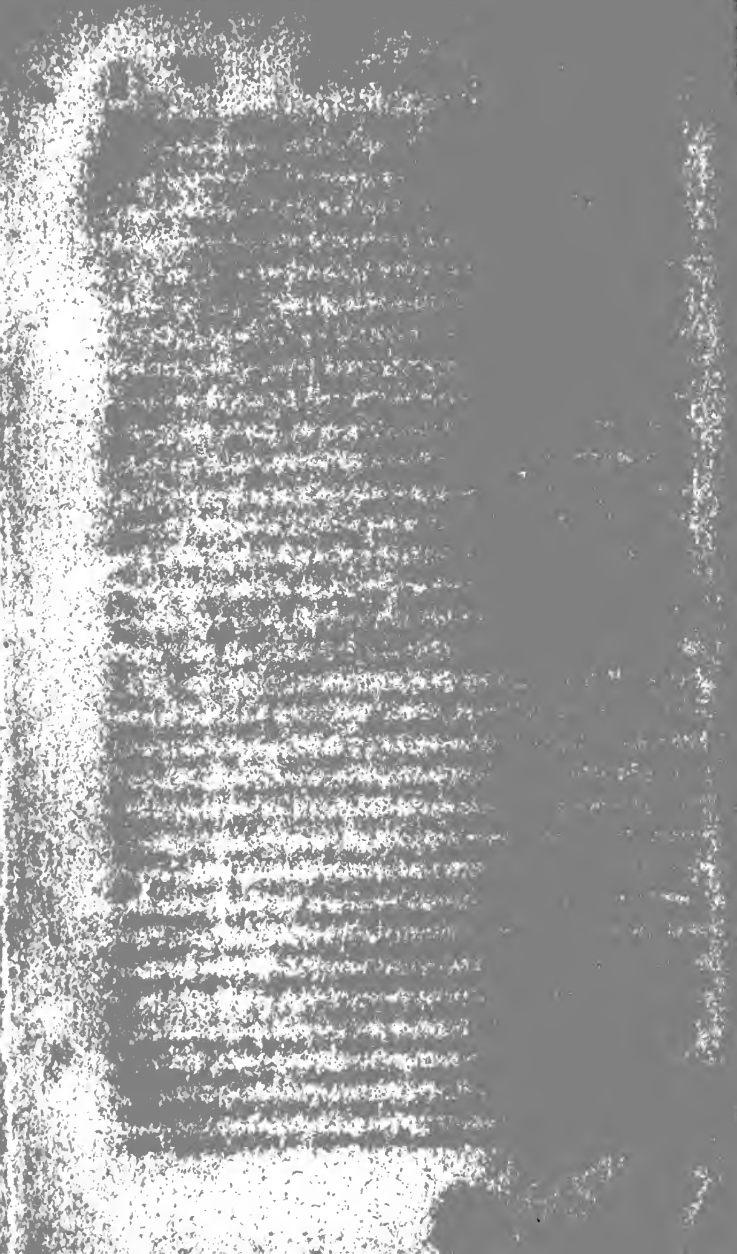
In the nineteenth chapter, we have, First, the voice of the heavenly minded, ascribing thanksgiving and praise to God, for his righteous judgments, in judging the great whore, and avenging the blood of his servants at her hand. Secondly, the voice of an immense multitude, in many nations, rendering praise to the Omnipotent Jehovah, because he now reigneth over all. Thirdly, all erroneous impediments being now removed, behold the joy of both Jew and Gentile, in ascribing the glory to God; and all uniting in the gospel plan of salvation, under the simile of a marriage with the Lamb. Fourthly, the blessed state of those who are called to the marriage, because to them are granted the robes of Christ's righteousness. Fifthly, the manifestation of the Spirit, being the gift of God, the prophet is charged to consider it as such, and to worship God, who alone is the giver, and that it comes by the mediation and testimony of Jesus. Sixthly, the glorified state of the Redeemer is described, his power and offices, the heavenly armies of the saints who follow him, and that he treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, which implies, that he is ordained of God to be the Judge of the quick and of the dead. Seventhly, an angel standing in the sun shews, that a new spiritual government will arise, whose foundation is the pure gospel light. Eighthly, that this new government will devour all the old establishments in both church and state. Ninthly, the opposition it will meet with, by the beast and false prophet. Tenthly, the miserable end of the beast and false prophet. And eleventhly, the great work of conversion which will then prevail, to usher in the millenial dawn.

In the twentieth chapter, the millenium commences, and satan is bound a thousand years. Secondly, the great chain that binds him, is man's adherence to the law and gospel precepts. Thirdly, the first resurrection, and the blessed and holy state of those who have their part in it. Fourthly, satan regains his liberty, when the thousand years are expired, and sets out to deceive the nations. Fifthly, the last effort of satan and his host against the saints, and their final overthrow. Sixthly, an awful description of the last resurrection, and general judgment.

In the twenty first chapter, the prophet shews us, First, that the present heavens and earth are to pass away, and that a new heaven and a new earth are to succeed them. Secondly, that a holy city, or new Jerusalem, is to be founded therein, and become the eternal abode of the saints made perfect. Thirdly, the happy state of its inhabitants, who ever live in the presence of God. Fourthly, an assurance given of the certainty of these things. Fifthly, the miserable state of the wicked. And sixthly, a description of this heavenly city, and its undefiled inhabitants, and the total exclusion therefrom of the ungodly.

In the twenty second and last chapter, John shews, First, the source and fountain, from whence all spiritual blessings flow, namely, from the throne of God, and the Lamb. Secondly, the happy state of the servants of God, even in this life, and their uninterrupted state of felicity in eternity. Thirdly, the truth of these sayings, as the knowlege of them came by divine inspiration. Fourthly, as time is here short, and very uncertain, we shall obtain blessedness, by keeping, or living agreeable to the sayings of this book. Fifthly,

the prophet again shews, that as heavenly knowlege comes by divine influence, God alone is to be worshipped, as the giver of this precious gift. Sixthly, that the sayings of this book are not to be sealed, but always open for instruction. Seventhly, that God is the great first cause, and parent of law, and the happy state of those who obey his commandments. Eighthly, that Jesus is Mediator, and chief Ruler over the churches. Ninthly, the comfortable assurance of free grace, and the different invitations to come, and be saved. Tenthly, the severe denunciations of God's wrath, against those who add to, or take from, the words of the prophecy of this book. Eleventhly, that we must appear quickly before the Redeemer, and how we ought to be resigned to his heavenly will. And twelfthly and lastly, this holy prophet prays, that "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may remain with the churches. Amen."





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DISSERTATION

ON THE

REVELATION.

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CHAP. I.

THE beloved disciple and prophet, John, begins this book, with a short, but nervous introduction. He calls it "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him." The intention of it was, "to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent, and signified it by his angel," or by that operative influence, and gift of his Holy Spirit, "to his servant John," who was the person appointed to publish it. This John was ordained to "bear record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw," or was allowed to publish. He then pronounces a blessing on him "that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep," in heart and mind, "those things which are written therein;" and concludes with this emphatic reason, "for the time is at hand."

His dedication to the seven churches is full of heavenly consolation to all true believers: "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and

which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne." Here God is declared to be the great first cause of all things. See also Chapter, iv. "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." In this verse the great attribute of mercy, through the Redeemer, and his mediatorial offices, are beautifully described; and in the following verse, the highly exalted state and privilege of a true believer is given in the most lively colours; for the Redeemer "hath made them kings and priests unto God, and his Father; to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen."

"Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth, shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Through the whole of this book, we shall find mankind divided into three parts. First, the heavenly minded, or those who place their affections on things above. Second, the earthly minded, who have a form of godliness, but were ignorant of its power. Third, the sea, which comprehends the heathen and infidel, or pagan world, who knew not God, and are, like the sea, the major part of the human race; it is, therefore, to the second class that this verse must be applied; for first, the Redeemer "cometh with clouds," or appears in an obscure manner to them. Secondly, "and every eye shall see him;" they shall see, but not perceive, as did the incorrigible Jews, the nature and efficacy of a Saviour's love. Thirdly, "and they also which pierced him;" this includes the wicked Jews, who consented to his death, but more particularly the

nominal christians, who "crucify him afresh, and put him to open shame," by their ungodly deeds. And fourthly, "all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." It is plain, from this last clause, that the earthly minded and carnal, who are lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God, shall wail and lament, when they are cast into outer darkness. And lastly, "even so, amen," shews their doom to be inevitable.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Here again God is declared to be the great first Cause, or Parent of universal nature.

The ninth verse shews, that "John was a companion in tribulation," with the saints of those days, that he was "also their brother, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, and that he was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." This appears to be a small barren island in the Archipelago, between Europe and Asia, to which the prophet was banished, for the truth which he propagated and maintained.

Verse 10. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." This voice, or call to this holy man, seems to be very different from that of the teachers of this, or the former ages. I fear many of them have ran without it, and are not sent; and how can they, in such cases, profit the people? This great and spiritual voice was behind him, urging him to write for the reproof, edification, and comfort of the churches, by saying, in the eleventh verse, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; and, What thou seest, write in a book, and

send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea." Why John was directed to send this book to these seven churches of Asia, leaves room for a variety of conjectures; some have imagined, that as these churches were pretty convenient to each other, John became their Metropolitan; but how could that be? for first, as it was the Redeemer's kingdom, and the future happiness of mankind that he labored for, in christian love he could have no particular attachment to these churches, beyond any other; Secondly, were they more famed for their piety, than any other, that John was commanded to pay this extraordinary attention to them? Thirdly, were they so situated, as to transmit copies of this book with more ease and facility to other churches? Fourthly, why were the churches of Italy and Greece not noticed, or were the writings of Paul considered as sufficient for them? Fifthly, were they more likely to fall into errors, than any others? Sixthly, this observation I am constrained to make, that as they were situated near Byzantium, afterwards called Constantinople, which became the seat of the eastern emperors, these emperors and their bishops, about the year 536, separated from the Roman, or western church, then falling into idolatry. The eastern empire continued till the year 1453, when it was destroyed by the Ottoman power, and many of the easterns were obliged to take refuge in Europe, about the time that the art of printing was discovered. These refugees brought with them the copies of the New Testament, and thus by the providential care of God, we have that sacred

volume translated, and printed in the languages of all the reformed churches, from the original Greek manuscripts.

Verse 12. "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks." This proves John's writings to be all figurative; for in the twentieth verse, the seven candlesticks are shewn to be the seven churches. On considering this figure, we find, that a candlestick is placed on some eminent situation, it supports the candle, and thus light and comfort are diffused to all around. The same effect would a church, or society of true believers produce.

The four following verses shew the glory, power, majesty, and dominion of the Redeemer, in and over the churches, as their Supreme Head. "He held in his right hand seven stars," which are the angels, or the governmental authority over them. "Out of his mouth went a sharp two edged sword," which shews the powerful effect of his gospel, on all true believers, and the fatal consequences of it to the disobedient. "His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." He is the Sun of righteousness, who, by his gospel, has dispelled those clouds of error, ignorance, superstition, and idolatry, from all who are obedient to the truths contained in it.

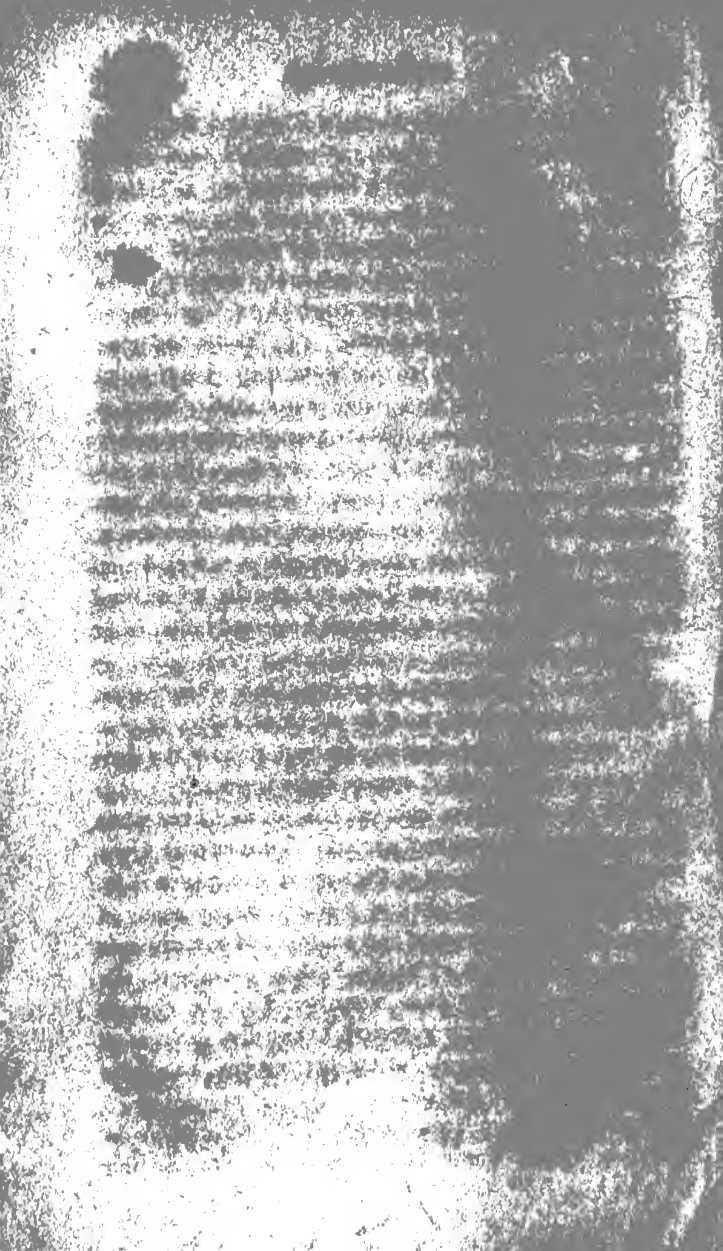
Verse 17. "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last." From these words we may perceive the reverential awe of John, who was the beloved disciple. What shall they do, who revere him not? John was comforted, they shall be tormented.

Verse 18. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen. And have the keys of hell, and of death." These are comfortable words, to know that the Redeemer liveth, that he has triumphed over hell and death, and is the victorious Captain of our salvation. That he has the keys of hell and death, shews that he has power to punish the wicked, as well as reward the righteous. As all power is committed to him, by his heavenly Father, glory, honor, and praise, be given to that adorable Being, who has put the keys into more merciful hands, than the pretended successors of Saint Peter!

Verse 19. "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." Here is a commission of a most extensive, and important nature. John was beloved by his Redeemer, and by his mediation became a favorite of the most high God, who endowed him with many spiritual gifts, and qualified him to write the things which he saw, and which are, and even those things which should be hereafter. In this wonderful book, the predictions, numbers, times, and other circumstances, all prove it to be of divine original.

Verse 20. "The mystery of the seven stars, which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks, which thou sawest, are the seven churches." This verse proves, that the words of this book cannot be taken in their literal sense; it is here called, a mystery, and to shew that it is so, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, which is the spiritual government of its several members, in defence of the truths of the

gospel, as committed to them; for we see that some are commended, and others reprov'd, which shews that the whole body were chargeable, or to guard against any error that might appear among them; and thus it appears, that pastor and people are included. And the seven candlesticks are the seven churches, or lights, to lighten the gentiles, and to shew mankind the way of righteousness, and truth; and to prove this, Christ says to his followers. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven." Matt. v. 16.





## CHAP. II.

Verse 1. "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that hath the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." It is to be observed, that the seven churches are addressed in seven different forms, and each shews the power and efficacy of the Redeemer. This church is highly commended, in the second and third verses, for its works, its labour, and patience; it appears, that they could not bear them which are evil; they examined pretended teachers, and found them liars; they persevered in well doing. Nevertheless, the prophet, in the fourth verse, had something against them, because they had fallen from their first love.

Verse 5. "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

Verse 7. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Happy state of those, who can overcome the snares, and temptations of this evil world, and be enabled to partake of the tree of life! When faults were found in the church at Ephesus, at this early period, I fear that the best of our church governments, at the present day, would be found vastly more defective.

Verse 8. "And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These things saith the first and the

last, which was dead and is alive." This church is commended for its works, the tribulation which it endured, the poverty it labored under; but it was found rich in grace, though at the same time there were hypocritical members attached to it, who said they were Jews, but were found to be of the synagogue of satan. For a trial of their faith, it was foretold, that some of them should suffer imprisonment, by temptation from the evil one; they were also to suffer persecution for ten days, (or prophetic years.) This church is exhorted to continue faithful unto death, that they may obtain a crown of life. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Happy death of the righteous, when they shall receive a crown of life, that fadeth not away! It is worthy of notice, that the faithful members of these seven churches, have seven different kinds of blessings promised, all of which centre in eternal happiness.

Verse 12. "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write: These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges." It appears that this church was situated in a very corrupt part of Asia, even where satan's seat is; that even there they held fast the name, and supported the faith of the Redeemer, even in those days, wherein Antipas, a faithful martyr, was slain among them. But he who knows the mind and secrets of all men, found vices and crimes among them. They had also among them, those that held the doctrine of Balaam, and threw stumbling blocks in the way of the truth. They had among them, those who inclined to idolatry, and were guilty of fornication. They had also among them, those who held

the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, now called poligamy, or a plurality of wives.

Verse 16. "Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." From these words we may perceive, how unequal the combat, when the sinner is to be fought by strict justice.

Verse 17 "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." Happy state of the righteous, to be fed with that bread, which cometh down from heaven, to receive spiritual nourishment from the Lord of life, and to enjoy a blessing, which the world can neither give, nor take away!

Verse 18. "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass." Verse 19. "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works." It would appear, from these words, that the church was in a progressive state of spiritual improvement; but yet when tried by him, who knoweth all our ways, it was found in some things defective. It was charged with having some, who taught false doctrines, and thereby seduced others; it was also tinctured with idolatry, and a "space to repent of these fornications was given her, but she repented not."

Verse 22. "Behold I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her, into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds." From

these words we may see the danger of continuing in sin. God's Spirit will not always strive with man; he may be given over to a reprobate mind, and no place for repentance found. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God in an unregenerate state. He is not to be mocked.

Verse 23. "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know, that I am he which searchest the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you, according to your works." Verse 24. "But unto you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, (as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of satan, as they speak,) I will put upon you none other burden, but that which ye have already; hold fast till I come." From these words we may see the purity of heart and life, which the gospel law requires, and the dreadful effects of teaching false doctrines. It is a fact, that in these last ages, men have considered the Redeemer as incapable of ruling over us. They must decree rites and ceremonies, which neither he, nor his disciples, ever ordained. They have made canons, and injunctions, which the gospel never enjoined, and have treated with contempt, the glorified Redeemer, and his heavenly Father.

Verse 26. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." "The meek shall inherit the earth." Matt. v. 5. "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star," which will lead us on to perfect day. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

## CHAP. III.

Verse 1. "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead: Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." From these words, we find, that at Sardis, they had a name among the churches, that they had received the important truths of the gospel, and were content therewith; they thought the name sufficient, but made no spiritual improvement; they had the form of godliness, but not the power, and therefore were considered as dead, or ready to die. From hence we may learn the danger of living in a state of carnal security. If we are not growing better, we are growing worse; we must grow in grace, and favor with God, before we can arrive at perfection, and perfection is positively required, before we are admitted into glory; any thing that is impure, or unclean, cannot appear in the presence of HIM, with whom we have to do. In order to attain to eternal happiness, see what the Redeemer says, Matt. v. 48. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect." And here the command is to "be watchful, and to strengthen the things which remain, and are ready to die." If

we do not, our works will not be found perfect before God. I do not here mean absolute perfection; no mortal on earth can attain to that, by his own works; but if we draw near to God, he will draw near to us, and our merciful High Priest, and Intercessor, is able and willing to perform the rest. We are also commanded to "remember how we have received and heard," as we have the voice of scripture, and the voice of reason, to direct us. We are to hold fast these things and repent, lest death may come on as a thief, and we know not what hour he may come.

It appears that "even in Sardis, there were a few names which had not defiled their garments, therefore they shall walk in white with the Redeemer in glory; because they were found worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." Gracious encouragement! may we grow in grace, that our works may be perfect before God. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Verse 7, "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, These things saith HE that is holy, HE that is true, HE that hath the key of David, HE that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth. I know thy works: Behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." The church, or I may add, the people of this description, are greatly encouraged; the door of mercy is always open to them; if they are weak, they also are willing to keep the faith, and

Christ's strength is sufficient for them. These are they, who will increase in strength, and stature, and in the end attain to perfection through Jesus Christ. These are they, before whom the synagogue of satan, or all the wicked and unbelieving, of every description, shall tremble. In that day, when the great division is made, "Come, ye blessed, and go, ye cursed," the wicked shall then know and acknowledge, who are the redeemed of the Lord, and in bitter anguish behold those whom the Redeemer has loved. Even in this life, the meek and humble christian has his reward, which is beautifully expressed in verse 10. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." And our Saviour says, "the meek shall inherit the earth." Matt. v. 5. To be enabled to overcome, or resist temptation, is an inestimable blessing, and happy are they, who are proof against the seducing snares and allurements of it!

In verse 11, the shortness of our time is shewn in very expressive terms. "Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." And on such, a blessing of a most singular nature is promised. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name." Happy state! to be for ever in the favor, and under the protection of the Eternal Jehovah! to be found worthy to have that great name, and the name of the all

glorified Redeemer engraven on him, and to be an eternal inhabitant of the new Jerusalem! O happy situation of the saints of God! May we die the death of the righteous, that our end may be found like theirs: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Verse 14. "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things, saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot." From these words we may perceive, that the Spirit of God neither rests on, nor dwells in, people of this description; they are careless about those things which pertain to their everlasting happiness, though they cannot be reckoned among the openly prophane. Therefore, in the sight of an all seeing God, they may as well join the wicked of the earth, as be halting thus between two opinions. There is no middle state; we cannot serve God and mammon. The sentence passed on this kind of christians is truly deplorable. "So then, because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth," or reject thee altogether. The cause of this lukewarmness, or indolence, is beautifully explained in verse 17. "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." From these words it is evident, that the Laodiceans were rich, had acquired much property, and that they placed their affections thereon, and not on things above; gain and wordly interest were what they chiefly doated on, and neglected "the one thing needful;" they consid-



ered not the Redeemer's words, when he informed mankind, that "it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xix. 24. They overlooked the information of St. Paul where he says, "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Rom. viii. 6. The righteousness of all such are only filthy rags; they know not that they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked; they want that righteousness, that spotless raiment, wherewith the saints, by Christ Jesus, are enrobed. People of this description are not born again, they are not yet become new creatures.

Verse 18. Notwithstanding all this lukewarmness, and indifference about those things, which constitute our eternal happiness, yet behold the vast extent of mercy! "I counsel thee to buy of me, gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich;" which is heavenly riches that fade not away; "and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed," that is, the Redeemer's righteousness instead of our own, "and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear;" we being born in sin, and our righteousness only filthy rags, we must be adorned with that righteousness which cometh from above, which is pure, is undefiled. "And anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see;" that is, the eyes of our understanding must be opened, by the influence of that divine light, which enlightens the saints of God, and enables them to see the way that leads to salvation.

Verse 19. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore and repent." This shews that when sickness and affliction of various kinds at-

tend us, we should not repine; we should consider these things as chastnings for good, and humble ourselves before HIM, who knowest best what we stand in need of. We should use the language of holy Job when he lost all. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job i. 21.

Verse 20. "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." These are gracious words. If we resist not the calls and strivings of God's Spirit, and show our willing obedience thereto, grace, mercy, and peace, is our sure reward; "for it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. ii. 13. Therefore if we do not obey, we are left without excuse.

Verse 21. To shew the mercy of God in Christ Jesus more fully, a promise is here made of the first importance. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father, in his throne." These words are so forcible and plain, that they want no explanation. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Although the prophet was commanded to send this book to seven of the churches of Asia, do not its injunctions extend to every part of the globe, wherever the name of christian is acknowledged? "God is the same yesterday, today, and for ever; with HIM is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." These once famous churches, by the increase of the crimes they are charged with, in these two chapters, are almost extinct, their candlestick is removed, its light nearly extinguished, and in the room thereof is established

the religion of Mahomet. When such is the state of the eastern churches, what will be the fate of the western, who have far exceeded them in apostacy? Are the different churches now in Europe as well governed and regulated, as those of Asia were in John's days? Are the people of this age as humble, chaste, virtuous, and truly religious, as the christians of the first century? Are not the vices and crimes of those who call themselves christians crying aloud for vengeance? Are we free from fraud, violence, blasphemy, perjury, debauchery? or, in a word, is there any of the ten commandments which are not violated among us? I fear, that if John were to visit the churches of these days, and witness the abominable practices of too many of their members, he would not allow them the name of christian.

It may be said, that I am too severe in my reflections. Alas! they are melancholy truths. Let the state of Europe, these fifteen hundred years, witness these dismal facts; and to add to the black catalogue already mentioned, christians (so called) persecuting each other. It is often said, in these days, that Jesus died to save sinners; are we to continue in sin, that grace may abound? Did HE die to make us worse? No such language is to be found in the gospel. "Repent, and be converted," are the terms of our reconciliation. If HE died to save us from our sins, and give a revelation of the Great Jehovah's will, HE did not die to save us in our sins.

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## CHAP. IV.

In this chapter the prophet gives us a view of the power, mercy, wisdom, and providential care of the eternal Jehovah, who is God over all, blessed for evermore. Amen. The same John has informed us, that "no man hath seen God at any time." 1 John, iv. 12. We can see him only by the great attributes and perfections of his nature; HE being that pure, and eternal Spirit, who fills universal nature with his presence, Our Saviour also says, "God is a Spirit, and they who worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." John, iv. 24.

Verses 1, 2. "After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard was as it were a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold a throne was set in heaven, and One sat thereon." These verses shew, that after John had written to the seven churches of Asia, being still an exile in the isle of Patmos, he was wrapt up in meditation, and divine contemplation; the Spirit of God wrought powerfully in him; for the first voice which he heard, was as it were of a trumpet; like the apostle Paul, he was caught up to see things unutterable. In this state of mind, the heavenly voice said, "Come up hither," or, I will give thee more exalted ideas, "and shew thee things which must be hereafter." Immediately he received an additional measure of the divine influence, and the first thing, which presented itself to his understanding, was "a throne; and One sat thereon."

Verse 3. "And he that sat was to look upon like a Jasper and a Sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like to an emerald." I find that the Jasper and Sardine stones were beautifully variegated, which shews, that as God is manifest in all his works, we may behold the amazing variety of them; and also that his "ways are unsearchable, and past finding out." "There was a rainbow round about the throne." This bow was a complete emblem of God's covenant, or covenants with man; for God said to Noah, after his great deliverance, "This is the token of the covenant, which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." Gen. ix. 12, 13. This bow was in sight like to an emerald, which shews the firm and durable existence of his gracious covenant with man.

Verse 4. "And round about the throne were four and twenty seats, and upon the seats I saw four and twenty Elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold." This brings to our view, the covenant made, and the law given, to the twelve tribes of Israel, and is to stand for perpetual generations. In confirmation of this, the Redeemer has said, "till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle of the law shall in no wise fail, till all be fulfilled." Matt. v. 18. He further informs us, verse 17, that "he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it." By a careful examination of the gospel covenant, we shall find it exactly corresponds with the former, as it is a confirmation and illustration of it, with this difference, that as the first had a covenant of works annex-

ed to it, typifying the Redeemer, that part was abolished, by the sacrifice of himself, and is now become a covenant of grace to all true believers in Christ. This covenant, now no more of works, but of grace, was given to the twelve disciples of Christ, and completes the number twenty four. They are called Elders, which is a mark of distinction conferred on those who received those precious monuments of God's mercy, and conveyed them to mankind, for their instruction.

These twenty four "were clothed in white raiment," that is, they had on them the garments of righteousness, when these covenants were made. They "had on their heads crowns of gold," which shews the power and riches of his grace, which dignified them; for when Peter said unto him, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee, what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, that when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Matt. xix. 27, 28. From these words we may perceive, how highly these trustees of the sacred laws are honored.

Verse 5. "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices." In prophetic language, when God gives a revelation of his will to man, it is compared to lightning, as it "is quick and powerful," and cannot be resisted; the effect of it is as thunder, because its sound is heard among mankind, and becomes a religious system, established among them. In old testament language, it is called a fiery law, from the terrible appearances on mount Sinai, when Moses received the law on which the Jewish religion was found-

ed. See Exod. xix. On the introduction of the christian religion, when the Redeemer opened the first seal, it was sent into the world as the noise of thunder; and James and John are called Boanerges, or sons of thunder, they being powerful pillars, or supporters of the christian faith. The same figurative expressions are used by the prophet, when any new religious systems are established by man's invention; so at the reformation seven thunders uttered their voices, which points out the seven principal sects which then arose. Chap. x. 3, 4. And at the judgment, and final overthrow of the great whore, there shall be "mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." "And voices," are the voice of reason, and the voice of revelation, but particularly the latter, because holy men of old spake as they were influenced and moved by the Spirit of God. "And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." In many parts of the sacred writings, we read of "A lamp to light our path," which plainly is the Spirit of God, conducting the righteous in the way of salvation. These are the gifts of God, which burn with holy zeal in the soul, or the minds of the saints, through the mediation of the Mediator. Saint Paul beautifully explains this, in 1 Cor. 12, where he shews the diversity of gifts which the Lord hath given, and that it is the same God who worketh all in all; and that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. To a wicked unconverted man this appears nonsense, but they who fear God know it to be true; for the apostle shews the Corinthians what they were before their conversion, and how the Holy Spirit would



operate afterwards. As Jesus Christ is the true vine, the righteous in him are the branches, and God gives life and vigor to the whole, see John xv. Therefore if we "abide in him, we bring forth much fruit unto holiness," and are made partakers of those divine favors which God in his mercy gives: When thus made partakers of the benefits purchased by Christ, we in a measure receive with him these seven lamps of divine light, which are, heavenly power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing. Thus we may see the rich provision which our merciful Creator has in store for the saints, and the servants of God and the Lamb. The saints thus attired, may be said to keep the great commandment of the Law; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, strength, soul, and mind." Mark xii. 30.

Verse 6. "And before the throne there was a sea of glass, like unto crystal." Through the whole of this book mankind are divided into three parts. First, heaven, that is, the heavenly minded, who place their affections on things above. Secondly, earth, or the nominal christian, who is carnal, earthly minded and sensual. Thirdly, the sea, or turbulent ocean of mankind, and like the sea compose the major part of the human race, which are the heathen and infidel part. So here in this celestial view, it is a representation of the angelic host, who are in the immediate presence of God. They are compared to crystal, because any thing that is impure or defiled cannot appear before him. "And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts, full of eyes before and behind." That is, they were all light, nothing in nature could be hid; which shews that they are the attributes of the omni-

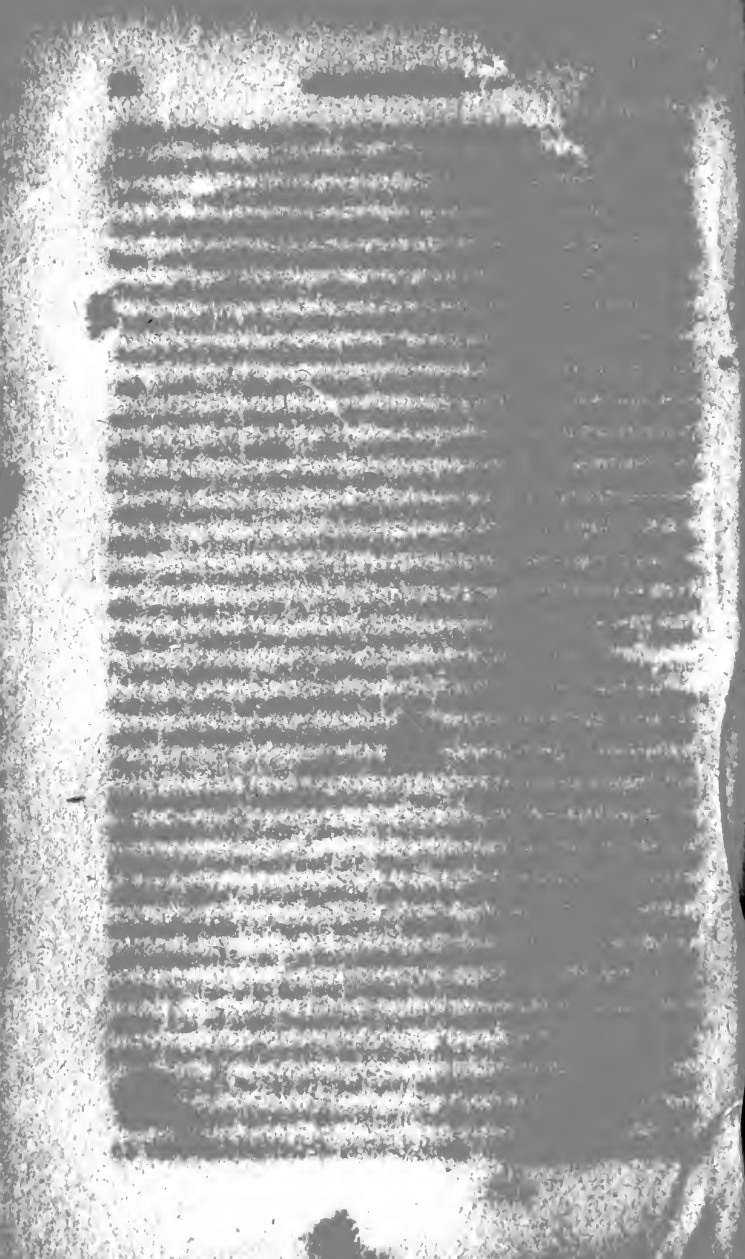
potent Jehovah; for no description can be given of him, otherwise than by the great attributes and perfections of his nature.

Verse 7, "And the first beast was like a lion." Figurative of God's great and irresistible power in the work of creation. "And the second beast like a calf;" which shews his great mercy, in the sacrifice he has made for man's salvation. "And the third beast had a face as a man;" which directs us to behold his infinite wisdom in the plan of universal nature. "And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle," a beautiful emblem of that providential care, by which the wonderful whole is preserved and governed.

Verse 8. "And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him." This directs our attention to the amazing speed, by which the divine will was accomplished, in the six days' work of creation. "And they were full of eyes within." This shews the beauty, light, magnificence, and harmony, which are displayed in the creation; there is no defect, no blemish, to be found, for God viewed "every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good." Gen. i. 31. "And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." When we consider the amazing works of God, do we not see his great power day and night shewing forth his praise? Is there a man, saint or sinner, who does not by day and night, experience his mercy? Can any man look around him, and not see his infinite wisdom, day and night, displaying itself? And can any mortal be so insensible, as not to see his providential care over the whole of creation, by day and by night, in the government and preservation of it? As far as our limited

conceptions can extend, is there any thing else that is making this incessant proclamation, in praise of the Eternal Jehovah, but those four already mentioned? As to his Omnipotence, and Omnipresence, they are not so conspicuous in proclaiming his wonderful works to us his rational creatures, though he has condescended to make his abode with us, if we abide in his laws.

Verses 9, 10, 11. "And when those beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, and the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." It is plain from these three verses that the true believers, (whom I shall here call the offspring of the twenty four elders,) when they contemplate God's wonderful works, in either creation or redemption, they will prostrate themselves before the throne, and in imitation of the twenty four elders, render to God that tribute of praise, which is so justly due unto him, by saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created."



## CHAP. V.

IN the former chapter, the prophet, in the most beautiful and lively figures, exhibited the attributes and perfections of the eternal Jehovah. In this chapter, the amazing extension of God's mercy, in the work of redemption, through Jesus Christ, is opened to our view.

Verse 1. "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a book written within, and on the back side, sealed with seven seals." This book "is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him;" and its contents were made known to his servant John. See chap. 1. It "was written on the back side," which shews that what was visible under the mosaic law, was insufficient for human happiness.—It, "was written within;" which leads us to see it contained that which would complete it.—It "was sealed with seven seals;" these were to be opened by the Redeemer, who was ordained to shew us the way to eternal life, and the wide avenues which lead to sin and death.

Verses 2, 3. "And I saw a strong angel proclaiming; Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." This strong angel is the gracious promises made to the Jews, concerning the Messiah; he was loudly proclaimed to them, by all the old prophets; the people believed these promises, and in his coming, and his presence among them: But alas! they were ignorant that his kingdom was not to be of this world; they were insensible that his power was from on high, and that no mortal man, be his attainments ever so

great, was "able to open the book or even to look thereon."

Verses 4, 5. "And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open, and to read the book, neither to look thereon." John laments his own ignorance; he knew not the Redeemer's efficacy; but he was comforted, when he considered the promises, and found that it was Jesus Christ, of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, that would prevail, and open the seven seals thereof. It appears that even the disciples were ignorant of the nature of Christ's spiritual kingdom, until the day of pentecost; being then under the Roman dominion, they asked, "Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel! And he said unto them, it is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power; but ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts i. 6—8. They were commanded "not to depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me." When that happy day arrived; "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues; as the spirit" of Jehovah "gave them utterance." They then knew the Mediator's power and advocacy with the Father. They then became new creatures, and experimentally knew that their Lord and Master was to open the seals, and reveal the word of God to man.

Verse 6. "And I beheld and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the Elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven

horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God." In this remarkable verse, we have a great variety of considerations. First, the Messiah is represented as a Lamb, not slain, but as if it had been slain; which leads us to behold his glorious resurrection and ascension, and that death could have no dominion over him, neither would God "suffer his Holy One to see corruption. Ps. xvi. 10. Secondly, it "stood in the midst of the throne;" which shews how highly God has "exalted him, and made him to be a Prince and a Saviour." Thirdly, it "stood in the midst of the four beasts;" which may teach us to see the power, wisdom, mercy, and providence of God magnified in our redemption. Fourthly, it "stood in the midst of the elders;" whereby we may behold him as our great High Priest and Intercessor, and also his affinity to his saints. Fifthly, it "has seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth." As God is a spirit, who fills the universe with his glorious presence, we may in this verse, perceive how various his operations are. As "it pleased the Father that in Christ, all fulness should dwell," Coll. i. 19. so here we see, that he had the seven spirits, or gifts of God. As he came forth from the Father, and came into the world; so he left the world, and went to the Father. See John xvi. It is evident that these precious gifts he fully enjoyed. As he received them freely, freely he gives to all, who truly believe and obey him; and sends, in a measure, those heavenly gifts into all the earth, to his saints and faithful followers.

Verse 7. "And he came, and took the book out of the right hand of him who sat upon the throne." In this verse God's infinite mercy is powerfully manifested,

by the commission which he gave to his only Son, who bore our infirmities, and taught us the way of salvation.

Verse 8. "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts, and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." From these words it appears, that all the heavenly host concurred, and rejoiced in the gracious plan of man's redemption. The twenty four elders testified their joy on the same occasion; "for there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus;" Rom. viii. 1. The law hath no dominion over them; they are freely justified through faith in the Redeemer, therefore they "have every one of them harps," which signify that all is joy, all is harmony; "And golden vials full of odours," which the prophet explains, and says, "are the prayers of saints."

Verses 9, 10. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." From these words we may see, that mankind were relieved from the burden of the ceremonial law. The song now sung was a new one; it was a song of adoration and praise to God, for his redeeming love; and "God was now to be worshipped in spirit and in truth." John iv. 23. Mercy now became so great, that it extended to every kindred, tongue, people, and nation. These words also shew us the highly exalted state and privilege of every true believer.

Verses 11, 12. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice



of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.*" From these words we may, *First*, behold the innumerable host of glorified spirits, who surround the throne of God. *Secondly*, their joint acclamations of praise for God's redeeming love. *Thirdly*, the gifts that the Redeemer was found worthy to receive, which are the seven spirits so often mentioned. *Fourthly*, these are, *Power*, whereby he conquered his and our enemies, got the victory over death and the grave, and trampled satan's empire under his feet; *Riches*, as he is rich in mercy to all who come to God by him; *Wisdom*, as he is able to make them wise unto Salvation; *Strength*, to overcome all temptation; *Honour*, to be made heirs with him in the kingdom of heaven; *Glory*, as he enables us to be accepted and made perfect; and, *Blessing*, in the enjoyment of God to eternity. Thus we may see what God in his mercy has done for the restoration of fallen man.

In the remainder of this chapter, the whole creation are considered as shewing forth God's praise for his great mercy in Christ Jesus. Even the four beasts have given their amen, or assent.

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## CHAP. VI.

IN the beautiful language of prophecy, the will of God before it is known, is compared to a sealed book. None in heaven, nor in earth, was found worthy to open it, except the ordained of God, who was mighty to save. He took the book out of the right hand of him who sat on the throne, and made known its contents to man; by first shewing him the way of eternal life, and the broad ways which lead to eternal misery. Man, being a free agent, holds the reins in his own hand, and under the metaphorical figure of a horse and its rider, he can conduct both as he pleases; or, in other words it is the principle, on which he acts, be it good or evil. If he acts on a principle of purity, he receives divine assistance, and goes on his way rejoicing; if otherwise, he gallops on to certain ruin.

Verse 1. "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, Come and see." First, John was an eye witness to the introduction of the gospel. Secondly, by consulting the gospel writings, we see what a noise it made among the Jews, even like that of thunder. Thirdly, Christ being the power of God to salvation, power invites us to come and see.

Verse 2. "And I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer." In this verse let us observe, First, white, being an emblem of purity; this rider set out heavenward on a pure principle. Secondly, he had a bow or assistance to help him in time of need. Thirdly, a

crown, as he knew his reward was sure. See 2 Tim. iv. 8. "He went forth conquering and to conquer;" for he "grew in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. iii. 18. And fifthly, our Saviour, in his sermon on the mount, assures us, that "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Matt. v. 8.

Verse 3. "And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see." In this verse mercy calls upon us to come; but see an evil principle arise, though the way of life lies open to us.

Verse 4. "And there went out another horse that was red; and power was given to him that sat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword." In this verse observe, first, a principle very different from the first, for this is red, and of a fiery and sanguinary disposition. Secondly, "power was given to him that sat thereon, to take peace from the earth," from whence we may see the man of pride, ambition, and vain glory, driving on to endless destruction. Thirdly, this evil principle is not confined to the warrior alone, it extends to all ranks and conditions of men, who are corrupted with it. Fourthly, our spiritual peace is destroyed by it; for "if the tree is good," so will its fruit be, and tree like, an evil principle, once firmly rooted, increases in strength and stature, and spreads its pernicious seeds all around, and is on the increase from generation to generation. Fifthly, if we confine this evil principle to war, it was not allowed of, among the meek and lowly followers of Christ, in the primitive church; but the christians of these days make it a studied science. Sixthly, in the apostles' days, the

introduction of any kind of error was called a false doctrine; those errors have since grown into established principles: For instance, transubstantiation, mother of God, supreme head of a church, &c. &c. These are a few heads of this evil principle, which deprives the earth of peace; pride and ambition are the very opposite of meekness and humility, so strongly recommended by our Saviour. Matt. v. 3, & 5. When we depart from the latter, we fall into the former, and by these means kill one another. The prophet's conclusion on this subject is very emphatic: "And there was given unto him a great sword." A great one truly! It slays in the cabinet, in the field, in the church, and even among the inferior classes of men; it not only kills the body, but also the soul.

Verse 5. The prophet here brings under our consideration another evil principle, which he foresaw would prevail among the professors of christianity; for when the Lamb "had opened the third seal, he heard the third beast say, Come and see. And lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand." Here is a horse, or principle, the very opposite of the first, for this is black. The rider pretended that he was pure and holy, though he practiced hypocrisy, covetousness, and deceit; he kept within the bounds of human laws, and would appear righteous before men, for he held the balances in his hand; but, like Belshazzar, when weighed in the balance, was found wanting. See how the scribes and pharisees were charged with being guilty of this horrid principle, and a woe of condemnation was denounced against them, by our Saviour for it. Matt. xxiii. 14, 23—31. In short, this evil principle, with all its attendant train,

would have no bounds, were it not restricted by efficient laws, both divine and human; for in verse 6, the prophet "heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." From these words we may see, that God has placed a barrier against it. See the eighth and tenth commandments. And that we should "covet only the best gifts," 1 Cor. xii. 31. and obey the sacred laws.

Verse 7. "And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth beast say, Come and see." And see how God's providential care is abused! The prophet "looked, and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat upon him was death, and hell followed with him; and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." Behold now luxury and debauchery, with all their ghastly train, riding the pale horse! See intemperance, how rapidly it drives on to destruction! Behold it as the parent of disease! View its amazing power; for it often kills with the sword, by duelling, and other crimes of the like nature. It "kills with hunger," it often does so in a literal sense; but observe how it preys on the faculties of the soul: Reason, with all the spiritual comforts, which ought to flow from it, is withered and impaired. Brotherly love is destroyed; for if the man of intemperance has any remains of it, it is only shewn to creatures like himself. He never hungers nor thirsts after righteousness, though he has a perpetual thirst for sensual pleasures. It "kills with death." Let the gout, dropsy, apoplexy, and diseases of a like nature, be

vouchers for the fact: But these are not the greatest evils; the unhappy victim of intemperance is frequently addicted to cursing, swearing, lying, blasphemy, perjury, and all manner of filthy, or at best, unprofitable conversation, which end in eternal death, or endless misery. "And with the beasts of the earth." View the debauchee in his worst state; he is beneath the beasts, and is a companion for none but brutes like himself. "And power was given them over the fourth part of the earth." In this age we may see the truth of this calculation, particularly in Europe, which since the apostles' days is become the seat of intemperance.

Verse 9. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw, under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and the testimony which they held." Behold now persecution raising its merciless hands against the children of God, and particularly by them, who lived by the altar. Behold the Jewish high priest, and his accursed train, condemning and putting to a shameful death, the innocent Jesus, for preaching peace, and shewing the way of salvation. Behold them persecuting his harmless followers, and putting them to death also. Behold heathen Rome persecuting the primitive christians, for giving them true ideas of the eternal God, and shewing them the absurdity of worshipping their false gods: But that the people who say there is but one God, and make a profession of christianity, should persecute each other, is truly astonishing. But one amazement may cease when we consider, that it is all done by priestcraft. These false teachers led the laity first into error; ignorance then increased, the scriptures became obscured, and at length totally concealed. In this state of total darkness, the clergy assum-

ed a power, which none dared to disobey. The few who sought for gospel information were considered heretics, doomed to damnation, and destroyed without mercy. O persecutors! persecutors! ye enemies of the true worshippers of God, ye monsters of iniquity, that dare to judge thy fellow creatures, and doom them to perdition! Know ye not that God hath appointed a JUDGE, who will in righteousness judge both quick and dead? and will he not judge you? How can they appear before the tribunal of the Eternal Jehovah, who thus rob him of his royal prerogative, and put to death his saints? Stupid mortals the laity were, who have been thus deluded and led astray, by these high priests of the altar!

The prophet, in verse 10, represents these poor persecuted sufferers as “crying with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge, and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” The cries of the persecuted have been, since the christian era, loud and great; how long these evils will be permitted, is not given us exactly to know; but from the signs and appearance of the times, “the great whore, which did corrupt the earth,” is near her dissolution. God is manifesting his great power among the nations. Rome’s lovers are hating her; they are eating her flesh, and will utterly consume her; and though man may assign reasons for this great change, yet the true reason is, “For strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.” Rev. xviii.

The prophet, in verse 11, informs us, that these martyrs for the truth had “white robes given unto every one of them;” which is a proof that they adhered to the principles of purity and truth, and are to enjoy an heavenly inheritance. “And it was said unto them, That



they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren that should be killed, as they were, should be fulfilled." From these words we may plainly see, that they who are advocates for truth, should patiently wait, till God, in his own good time, shall break the chains of ecclesiastical tyranny; then will persecution cease. Although the prophet assigns no fixed principle for this horrid persecuting spirit, yet it is easy to see that it is compounded with the other evil ones already mentioned. The prophet says, that it was "under the altar he saw the souls of them who were slain." Were there any who persecuted, but those who maintained and lived by the altar service? The Jews supported the altar, yet we see a sentence of condemnation denounced against them by our Saviour, for their persecuting, and other evil principles. Matt. xxiii. 13—39. Heathen Rome was guided by the high priests of their altars, when they carried on the ten persecutions against the primitive christians. Papal Rome was as much devoted to the altar service, as any of the former, and has far exceeded them in persecuting cruelty. Even in our established church, during the reign of the Stuarts, the altar service was inclined to, and for that reason it persecuted. And thus, in the powerful language of prophecy, we may "see under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and the testimony which they held."

Verse 12. "And I beheld when he opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." At first view we might imagine the prophet was describing the end of all things, when the

earth and all things were to be reduced to their original chaos. A chaos he is certainly giving us a representation of; but it is that of the ruin of true and vital christianity. He is in fact shewing the rise and progress of popery, and the effects of it. First he says, "there was a great earthquake;" so it was in the days of Constantine, the forty first emperor of Rome, when he took on him the name of christian, and overturned that of paganism. Secondly, "the sun became black as sackcloth of hair;" this was literally the case when the pure light of the gospel was eclipsed by the smoke of the bottomless pit opened by Constantine and the key of it given to the church. Thirdly, "the moon became as blood." Brotherly love and natural affection became corrupt. See the violence of the Arian and Athanasian factions, in the same Emperor's days.

Verse 13. Constantine establishing the church in temporal, as well as spiritual power, soon caused the stars, or churches, to fall from their heavenly lustre "to the earth, even as a figtree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." What a nervous, though short account this is, of the miserable fall and decay of the churches, from their primitive purity!

Verse 14. "And the heaven departed as a scroll, when it is rolled together." Such are the fatal effects, when mankind fall into ignorance and error; they have no pleasure in contemplating heavenly objects; their ideas concerning the great work of creation, are gross and absurd, and so are their notions of redeeming love. Converse with such on the providential care and goodness of God, they will admit it, but it affords no comfort; speak to them on the subject of justifying faith in Jesus Christ, the influences of the Holy Spirit, the new

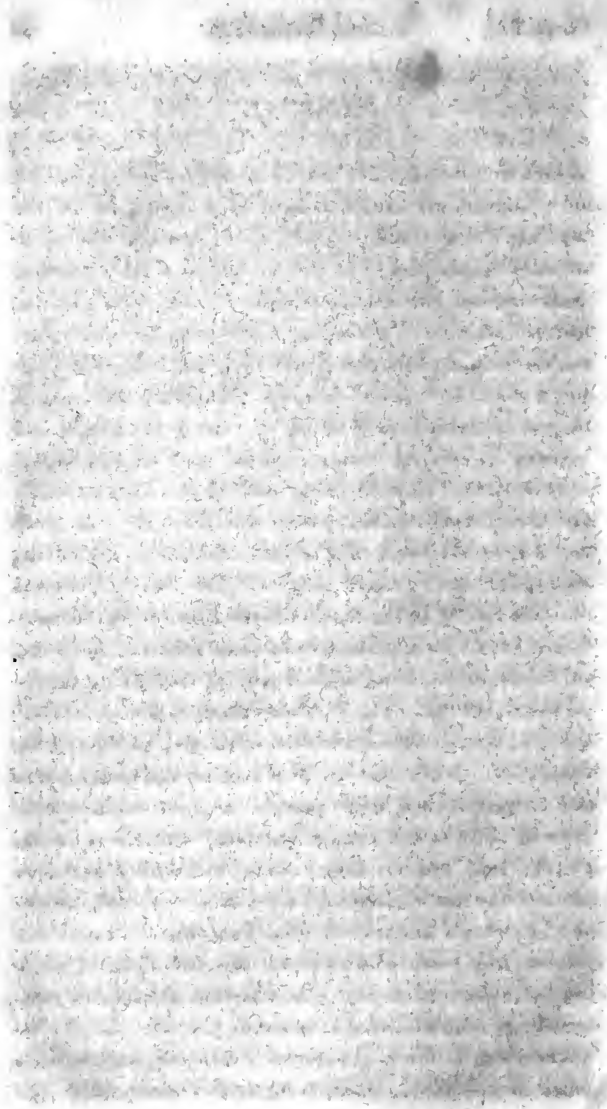
birth, &c. they have no conception of such things; such conversation is to them insipid, such knowlege is to them like a scroll, or sheet of paper, when it is rolled together. "And every mountain and island were moved out of their places." When this part of the verse is considered, we shall find that the principles of popery removed, by degrees, every obstacle in its way, and as it grew in power, it set up kings, and dethroned them; it absolved subjects from their allegiance, and granted pardons to the rebellious; it changed the commandments of God, by leaving out the second, to make way for image worship; it split the tenth in two, to preserve the number; it made the scriptures of truth of no effect by its traditions; it made the canon, or decree of a general council, of more validity than any gospel authority; it set up the pope's infallibility, in opposition to him who is Supreme Judge; it condemned the righteous, and justified the ungodly; it put the Redeemer into *limbus patrum*, when the avaricious road to purgatory was discovered; it substituted the sacrifice of the mass, in the room of that atoning sacrifice, which was to take away the sins of the world; and thus it gradually removed every mountain and island of hope and security, offered to us in the gospel, out of their places, and placed man's salvation in the merits of the church.

Verses 15, 16. "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains." When we consider this verse, we may easily see, how popery brought under its dominion all ranks of men, from the king, to the meanest of his subjects. The different orders of the Rom-

ish hierarchy could afford dens, and rocks, for mankind of all descriptions, provided they embraced its religion. If they had faith in the church, no matter how great the crime; it had power to absolve, provided the sinner had money to pay. According to the rank and dignity of the offender, there must be a sum proportionate. If he was a king, he must make confession to an Archbishop, or Cardinal; if a peer, a Bishop could do his business; and so on to the poor peasant, who had the Friar to apply to. In a word, let the rank and situation of the sinner be what it may, and his crimes of ever so heinous a nature, there was a den or rock he could hide under. Thus we may see, what excellent provision the church has made for the sinner's safety. But alas! the scene changes; death, the king of terrors, sends his fatal summons. Sins and crimes of the deepest dye, stand in array before the impenitent sinner—he dreads an offended God—he has rejected the offers of a Redeemer—the time of his departure is at hand—he sees the great day of God's wrath is come, and he is not able to stand, for his sins are unrepented of. In this awful situation, he or his friends send for the priest—the priest arrives—he converses a little with the patient, (if the patient is able,) and reminds him of the good he has done—that he was a good neighbor—that he was charitable, &c. He pulls out his book—he reads some prayers appointed for the occasion—he anoints him, or gives him the Eucharist—he reads the absolution—pronounces a blessing, and takes his leave—the poor sinner rests satisfied, and dies in this lethargic state. His friends are content—they are pleased, because the deceased has received the rites of the church—they pronounce him happy.

But lest all this should fail, the priest is sent for again. He reads mass as a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. A contribution is raised, on purpose to pay him. If the deceased was a poor man, one mass will do; but if a rich man, he must have many, because his friends can extend their liberality. At worst, they are assured, that their friend is safely arrived in purgatory, where he is out of danger till the church prays him out. These are the mountains; these are the rocks and dens, which a large portion of mankind take their miserable shelter under, and neglect that Rock which can give eternal security.

Chapter viii, verse 1. "And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven, about the space of half an hour." This silence seems to refer to a time, when all jarring, and discordant interests shall cease; when papal and regal power shall have an end, and become like the dust of the summer threshing floor; Dan. chapters ii, & vii. when the Jews shall be united under their lawful High Priest and King; when the scriptures of truth shall be well understood, and become the fundamental law of mankind; when nation will no more rise against nation, and all shall obey the law and gospel precepts, and true millennial knowlege shall diffuse itself over the earth. Then will man have silence and repose, and in grateful adoration give the glory and praise to HIM, who hath thus brought all things under subjection to his Son; "then shall the Son also himself be subject unto HIM that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." 1 Cor. xv. 28. Thus there will be an end put to all human noise and nonsense, and the great Jehovah glorified by all his rational creatures.



## CHAP. VII.

THE prophet, in the former chapter, having shew'd the different principles which have operated on the minds of the christian part of mankind, informs us, in the eighth chapter, that "when the seventh seal was opened, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." This silence is beautifully described in this chapter, the whole of which relates to the calling in of the Jews, and the happy junction of these, with the true worshippers of God, through Jesus Christ.

Verse 1. John informs us, that "after these things," (that is, when the evils mentioned in the former chapter should have lost their power and influence,) he "saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." In this verse, John compares the four winds of doctrine, which prevail in the earth, to the four principal, or cardinal points thereof. These winds are, first, paganism; secondly, popery; thirdly, mahometanism; fourthly, protestantism. These winds, which formerly blew so violently against each other, are at this time to cease. Even at the present day, a spirit of toleration is manifesting itself among them. These winds are not to blow on the earth, that is, to affect the earthly minded and carnal; nor on the sea, to agitate the heathen; nor on any tree, by which we may see, that the laws and ordinances of these adverse parties are to enjoy an undisturbed quiet, for a little time.

Verses 2, 3. In this state of universal tranquillity, the prophet "saw another angel ascending from the

east, having the seal of the living God ; and he cried, with a loud voice, to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of God, in their foreheads." In these two verses, let us observe, first, an "angel ascending from the east" shews, a new spiritual government to arise, which will illuminate the world. Secondly, this "angel had the seal of the living God," which is, the law, and the promises, given to the Jews at mount Sinai. See Exod. xx, & Deut. xviii. Thirdly, a two fold charge is given, "not to hurt the earth, sea, or trees," by the four former angels, or adverse parties. Thus we may see, in the order of God's providential care, that these hostile powers must cease from their persecuting principles, until the Jews, those ancient favorites of God, shall be again restored, and shall partake of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and acknowledge the Messiah's power and glory. The power of popery is now almost annihilated, consequently its doctrines, which never could be accepted by the Jews, must cease to be; therefore, these mountains of ignorance, superstition, and idolatry will shortly be removed out of the way, to hasten their acceptance of the gospel covenant. Mahometanism is also near its end. It is now a kingdom divided against itself, and cannot stand; this also will soon be removed, to enlarge the kingdom of peace, and clear the way for the Jews. As to the pagans, they are a scattered and divided people; their religious sentiments, if they can be called so, are so very absurd, that they can be no obstacle to them. It is to be hoped, that protestants, of every description will rather assist, than impede their way; but from



their present distracted situation, in church and state, little can be expected.

Verse 4. "And I heard the number of them which were sealed, and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand, of all the tribes of the children of Israel." Here is a number given, but whether the exact number, who are to come under the gospel dispensation, time only can discover. Here follows a list of the tribes which are to be sealed. In the fourteenth chapter, the hundred forty and four thousand are twice mentioned; but that refers to the state of the primitive church, which will be treated of, in its place. However, two certainties we have, first, that they are to be called in, and accepted. Secondly, that the time is near, as we are above two hundred and forty years under the sound of the seventh trumpet, and the third woe.

Verse 9. "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." It appears from this verse, that the coming in of the Jews would be the means of christianity assuming its primitive purity; that it is at present greatly adulterated, no thinking man can deny, and from the present state of it in the world, it belongs to the Jews to lay the foundation of a true reformation, which has not yet been effected.

Verses 11, 12. "And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and

might, be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen." In these two verses, we may see what true religion is, and wherein it consists. Here are no dead forms; no ceremonies invented by man; no established churches by human direction; no oppressive taxes to support them; no persecuting project to annoy; no evil principle to render man unhappy; all shall be pure millennial love; all shall be seraphic holiness and joy; and all shall know him from the greatest to the least, and render that tribute of adoration and praise, so justly due to the Eternal Jehovah.

Verses 13, 14. "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." In all ages, since the christian era, the saints have experienced great tribulation; but their great consolation is, they can say as Saint Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto them also, that love his appearing." 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

Verse 15. "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." Here is a gracious deliverance, a gracious acceptance, a heavenly employment, and God to assist, even in this life.

Verses 16, 17. "They shall hunger no more, nei-

ther thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Thus by a faithful adherence to the gospel covenant, we are led, by the Redeemer, into the glorious mansions of the Eternal God, there to live and reign for evermore. Amen.

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BEFORE I conclude this chapter, it is necessary to apply it more particularly to the Jews; as in the wise order of Providence, it seems calculated for that purpose, as are also chapters xiv, and xxi, of this amazing book.

O ye house of Israel, to whom was given the law, and also the promise of the Messiah's appearance and presence among you; ye, who were so highly favored by the great Jehovah, who has led you, in a miraculous manner, from Egyptian bondage, and bestowed on you the promised land, which was emblematic of additional blessings intended for you. Your high priesthood, and the ordinances thereof, were also typical of that great atonement, which conveyed spiritual comfort, and eternal life, to a sinful world. Your law was as a schoolmaster to conduct us to the Messiah, to whom ye were to hearken. Moses, that blessed servant of God, has, by heavenly inspiration, informed you, "that the Lord thy God would raise up unto thee, a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto himself, and that unto him ye should hearken." Deut. xviii. 15. Jacob, in whom the spirit of God dwelt, has prophetically told you, "that the scepter should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and to him shall the gather-

ing of the people bc." Gen. xlix. 10. Ye are a scattered and dispersed people these many ages past; for more than seventeen hundred years the sceptre has departed from you; ye have no abiding place; ye are scornfully used among the nations of the earth. Sin is the cause of your dispersion; it is also the cause of the calamities attendant on those, who call themselves christians; you may justly view, with horror, the crimes and impieties of christendom, these fourteen hundred years; to you, therefore, it belongs, in a peculiar manner, to examine the scriptures of the old and new testament, and to set up the standard of truth once more in Judah, which is yet very little known, and less practised in the world.

Among the professors of christianity, there is a great diversity of opinions. Many there are who say, that there are three persons, each equal in power and glory, to compose, what they call, God. There are others who affirm, that Christ is not equal in power and glory with the Father, and that God sends a gift, or portion of his Spirit on them who are found worthy of it. Some maintain, that God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, and some deny it. There are many who support the authority of scripture, as being the work of inspiration, and some who say otherwise, and call it a book of contradiction. They, of the Romish church, believe that God has a mother, and pray to her, as such, to use her influence with God, in their favor; they also believe, that their priests can change bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and worship these earthly elements as such. Are these just notions and conceptions concerning the adorable Creator of the universe?

They, of the reformation, emerged out of total darkness, ignorance, and superstitious idolatry; could it be expected, that they would come pure, out of so corrupt a fountain? They, of this reformation, divided into seven sects, which this holy prophet compares to the diversity of colours in the rainbow; each sect thundering out its doctrines; but John was commanded to seal up, and not write what these thunders uttered. See Rev. x. But when the tribes of Israel are sealed, or that new reformation effected, there "shall be a multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues, standing before the throne, with white robes, and palms in their hands." Here are real marks of purity, and victory over error, which is not to be ascribed to protestant reforms; and it also shews the happy effects, which the Jewish reformation will produce, among the nations of the earth.

In chapter xiv, of this book, the prophet describes the hundred forty and four thousand, as being "without guile or fault, before the throne of God;" as "being virgins, or undefiled;" as "being redeemed from among men;" as "being the first fruits to God, and the Lamb. And they sung a new song, which none other could learn;" which shews the heavenly state of those Jews, who became followers of Christ, in the infancy of christianity. But more of this in its proper place. John also describes the Jews as foremost in adorning that heavenly building, the new Jerusalem; under the figurative representation of the twelve tribes, as "twelve gates," or entrances, into that holy city, and its "foundations being laid by the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Rev. xxi.

Daniel, that holy and zealous servant of the living

God, prophesied concerning the rise of the four great monarchies, that should appear, (and time has verified the truth of his predictions,) namely, the Babylonian, Persian and Median, Macedonian or Grecian, and Roman. He foretold their power, and their fall, particularly the Roman, which should be the "fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall tread down all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and break it into pieces." He shewed "the ten horns," or principalities, that should "arise out of this kingdom," and also "the little horn," or spiritual empire, that "arose among them, which should be different from the rest." He then proceeds to speak particularly of the papal hierarchy, and says, "he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hands until a time, and times, and the dividing of time." Which corresponds with John's forty and two months, or twelve hundred and sixty years of the papal reign. "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume, and to destroy it unto the end." Then shall the Messiah's kingdom illustriously appear; "for 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 dominion shall serve and obey him." Dan. vii. 23—27. This passage is compared with Rev. xviii. and from the appearance of the papal power at present, I am of opinion that Israel's deliverance is near.

Isaiah, that prince of prophets, in chapter ii, relates what he "saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the

latter days." He shews "the establishment of the Lord's house" above all establishments. He shews the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah. He shews the overthrow of idolatry, "and that the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." In chapter iv, the "reproach is to be taken away. In that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely, for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." These are positive proofs of the exaltation of the house of Israel, in those days. In chapter vii, the Lord has promised to "give the house of David a sign: Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." In chapter ix, the very titles, that are ascribed to Christ, since his birth, are mentioned; and Isaiah, in this chapter, agrees with the other prophets, that the Messiah's kingdom is to last for ever. In chapter xi, is a history of the Messiah, and the nature of his spiritual kingdom, and "the gathering together of Israel, from the four corners of the earth, the second time." In chapter xxviii, the Redeemer is compared to "a sure foundation stone, that cannot be moved." Chapter xxix deserves a serious consideration, as it shews the blessedness of the Jewish rulers, in the midst of the marvellous work done among them; and the extraordinary light, joy, and heavenly consolation, which shall attend the house of Jacob, in these latter days. He even shews the cause of it; "for the

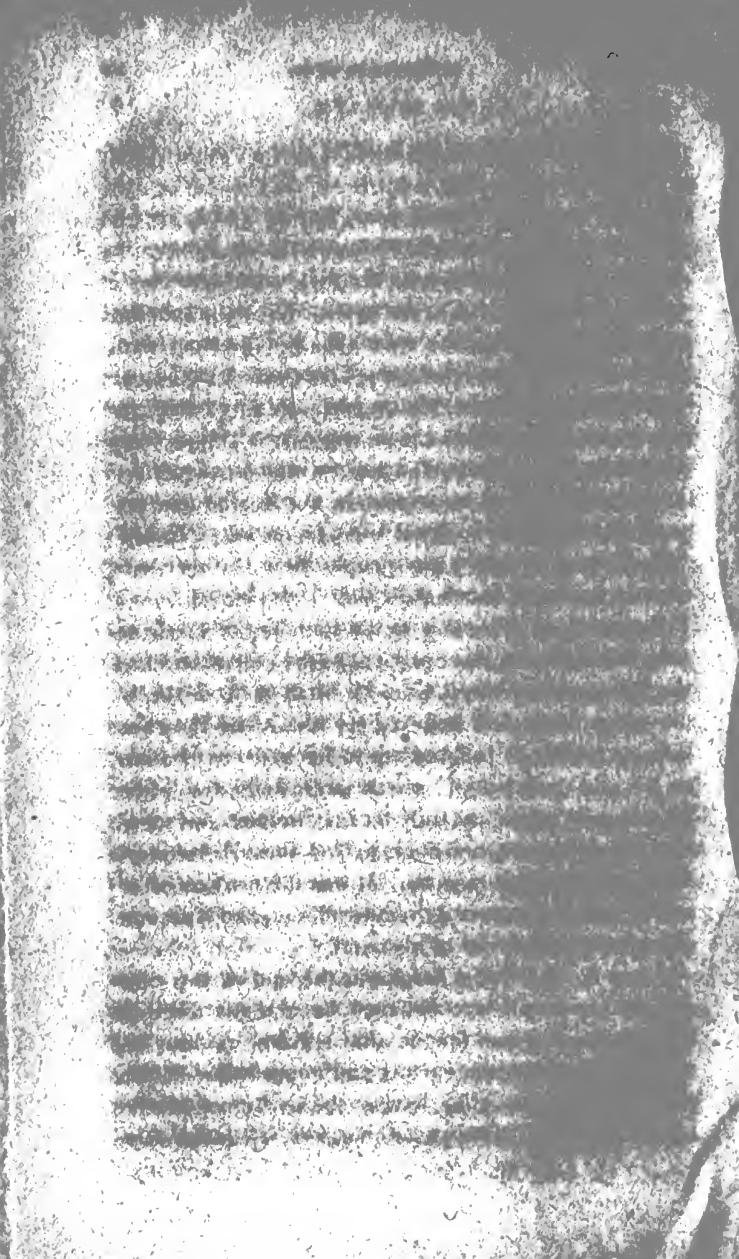
terrible one," the pope, "is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off." In chapter xxxii, the desolation is predicted, and the restoration and kingdom of peace promised. In chapter xl, the effects of redeeming love, in the might and power of God, is exhibited. In chapter xlii, we have the office of Christ; God's promise to him, and his power shewn in him. In chapter xlix, the mercy and power of God in the Redeemer is shewn. In chapter liii, the humility and affliction of the Redeemer, for the sins of a guilty world, and the sacrifice of himself for their transgressions, are clearly foretold. In chapter lxi, are shewn the office of Christ, and God's power in him. In chapter lxiii, is plainly shewn the mercy of God in the Redeemer; that he who bore our infirmities, is appointed King over his church, and shall tread down the enemies thereof.

Jeremiah, that true prophet of the Lord, complains that both prophet and priest were prophane, that they had scattered the flock of the Lord, and declares that severe punishments would be inflicted on them; yet in mercy a restoration is promised. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: And this is the name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**. Therefore behold the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth, which brought up, and which led the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all coun-



tries, whither I had driven them, and they shall dwell in their own land." Jer. xxiii. 5—8. In chapter xxxiii, the same words are repeated. Thus we may see, that the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah is to stand for ever, and the Jews to be reinstated in their own land.

Daniel's seventy weeks are expired eighteen hundred years ago, and for above seventeen hundred years ye have been a dispersed people. From the confused state of religion, you have a fair opportunity of examining the scriptures of the old and new testaments, and through the mercy and favor of the Eternal I AM, to build up the gates of the new Jerusalem, on the foundation laid by Christ and his apostles. And may this glorious work prosper in your hands.



## CHAP. VIII.

JOHN, by divine inspiration, having given his first general view of present and future things, by opening the seven seals, now gives a second, by the sounding of seven trumpets. Let it be noted, that in gospel and prophetic language, the sounding of a trumpet signifies the manner, how the gospel is sounded in the ears of the people, by their instructors. It may bring glad tidings, or it may have a contrary effect. As a trumpet produces a variety of sounds, so may teachers; and if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who can prepare for the battle? The voice, or sound of Isaiah's trumpet was to "shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Is. lviii. 1.

Verses 3, 4. Previous to the sounding of the trumpets, John gives a short account of the reception which the Redeemer received, from his birth to his death, by the pious Jews, who believed on him; and the sweet incense, which he offered up to his heavenly Father, on his and their behalf; see at large, John xvii, where he fervently prays, not only for his disciples, but for all who should believe, and come to God, through his name. Here was precious incense. It was the prayers of all saints, which the great Advocate offered, and it ascended up before God, out of his hand.

Verse 5. As Christ Jesus was the end of the ceremonial law to all who believed, he and his disciples cast this fire, or zeal for the altar service, out into the earth, as now become earthly and unprofitable, by the sacrifice of himself; he having shewn a more perfect and living way. This caused "voices," or many opin-

ions concerning him; “and thunderings,” or new religious notions founded on him; “and lightnings,” or quick and furious determinations against him; “and an earthquake;” this literally was so, at his death, see Matt. xxvii. 51. but it extended further; it overthrew the Jewish nation, and their priesthood. All this is proved by the four evangelists.

Verse 6. “And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.” And this first sound began on the day of pentecost, and was addressed to the men of Israel. Acts ii.

Verse 7. “And the first angel sounded, and there followed hail, and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth, and the third part of trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.” Let it here be noted, that hail, in the language of prophecy, signifies the heavy judgments of God falling on sinners in this life; such as the sword, famine, pestilence, &c. Fire is zeal, whether true or false. Blood, is guilt, as when a sinner was punished for his crimes, it used to be said, in times of old, that he is guilty—his blood be on his own head.

On that memorable day of pentecost, the disciples became new creatures; they were renewed in the spirit of their minds, and, according to the promise of the Redeemer, they received that precious gift of the Holy Spirit, which afterwards conducted them through this evil world, and enabled them to carry on that important work, to which they were appointed. This extraordinary change filled the multitude with surprise; even strangers and foreigners, of different nations, were amazed, when they heard these men (being Jews) speak in their different tongues, the wonderful works of God.

Some of the ungodly Jews charged the apostles with drunkenness, and mocked them; on which Peter, with his eleven brethren, lifted up their voice, and sounded a general alarm to the Jews. Under this sound, the disciples first acquitted themselves of intoxication, as the hardened Jews supposed. Secondly, they proved from the scripture, that they were under the powerful influence of God, and acted accordingly. Thirdly, they showed the mighty power of God in the heaven and earth, and particularly by the signs and wonders which appeared when Jesus suffered. Fourthly, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Fifthly, they remind the Jews of the miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did, by Jesus of Nazareth, among them. Sixthly, that it was by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, he was sent unto them. Seventhly, that by their wicked hands he was crucified and slain. Eighthly, the mighty power of God is shewn by Christ's resurrection. Ninthly, the apostles prove that death could have no dominion over him, neither could his flesh see corruption. Tenthly, that God raised him up, and that they were the witnesses of it. Eleventhly, that he is exalted by the right hand of God, and received from him the promise of the Holy Ghost. Twelfthly, that by his advocacy with the Father, this was shed forth, which they have now seen and heard. Thirteenthly, that he is to sit at God's right hand, until his foes are made his footstool. Fourteenthly, they assure the house of Israel, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom they crucified, both Lord and Christ. These are some of the sounds of pentecost, or first trumpet, to the Jews. Let its effects now be considered. It appears that many of them "were pricked in their

heart," or were under sore conviction, "and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter exhorts them to "repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, for the remission of sins, and they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: For the promise was to them, and their children, and to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." He further exhorts them to "save themselves from that unrighteous generation." And the same day about three thousand were converted. Acts ii. When we consult, from the third to the tenth chapter of Acts, inclusive, it is evident, that this was the sound of the first trumpet; namely, repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and shewing the incorrigible Jews their guilt, by denying the Holy One and the Just, and desiring a murderer to be granted unto them. Thus they persisted in their guilt, until the hail, or heavy judgments of God, came on them by the Roman power, A. D. 70; and by the sword, famine, and their own intestine commotions, above eleven hundred thousand of them perished; the Romans then burnt their temple, and dug up its very foundations, whereby the third part of their trees, or ceremonial law, was burnt up and destroyed; and all this green grass, or ceremonials pertaining thereto, was consumed also: Even their high priesthood, which they so much esteemed, was annihilated, that the eternal priesthood of the Redeemer might be established. Let it be noted here, that trees, in prophetic language, are laws; the law given to Adam was under the symbol of a tree, which he was forbidden to eat of. John Baptist says, "and now also the ax is laid to the root of the trees; therefore every tree that bringeth not forth

good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Matt. iii. 10. Hereby intimating, that now all unnecessary laws were to be cast into the fire.

Verses 8, 9. "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire, was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and a third part of the ships were destroyed." As the first trumpet was sounded for the Jews, the second sound extended to the Gentiles, which is easily proved, when chapters ix, x, xi, xiii and xiv, of the Acts, are consulted, and also Paul's epistles to them; and when these prophetic words are known it will be easy to apply them. "Earth" signifies those earthly minded carnal professors, who had some knowlege of God, but were ignorant of his power; or had the form of godliness, but denied the power of it. "Sea" is an emblem of the huge mass, or turbulent ocean of mankind, who at this time were idolators, and adhered to the superstitious doctrines of their priests; they paid divine honor to Jupiter, Mercury, Diana, &c. see Acts xiv, & xix.—they worshipped false Gods. "Ships;" as a ship at sea, contains its superior, and inferior officers, and its crew, so a heathen temple is an exact image of the same; it has its high priest, inferior officers, and crew. "The third part of the sea became blood;" that is, they acknowledged their guilt and became converts to the truth, they also died to sin, that they might live to righteousness. "Fire" is zeal.

Application. Paul after his miraculous conversion was appointed the great apostle of the Gentiles, he in conjunction with his fellow laborers travelled through

Asia, Greece and Italy, where the word of God grew by his ministry, and his converts became numerous; thus he laid the foundation in these extensive regions. When Jesus Christ foretold the destruction of Jerusalem; he gave his followers this sign, "when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, know that the desolation thereof is nigh, then let them that are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter thereinto; for these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." Luke xxi. 20—22. The christian party, who were at this time numerous, in the land of Judea, and parts adjacent, took the hint given, and fled into different parts of the Roman empire. These emigrants filled with holy zeal for the interest of Christ's kingdom, in addition to the labors of Paul and his companions, is that great mountain burning with fire, which was cast into the sea of heathenism; or is, as it were, a great mountain burning with fire, and cast into the sea. It was the great work of the apostles, and other teachers of the first century, to shew mankind the error of their ways, to teach them the knowlege of the true God, and his mercy in sending Christ Jesus to save them; they were taught the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the dead; that Christ was their Advocate, High Priest, and final Judge; that "both Jew and Gentile were sold under sin, and all the world guilty before God," and how his mercy was extended to them by sending Jesus to save, and restore them to eternal life; they were instructed and told the nature of the new birth, and that they must die to sin, that they might live to righteousness. Thus from the great number of Christian teach-



ers at this time dispersed over the empire, they brought the Gentiles under strong conviction, whereby a third part of them acknowledged their guilt, or became blood then followed conversion, for this third part who thought they had life in their natural state, now died to sin that they might live the life of the righteous; and consequently the third part of the ships, or heathen temples, were destroyed, or went to ruin.

Verses 10, 11. "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter." The great and important truths of the gospel were delivered pure and uncorrupted by the apostles, but they could not satisfy the vanity of man; even in the apostles' days the mystery of iniquity began to work, which makes me conclude that this trumpet began to sound before they departed this life. In Paul's charge to Timothy, he "exhorts him to support the simplicity and purity of the gospel law, from which some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, or whereof they affirm." 1 Tim. i. 6, 7. In giving directions concerning the conduct of old and young widows, he says, "some are already turned aside after satan." 1 Tim. v. 15. After further instructions, he says, "the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." In his second epistle, (which seems to have

been written shortly before his martyrdom) he complains, "this thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes;" he points out these two men, as if once strong in the faith. After the most earnest admonitions to faith and constancy, he complains of "Hymeneus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18. He afterwards enumerates the vices and crimes that were to take root among the teachers and professors of christianity, and observes, that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." 2 Tim. iii. 13. In another place, he gives a very solemn charge to him, "for the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;" he complains that "Demas had forsok him, because he loved this present world;" that "Alexander the coppersmith did him much evil;" and desires Timothy to "beware of him, because he greatly withstood their words." 2 Tim. iv. 3, 10, 14, 15. John, in his first epistle, takes extraordinary pains to explain the ways of truth, and informs his little children that "even now there are many antichrists; that they went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." 1 John ii. 18, 19. From these, and many other proofs, which the gospel affords, it is evident that errors appeared in the church, at an early period; but when we consider John's severe reproof to some members of the churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia, "who said they were Jews, and were not;

—when we consider Peter's epistle to the strangers scattered through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, the whole appears thus, that the great star, or christian church government at Jerusalem, fell or fled at the approach of the Roman armies; that it burnt, or shone as a lamp through the regions above mentioned; that it carried with it some of the old Jewish observances; That these falling in, or mixing with the simple waters, or doctrines taught to the Gentiles, caused envying and bitterness; that it was in Asia, the then third part of the known world, where the waters were thus made bitter; that this bitterness and envying caused the death, or falling away of many; and from thence this great star, or Jewish church, is called wormwood. Note even at Jerusalem the apostles called a council, to decide on these matters. See Acts xv.

Verse 12. "And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars, so as a third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise." These extraordinary men (the apostles) being now gone to receive their heavenly inheritance, holy John shews us how the church was governed, in the second and third centuries, and the fatal consequences that attended. Let the reader take these instructions. The "sun" is that grand luminary placed, by its Creator, in the heavens—it diffuses light, heat, and comfort, to all things around—it causes vegetation, and gives life and animation to all things within the bounds of its influence. The gospel, and its light, has the same effect on every true christian. The "moon" is a secondary light; it

is a faithful attendant on the earth; and the earth and moon are mutually moons to each other. A true emblem of that brotherly love, which is so strongly recommended in the gospel. The "stars" also produce light, and add lustre to each other; so will true christian churches.

Thus we have before us, the effects of the fourth gospel sound; and if by "smiting," we understand a blow given, or an injury received, it is easy to apply the words of the text. And first, under this sound, "the third part of the sun was smitten." From hence we may learn, that ignorance and error increased much in these two centuries, though the apostles did all they could to prevent it; after all their vigilance and care to fortify the truth against error, we here see how the instructors, in this early period, have attacked it, by smiting the sun, or gospel of truth, drawing false conclusions from it, and making it the instrument of error. Secondly, "the third part of the moon was smitten." Brotherly love under this trumpet abated; that universal charity, which is the bond of perfection, and which is so forcibly recommended in the gospel, began to decline; like the moon, charity and love were on the increase under the apostolic government, but since that time it has been on the decrease. Thirdly, the "stars," those churches, which ought to illuminate mankind, "were smitten" also; they lost part of their former lustre, and are now growing dim. Fourthly, "and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise;" the prophet intimating that this partial darkness was only the forerunner of a greater: For, in verse 13, he "beheld, and lo, an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, woe, woe,

woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound." In this, and the former verse, the prophet saw the miserable decline of the christian church; nay, so far in a state of imperfection, as that the teachers, or instructors, under the three next sounds should establish three woes, or three distinct causes of the calamities, that would prevail in the christian world, and these are, first, the imperial woe under the christian emperors; secondly, the papal; and I am sorry to say thirdly, the protestant. These will appear in their proper places. It may be said, that I am here censuring the conduct of the primitive fathers, in the second and third centuries. I believe that some of them maintained the truth, and sealed it with their blood; but holy John proves the blow was given: And let every unprejudiced man determine, whether the clergy or laity of those days were the aggressors. This brings us down to A. D. 303, when christianity put on its new garments, and appeared at the head of church and state. The prophet, in this chapter, draws our attention to a period of time, when christianity assumed a new face. When it got a christian emperor (so called) mounted on the imperial throne of Rome, who made the bishops, next to himself, the lords and masters in this lower world, and gave them the key of the bottomless pit, that gulph of ambition and avarice, which never could be filled, neither could the locusts that crawled out of the smoke, or filth of it, ever be satisfied; for ambitious desires, and covetousness for the things of this world, are passions which never can be rooted out; though they had the example and precept of a meek and lowly Saviour before them. As to Constantine's real character, it is

impossible to determine. By some historians, he is considered a saint, by others, the contrary; but certain it is, that the murder of his wife, father-in-law, and his son, are bad stains for a christian character. The character and conduct of Constantine, and that of Henry VIII, of England, seem to be nearly similar; the first supported the christians, because they raised him to the imperial dignity; Henry joined the reformers, because the pope had excommunicated him for poligamy. Constantine presided at the Council of Nice, as the head of the man of sin. 2 Thess. ii. 3. Henry procured himself to be acknowledged the head of the church; Constantine made an edict, that all the subjects of his vast empire should become obedient to the bishops; Henry, and several of his successors, persecuted their subjects for nonconformity to the rules of their prelates. Thus, since those days, the church always had heads, and with them they do hurt, verse 19. As this is a period much alluded to, by the prophet, let it be noted, that Dioclesian, and Maximinus, who jointly ruled the empire, resigned it in one day, in the year, A. D. 303. They were the last heathen emperors, on which Constantine claimed the empire, but did not obtain the quiet possession till A. D. 311.

## CHAP. IX.

Verse 1. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth, and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit." Thus we may see, that pure and spiritual church government, whose foundation was laid by the Redeemer, built up and adorned by his disciples, tumbling into ruin, in a little more than two hundred years; its fall was great, even from heaven to the earth; its professors now becoming earthly and sensual, it fell from its primitive state of purity and love, to its now debased state of selfishness, ignorance, and pride, and now receives, from the hand of Constantine, the key of the bottomless pit, whereby it is gratified with power, pomp, and the liberty of reigning over the minds and consciences of mankind at pleasure; for Constantine commanded, that in all the provinces of the empire, the orders of the bishops should be exactly obeyed. No power to control it now—no limits to the hierarchy, or government of the church.

Verse 2. "And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened, by reason of the smoke of the pit." The bishops being now in sure possession of the key, they opened the bottomless pit, from whence issued such a smoke of ignorance, error, superstition, and idolatry, that the sun, or pure light of the gospel, was darkened by it; even the air, which signifies reason and understanding, were obscured by the doctrines imposed on mankind, at this time.

Verse 3. "And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth, and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power." This is plain language. The bishops having now established their kingdom of spiritual darkness, raised up the locusts, or inferior clergy, to assist them, and gave them power, like the scorpions of the earth, to scatter their infectious poison, or their false doctrines all around; and to this day, see how the inferior clergy obey their superiors.

Verse 4. "And it was commanded them, that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads." As was observed before, trees, and green grass, signify the greater and lesser ceremonials established at this time. Any ordinances, or ceremonials established by the bishop, was not to be hurt by the locusts. It was the business of the bishops to decree rites and ceremonies; it was the work of the locusts, or inferior clergy to obey, and enforce them. Even at this time, we see the power exercised by the bishops over their inferior brethren; for they first create them, next appoint their livings, and this binds them to obedience. The locusts of the fourth century had power given them to "hurt only those men who had not the seal of God in their foreheads." This is very plain, because the men whom God had sealed wore the christian armor, and were proof against their delusive snares; the men who had not this armor became their prey, and were hurt.

Verse 5. "And to them it was given, that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months; and their torment was as the torment



of a scorpion, when he striketh a man." This verse shews the miserable situation of the laity, in the days of Constantine, and above a century after. In those days the Arian and Athanasian factions strove violently against each other, concerning the two natures of Christ, as God and man. It appears, that both parties were numerous, and treated each other with great severity, and lest they should kill each other, the imperial, or civil power, was frequently obliged to interfere, in order to prevent it. What must the poor laity do in these days, when their spiritual guides were at such variance? Must it not fill them with gloomy apprehensions concerning their eternal happiness, and fearful terrors, as when a man is struck, and receives the poison of a scorpion? This is proved by the next verse.

Verse 6. "And in those days, men shall seek death, but shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them." When the mind is filled with fearful apprehensions concerning its future state, it is the natural wish, or desire, (in the apostle's words,) "to die to sin, that we may live to righteousness;" but in those days, this could not be found, the jarring and discordant instructions, given by the locusts, led to no such thing. The people did desire to die the death of the righteous, but this comfort fled from them; they had none to shew them the way of eternal life.

Verse 7. "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle, and on their heads were, as it were, crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men." Lest men should mistake whom the prophet alludes to, he now gives a further description; "the locusts were like unto horses prepared for

battle;" that is, all were animated by one and the same principle, being determined to execute and obey the will of their superiors; "and on their heads were crowns like gold;" that is, the bishops, who are their heads or superiors, that were thus crowned when adorned with their mitres. "And their faces were as the faces of men;" which shews, that after all their boasted power in heaven, and on earth, they had the human form—they were but men.

Verse 8. "And had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions;" which proves, that they had the appearance of meekness and chastity outwardly, while inwardly they were ravening wolves, and preyed on the flock.

Verse 9. "And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle;" which shews, first, that they fortified themselves in defence of their errors. Secondly, that they were swift and decisive in opposing the truth. Thirdly, that they ran, with winged speed, to resist every thing that interfered with their prerogative.

Verses 10, 11. "And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails, and their power was to hurt men five months; and they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name, in the Hebrew tongue, is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon." In these two verses we may observe, first, the government of the church by bishops, under the christian emperors of Rome. Secondly, the exorbitant power of the prelacy in those days. Thirdly, the prelates had tails, or inferiors, who were obedient to their will.

Fourthly, that the tails were like unto scorpions, which produce the most deadly of all poisons. Fifthly, that in those tails there were stings, with which they stung the laity, and tormented them. Sixthly, that this torment was to continue five months, or one hundred and fifty years.

Under the four first sounds of the trumpet, the prophet has mentioned no particular, or definite time for the continuance of any one of them, but under this, he is very particular, because the work of apostacy went on rapidly, which is, in reality, the first woe. In this chapter, and under the fifth sound, the five months torment is twice mentioned, whereby we may prove the time. In prophetic language, a day is mentioned as a year, therefore five months, at thirty days each, which was the ancient mode of reckoning, amounts to one hundred and fifty years. Let it next be noted, that the first general council was held at Nice, A. D. 325. Here the key was given, the pit opened, the locusts came out, and the broad foundation for popery laid. These two numbers amount to 475, the exact year in which the western empire fell; a period remarkable for the great events which followed, namely, the overthrow of the empire, by the barbarous idolaters of the north, whereby the kind of christianity, that then existed, became mixed with their pagan rites, out of which popery arose. Thus ended the five months torment, or the first woe.

To conclude this grand description of prelacy, and its train, the prophet adds, "and they had a king over them," which is the angel, or governor, of the bottomless pit. Singular it is that wherever prelacy prevails, it must have a king, emperor, or pope, to reign over it.

It would be beneath the dignity of a lord spiritual, to bow under the sceptre of a meek and lowly Jesus. Prelacy will not admit the Redeemer to hold the stars, or government of the churches, in his right hand; it would be too lucrative an office for him in these days, therefore the bishops must undertake its government, and appoint an earthly king over them, whose name, in the Hebrew tongue, is Abaddon, in the Greek, Apollyon, and in English, the Destroyer, because he, and his bishops assume that power, which alone pertains to Jesus Christ; and as their kingdom is of this world, what can be expected, but lamentation, mourning, and woe?

Verse 12. "One woe is past, and behold there come two woes more hereafter." The prophet now closes this scene, by the fall of the western empire, and the end of the first woe. From what has been said on this head, it is easy to see what the first woe is, and the fatal effects it has produced. What a lamentable state is the christian church been brought to, when a destroying angel is the king or chief governor over it! What a deplorable situation is the laity reduced to, when they must receive the erroneous doctrines and traditions of men, and remain ignorant of the gospel of truth! Under this fifth sound of the trumpet, what kind of instruction must the poor laity receive, when the prophet compares their teachers to locusts and scorpions! As the first devours man's industry in the field; so the other is the most poisonous of all reptiles. This woe was mild in its nature, when compared with the next, under the papacy. During this, though the foundation of error and apostacy was laid, the civil power did not permit persecution. We read, that the Arian

and Athanasian factions frequently came to blows, and bitter invectives in their councils; but the imperial power prevented them from imbruing their hands in each other's blood.

Verses 12, 13. "And the fourth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels, which are bound in the great river Euphrates." The sound of this trumpet begins with the papal reign, when the power of the clergy was established, after the dissolution of the western empire. Being now on a firm basis, "the voice," which the prophet heard, "came from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God," which deserves a serious consideration. First, it is called a "golden altar," whereby we may see, that earthly gain was the principal object of those who lived by it. Secondly, popery has its altar in reality, as well as a figurative one. Thirdly, it had four horns, which are, the pope, the cardinals, the bishops, and the priests. Fourthly, these four powers form one body, or anti-spiritual altar. Fifthly, it was before God, or in prophetic phrase, in opposition to him. Sixthly, it produced a voice, even such a voice as made Europe tremble, and its inhabitants to quake and fear. This voice from the four horns gave its commands also, first, by saying to the sixth angel, who now sounded the papal trumpets, "Loose the four angels, which are bound in the great river Euphrates." Secondly, these four angels are the numerous hordes of the monastic orders, who were, in A. D. 1272, formed into four grand divisions. Thirdly, these are, 1st, Franciscans, or grey friars; 2d, Augustines, or black friars;

Dominicans, the founders of the inquisition; 4th, Carmelites, or white friars. The monks had rules peculiar to themselves, before the above date, but they were much limited by the holy see; but it appears that the higher clergy wanted their assistance at this time, and granted them more extensive privileges than they before enjoyed, and formed them into the four orders above mentioned, and then set them loose among mankind. See further concerning Euphrates, in the remarks on chapter xvi, verse 12.

Verses 15, 16. "And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand; and I heard the number of them." In these two verses we find, first, that those creatures who, at their first institution, lived a life of solitude and poverty, conformable to their vows, were now loosed, and called into action. Secondly, they are now to mix with mankind, and teach them the lesson which they received from their superiors. Thirdly, that they "were prepared for an hour, a day, a month, and a year;" that is, always active, and ready to propagate their doctrines. Fourthly, that they were to be always ready to give information against those whom they suspected of heresy. Fifthly, that these creatures made it their business, to glide into all consciences, and to spy into the secrets of families. Sixthly, that under the appearance of sanctity, they led captive the ignorant multitude, into their errors. Seventhly, that they were to slay the third part of men. When we consult the histories of those times, we find, that not only Europe, but many of other parts of the

earth, became proselytes, by their means to the doctrines of Rome; and if we could make out the number, there is every reason to believe, that the third part of men were slain by their deadly religion. Eighthly, the prophet informs us, that that their number amounted to two hundred millions. I would suppose, that he means the number of them from their first establishment, to their nonexistence, because all Europe could not support such a number at one time. Ninthly, they are called an "army of horsemen;" that is, they were all actuated by one principle—they were guided by one and the same impulse. From some accounts that I have seen, the number of those who live a monastic life, in Portugal, Spain, and the Spanish dominions in America, is truly astonishing.

Verse 17. "And I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat thereon, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone; and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone." In this verse, the prophet, as was revealed to him in the vision, "saw the horses, and them that sat on them." Here he includes the whole of the papal powers, from the pope to the meanest monk. He saw their horses, which are their evil principles; he saw them that sat on them, which is the papal hierarchy. These riders had a "breastplate of fire, jacinth, and brimstone." Dreadful composition! Blind zeal, hearts of stone, and infernal rage! "And the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions." In this sentence is shewn, the amazing power of those who maintained and supported these principles. The heads of those principles are the councils who gave them birth. When one council decreed any

matter of faith, the next confirmed it, and so on, to the last general council of Trent, who confirmed all the diabolical errors, or evil principles, that had crept into that apostate church, since the days of Constantine. "And out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone." Strange to relate, that out of the mouths of these learned teachers of mankind, should issue blind zeal, wilful ignorance, and hellish cruelty !

Verse 18. The prophet is very particular in his description of the papal hierarchy, for again in this verse he informs us, that "by these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths." Here it is plain, that it is a spiritual, or eternal death, that is alluded to; because these infernal weapons for man's destruction, was to issue out of their mouths. Even to this day, the miserable laity are filled with false zeal, for the honor and interest of their religion; they are suffocated by that smoke of ignorance which surrounds them, as they must believe what their church commands. If they should doubt the power of the church for salvation, they are given over to the devil, to be tormented with fire and brimstone, which is hellish cruelty, in the extreme. It is one of the articles in their catechism, to believe the doctrines of the church, and he that doubteth is damned. As was observed before, it is probable, that the third part of men had embraced the doctrines of this apostate church, and were slain thereby.

Verse 19. "For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails; for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt." In this verse, the prophet even enforces his description of these



seducers, as if to guard us against them; "for," says he, "their power is in their mouth, and in their tails." This language is easy to be understood; for out of the mouths of the bishops, in council, issued their canons, or decrees: These descended to the tails, who are the executive power; and whether these canons are agreeable to the gospel, or not, the poor laity must believe them, under pain of damnation. These formidable tails are compared to serpents. John, who was well acquainted with gospel purity, pays the clergy, of these dark times, the same compliment that his Lord and Master did the scribes and pharisees. "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! how can you escape the damnation of hell?" Matt. xxiii. 33. To complete the description, the prophet informs us, that this serpent tribe had "heads, and with them they do hurt;" this is also plain. The pope creates the bishop,—the bishop the priest, &c. and all these act in conjunction to do hurt; and even in their bloody persecutions, they drew in the regal powers, as subordinate heads to do hurt, and destroy those whom they call heretics. Thus they all have combined to do hurt.

Mankind may, if they please, be delighted with church power, and pageantry; but it never was intended, by an All Wise and Bounteous Creator, who delights in the happiness of his creatures, that gain, and filthy lucre, should be the object of those, who undertake their spiritual improvement; the old and new testaments afford undeniable proofs to the contrary. But what is the language of the present day? Such a one is promoted to the see of ———. Mr. ——— has got a good living. Our friend ——— is raised to the rectorage, or vicarage of ———; he can keep a curate, and live

easy. But it is never enquired, what any of these characters has done for the glory of God, or the edification of his fellow creatures.

Verses 20, 21. Redeeming love, and the conversion of mankind, being the great object of the covenant of grace, it is the bounden duty of those, who undertake the work of the ministry, to be careful, and diligent, and to do all that in them lieth, to promote the interest, and enlarge the boundaries, of the Messiah's kingdom. It is just the contrary with those, whom the prophet has so elegantly described, under the sound of this trumpet. To close the scene, he says, "And the rest of the men, which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the work of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk; neither repented they [of the papacy] of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornications, nor of their thefts." From these words it is plain, that the conversion of the heathen was neglected by them; and the fact is, they were incapable of doing it.

It is truly lamentable, to reflect on the dismal state of (what is called,) the christian world, these fifteen hundred years. The promise of a Messiah was, in mercy, early given; "the seed of the woman was to bruise the Serpent's head;" this promise was revived by almost all the Prophets, for near four thousand years, and they "through faith saw this precious promise afar off." Heb. xi. 13. When the appointed time came, the Redeemer appeared; he taught publicly, he proved his Divine mission, by many great and undeniable works; he formed a plan for man's

happiness in this life, that even the greatest enemies of the christian scheme cannot gainsay, nor resist; "he brought life and immortality to light, by his death, resurrection, and ascension." He is now enthroned in Majesty, as King over his church; he is the great High Priest, Advocate, and Intercessor, for all those who humbly come to God through him. When fallen man could not appear before Divine Justice, he ransomed us, and he, who bare our infirmities, is appointed our final Judge. His precepts are plain, and simple, and easy to be understood. He informed us, "that the first and great commandment is, To love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, soul, and mind, and the second is like unto it; Thou shall love thy neighbor, as thy self: That on these two commandments, hang all the law, and the prophets." Matt xxii. 37—40. These commands he obeyed in himself, and set the example to his followers; and promised to be with them to the end of the world. By his mediation with the eternal Father, he sends the Comforter to support, and assist us, and seal the earnest of our eternal inheritance. These are a few of the leading features of true christianity.

I omit making any observations here, on the conduct of the heathen world; but since the time that christianity obtained the ascendancy, until now, what are the ravages, which avarice and ambition have made, in church and state? They are both linked together; though the Author of christianity has expressly said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Church and state have acted in conjunction, to enslave mankind; though the gospel law is perfect freedom; freedom from sin, through the Redeemer, and freedom from the vices

and crimes of an evil world, by obeying his commands. Christianity has often been reviled by its enemies, when in fact, it is the false, and avaricious teachers of it, that ought to bear the blame. All parties boast of their holy religion, but where are the genuine effects of it? When we hear of wars and commotions, we find the clergy of these ages, are very active instruments, in fomenting them. For upwards of a thousand years, what a sad spectacle has Europe presented, in point of human butchery! yet the pretence frequently is, that we are fighting for our holy religion; and so say all the contending parties: But the melancholy fact is, that it is not the religion of Jesus, but the want of it, that causes all the mischief. Chistianity recommends peace, love, good will, and universal charity. The religion of these days is the very opposite. Jesus Christ commands us "to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them which despitefully use, and persecute us." Matt. v. 44. Which conduct proves us to be children of God. The clergy, since the days of Constantine, have taught us to hate our enemies, to destroy them by fire and sword, to burn and destroy heretics, to sing *Te Deums* for victories obtained, to rejoice for victories gained, to pray for the success of fleets and armies, by sea and land, and then to say the Lord's prayer. Can a just and holy God be pleased with such vile hypocrisy?

In ancient times, we read of three ways to punish a wicked, and impious world; to wit, the pestilence, sword, and famine. The Clergy have invented a fourth: They have created purgatorial fire, and taught man the use of gunpowder. Happy discovery! But

that holy ardor and zeal, which Christianity requires, is extinguished by them. The laity have lost the harmonious sound, which the Gospel trumpet gave, in the first century; the notes they now hear, are shrill, harsh, and hard to be understood. They hear of saints' days, and holy days—of creeds and catechisms—of works of supererogation, or overplus merit—of transubstantiation, which far exceeds any of the Redeemer's miracles—of pardons, and absolutions—of masses for the living and dead—of tythes, and other church dues—of church ornaments, and Priests' vestments—of ceremonies instituted—And, to close the list, they hear of a mother of God!—May the laity read the scriptures, and shun the fatal sound of the fifth and sixth trumpet, and fly from the wrath to come.

I shall now take a short view of these seven different sounds, and the consequences.

First. To the Jews, by the Redeemer, and his Apostles. Ceremonial law abolished.

Secondly. To the gentiles, by the apostles, and companions. Conversion great—Jerusalem destroyed.

Thirdly. To the gentiles, by the apostles' successors. Gospel truths made bitter, by false teachers.

Fourthly. Error increases—Gospel light, partly eclipsed—brotherly love abated.

Fifthly. Bottomless pit opened, clergy established. Gospel light, and reason, darkned, under christian emperors, for one hundred and fifty years; this period begins and ends the first woe.

Sixthly. The long reign of popery commences, with its many errors. It begins and ends the first woe.

Seventhly. Reformation (so called) begins, and with it begins the third woe.

The woes are doctrines established by man, in opposition to the truth; whereby those that adhere to them are guilty in this life, and in the next, have "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." Matt. xxiv. 51. "Come, ye blessed!" or "Go, ye cursed!" are what we may expect, by the gospel law.

## CHAP. X.

IN the ninth chapter, the prophet has shewn, first, the great power to which prelacy rose, under the christian emperors, and the woful effects of it. Secondly, its amazing increase of power, under the papacy, and the havoc it made of the truth, and of mankind. In this chapter, he changes the scene, and foretels the reformation, and its varied appearances.

Verse 1. John "saw another mighty angel come down from heaven;" which implies, that a new spiritual government was to be established, among men, in this lower world. "He was clothed with a cloud;" which shews, that he was enrobed with a mist of much darkness. "A rainbow was upon his head," to evince his conspicuous and heavenly, or formidable appearance. "His face was as it were the sun;" emblematic of his intentional light, and claim to gospel purity.— "His feet as pillars of fire;" which signifies the powerful heat, or zeal, which supported the reformers, and which all their adversaries could not extinguish.

Verse 2. "And he had in his hand a little book open;" to shew that he would make manifest his doctrines, and propagate them. "And he set his right foot upon the sea;" which shews it was supported only by the wavering, and turbulent ocean of mankind. "And his left foot was on the earth;" which also shews, that it was to be supported by earthly endowment, and worldly emolument.

Verse 3. "And he cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth;" which sheweth, first, the loud voice of the reformers among mankind, by their doc-

trines. Secondly, it was a loud cry, that caused the bishops to assemble in council, at Trent, to suppress them. Thirdly, it was a loud voice, that formed the potentates of Europe into protestant and popish interests. Fourthly, it was a loud voice, that called so large a part of mankind from the papal dominion.—Fifthly, it was a cry, so very disagreeable to the see of Rome, that they denounced an anathema against it. “And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.” Some may imagine, that these thunders were the anathemas of the see of Rome against the reformers, but this will not comport with the true meaning of prophecy. Thunder, in prophetic language, is the thundering out, and propagating any new doctrine, and accordingly we find, that James and John were surnamed Boanerges, or sons of thunder, by the Redeemer, because he knew that they were faithful, and would thunder out his gospel, to, or in the ears of mankind. Therefore, these seven thunders are the seven principal sects, which arose, in consequence of the reformation, and thundered out their doctrines, in like manner, and were all unanimous, in condemning many of the doctrines of the Romish church, and they often past severe censures on each other. These sects are, 1st, the Lutherans. 2d, the Calvinists. 3d, the church of England, as by law established. 4th, the Presbyterians. 5th, the Quakers. 6th, the Anabaptists. 7th, the Arminians, from whom descended the Methodists. These are the principal sects, who have distinguished themselves since, and during the reformation, and are the most lively, and shining colours in the rainbow of it.

Verse 4. “And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write; and I heard a



voice from heaven, saying unto me, Seal up those things, which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." This charge to the prophet proves, that these various doctrines were defective, and not conformable to the gospel precepts. Christ's kingdom is not of this world, but these sects are of this world, and they all, (save one,) are so connected with the state, that true christianity is reduced to a mere shadow. They all boast of their holy religion, but where are the evidences of it? Are they not frequently at war with each other? and has not Europe been, since the reformation, an *Aceland*, or field of blood? and does not this prove, that "they are not Christ's disciples because they have not love, one to another?" John xiii. 35. Therefore holy John, who well knew what brotherly love was, was not suffered to write, or approve of their evil deeds.

Let it here be noted, that the gospel of Jesus Christ, which was taught and practised by his disciples, is always compared, in this book, to the spotless appearance of the sun, in its meridian splendor. Unity, and brotherly love adorned their characters, and universal charity shone, with heavenly lustre around them. But our reformation is compared to the varied colours of the rainbow; though beautiful in appearance, yet it is only a part of the circle of gospel perfection. Philosophers tell us, that the natural bow has seven different colours, which are occasioned by the refracted, or broken rays of the sun, in time of rain. It is always seen in the rear of a dark cloud, and is only a segment, or part of a circle. What a lively image is this, of the reformation, and the effects of it!

Verses 5—7. "And the angel, which I saw stand

upon the sea, and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants, the prophets." In these three verses observe, that the prophet once more calls the attention to the same angel, or spiritual government, "with his right foot on the sea;" by which we may learn, that its first, and principal support was on the restless ocean of mankind, and on the wavering and tottering support of regal authority. Secondly, its left foot was placed on a firmer foundation; for it had earthly gain, power, and other sensual, and temporal gratifications for its support: And thus it stands to this day, and is a basis, very different from that of the first founders of christianity. Thirdly, "he swore;" swearing cannot here be taken in its literal sense; it only implies the faith, or firm belief of the reformers, concerning the gospel promises. And fourthly, this belief is, that time should end all the gospel promises, and threatenings, in the days of the voice of the seventh trumpet's sound; that under it the mystery, or mysterious work of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants, the prophets. And is not this the faith, and firm belief of all the reformed churches, as it is they, who are blowing the seventh trumpet.

Verse 8. In this, and the following verse, the prophet shews the doctrinal effect, and defect, of the reformers; for he, by divine inspiration, was ordered to

“go, and take the little book, which is open in the hand of the angel, which standeth upon the sea, and upon the earth.” Here we may perceive, that their book was always open for inspection; and certain it is, that every sect shewed their doctrines to mankind, in the best outward appearance, which they could.

Take notice, that John is represented here, as if conversing with the reformers.

Verse 9. John now asks for the book, and the demand was instantly complied with, by the reformers, and accompanied with an injunction, that he should “eat it up, and it should make his belly bitter, but would be in his mouth sweet as honey.” From this we may learn, what was truly the case, that the reformers did not pretend to attain to apostolic purity, and perfection; and that what they did, by their little book, would be sweet to the taste of John, by so far departing from Romish error, and idolatry; but on eating, and digesting it, it would cause bitter reflections in him, to see them fall so far short of genuine apostolic perfection. On this, in verse 10, John “ate the book,” and found it so. Then, in verse 11, the reformers said unto him, “Thou must prophecy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.” Which implies, that a new reformation must arise—that the present is defective, and that out of the sayings of John, mankind must receive further instructions, before they attain to that knowledge which the gospel requires.

I shall conclude this chapter, with a few observations on some of the leading points contained in it.

And first, this book of the reformation is four times called “a little book,” because it contained but little

of that vital knowlege, which existed in the apostolic age. Secondly, it is "a little book" from the obstruction, that the reformers met with, by a combination of almost all the regal powers of Europe, in opposition to it. Thirdly, it is "a little book" from the furious persecutions, which the reformers experienced, by the Romish hierarchy. Fourthly, it is "a little book" from their own internal divisions, and animosities. Fifthly, it is "a little book" on account that the reformers were just emerging out of Romish darkness: By long custom, and early prejudice, they retained many of the old established errors. Sixthly, the protestant powers, by establishing one sect, and barely tolerating the others, have made it "a little book." Seventhly, the bloody wars carried on, even among enlightened protestant powers, must make the "book a little" one. Eighthly, the vice, folly, and lukewarmness, of the different professors, must make this "book a little" one, until the Wise Ruler of the universe fulfils his further promises to mankind.

Secondly. Let an impartial enquirer after truth, behold the deplorable state of the christian part of mankind. They all boast of their holy religion, but from whence come the wars? Do they not come from the ambitious lusts, and carnal desires of its professors, who are at enmity with the truth as it is in Jesus. Behold nation destroying nation, and yet they have the audacity to call themselves christians. Behold the clergy imploring the aid of the Most High, in behalf of the infernal conduct of their respective sovereigns; as if an holy and unerring God would give ear to such impious and blasphemous nonsense. And where is the sect, (save only the quakers,) of all our boasted pil-

lars of the reformation, who is not implicated in the diabolical work?

Thirdly. The reformers all boast of their renunciation of Romish errors. It is true, that part of their superstitious ceremonials, and also some of their doctrines, they have laid aside; but can they deny, that the foundation laid by the Romish bishops, at the council of Nice, is to this day the basis of their religion? See the Athanasian creed. They also boast, that the doctrines contained in that creed were maintained by a great majority; but was truth ever yet supported on earth, by a majority? or could they, who came out of the bottomless pit, establish the truth? Rev. ix. 3. It is well known, that the minority, in that council, were obliged to fly into other countries for protection, in order to save their lives from the rage of their opponents! Does this look as if they were candidly enquiring after truth, and earnestly desirous to embrace it, wherever it might be found? Indeed, so zealous were the Romish party, in defence of this new doctrine, that all the writings of the minority, or Arian sect, were destroyed, and themselves condemned as heretics, lest their religious opinions should be known to mankind. Let it also be noticed, that it is the Athanasian party, or western church, whom the prophet, in this book, principally condemns.

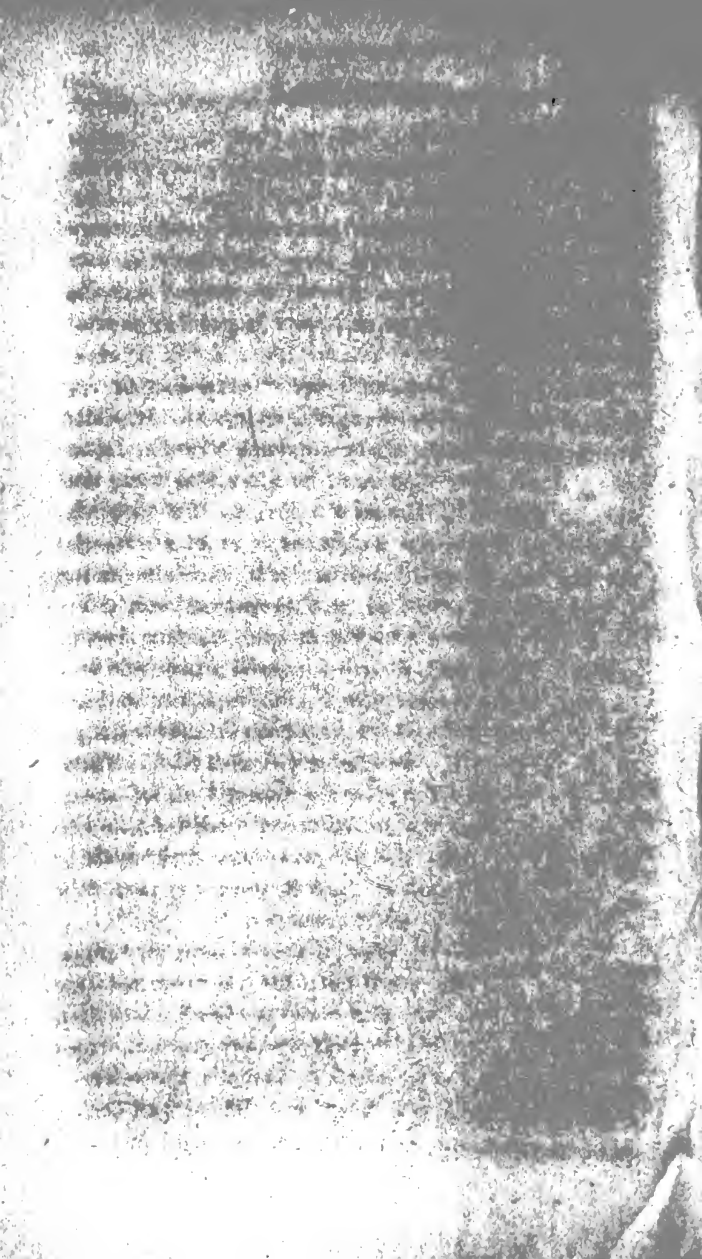
Fourthly, it is highly probable, that the Arian party also ran into error; for before the bottomless pit was opened, by Constantine, we find that the third part of the sun, moon, and stars were smitten, before the long night of error, and apostacy commenced.

Fifthly. For the honor of the christian name and character, and as they value their precious and immor-

tal souls, I humbly request of my brethren, the laity, to have their bibles frequently in their hands, and to make the careful and diligent study of them, their most important work. They are our only sure guide in the way of truth. Let us soar aloft, and have exalted ideas of HIM, who is the great first Cause, and Creator of universal nature; of HIM, who exalted the Redeemer, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give remission of sins; Acts ii. 38. & v. 31. of HIM, who raised him, by his mighty power, from the dead, and in mercy has ordained him to be the Judge of quick and dead; Acts x. 42. of HIM, who hath made the Redeemer an Advocate, Mediator, and Intercessor with God, on our behalf; 1 Tim. ii. 5. & 1 John ii. 1. of HIM, who hath spiritual gifts in store, and never fails to give them to those, who are found worthy; 1 Cor. xii. 7, 28. of HIM, who even condescends to be in us, and to make his abode with us; and that Christ shall be also in us, if we are not reprobate; 1 Cor. iii. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16. & xiii. 5. of HIM, whose providential care is over all, and who will not neglect even us, his most unworthy creatures, if the fault is not our own. Thus shall we see, that God is supreme over all his works, and that HE is in Christ Jesus reconciling us to himself. 2 Cor. v. 18. "Knowing that HE who raised up the Lord Jesus, will raise us up also by Jesus." 2 Cor. iv. 14.

Sixthly. By a careful, religious, and diligent use of the scriptures, we are dignified with heavenly "power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing." Rev. v. 12. We in a measure resemble the second Adam, who has restored the image of God, which we lost, by the fall of the first. 1 Cor. xv. 49. & 2 Cor. iii. 18. We shall "be fruitful in every good work, and increase in

the knowlege of God." Col. i. 10. We shall "be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience, and long-suffering, with joyfulness: Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Col. i. 11—13.





## CHAP. XI.

IN this chapter, we have the recovery, and preservation of the law, and the gospel, by the reformers, clearly foretold, and the attempt to destroy them, by the popish hierarchy, and time has proved the truth of the prediction.

Verse 1. The inspired prophet, according to that measure of divine knowledge, and understanding, which was given unto him, was commanded to "rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein." Hence it is obvious, that they who worship in this inner temple, or in other words, who worship him in spirit, and in truth, agreeable to the gospel plan of salvation, are here particularly noticed, and pointed out by the prophet, whether Jew or gentile. From their altar was offered a pure and free incense; it was sincere love to God, and faith unfeigned, in his merciful and gracious promises, made known to him, in this inner temple, or gospel of truth. These looked unto Jesus, the great Captain of their salvation; they regarded not the doctrines and traditions, now to be taught by men; the scripture was their guide to eternal life and happiness, and by the aid of God, they went on conquering, and to conquer.

Verse 2. "But the court that is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot, forty and two months." Here the prophet has drawn a complete line of separation, between the outward court worshippers, and the inner. These gentiles, or nominal christians, were permitted to tread down the

inhabitants of the holy city, or inner temple worship, for forty two months, or twelve hundred and sixty years. And this naturally draws our attention to that remarkable period of time, when Dioclesian and Maximian, the two last heathen emperors, resigned the Roman empire, A. D. 303, and thus ended the sixth head of the Romish beast. The seventh head then succeeded, and began under Constantine the great, and forty first emperor of Rome. He, and his successors, assumed the name of christians, until A. D. 476, when this seventh head expired, by the overthrow of the western empire, by the northern pagans. The papal head shortly after arose, and became the eighth, and was of the seventh, because that under the seventh head, the bishops received their unlimited power, and had, as was observed before, the key of the bottomless pit given to them by Constantine.

In the reign of Constantine, the bishops, being then seated in power, fell out among themselves, concerning the divinity of Christ. Their contentions were fierce, and disturbed the public peace, on which the emperor convened a general council at Nice, A. D. 325, in order to have this great point determined. Here they disagreed also. On which the emperor, at the head of three hundred bishops, framed a creed for the faith of mankind, and denounced a penalty of damnation to all who would not believe it. See the Athanasian creed. Here they proved themselves to be "the man of sin," foretold by St. Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 3—12 "and set themselves above all that is called God, or that is worshipped," by the inner court worshippers. Here by their new fashioned and uncharitable doctrines, and fierce contentions, they began the first christian perse-

cutions, under the name of the five months torment, or the first woe. Here also they began to make the scriptures of truth of no effect, by their traditions, which has ever since destroyed the peace of mankind; and for these evident reasons, these outward court worshippers are rejected, and not measured, or included, among those who worship God, in simplicity and truth.

Under this imperial and papal reign of twelve hundred and sixty years, time, and our historical records have proved, that these outward court worshippers have trod down the gospel temple, and by their canons and decrees, have thrown a veil over the scriptures, so as to make them of no effect; they have also changed the law made on mount Sinai, by omitting the second commandment, in order to establish image worship, and have divided the tenth into two parts, to preserve the number. In repeating the Lord's prayer, they always omit the last clause, and will not ascribe the kingdom, power, and glory, to that ineffable Being, to whom it is so justly due. They have trampled under foot, persecuted, and branded with infamy and heresy, all who durst disobey them, or search the scriptures, for true information. Thus, even in the literal sense, these outward court worshippers have trodden the holy city, or people of God, under foot, forty and two months, or twelve hundred and sixty years, namely, from A. D. 303, to the end of the council of Trent, in A. D. 1563.

Verse 3 "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." I shall shew, first, who the witnesses are; in the second place, the time

of their prophecying under this filthy garment; and thirdly, what the garment is.

That the law and the gospel are the two witnesses, is evident from the following proofs. First, that the law given on mount Sinai is one of them, is manifest from the manner in which Moses, the Jewish lawgiver, received it. See *Exod. xx, & xxxiv.* When Moses encouraged Joshua, and the people, a short time before his death, he “wrote the law, and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, who bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel.” *Deut. xxxi. 9.* And “Moses commanded the Levites to take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.” *Deut. xxxi. 26.* Moses, describing the majesty of God, says, “From his right hand went a fiery law for them.” *Deut. xxxiii. 2.* “Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.” *Deut. xxxi. 4.* After Moses’ death, God’s charge to Joshua was, “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe and do, according to all that is written therein; for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and thou shalt have good success.” *Josh. i. 8.* David says, “He established a testimony in Jacob, and a law in Israel.” *Ps. lxxviii. 5.* And the prophet says, “Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb, for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.” *Mal. iv. 4.* Our Redeemer had such respect for this law, that he said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to ful-

fil: For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Thus it appears, that the law given on mount Sinai, is one of the witnesses, and the transgression of it is sin.

That the gospel is the other witness seems plain, from the words of our Saviour. When he foretold the calamities, that were to afflict the Jews, he says, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." Matt. xxiv. 14. The Redeemer, speaking of his divine mission to the Jews, says, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness, which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, [Baptist] and he bare witness unto the truth. But I have a greater witness than that of John; for the works that the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me." John v. 31-37. We have many proofs of this nature, in the apostles' writings, particularly in the tenth chapter of the Acts. In a word, the twelve tribes of Israel received the law, and the twelve apostles received the gospel, and they are the twenty four elders, who recorded these divine laws, as a witness against all the workers of iniquity, and to the praise and glory of those who obey them, and learn to do well.

When we consider the two tables of the moral law, they are, in themselves, two witnesses of God's law to mankind. The gospel enjoins our reverential awe and esteem for the Creator, and love to one another, and

these are likewise two witnesses. Unite the law and the gospel, and they are more essentially so.

Secondly. The time of their prophecy under this filthy garment. As was observed before, apostacy, and the opening of the bottomless pit, commenced A. D. 303, and was on the increase to the end of the council of Trent, A. D. 1563; at which time, the art of printing became useful to the reformers, who, having obtained the genuine copies of the old and new testaments, from the original greek, had them printed in their different languages, and preserved them from further injury by the papal hierarchy. Subtract these two numbers, and there remain exactly twelve hundred and sixty years, during which time the witnesses were clothed with sackcloth.

Thirdly. To be clothed in sackcloth, signifies, a mean or filthy covering put on, whereby the beauty, or excellency of any thing so covered cannot appear. And thus it was, when the scriptures of truth wore the garment of false translation, and false interpretation put upon them, by the beast, which arose out of the bottomless pit, during the above period of twelve hundred and sixty years.

Verse 4. The prophet here gives us further particulars concerning the witnesses, by saying, "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks, standing before the God of the earth." Trees, in the language of prophecy, are figurative of the laws of God, for our instruction. They are here called "two olive trees," because they yield the fruits of righteousness and peace, to all who obey them. They are called "two candlesticks," on account of the statutes which they support, and hold up the true light, which ought to enlighten.

every man. They are "standing before the God of the earth," because they stand in opposition to the errors established by a pretended vicar of God, and his adherents.

Verse 5. In this verse, we have another description of the witnesses. "And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." It is plain, that a wilful transgression of the law, is sin; therefore, the wrath of God will devour his enemies, or adversaries. As the words are twice repeated, we may observe, that the laws of God are made void, when the canons of popes and councils are established in the room thereof. What can such sinners expect, but the utmost severity of God's wrath, which is compared to "a consuming fire." Heb. xii, 29.

Verse 6. "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters, to turn them to blood; and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will."

During this long reign of ignorance, superstition, and idolatry, it is plain, that no spiritual comfort could flow from the witnesses; any attempt toward attaining true christian knowlege in these days, was called heresy, and immediately suppressed by the papal authority. The histories of these times give a melancholy account of the distressed state of Europe, by persecution, war, famine, and pestilential diseases. And thus, by their wilful disobedience to the laws, or witnesses of God, he "smote them with all the plagues, as oft as he pleased."

Verse 7. "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." The prophet has, in this verse, brought us down to the council of Trent, where the witnesses were to receive their mortal blow; for before it, they were only clothed with sackcloth. I shall now show a few of those doctrines established by that memorable council, as they are in direct opposition to the law, and the gospel.

And first, The invocation of angels and saints, were established in their seventeenth and twenty-fifth sessions. Second, by the sacrament of baptism, sin is wholly plucked up by the roots. Third, by the sacrament of confirmation, the Holy Ghost gives perfection of grace. Fourth, the church cannot err, because she is apostolic. Fifth, the Holy Ghost, who presides in the church, governs it by no other than apostolic men. Sixth, infidels, schismatics, heretics, but particularly heretics, and schismatics, stand condemned, because they have fallen away from the church; these do not belong to the church, more than vagabonds, or renegades, to an army; yet they are in the power of the church, as those who may be judged by her, and condemned, with an anathema. Seventh, that there is one visible head, or governor, who by lawful succession, possesses the chair of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles. Eighth, God bestows his own dignity on others, he is a priest, and he makes priests, he is a rock, and he makes a rock, and what things are his he bestows on his servants. Ninth, that the church is holy, and that it has the legitimate worship of sacrifice, and the saving use of the sacraments; and whomsoe-



ver are truly holy, cannot be out of this church.— Tenth, that in the church are the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and that to her is given power, to forgive sins, to excommunicate, and to consecrate the true body of Christ. Eleventh, there is no sin so heinous which can be committed or imagined, for pardoning whereof the holy church has not a power. Twelfth, that before he ascended into heaven, he granted his power to bishops and priests in the church. Thirteenth, the eucharist is to be adored. Fourteenth, That the true body of Christ, that very same which was born of the virgin, and now sits in heaven, at the right hand of the Father, is contained in this sacrament. Fifteenth, and that no substance of the elements remains in it; although nothing seems more strange, and distant to the senses. Sixteenth, that the substances of the bread and wine, are so changed into the body and blood of the Lord, that the substances of the bread and wine altogether cease. Seventeenth, that whole Christ, as God and man, is contained in the eucharist. Eighteenth, that whole Christ is contained in each species of the bread and wine. Nineteenth, and for this reason, they give the bread only, to the laity. Twentieth, and the holy synod of Trent, has condemned those with an anathema, who assert that this doctrine is not true. Twenty first, that this sacrifice of the mass, is profitable, both for the living and dead.

These are only part of the many errors established by the council of Trent. Their chief attempt against the witnesses was, their false and ambiguous translation of the scriptures, and these were expounded to the people, in that way only, as the synod of Trent directed. These directions, the priests and curates

punctually obeyed. And thus, by false translation, false interpretation, and teaching for doctrines their own commandments, this great council spent eighteen years of idiotism and insanity at Trent; where they proved themselves to be the beast that arose out of the bottomless pit—made war against the witnesses, and killed them.

Verse 8. “And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom, and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” In this verse, let these things be considered, first, “their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city;” which is a positive proof that this great council of Romish citizens, (or bishops,) paid no regard to the witnesses; as they first killed them, by establishing their own doctrines, and then let them lie dead in the street, as unworthy of their further notice. Secondly, “this great city is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt;” which shews the spiritual wickednesses, that this council committed, and that their crimes are unpardonable. And thirdly, “where also our Lord was crucified;” which proves, that their crimes and impieties were equal to that of the Jewish high priest, and rulers of the people, who crucified the Lord of life.

Verse 9. “And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.” When the witnesses were thus slain, and the general council dismissed, a principal part of their work was left unfinished; and that was forming a creed, or catechism, for the priests, and other inferior clergy, according to the rules of which they might instruct the laity. On observing this omis-

sion, pope Pius the 5th, chose some of the chief fathers of the council, for the purpose of supplying the deficiency. These spent just three years, before the work was completed. It was then presented to the pope for inspection. He approved of it, and ordered Paul Manutius, whom he stiles "our beloved son," to print it, with all diligence and faithfulness; this took exactly six months more, and completes the three years and half, that the witnesses lay dead. And, during these three and half years, the reformers of the different tongues, and nations, beheld their dead bodies, and used all possible activity in getting the scriptures printed, and did not suffer them to be put into graves, or buried in oblivion.

Verse 10. "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets (or witnesses) tormented them that dwelt upon the earth." In perusing this verse, let these things be considered, first, observe the distinction the prophet makes between those who kept the witnesses from being put in graves, and those who rejoiced at their death; the one he calls "people of different kindreds, and tongues, and nations," pointing out the reformers. The other, they that dwell on the earth, or popish party, who were (particularly at this time) earthly, sensual, and devilish. Secondly, by the canons of Trent the papists imagined they had obtained a complete victory, and a general joy diffused itself among them; they even sent gifts, or legates to form alliances for the ruin of the reformers. Thirdly, the reason is, because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth; for the Romish party were at this time tormented by the writings,

preaching, and doctrines of the reformers. To prove the truth of this, see what the introduction of their catechism says. "In the mean time, it was wonderful to see how Luther's heresy crept abroad; and impiety, the child of war, had overspread almost all Europe; there were made, by the heretics, not only vast volumes, wherewith they endeavored to overthrow the catholic faith, but also there were written almost infinite books by them, which carrying in them the titles and shew of religion, it is incredible how hard it was to discern the good seed of Christ, from the tares of the enemy; there were as many catechisms carried about, as there are provinces in Europe, all which abounded with heresies, and wherewith the minds of the simple every where, were deceived; and scarcely was there any one well grounded in the faith." This catechism is called, "a storehouse of true divinity, and a treasure full of all ecclesiastic discipline; that it was dictated by the Holy Ghost, written by the decree of the fathers in the council of Trent, and published by the authority of Christ's Vicar."

Verse 11. "And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them; and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them." It is plain that after three and half years the canons and catechism of Trent were made known; the reformers rejected them with disdain, as all the old errors were established, and new ones added. They, by this time, had the bible translated from the original languages, and printed; and by these means the witnesses were once more on their feet, the Spirit of God having aided them in the performance. And great fear fell upon their en-

emies who saw the witnesses thus preserved from their destructive hands.

Verse 12. "And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." In this verse the providential care of God is made manifest in the preservation of the witnesses. Although the reformers were instrumental in this great work, yet the glory must be ascribed to HIM only who enabled them to do so. Their ascending up in a cloud shews, that they (the preserved) are wrapped up in much obscurity at present. Even their enemies beheld their preservation with astonishment.

Verse 13. "And the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven." The earthquake which the reformation produced, was indeed a great one, as it overthrew the tenth part of the papal power. When we consider the numbers in Europe, who at this time renounced popery, it is probable, that it amounted to exactly the tenth part of its inhabitants. "In this earthquake were slain of men seven thousand." This number may be the exact amount of the reformers slain at the first furious onset of their enemies, as the prophet carries the account no lower down than the same hour or time that the reformation commenced, and the remnant of the reformers were affrighted when they saw the powerful opposition they had to combat with, and gave glory to the God of heaven who was their only protector.

Verse 14. "The second woe is past; and, behold,

the third woe cometh quickly." The second, or papal woe ends here; but alas! the third, or protestant woe cometh quickly, and since the reformation, we may behold its dreadful consequences. Where is love?—Where is peace? Our first reformers had great zeal, and withstood the fiery, and cruel persecutions of the time, with the greatest courage and fortitude; but alas, how are the mighty fallen! View protestants in the seventeenth century, persecuting each other for non-conformity, and sapping the foundations of truth! View them in the eighteenth century, at open war with each other! View them also forming popish alliances, until they are now all gathered together into one place, called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

Verse 15. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." This seventh sound, is the sound of the gospel trumpet, by the reformers, or protestants of every description. And is it not the firm belief of the heavenly minded, of them that under this protestant sound, the kingdoms of this world, will yield a willing obedience to the witnesses, and "become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ." Do they not pray for the downfall of the kingdom of antichrist, for the conversion of the Jews, for the extension of Christ's kingdom among the heathen, and that the gospel may be propagated among all the nations of the earth.

I would remark here, that heaven, in the language of prophecy, is of three kinds. First, the heaven of eternal happiness, where there is fulness of joy, and

pleasures for evermore. Secondly, the heaven, or comfort which a saint enjoys in his own mind. Thirdly, the heaven which saints enjoy in the friendly and social intercourse, which they participate with each other. The voices, in this verse, allude to this last.

Verses 16, 17. "And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." In these two verses observe, first, that the twenty four elders, those faithful trustees of the law, and the gospel, are represented as praising God, for preserving those precious promises of his mercy. Secondly, they praise him, for manifesting his great power in bringing forth the reformation. And thirdly, they praise him for his providential care, by reigning over all.

Verse 18. "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants, the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth." The prophet here shews the effects, which the reformation produced, and which still continue. "And the nations were angry." Behold their anger at the reformation, by cruel persecutions! Behold their anger, by popish and protestant interests slaying each other! Behold their anger, by maintaining balances of power! Behold their anger, in disputing and quarrelling about what they call the rights of man, and the dreadful consequences resulting therefrom! Be-

hold the present war;\* a war unparalleled since the creation; and is not anger the cause of it? “And thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged.” Is not this literally the case? The nations professing christianity are angry—they experience the wrath of God, and they are dead in trespasses and sins; therefore they are judging, condemning, and destroying each other. But behold now the hope of the righteous, in the midst of these desolations! “And that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants, the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great; and will, in the end, destroy them that destroy the earth.” Note here, that some may imagine this verse refers to the general judgment, and end of all things; but I am of opinion that it hath a greater reference to the millennial state, when the wicked shall be cut off, and war shall cease, and be no more.

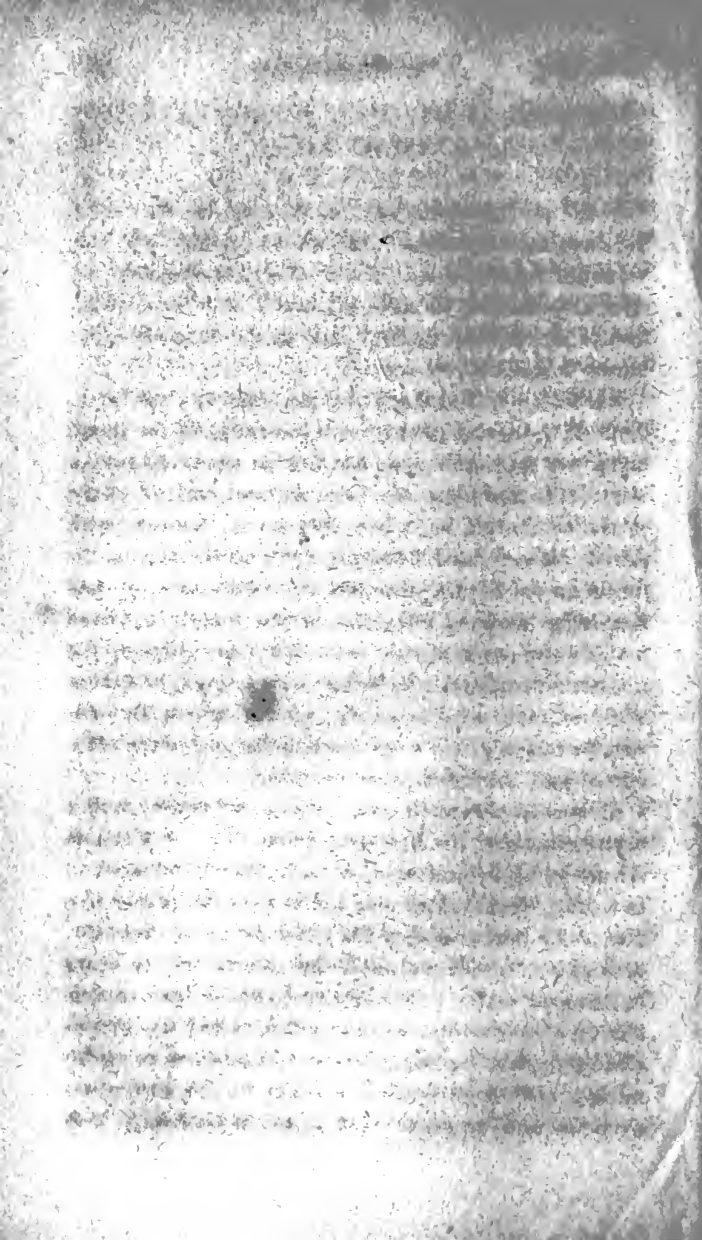
Verse 19. “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of the testament: And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.” This verse leads to some further effects of the reformation, and opens to our understanding the following particulars. First, the gospel was printed, and opened to the view of the heavenly minded, and there was seen in it the testament, or will of God to man, by the Lord Jesus Christ. Secondly, “there were lightnings,” or quick and fiery determinations on each side. Thirdly, it produced “voices,” or various opinions. Fourthly, it caused “thunderings,” or different

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\* The European war in the year 1803.



religious sects. Fifthly, it was attended by an "earthquake," which overthrew great part of the papal empire. And lastly, there was "great hail," which signifies the severe judgments of God, by sword, famine, pestilence, &c. Thus we may see, that by the abuse, or improper use of the scriptures of truth, an holy and righteous God is justly offended thereby; that fearful judgments await such sinners; and that the providential care of Almighty God is constantly exerted for the preservation of the law, and the gospel, whose witnesses they are.



## CHAP. XII.

IN the preceding chapter, the prophet, having shewn the dangerous situation of the witnesses, and their providential preservation, in this chapter, describes the true church, and its afflicted state, from the foundation of it; and particularly during the term of twelve hundred and sixty years.

Verse 1. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." In this verse, we have a grand portrait of the primitive church, in its heavenly attire; adorned with purity, beauty, and heavenly light, as the sun in his meridian splendor; possessed of chastity, charity, and brotherly love, or affection, as the moon; crowned with twelve stars, a true emblem of the lustre of the apostolic doctrines. This new born church, or spouse of Christ, appeared as a great wonder among the heavenly minded Jews; even the angelic host, were amazed at such merciful condescension.

This is represented as a wonder in heaven; and a wonder it is, of the first magnitude, that the glorious Architect of the universe, should condescend to stoop to sinful, mortal, frail man; that the Son of his love should die that we should live; that he should take our sins upon himself, and make the atonement, in order to bring us to God; that he could endure such contradiction of sinners against himself, to obtain our reconciliation; that he should subject himself to our infirmities, sin only excepted, to gain the victory, even over hell and the grave, that we might ever reign with

him; that he should give us a revelation of the divine will, to promote our present, and future happiness; and, that he has laid the foundation of a pure, and infallible church, against which, the gates of hell cannot prevail! When we seriously contemplate this divine truth, we are lost in amazement! our ideas fall short! no language of man, can utter or express it! It is only when we shall put on immortality, and live with HIM, that we can discover some part of the wondrous whole.

Verse 2. "And she, being with child, cried, travelling in birth, and pained to be delivered." This shews, that this pure church endeavored to bring forth, or produce something for the happiness of the human race.

Verse 3. "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." What a portrait is here given of the Roman government, under all its different forms, and satan as chief ruler over it.

Verse 4. "And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born." This verse may cause the following reflections: First, he stood before the Redeemer, and endeavored to seduce him by temptation. See Matt. iv. Secondly, he stood with the Jewish high priest, Jewish rulers, and Roman governor, to condemn and put to death the Redeemer. Thirdly, he stood at the head of the Romish power, to persecute and oppose the gospel. Fourthly, he stood with false teachers, to raise up antichrist, even in the apostles' days. Fifthly, he stood

with antichrist to tread down the truth. Sixthly, and he stood before the woman, to devour the truth in its very birth. This monster, had also, a tail of false teachers, that drew the third part of the stars, or churches, from their heavenly lustre, and cast them to the earth. See Rev. viii, 12. And thus he stood before the church, in its infant state.

Verse 5. "And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne." This heavenly adorned church, exhibited Christ Jesus, the eternal Word, and promise of the Most High, to the world. She labored in Asia, in Africa, in Europe, and in the Isles. She published it to both Jew and Gentile. She suffered the most cruel mockings, scourgings, and excruciating deaths, for bringing forth, or introducing the Holy Child Jesus, to the fallen race of Adam. Thus we see the pains and sufferings of the primitive church, are compared to a woman in travail.

This Child, this Saviour, is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. He has called aloud upon all mankind every where to repent, that their sins may be blotted out. He has invited weary and heavy laden sinners, to come unto him and be saved. He has promised, that "where two or three are gathered together in his name, he will be in the midst of them to bless them." Matt. xviii. 20. And he has commanded "all who work iniquity, to depart from him, as he knows them not." Matt. vii. 23. Paul, who laboured and suffered death for this Child, informs us, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. "Be not deceived," says he, "neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor revilers, nor effeminate, nor abu-

sers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. vi. 9. Let all who believe the gospel, and profess the christian religion, read, and carefully meditate on both the old and new testaments, and particularly the latter, and endeavor, through divine aid, to conform to the gracious injunctions therein contained, lest they fall under the severity of this rod. This Child is to be our final Judge, when he will exercise the rod of his power. This Child frequently chastens with the rod of his love. This Child is to tread the winepress of his Father's wrath among the nations. And this Child was caught up unto God, and to his throne, there to behold our actions, whether good or evil.

Verse 6. "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there, twelve hundred and sixty days." This verse naturally draws our attention to that period of time, when the church received earthly power, wealth, and honor, under Constantine; when he gave it the key of the bottomless pit, A. D. 303. As Christ's kingdom, or church, was not of this world, consequently the woman, or true church, fled into, or was surrounded by a wilderness of error, ignorance, sloth, ambition, vain glory, and, in a word, of every kind of shameful impurity. Earthly grandeur, with its luxurious train, never encouraged vital christianity. The church cannot thrive in the soil of sensuality. Thus the church continued in this wilderness of error, till A. D. 1563, when the council of Trent ended. The reformation then took deep root, and the scriptures were printed. The difference between these two num-

bers is twelve hundred and sixty years, during which time, by the providence of God, she was fed, or kept in existence.

Verses 7—12. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." This war between truth and error has been of long continuance, even from the days of our first parents. However, the prophet, in these verses, draws our attention to that period of time, when the professors of christianity began to make war upon each other; and this commenced also in the days of Constantine, between the Arian and Athanasian warriors. Hence it is plain, that as the emperor Constantine was the seventh head of the Romish beast, he, and satan with his angels, or Athanasian party, acted in conjunction. And as error, war, and persecution, are evidences against them,

it is proved, beyond a doubt, that they opposed the truth, though they could not prevail, neither was their place found any more in heaven. Hence it appears, that they who support the Athanasian doctrines, are rejected—they are the outward court worshippers, and separated from the true worshippers of God. For “the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Strange, that protestant divines do not observe this!

As to the Arian party, little is known of their religious principles, only that they acted in opposition to the Athanasians, and are to this day held in utter abhorrence by them. History informs us, that when the Athanasians arrived to great power under the papacy, they banished the others, and destroyed their writings; by which means, we have scarcely any thing on record, to enable us to decide with certainty. All the true information I can get on the subject, is from the prophets John and Daniel. But before I proceed, let it be noted, that Constantine divided the empire between his two sons; one he placed at Constantinople, and he, and his descendants, became the greek, or eastern emperors; the other he placed at Rome, and founded the Latin, or western empire. Thus was the christian world situated, when this war raged with its utmost violence; but at its commencement Constantine governed the empire, and was its seventh head and the head also of the Athanasians.

The war having begun, Michael, whom Daniel calls the great prince, and his Arian angels, fought against the dragon, or satan; and the dragon, with his Atha-



nasian angels, fought. Now as the prophet has placed satan at the head of one party, and Michael the champion of the other, let any impartial inquirer after truth determine which side fought for the truth.

The consequence of this war is, satan and his angels were cast out into the earth, that is, among the earthly minded, or nominal christians of those days: Ambition and covetousness were the reigning principles of the clergy, in the western empire; the Athanasian creed was their guide in matters of faith; the canons and decrees of their councils were observed, in preference to gospel precepts; the errors of one council were confirmed, and made valid, by the next, and thus were laid the strong foundations of popery and prelacy. In this war the Arian bishops were as active as the others. History informs us, that there were seventeen councils held on each side, who regularly opposed, and condemned the doctrines of their opponents. These furious contests continued till A. D. 535, when the eastern, or greek church, separated from the western, or, Romish, on account of the abominable errors, and idolatry of the latter; the pope also at this time having nearly attained to manhood.

On this great division, or separation, being effected, it caused great joy among the heavenly minded of the greek christians, by saying, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God, day and night." John now gives a satisfactory reason, and the true cause of this victory; "and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto

the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them." The prophet next shews the miserable state of those who had come under the dominion of the papacy. "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea; for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

Verse 13. "And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman, which brought forth the man child." In this verse, the prophet reminds us of the dreadful persecutions, which satan, and the papacy carried on. The papal hierarchy, animated by the spirit of the evil one, had a greater thirst for persecution, than any other power on earth, that we read of. It is singular, that prelacy, of every kind, has such an aversion to the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, and the pleasure it took, in destroying those who maintained it! The Romish priests placed salvation in their church, and denied it to be elsewhere; and thus they persecuted the woman, or church, who held that salvation came by Jesus Christ.

Verse 14. "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place; where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." By this verse it appears, that all the earthly protection, which the woman had, was under the two wings of the eastern emperors; an eagle being the insignia of the imperial dignity; all their crowns, standards, &c. were decorated with the image of this bird. Here she remained in a wilderness of war, and disorder, "for a time, times, and half a time," equal to twelve hundred and sixty years, "where she was nourished," or

preserved in existence, "from the face of the serpent," or papal tyranny.

Verse 15. "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water, as a flood, after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." This verse shews, and time has proved it, how active the Romish church was to seduce, and carry over to their persuasion, all who adhered to the truth. When their flood of false reasoning failed, they then had recourse to threats, to fire, and to faggots. It was one of their principal characters, in the days of their power, to search after the truth, and then to ruin it; they always feared the truth, and therefore endeavored to suppress it.

Verse 16. "And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood, which the dragon cast out of his mouth." The gospel of truth is proof against all the flood tides of the wicked. Even the vicious conduct of the papists, who swallowed up the antichristian flood, helped the woman. Was it not the shameful impurities of the Romish church, that caused the Albigenes, Waldenses, and Wickliffites, to arraign her evil conduct, and, by so doing, helped the woman? Did not several of the Romish clergy, in France, Germany, and even in Italy, complain of abuses in the church, and helped the woman? And even the hellish conspiracies, and persecutions of that apostate church, helped the woman, for the blood of the martyrs is crying aloud against her.

Verse 17. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Truth and error

are the very opposite of each other. From this verse we may see, that satan is still "going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." He is still the enemy of man, and will continue so, until the earth, or its inhabitants are renovated; and until the beast and false prophet are both taken alive, and cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, and himself cast into the bottomless pit, and bound a thousand years.

May my brethren, the laity, put on the true christian armor, and be able to make war against satan, and all the principalities and powers of darkness, and become members of that true and infallible church whose sun is the pure gospel light, whose moon is universal charity and brotherly love, and whose crown is to follow the doctrines and examples of the twelve apostles.

## CHAP. XIII.

IN this chapter, we have a short, but curious history of the Roman empire, with all its various forms of government, from its foundation, to its overthrow by the northern barbarians, and from thence to its rise, under the universal dominion of the papacy.

Verse 1. "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads, and ten horns, and upon his heads ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." It appears, by considering this verse, that John "stood upon the sand of the sea," or in other words, he examined the annals, or registers of the heathen, and "saw a beast rise up out of the sea," or infidel ocean of mankind. (Prophecy here begins.) This "beast," or earthly power, "had seven heads, and ten horns, and upon each horn," or kingdom, a "crown, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." When we consult our historical records, they inform us, that Rome was founded about seven hundred and fifty years before the christian era, by a party of poor adventurers, who had escaped from Troy, at its destruction; these sailing from the ruins of that city, wandered along the western shores of Italy, and at last landed near where Rome now stands. They soon after began to build a city, or rather, a village, and called it Rome, from Romulus, their chief. It appears, that their first form of government was regal; their second was consular; their third was dictatorial; their fourth was tribunitial, with consular authority; their fifth was the dictatorship revived, which ended in the sixth, or imperial

head, which existed at the time that John wrote this book. See Rev. xvii. It is to be noted, that these six heads, or forms of government, were infidel, or heathen. The seventh assumed the name of christian, under Constantine, the forty first emperor of Rome. This head had also the name of blasphemy, because it apostatized from the truth, and laid the foundation of the papal head.

Verse 2. "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion; and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." What a beautiful and grand description the prophet gives of this vast empire! First, he compares it to a leopard, as it was mottled, or spotted by its different heads, or forms of government. It was mottled, or spotted with the different nations under its subjection. It was spotted with Jews and gentiles. It was spotted with heathen and christians; and under its seventh head, it was spotted with Arians, Athanasians, monks, &c. &c. Secondly, its feet are compared to a bear's, as in all its conquests it held fast its prey; and its church conducted in the same manner. Thirdly, its mouth is compared to that of a lion, as heathen Rome was the terror of the nations, and its decrees irrevocable; so also Rome christian was guided by the same impulse. Fourthly, the dragon, or satan, "gave him his power and seat, and great authority." By these words the prophet proves, that all these heads were idolaters, and under the dominion of satan.

Verse 3. "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded unto death; and his deadly wound was healed: And all the world wondered after the beast."

The seventh, or christian head was wounded to death, A. D. 475, by the barbarous nations of the north, who sacked and plundered Rome, overturned the government, and seated themselves in all the western provinces, and by degrees, formed themselves into ten kingdoms, which are the ten horns of the beast. The eastern empire remained, though much shattered, for several centuries afterwards.

During these calamities, the bishops were not idle, particularly the bishop of Rome. Bad as the state of religion was, previous to these disorders, it now grew worse. These new inhabitants of Europe, (as I may call them,) being pagan idolaters, the bishops had in view, the establishment of a new spiritual empire among them, and so heal the deadly wound of the seventh head. In order to obtain this great end, the little that remained of christianity was partly relinquished, by the bishops, to gain over this idolatrous people. This scheme succeeded so well, that as early as A. D. 494, the bishop of Rome began to assert his supremacy. About the year, 557, the ordination of bishops was considered as belonging to the holy see; and in 601, pope Gregory the great, would not admit the ordination of a bishop, by the Lombards, but placed the right in himself. About the year 800, this new spiritual empire extended itself over all Italy, Germany, Poland, Hungary, France, Spain, Britain, and Ireland; these nations all becoming obedient subjects to the holy see. Thus the wound, which imperial Rome had received, papal Rome healed, and made its dominions much more extensive than the former. Let it be observed here, that the papal empire is the eighth head, and is of the seventh, because under the seventh, or imperial head,

the bishops first obtained earthly power, and wealth, by the bottomless pit being opened for them. The prophet adds, "and all the world wondered after the beast." The papal beast, or hierarchy of Rome, was, and is the wonder, admiration, and astonishment, of mankind. It is a wonder, to behold the art and policy of the bishops, in raising up, and establishing this antichristian empire. Jews and mahometans have wondered at it, when they experienced its cruelty. The Indian nations have wondered for the same reason. The protestants have wondered at, and felt its infernal rage. And even the Romish laity are wondering at its power and infallibility.

Verse 4. "And they worshipped the Dragon, which gave power unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" In this verse, the prophet gives a melancholy account of the unhappy people, who submitted themselves to the papal jurisdiction. It appears, that the principles of popery are so odious, in the sight of God, that they who adhere to them, cannot expect mercy; they being here represented, as worshippers of both sañan, and the Romish beast. A similar account is given of this dreadful apostacy, by both Peter and Paul. See 2 Peter ii. and 2 Thess. ii. And even we of this age have ocular demonstration of it. Let the meek and humble behaviour of the primitive pillars of the church of Christ, and those of the present day, be compared, and see how horrid the contrast; the first enforcing obedience to God, and faith in Jesus Christ, for man's salvation; the other teaching the doctrines, traditions, and commandments of men, for that end. The apostles preached remis-



sion of sins, through faith in the Redeemer; the apostles of the Romish church will pardon sins without him, provided a little attention is shewn, and obedience to the church. Christ's apostles prayed for grace, mercy; and peace, to remain with all them who love the Lord Jesus Christ, in sincerity; the pope, and his disciples, condemned to the flames all who denied their pretended authority, be their obedience to God ever so perfect. Peter could declare, "that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted." Acts x. 34, 35. The pope's disciples taught, that all who disobeyed his holiness, and the church of Rome, could not be saved. Peter and the other apostles declared, "that they ought to obey God rather than men." Acts v. 29. The decrees and canons of the Romish councils say otherwise, and established their church authority over all. The papal power dethroned kings; it set up kings; it absolved subjects from their allegiance; it desolated the nations, by its ambitious projects; and the miserable inhabitants of Europe found, by fatal experience, the truth of the prophet's words. "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" And it is well known, that any who opposed his will, paid dearly for it.

Verse 5. "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies, and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." In this verse, we may consider the bishops of Rome, only in their individual capacity, until they assumed the power of nominating and ordaining the bishops; then he became their spiritual father, or papal head. The

bishops, whom he ordained, extended his power, and gave him a mouth, wherewith he spoke great things, and blasphemies. From the poor historical fragments of these times, it appears, that this power of nominating commenced about A. D. 557; to this number add forty two months, or twelve hundred and sixty years, and A. D. 1817 ends the papal continuance.

Verse 6. "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God; to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven." In this verse, we have the following facts to consider; first, "he blasphemed against God," by omitting the second commandment, in order to establish image worship; he blasphemed, by assuming the title of God's vicegerent, and therefore rejects Jesus Christ the true Vicegerent; he blasphemes, by invoking the virgin Mary, as the mother of God, and thereby denies his eternity; he blasphemes, by the invocation of saints, in the room of Jesus Christ, who is the only Advocate and Friend of sinners; he blasphemes, by taking the name of the universal head of the church, and making canons and institutions therein, and thus destroys the regal authority of the Redeemer; he blasphemes, by granting pardons and absolutions, and thereby makes null the efficacy of Christ. In a word, every human institution, that is contrary to the word and will of God, is blasphemy against him. Secondly, "he blasphemed the name of God and his tabernacle," by claiming all power in heaven; by pretending to have the keys of it; by pardoning sinners, and sending them into it; by the discovery of purgatory, to prepare them for it; and by pretending to keep other sects out of it. Thirdly, he blasphemed and con-

demned all who denied his supremacy; he blasphemed the heavenly minded, who endeavoured to work out their own salvation; he blasphemed and reproached, as heretics, all who dissented from the Romish church; and he consigned to the flames, the innocent followers of the lamb.

Verse 7. "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him, over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." We may here observe, first, the bishops having placed their chief on the papal throne, they enabled him to make war with the saints; secondly, by their power and influence through Europe, they enabled him to overcome the saints, and all who dared to oppose his will; thirdly, by making him universal head of the church, they enabled him to claim, and exert a "power over all kindreds, tongues, and nations;" fourthly, great as the papal power was, its hypocrisy exceeded it; the popes stiled themselves the servants of the servants of God; and at the same time wore a triple crown, to shew their superiority over all; and fifthly, their horrid intrigues, and merciless persecutions, are so well known already, that I omit making mention of them.

Verse 8. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life, of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Through the whole of this book, mankind are divided into three classes; first, the pagan, or great ocean, or sea; secondly, the earth, or earthly minded, and carnal; and thirdly, the heavenly minded, who set their affections on things above. In this sense, it is the second class, who are the worship-

ers of this antichristian beast. The Jews, mahometans, and all other unbelievers of Christ, never worshipped him. The Jew, who obeyed the Gospel in sincerity, would, and did suffer martyrdom, in preference to it. And thus it is, they who dwell upon the earth, they who are wilfully ignorant of God's mercy, in the revelation of his will, by Jesus Christ, and place their affections on worldly things, these are they, who became an easy prey to the erroneous doctrine of popery, and became the advocates for, and worshippers of the beast. And, sad reflection! cannot be enrolled in the Lamb's book of life.

Verses 9, 10. "If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity: He that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience, and the faith of the saints." In these two verses, the prophet demands our attention, in a most solemn and serious manner, to the irreversible sentence of heaven, denounced against all who teach mankind any doctrines, which are contrary to those contained in the scriptures of truth; for, says he, "if any man have an ear, let him hear." Which implies a call of attention to this particular period of time, when apostacy was making such hasty strides, under the papacy. He then pronounces the awful sentence, which every teacher, or preacher, ought seriously to consider, namely, "He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity." From which we may learn, that if our spiritual guides shall lead the laity into error, the laity are led captive into eternal ruin, and the teacher goeth into captivity, or in other words, into perdition. To the same purpose are our Saviour's words, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall

fall into the ditch." Matt. xv. 14. And lest this warning should not be sufficient, the prophet adds, "he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword." Which implies, that if the teachers by any means, are persecutors, or handle the sword, or word of God, deceitfully, they are enemies to God, and shall be eternally killed with the sword of his justice. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." Rom. xii. 19. "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" Luke xviii. 7. These last words prove the faith and patience of the saints, and shew that their hope is in God alone.

In the former part of this chapter, the Roman power is described, by its various appearances, and all are condemned, by the prophet, as idolaters. He, in the remaining part, shews that the pope was brought into existence by the power, craft, and dissimulation, of the bishops; and even their number is mentioned.

Verse 11. "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns, like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." As the first beast rose out of the sea, or infidel part of mankind, this beast, or hierarchy, came up out of the earth, or from among the earthly minded, and carnal christians. "He had two horns like a lamb," emblematic of his power, and disposition, to instruct the inferior clergy, and to confirm the laity; but "he spake as a dragon," for none dare control him, as he was their superior. He also meddles with state affairs, as well as those pertaining to the church; and to this day, a bishop supports his antient character.

Verse 12. "And he executeth all the power of the

first beast before him, and causeth the earth, and them that dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." In this chapter, and also in the seventeenth, we may easily see the close connection, which the prophet preserves, between the christian imperial head, and the papal. From all our historical records the bishops rose up into earthly power under the seventh or christian head, and to this day hold it in veneration. In the wars of Constantine we find, that the bishops attended his armies, encouraged his soldiers, and by their influence placed him on the imperial throne. At their first general council, at Nice, their new emperor presided in person, and supported the western bishops in opposition to the eastern, and laid the foundation of that stately edifice, the Romish church. Thus the bishops exercised all the power which they received from the seventh, or imperial head, before the papal; and caused the earth, or its earthly and sensual inhabitants, to worship the papal head, who healed the deadly wound which the seventh received.

Verse 13. "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men." Were I to enumerate all the wonders performed by the bishops, it would require a volume; I shall only mention a few. First, see what incomprehensible nonsense they have imposed on the minds and consciences of mankind, in opposition to the express declarations of scripture and common sense. See Athanasian creed. Secondly, transubstantiation, which at once confounds the senses and understanding, and causeth men to worship and adore the creature, in the room of the Creator. Thirdly,

purgatory, which they discovered for filth sake. Fourthly, excommunication, which to eternal flames, all who oppose their do Fifthly, extraordinary pretensions to power, spiritual. See their canons and decrees. Sixthly, absolution, as if God was unable to pardon without them. Seventhly, infallibility, whereby they claim a power of acting without error. Eighthly, the last clause of the Lord's prayer they wilfully omit, to reserve the kingdom, power, and glory, to themselves. Ninthly, they have refused the laity the use of the scriptures, which keeps them in perpetual ignorance. Tenthly, by thus deluding the laity, they are made to believe, that their church has all power in heaven, and on earth. And eleventhly, the laity are not to doubt, what the bishops, or church commands, under penalty of hell fire, and eternal damnation, which the church says, that she has power over.

Verse 14. "And he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles, which he had power to do, in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had a wound by a sword, and did live." It would be a toilsome and disagreeable work, to mention all the arts of deception used by the bishops, from the days of Constantine, to the fall of the western empire, and from thence to the completion of the papal power. During this long reign of ignorance and superstition, the pure and simple precepts of the gospel were neglected; but ambition and superiority among its pretended teachers was not. On the fall, or deadly wound of the seventh head, the bishops, taking advantage of the distracted state of Europe, chose one of their

own body, and placed him as universal head over their new spiritual empire, by the name of papa, or pope, and pretended that the popes descended in a right line, from St. Peter, who they also said was the chief, or prince of the apostles. Thus the bishops deceived mankind, and made a pope, or image of universal power, and healed the deadly wound of the seventh head. And thus they created a pope, and caused the unfortunate laity, to worship him, and denied their true Lord and Master. It is very remarkable, that a bishop, since these days, let him be of what sect he may, is not content with the Lord Jesus Christ, for the supreme Head of the church. They must have either an emperor, pope, or king, to reign over them.

Verse 15. "And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." This verse presents to the understanding the following facts; First, it is well known, that the popes have no power, as pope, until they receive it from the bishops, cardinals, or two horned beast. These first create him, and give him power and authority to speak as their universal head. He, in return, creates them, and gives them power over the inferior clergy and laity; and thus they are mutually a creation of their own, and consequently, are hostile to the laws of God, and the rights of mankind. Secondly, the bishops being established in their different sees, through most part of Europe, and allied by kindred, to the first families in it, they maintained and supported the papal power, and gave life and energy to the image. Thirdly, this image by, and with the advice, and consent of the bish-



ops, or two horned beast, enacted canons, or laws, whereby all who would not obey and worship it, should be killed. And fourthly, these truths are so well attested, that any further explanation on this head, is unnecessary.

Verse 16. "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads." This is also the work of the bishops, or two horned beast, for these reasons : First, the inferior clergy, who are their creatures, are appointed to administer the sacrament of baptism, to all both "small and great, rich and poor, free and bond;" and this act cannot be performed without putting on the infant this mark, †, or sign of the cross. Secondly, at the sacrament of confirmation, as it is called, none can administer it but a bishop, and the words on this occasion, are remarkable, "I sign thee with the sign of the cross; and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Thirdly, none are admitted, either small or great, rich or poor, free or bond, to the sacrament of the eucharist, in the Roman church, until they are confirmed by a bishop, and receive this mark, †. Fourthly, the laity are taught to put the mark on themselves; which they must do with the right hand, beginning at the forehead. These facts are convincing proof of the truth of this prophecy.

Scripture proves, that the cross was an instrument of torture, for putting to death criminals of the worst description, by the ancient Romans and Jews. When the empire was changed, and got the name of christian, it came into high estimation, and none were put to death on it; but when popery was established it be-

came an object of veneration; and in Romish countries, they pretend to shew so many pieces of the cross, on which our Saviour suffered, that if Simon of Cyrene had the strength of an elephant, he could not have carried it. In the apostles' days they considered it as we do, the gallows, by calling it "the shameful death of the cross." Heb. xii. 2. "Christ being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Gal. iii. 13. "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree." Acts v. 30. It is, in fact, "crucifying Him afresh, and putting him to open shame." Heb. vi. 6. And the more so as apostacy prevails.

Verse 17. "And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." When popery reigned triumphant, all who dissented from its communion, were deemed heretics and schismatics; they were excommunicated, and sentenced to the most cruel deaths, of which many instances are recorded. None were even suffered to carry on any commercial intercourse among them, "save he who had the mark, the name, or number of this two-horned beast;" which includes the whole of the papal connection. Of this, also, our historical records bear undeniable evidence.

Verse 18. "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding, count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man: and his number is six hundred and sixty six." Many opinions there are concerning this number. Some think they have found it, in the numerical letters of the Pope's title, viz. "Vicarius generalis Dei in terris." Others in a title given to pope Paul V. that is, "Paulo quinto vice Deo." More

have endeavored to squeeze it out of the word "Latinos," and some out of the Hebrew word "Romithi." All these can only be applied to the pope as an individual; it is the number of the two horned beast we want, and it is best to follow the prophet's direction, and count the number of the bishops within the papal jurisdiction, when at its meridian height. They were as follows:—

	Archbishops.	Bishops.
In Spain and Portugal	11	59
France and Italy	49	351
Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica	6	14
Holland and Flanders	4	14
Germany and Bohemia	7	39
Hungary and Transylvania	3	6
Sclavonia and Poland	2	15
Sweden, Denmark and Norway	1	13
England and Scotland	4	37
Ireland	4	26
Pope, or universal head	1	

The whole number added is - - - - 666.

Here are the countries who acknowledged the papal supremacy; these are the countries where the bishops, or two horned beast, resided, and maintained the papal jurisdiction never extended itself in Europe; papal authority over them. Beyond these limits, the Muscovy and Greece being either mahometans, or adhering to the greek or eastern church. In America, and the islands thereof, there are about fifty Romish bishops, but the king of Spain has the nomination of them, by a trick which he played on the pope at the discovery of these countries.

This famous number was greatly reduced by the reformation. The French revolution has almost ruined it, and a little time will finally end it.

## CHAP. XIV.

IN the thirteenth chapter, the prophet having shewn the various appearances of the Roman empire, from its foundation, to its apostate state under the papacy. In this chapter he shews the various appearances of the other churches, from the christian era, to A. D. 1688.

Verse 1. "And I looked, and lo! a Lamb stood on the mount Zion; and with him, an hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." Here the Redeemer is represented as standing on mount Zion, accompanied by an hundred and forty-four thousand of his brethren and friends, the Jews; from whence he is conducting them to the mansions of glory, for they had "his Father's name written in their foreheads," which implies their knowlege of the truth, and also their walking in the true light, which then shined so conspicuously before them. The number mentioned in this verse, seems to be figurative; for twelve, the number of their tribes, being multiplied by twelve, the number of the apostles produces one hundred and forty-four, which is typical of the thousands of Israel that are to be saved, for, in many parts of the scripture, God has promised to multiply them exceedingly, provided they obeyed his statutes. The same figurative number is mentioned in the sixth chapter, when the Jews are to be sealed, at their return to their Lord and Saviour, previous to their millenium.

Verse 2. "And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great

thunder. And I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps." This verse presents to the understanding, first, "A voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters," which shews the Redeemer's coming with power to reveal to sinful man, the will of his heavenly Father. See Rev. i. 1. It also implies the concurrent voice and testimony of all the old prophets concerning him. Secondly, "as the voice of a great thunder." Thunder, in prophetic language, signifies the powerful introduction of a new religious system; which accordingly happened, among Jews and gentiles, by Christ's coming into the world. Thirdly, "the voice of harpers, harping with their harps," points out the melodious and joyful sound of the gospel by the apostles.

Verse 3. "And they sung, as it were, a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the one hundred and forty-four thousand which were redeemed from the earth." This verse directs our attention to the happy state of those who are going on, rejoicing in the God of their salvation. They extol their bounteous Creator for his power, mercy, wisdom, and providential care in and over them. They are filled with gratitude for the benefits conferred on them by the law and the gospel. They dread not the severity of the law, because their Mediator liveth. They rejoice in the gospel covenant, because the Redeemer purchased them. Therefore none can learn that song, but they who are redeemed from the earth and its sensual allurements, and created anew, unto good works.

Verses 4, 5. In addition, and in support of what is already mentioned, the prophet adds, "These are

they which are not defiled with women, for they are virgins," which denote a purity of life and conversation, and keeping themselves unspotted and blameless in the world. "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." That is, either in prosperity or adversity, through good, or through evil report; they obey his gospel, and look to him as their deliverer. "These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb." This clause proves to a certainty, that John is, in these five verses, shewing the perfection which the Jewish converts arrived at in the early days of christianity; and when we consult the Acts of the apostles, they confirm the same. The prophet now sums up the whole with this grand and emphatic conclusion. "For they are without fault, before the throne of God."

Verse 6. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." These words exactly correspond with the injunctions of the Redeemer. "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts i. 8. By perusing the new testament, we find that the disciples punctually obeyed these directions; they preached the word, and established churches, in great parts of Asia; they did so over Greece; in Italy many were converted; and at Rome, that sink of degeneracy and corruption, many were converted by Paul and his companions, where at last he was martyred by bloody Nero, shortly before the

destruction of Jerusalem. By our historical records we find there were a great number of churches planted in Africa, even in the first century. Thus this angel, or governing principle of the first christians, diffused itself over the then known world, by the zeal and activity of the apostles and their fellow labourers, who we find "laboured much in the Lord." Rom. xvi. 12. To prove that this great work of conversion among the gentile nations, was the flying angel John alludes to, see what he says in the following verse.

Verse 7. "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Whoever examines the apostolical writings, with care, will find, that this verse might almost be called their creed; it being the doctrine which they impressed on the gentile nations, that knew not God; nay, nations who worshipped the work of their own hands, as we may see at large in Acts xix. Even at Athens, at this time the seat of learning, and the polite arts, that famous city is represented, by Paul, as wholly given up to idolatry and superstition, and in his reasoning with them, he uses the same words, as mentioned by John. See Acts xvii. 23. Rome, the capital of the then known world, Paul describes as not only idolaters, but as guilty of the most detestable vices and crimes. Rom. i. 21-32. Thus we may see the state of the heathen world, when, christianity made its first appearance among them.

Since the first introduction of christianity, no time has yet appeared, in which the great work of conversion among the heathen, was so universally diffused, as it was, in the apostles' days. By consulting their



writings, we find, that they, and their companions, turned vast multitudes to the Lord, in Asia, in Greece, in Italy, and the adjacent Islands; and history informs us, that in Africa, the work of conversion was great, which proves that this was the sound of the second trumpet, and is compared by the prophet, to a "mountain burning with fire," or flaming with holy zeal, for the cause of christianity, "being cast into the sea," or heathen world. Rev. viii. 8. And thus John actually saw this "angel fly in the midst of heaven," or acting under the immediate influence of God, "having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." The prophet's own labours and writings prove the same.

Verse 8. "And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." In this verse, Rome, the mystic or spiritual Babylon, is charged by the Asiatic church of being the cause of the fall, or decline, of true christianity, and also of intoxicating the nations with fornication or false doctrines. Even her wrath is not omitted, because she compelled the nations to obey the frantic errors at this time established; which brings us down to the famous council of Nice, A. D. 325, at which period commenced the five months torment, and first woe. As her fall is twice mentioned, it is evident she fell from, and acted contrary, to the maxims of the gospel law; likewise she fell from her primitive purity at this time, by becoming a tool to the state. In another sense, she fell from her first love, and she fell, also, from the knowlege

of God, and of Jesus Christ, whom to know is eternal life. Since the above date, history presents us with a mournful tale of diabolical intrigues, bloody wars, horrid massacres, merciless persecutions, and bitter strifes and envyings, urged on by the artifice and cunning of the church and court of Rome; and, strange to tell, they boast of being the only true church of Christ!!

Verses 9—11. “And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest, day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.” In these three verses we may observe, first, the eastern, or Asiatic church, condemning the western, or papal, for its apostacy; which, as was observed before, happened about A. D. 536, when the eastern separated from the western on account of its errors. Secondly, the severity of the sentence; for history informs us, that under the pontificate of pope Gregory the great, which began A. D. 590, and ended A. D. 603, the two churches openly anathematized each other. Thirdly, the unhappy and restless situation of those who yielded to the doctrines of popery; they being ignorant of the scriptures of truth, which afford true consolation and comfort to the soul.

About this time the papal reign commenced; but from the poor materials, which this dark age affords, it is difficult to determine the exact point of time. If the separation took place between the churches, in A. D. 536, I am of opinion, that it is the true beginning of it. It appears, that Gregory's power was very great, as he claimed the right of investiture over the bishops, which made him "more stout than his fellows." Dan. vii. 20. He is also considered the first who instituted the litanies to the virgin Mary, wherein she is stiled, "The mother of God; the mother of our Creator; the queen of heaven," &c. See the Romish manual. Thus from the great power which Gregory assumed, I would infer, that the foundation was laid for him, and that the papal reign began shortly before he became pontiff.

Verse 12. "Here is the patience of the saints. Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." "Here is the patience of the saints;" now is come the time for the severest trials, that they ever experienced. Prelacy was conceived under the heathen emperors. It had its birth and pupilage under the christian emperors. It arrived at manhood, amidst the disorders attendant on the dissolution of the western empire. It is now seated on the throne of the Cæsars, with a pope, or king over them, who is the angel, or governing power of the bottomless pit. Apollyon, and his six hundred and sixty six bishops, are now beginning their imperial spiritual reign of twelve hundred and sixty years. Abaddon is now fixed in the pretended chair of St. Peter, holding out indulgences, and pardons, in one hand, and fire and faggots in the other. The pope being the head,

and the cardinals, bishops, and legates, the body. A tremendous tail of priests, monks, and friars, to complete the beast. This hideous monster is now preparing to try the patience and perseverance of the saints, and to ensnare those who endeavor to keep the commandments of God, and who have the faith of Jesus.

Verse 13. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." I perceive that when the prophet was commanded to write, or to write not, signifies a particular mark, or point of time, when the most remarkable events, recorded in the book of revelation, were to commence. Thus it was, when John was commanded to write the book of revelation of Jesus Christ. See Rev. i. To write not what the seven thunders, or religious sects, uttered at the reformation. See Rev. x. 4. Again, at the return of the Jews, previous to the millenium, when true christianity will be raised from its ruins; he was commanded to write, because these were the true sayings, or determinations of God. But in this remarkable verse, he was commanded to write, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth," plainly intimating, that now the man of sin was established in power. That now the great apostacy is become manifest, and that it was almost impossible to escape the dangerous errors, and contagious principles, of the Romish hierarchy. Peter, who foresaw this apostacy, says, "it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." 2 Pet.

ii. 21. And, from the general tenor of this epistle, it is plain, that it was better to have remained pagans, than embrace this new fashioned christianity. Paul, in his description of the man of sin, considers them under the strong delusion, and in a state of damnation. See at large 2 Thess. ii. 3—12. And John calls this apostate church “**THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**” Rev. xvii. 5.

Thus it appears, that from the apostacy of the Romish hierarchy, armed with such extraordinary power, their enmity to the true worshippers of God, the gross darkness and ignorance, in which they kept the laity, their superstitious rites and ceremonies, were all so flagrant and notorious, that John was commanded to “write, Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord, from henceforth;” or their reward shall be great, who had courage and fortitude to withstand these adversaries, and opposers of the truth; “they rest” in peace in death “from their labours,” and tribulations in this life, “and their works shall follow them,” and be manifested in the next, before their JUDGE, angels, and men.

Verse 14. “And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.” This verse presents to our reason, the first dawn of the reformation. In this verse the Redeemer is not represented in the glorious, powerful and triumphant manner, reigning over his church and people, as he is in the first, and nineteenth chapters of this divine book; the portrait is quite different. Here he is pointed out, only as “one like unto him, seated on a white cloud;” which implies purity, and at the same time

obscurity, emblematic of the first reformers, just emerging out of Romish darkness, and superstitious blindness. In the next place, "he had on his head a golden crown;" figurative of dominion, and earthly power, which the reformers were firmly attached to. And lastly, "in his hand a sharp sickle," expressive of his gospel power to cut down, and separate mankind from Romish idolatry, error, superstition, and tyranny.

Let it also be observed, that the woman's or church's flight into the wilderness, for twelve hundred and sixty years, during which time, she lost sight of the scripture, now ended; for this obvious reason, as the reformation gained strength, the art of printing improved with it, and restored to mankind the long lost use, or knowledge of the bible; and proves the truth of divine revelation; for from A. D. 303, when the last heathen emperors made their exit, to A. D. 1563, when the council of Trent ended, completes the twelve hundred and sixty years flight, and brought to view the gospel light.

Verses 15, 16. "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped." In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Waldenses and Albigenses may be considered as the first who attempted the reformation; but these were suppressed by the papal and regal powers in conjunction. However, a spark lay concealed, which was again lighted up, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, by John Wickliff, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague; which was also

nearly extinguished by the papal power. In the sixteenth century, Martin Luther once more kindled up the little spark, by publicly writing, and preaching against the pope's shameful sale of indulgences, pardons, transubstantiation, purgatory, and many other errors of the Romish church, prevalent at that time. All which prove, that this "angel," or spirit of Lutheranism, "came out of the temple," or in other words, the gospel came from heaven, and "cried with a loud voice," or earnestly implored the aid of "him who sat on the cloud, to thrust in his sickle and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; the harvest of the earth is ripe." And time has proved, that Europe was ripe for that reform, which then manifested itself.

Verse 16. It has been proved, by the gradual unfolding of events, that Luther's party were gratified in the accomplishment of their hopes. "And the earth was reaped." By reaping we understand, cutting down, separating from the soil, and gathering together, the productions of the earth, for the emolument and comfort of man. Thus it was with the first reformers; they cut off from popery what they could; they gathered their converts together, and formed them into societies, which are to this day called protestant churches; but in time, they became so fond of the good things of this life, that even the tythes, and other church dues, claimed by the Romish priests, they carefully secured for themselves, by getting human laws enacted in favor thereof. It is further to be observed, that the Lutheran angel, or spiritual government, consists of archbishops, bishops, deans, archdeacons, deacons, and priests, &c. and the people are obliged to support the same expensive tribe of church officers,

as they did when governed by the pope. These officers wore nearly the same habits; and the superior ones have the same titles, that they enjoyed when his holiness, the pope, reigned over them. In all their ways, it is not the true Son whom they imitate, but it is one which they liken unto him, or have formed in their own imaginations. The true Saviour recommends love, good will, and universal charity to all men; he commanded his disciples not to suffer themselves to be "called master, for one was their Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among them," that is, possessed of most heavenly wisdom, "should be their servant." Matt. xxiii. 10, 11. Christ also taught his disciples, to "call no man their father upon the earth; for one is their Father, which is in heaven." Matt. xxiii 9. But prelacy has something in it very different from this.

Verse 17. "And another angel came out of the temple, which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle." Here calvanism made its appearance, armed also with a sharp sickle, which he brought out of the temple, or gospel precepts. As Luther led the van against popery, Calvin brought up the rear; And these are the two main pillars of the reformation, and in a little time opposed each other.

Verse 18. "And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire, and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe." Here presbyterianism appears at variance with the established church of England.

As the reformation took deep root in Germany, it



soon extended itself into Britain, and particularly into that part called Scotland; under the conduct of John Knox. In a little time, the major part of the people were violent in favor of calvanism, and would admit no kirk government, but that composed of presbyters, and elders; from whence derived the name presbyterian, which is the angel, or spiritual power, alluded to in this verse. The presbyterian party soon became clamorous, and loudly complained that prelacy was too nearly allied to popery; that bishops arrayed in robes of state, and acting in offices of state, were contrary to gospel rules; That the introduction of any rites and ceremonies, not ordained by Christ, or his apostles, is sinful; that saint's days, holy days, the forty days of Lent, the consecration of churches, and church yards, the sign of the cross in baptism, and confirmation, had no gospel authority for their support; that the book of common prayer, with its injunctions, and the surplice, or vestments of its priests, differed little from the altar, or mass service. On these grounds, the presbyterians openly dissented, and renounced prelacy, and its altar service. And thus this angel, or spirit of presbyterianism, came out from, and abandoned the altar. It had also power over fire, or that bigoted zeal, which prelacy manifested for the altar service.

On this the prelates became enraged, and having the then king of England, Charles I. in their interest, furiously persecuted the others for nonconformity; the presbyterians, in return, entered into a solemn league and covenant, to extirpate popery, and prelacy, out of their land, and after a hard struggle, got it effected; for in these days, there were fourteen bishop's sees in Scotland; the Romish party were also numer-

ous. Thus the stubborn Scotch concluded, that the grapes, or the fruit of this earthly vine of popery, and prelacy, were fully ripe, and fit to be cut off.

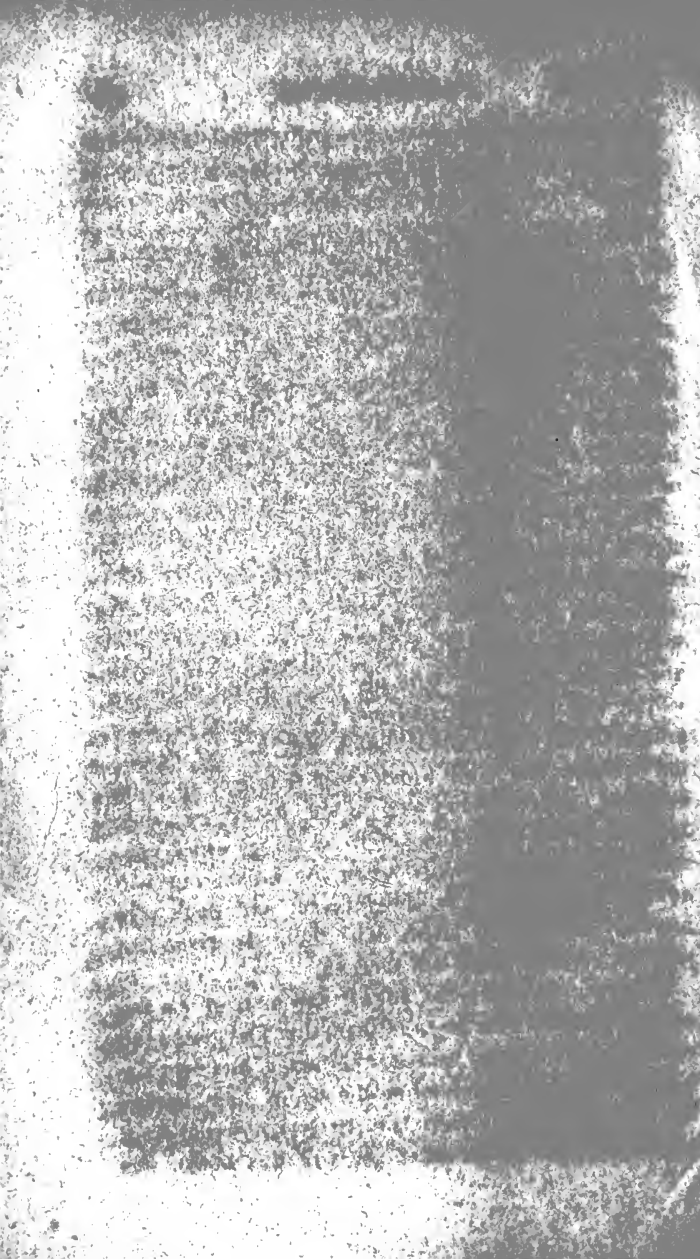
Verse 19. "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine press of the wrath of God." Jesus Christ calls himself the true vine, his disciples, and faithful adherents, the branches; and his heavenly Father he compares to a husbandman, who cultivates and invigorates the whole. John xv. 1—8. Consequently this heavenly vine must be the stem, or stock from which true christianity proceeds; and "without HIM we can do nothing;" this the presbyterians firmly believe.

On the contrary, popery and prelacy must have a pope, or king, as supreme, or visible head, over their churches; and for that reason, are frequently termed, by the prophet, the vine of the earth, because they abode not in the true vine. This form of church government prelacy maintained, with all its might, and would impose it, and its doctrines, in these days, on all other sects. To this the presbyterians would not yield; they zealously supported their own cause, and by degrees gathered together, and banished all popish and prelatical establishments out of their land, and "cast them into the great wine press of God's wrath." The plain meaning of which is, the Scots condemned them, and their doctrines, as antichristian. Thus this stiff necked race fought their way, till A. D. 1688, when by the act of toleration, in the first year of William III, they enjoy their own kirk government, and none to make them afraid.

Verse 20. "And the wine press was trodden with-

out the city, and blood came out of the wine press, even unto the horse-bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." This verse presents to the understanding a variety of considerations. First, the wine press being trodden without the city shews, that the Scots, by their league and covenant, extirpated and cast popery and prelacy out of their city and country. Secondly, as they were severely persecuted for nonconformity, by the bishops of the established church of England, it shews, that prelacy, of every kind, hath an affinity; its root is the same, though it may vary in appearance. They all support the Athanasian doctrines. Thirdly, "and blood came out of the wine press, even to the horse-bridles." I find, that in prophetic language, blood signifies guilt; that a horse is figurative of the principle on which we act; that a bridle is the helm, by which we conduct ourselves to either good or evil; therefore the prophet, in this verse, shows that prelacy conducted an evil, antichristian, and persecuting principle, which manifested its guilt to the people of Scotland, and they abhorred it.

To conclude, the prophet now shews the extent of the country, in which this great work was performed, and calls it a space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs. If we reduce Scotland into a square, whose sides are equal, each side will measure a space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs, or two hundred Scotch miles, and is a convincing proof of the truth of the things recorded in this book. Thus the hardy sons of Scotia drove prelacy out of their land, a deed not yet performed by any other nation on earth. Note, that thirty five Scotch miles, are nearly equal to forty English.



## CHAP. XV.

THIS chapter contains a very interesting account of the triumph of the true worshippers of God, "who had got the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." And the severe judgments and wrath of God to be inflicted on those "who obeyed the beast, and his image, and had his mark, and supported the number of his name," and also of our ignorance of the scriptures of the truth, until the seven plagues are ended.

Verse 1. In this verse, the prophet "saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, even seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God." From these words it appears, that when the plagues, or judgments, are poured out, and ended, mankind, I mean those of the christian world, will be so far renewed in the spirit of their minds, that a repetition of them will forever cease; the christian world will break those fetters of spiritual delusion, wherewith they were so long entangled; both Jew and gentile will discover those things which conduct to everlasting peace; when the millennium will commence, mankind be enlightened, and their true interest understood. John calls them the seven last plagues, as none other will succeed.

Verse 2. In this verse, John "saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God." Here is a sea very different from any mentioned in the other parts of this book; this

sea will receive no unclean thing; its rivers, or fountains cannot be corrupted; it is that sea, or ocean of mercy, which is mingled with fire, or holy zeal of the Redeemer, for man's salvation, which the prophet is giving this grand description of; on this sea the true believer stands secure, neither the beast, or his image, the pope, or his antichristian mark, †, nor his number, six hundred and sixty six, which is the papal strength and security, can prevail against him. All this combination of power, cannot separate the true believer from his God. It is true, that these powers of darkness may, and have "persecuted the faithful, even unto death," but could not prevent their "rejoicing in the God of their salvation." They had the "harps of God," and melodiously sounded his praise. They "laid fast hold of the promises." They knew "him in whom they trusted." They knew "he had laid up for them a crown of glory, which fadeth not away," And thus "they went on their way rejoicing."

Verses 3, 4. These two verses shew the song of the saints, and martyrs of old. It is "the song of Moses, the servant of God." It is also "the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: For all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." When we seriously reflect on these sayings of the prophet, and also on the different expressions of a like nature, through the whole of the old and new testaments, and even from the voice of nature, we should be constrained to use the same language. What can poor mortal man do,

but offer that tribute of adoration, thanksgiving, and praise, which is so justly due to an all bounteous Creator? It is God alone who justifies, who sanctifies, and can adopt us into the happy number of his elect; it is by him we live, move, and have our being: It is by that great attribute of mercy, through and by the Redeemer, that we can find pardon and acceptance; "for there is no other name given under heaven, among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12.

Verse 5. These happy children of God are they to whom "the temple of the tabernacle, of the testimony in heaven, was opened," they knew the Lord's will, and obeyed it. God made his abode with them, and dwelt in them; their "bodies became the temples of God," and were holy, and he preserved them from defilement. 1 Cor. iii. 16. The testimony of Jesus Christ was opened to them; they laid hold on the promises of him, who is mighty to save. "Neither death, nor life, nor principality, nor power, was able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." Rom. viii. 38, 39. Thus it was with the saints, and martyrs during the reformation; and thus I hope it is with many, at the present time. But alas! the scene changes.

Verse 6. Man's salvation was purchased dearly. The propagation of his gospel was attended with great sufferings, sore tribulation, and severe affliction. Notwithstanding this opposition, the apostles, and their fellow labourers, perseveringly went on, until the gospel was made known over great part of the then known world. During the first century the church continued pure, although some of the apostles com-

plained of false teachers, who had crept in unawares. In the second century the church began to decline, for the salutary waters, or precepts of the gospel, were made bitter by its teachers. In the third century its declension was great, for the third part of the sun, or gospel light, was smitten; the third part of the moon, or brotherly love, was smitten; and the third part of the stars, or churches, lost their lustre. In the beginning of the fourth century the bottomless pit was opened, and that covetous and craving gulph is not yet shut. In the sixth century the long reign of Antichrist commenced.

Thus we may see, on no less authority than that of holy John, how religion declined, until it ended in total apostacy, under the Roman pontiffs. And by reason of apostatizing from the truth, after having received the knowlege of it, no less than seven angels, or spiritual evils, denounced against all such, in the gospel temple, are to accompany them, and will bring on irretrievable ruin both in this life, and that which is to come.

Verse 7. Previous to the pouring out of the vials, "one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels, seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever," In this verse, we may observe, First, God's great power, in the punishment of apostate sinners. Secondly, his justice in the performance of it. And thirdly, what a fearful thing it is, to incur the wrath and displeasure of that "God who liveth for ever and ever."

Verse 8. "And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven



plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled." When the canons, and decrees of councils were established, and exalted above the pure precepts of the gospel; when a pretended vicar was chosen to rule and govern the church, in the room of Jesus Christ, the true Head thereof; when a creed became of more validity than the gracious injunctions of the Redeemer; when the law, and the gospel, were clothed with sackcloth, and covered over with the doctrines and traditions of sinful men; when man's salvation must depend on the Romish church; then it was that this temple, or gospel of truth, was filled with smoke, so that God's glory in it, for man's salvation, could not be seen. His power was veiled over by the assumed power of the clergy, who were then under strong delusion. They neither entered the temple themselves, nor suffered them that would. Such was, and is to this day, the deplorable state of the christian world, that no man can enter into the temple, and discover the truth, as taught by Jesus, until the seven plagues, or judgments of God are poured out; and then will the temple be cleansed, and both Jew and gentile know the truth. In these days, one saith, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," which proves that we are carnal, and unacquainted with the truth.

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### ON PROPHETIC LANGUAGE.

BEFORE I speak farther, as the prophet makes use of a variety of expressions in this, and the other chapters of this book, concerning the different voices

which, by the Spirit, he heard, it is necessary here to endeavour to explain some of them ; and, first,

“ A voice from the throne,” is the voice of God’s law given on mount Sinai. Its four first commands contain that obedience and adoration which is due to the Creator, as Sovereign of universal nature. The other six commands declare that respect and regard we should have for our parents, our neighbor, and ourselves. The transgression of this law, or any part of it, is sin. Christ Jesus came, not to destroy this law, but to fulfil and support it ; and Paul “ had not known sin, but by the law.” Rom. vii. 7. This voice, or law, from the throne, Moses informs us, must stand for perpetual generations ; and Christ assures us, “ that till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle thereof shall not fail.”

Second. “ A voice from the temple,” is the voice of the gospel dispensation, or covenant of grace, by the Redeemer. “ As the law was given by Moses, so grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” John i. 17. “ This temple is erected on the ruins of the ceremonial law which typified Christ, and is to stand forever. It is called a kingdom, which cannot be moved. Heb. xii. 28. It is not a temple built with hands ; it is eternal in the heavens. Its voice is a tremendous one against all who disobey the truth, and have pleasure in unrighteousness. Its voice, also, stands closely connected with that from the throne.

Third. “ A voice from heaven,” is the operative influence of God on the soul, whereby the man is inspired with the spirit of wisdom and truth, and is enabled to act in conformity thereto. Such was the state of John, when he was enabled to write the things

which are, were, and to be hereafter. Such, also, was the state of the other apostles, though in a lesser degree, and it proves the advocacy of Christ, according to his promise. Acts i. 3.

Fourth. "A voice in heaven," or "voices in heaven," is the universal voice, consent, or determination, of the faithful servants of God, whereby they cheerfully submit to his will in all things. Such was the voice of the apostles, after the day of Pentecost.

Fifth. "A voice behind me," is the call of the Spirit of God; which, if obeyed, will guide us in the way of truth. If otherwise, we may be left in a reprobate mind. "The Spirit will not always strive with man."

"Waters of life," are the comfortable assurances of God's love, increase of grace, and all the promised blessings that are to be conferred on the saints of God. These are his precious gifts, which are freely given to them who are found worthy. They flow from the throne of God and the Lamb.

"Waters where the whore sitteth." These are the very opposite of the above. They are the peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, which the woman or Romish church, have corrupted, by her false and erroneous doctrines.

The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the war. It is followed by a detailed account of the military operations and the state of the army. The report then discusses the political and economic conditions of the country and the measures taken by the government to deal with the crisis. The final part of the report contains the conclusions and recommendations of the committee.

The report is a comprehensive and detailed account of the events of the war and the state of the country. It provides a clear and concise summary of the situation and the actions taken by the government. The report is a valuable document for anyone interested in the history of the country and the war.

## CHAP. XVI.

IN this remarkable chapter, the prophet shews the fatal and destructive evils, attendant, in this life, on that part of mankind, which are called christian, by reason of their wilful apostacy, and disobedience to the gospel.

Verse 1. "And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God, upon the earth." In this verse observe, first, that the voice out of the temple, or gospel threatnings, is "a great voice," because therein is revealed "the wrath of God, against the children of disobedience." Eph. v. 6. Secondly, that mankind had revolted from the gospel precepts, at this time, and brought on themselves the wrath of God.

Verse 2. "And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome, and grievous sore upon the men, which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image." By this verse we may see, first, that the first vial was not poured out, until apostacy was completed, the papal power established, and its deluded worshippers, or followers had received the mark of it. Secondly, that it was on the earthly minded, and sensual, it was poured out. And thirdly, that the effect of this vial was, a "noisome and grievous sore," which brings on this natural conclusion, that the papal worshippers are seized, with wilful ignorance, abandoned reason, and a darkened understanding. And alas! this noisome and grievous sore is not yet healed.

The new testament abounds with proofs, to shew the malignant nature of this disease, and also how to prevent it. The physicians of these days having the same complaint, cannot apply the proper remedy. Therefore it is the duty of the laity to "search the scriptures, and ask wisdom of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given them." James i. 5.

Verse 3. "And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man; and every living soul died in the sea." The saints, and children of God grow in grace; but evil men, and seducers, wax worse and worse. The prophet, who clearly was shewn this miserable apostacy from the truth, considers the Romish church, as having fallen back into that ocean of heathenism, and impurity, from whence it could not return, and compares its blood, or guilt, to that of a dead man, which is irrecoverable, or past restoring to newness of life. They became dead in trespasses and sins; which is the very opposite of dying to sin, and living to righteousness. The prophet adds, "and every living soul died in the sea." It is a well known fact, that the poor Romish laity were under such strong delusion, that they verily believed none could be saved, out of their church; and their teachers enforced the same irrational opinion. Their teachers acted the part of the scribes and pharisees, "for they shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, and neither would go in themselves, neither suffer they them that are entering, to go in." Matt. xxiii. 13. They were also blind leaders of the blind; and taught the poor ignorant laity, that by penances, pilgrimages, the saying of creeds, pater nosters, ave

marias, the keeping of saints' days, holy days, lent days, &c. that they merited eternal life. And thus by these dead works, they were taught to believe that they could serve the living God. Paul informs us, that "if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowlege of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. x. 26, 27. And in another place, "how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." Heb. ii. 3. And in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, he has foretold the fatal apostacy, that would prevail; whereby strong delusion, and damnation, or irrecoverable guilt, would be the fatal consequences. These testimonies, and time has also proved their veracity, that mankind had received the knowlege of the truth, and crawled back again into that sea of spiritual impurity, which brings death to every living soul.

Verse 4. "And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood." Water, or waters, in gospel and prophetic language, signify those spiritual blessings, and comforts, that may be enjoyed by a due obedience to the law, and gospel precepts. It is also, that inward peace, joy, and consolation, which flow from a well spent life, in the fear and love of God, and certain hope of pardon, and acceptance, through the merits, and mediation of a glorified Redeemer. It proceeds "from the throne of God, and the Lamb." Rev. xxii. 3. And is a well spring of salvation to every true believer. Prov. xvi. 22.

It may now be asked, how could a vial of wrath be poured out here? I answer, when the scriptures of truth

are wrested by false teachers, do they not become blood and bring guilt and condemnation on all those who approve such errors? When the scriptures are tortured to establish false doctrines, have they not the same effect? When the law, and the gospel, those witnesses of God, and Christ, are veiled over by the false doctrines, and traditions of the man of sin, is not this pouring out blood, or guilt, on the scripture fountains? When pardons, and absolutions are granted for the most enormous crimes, is not this staining the gospel waters, with blood, and making them of no effect? In a word, all established errors are crimes committed against the gospel of Jesus Christ. Its waters become blood to all such criminal offenders, and is an augmentation of their guilt. Let it be noted, that the prophet does not say, the waters are blood, but that "they became blood." Peter, who foresaw this grand apostacy, informs us, "that it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. And then shews, how they would creep back into their heathenish errors, as "the dog returns to his vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." 2 Pet. ii. 21, 22. Thus we may see, that the gospel privileges, which were given to mankind for a blessing, are, by a fatal apostacy, become blood, and increase the guilt, and condemnation of all apostate sinners.

Verse 5. "And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus." This angel of the waters is the gospel invitation. It first invites all to come to Christ, and be saved. Secondly, it shews:



the righteous judgment of God, in the punishment of those who reject it. And thirdly, these judgments fall heaviest, on those who have apostatized from the truth, because they received the knowlege of it.

Verse 6. "For they have shed the blood of saints, and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy." In this verse, observe, first, Rome papal is charged with having shed the blood of saints, and prophets. Secondly, the guilt she has incurred by doing so. And thirdly, that she was found worthy, as she brought the guilt on herself.

Verse 7. "And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." By this verse, we may understand, that both Jews and heathens, who held an altar service, are crying out to God against her. The unfortunate Jews, in particular, have experienced her inquisitional tortures, and will ere long praise the Lord God Almighty, for judging her.

It is truly astonishing, that the hierarchy of Rome, who make a profession of christianity; who consider themselves as the only true church; and who claim every apostolic virtue, should become such monsters in cruelty. Many instances we have recorded of men being burned to death, for worshipping God according to their consciences, in spirit and in truth. Others for denying transubstantiation, and the power of the church to forgive sins. And others martyred, for reading the scriptures, and obeying them, &c. Have not all those evils arose from the apostacy of the Romish church?

Verse 8. "And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and power was given unto him to scorch with fire." Christ Jesus being the true "Sun of

righteousness, he rose with healing under his wings." Mal. iv. 2. He left the world his gospel, or testament, for their illumination. He told his disciples, who are the writers, and witnesses of it, "Ye are the lights of the world; a city that is set upon a hill cannot be hid." Matt. v. 14. In the next verse, he uses a powerful reason, why they should not extinguish that light, but by it to "give light to all that are in the house." The true meaning of which is, to exhibit this light to all the world; for in the next verse, he commands them. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven." Matt. v. 16. This appears to be the true light, which ought to enlighten every man. We are further informed, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." John i. 4, 5. Our Saviour also told his disciples, "that the light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." Matt. vi. 22. From whence we may learn, that our affections should be set on things above, and to have no covetous desires after the things of this life. He adds, "but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." Matt. vi. 23. Which implies, that earthly mindedness, carnal desires, the love of sensual pleasure, or in a word, we become "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." 2 Tim. iii. 4. He then draws this beautiful conclusion; "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" From these words we may see, that men may sin against light, and become eternally miserable. Matt. vi. 23. We are also informed, that life and immor-

tality are clearly brought to light through the gospel. 2 Tim. i. 10.

From what has been observed on the pouring out of the three first vials, it is easy to see, that the hierarchy of Rome were making rapid advances in error. Under this vial they are arrived at that height of apostacy, that even the sun, or pure gospel light, is made use of, by the bishops, as an engine of destruction, "to scorch men with fire." In A. D. 1215, they found transubstantiation in the new testament, and all who doubted of the real presence of Christ in the eucharist, were sentenced to hell fire. About the same time, they squeezed purgatory out of the gospel, and all who denied it, must be scorched with hell fire. In 1204, they established the bloody inquisition, and all who would not adore the host, or sacramental wafer, must suffer death, and hell fire. In 1210, they sent an army of crusaders, or cross bearers, against the poor Waldenses, for endeavoring to worship God according to the scriptures, and murdered every man, woman, and child, that they could meet with, and doomed their souls to hell fire; at the same time, these murderers were absolved, and made to believe, that they had done God service, and were, by the holy church, exempted from hell fire. Finally, all who doubted the canons of the holy church were damned, and consequently sent to hell fire. All who maintained any opinions, contrary to those of the church, were called heretics, and they must suffer the torments of hell fire to all eternity.

Thus it was with mankind, in those days of darkness, and delusion; thus it was, that the bishops and teachers of the Romish church shewed their fire, or

zeal, if I may use the expression, for the glory of God. In all their acts of cruelty, they made use of texts out of the scripture, to sanction them; but particularly, the decrees of their councils, were what they most depended on. These hurried them on to such implacable rage, that their cruelty against all who dissented from them became unbounded. They had the impudence to call themselves christians, and boasted of being in possession of the gospel, but their actions proved, that they knew little of either; and instead of obeying, and propagating the gospel, they made a tool of it, to scorch men with the fire of persecution. The apostles shewed their zeal, or fire, in defence of the gospel, and making it known to mankind. The bishops shew their zeal, in concealing, and depriving men of its benefits, and say, that it is dangerous for the laity to read the bible, lest they should misinterpret it.

Verse 9. To illustrate the effects of this vial the more fully, the apostle adds, "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory." When bigotry, superstition, and false zeal, act in concert; when men's minds and consciences are seared with the hot, persecuting principles of their clergy; when men depended on these unhappy creatures for their salvation; when malice, hatred, and revenge against all, who dissented from them, became their predominant passion; when they thought that they did God service, by killing a heretic; then truly "men were scorched with great heat;" then they "blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues." "They could

not repent, and give him glory; no place for repentance could be found. This persecuting principle among the people called christians, began to rage with violence in the twelfth century.

Verse 10. "And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain." This brings us down to the dawn of the reformation, the sound of the seventh trumpet, and the end of the second woe. There are two points of time, which the prophet has much noticed in this extraordinary book, viz. the revolution that commenced at the end of the heathen reign, in A. D. 303, and the present under consideration.

The night of darkness, which prevailed under the fourth vial, continued until the reformation began. Previous to it, through divine mercy, the art of printing was discovered, about A. D. 1440. In 1462 the vulgate bible was printed, and many copies of it dispersed through Europe. This great light extending its rays among the people, prepared their minds for that amazing revolt from the Romish church, which shortly after happened. By it the people discovered the erroneous doctrines and practices of the hierarchy of Rome. And by the aid of the scriptures, the kingdom of the papacy was found to be full of spiritual darkness, and strong delusion; and its tenets exposed to public examination.

By these means such a ferment prevailed among mankind, "that the tenth part of the great city fell," see Rev. xi. 13. and revolted from the holy see. The prophet remarks, "they gnawed their tongues for pain." Every person, acquainted with human nature,

in its depraved state, knows with what regret honors, privileges, or dominion, is relinquished, even in temporal affairs. But to attack the powerful and ambitious hierarchy of Rome, and force it to yield up any of its pretensions, must be painful in the extreme. That wonderful fabric, the work of above a thousand years, and secured by the art and cunning of popes, cardinals, and bishops, to be attacked by a Luther, a Calvin, and a few feeble adherents, and be obliged to abandon any part of its mighty whole, is truly astonishing; and in the beautiful language of prophecy, they must unavoidably have "gnawed their tongues for pain."

Verse 11. "And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains, and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." This is plain, for the Romish prelates, instead of meeting and returning God thanks for the happy discovery of the printing art, and the illumination of mankind by it, they met for a very different end; for pope Paul III. called a general council, which he ordered to meet at Mantua, in A. D. 1537, some cause of disappointment happened, on which he commanded them to meet at Vicentia, a city then belonging to the republic of Venice. A war breaking out, at this time, between the emperor and the French, prevented this meeting also. When this war ended the city of Trent was chosen, where, by command, the council assembled on the 13th of December, 1545, and continued to meet, by adjournment, to December, 1563. All this mighty work, according to their own confession, (see catechism of Trent) was avowedly to stop the progress of the reformation; and, instead of conforming to the gospel

rules, they established all the errors which had formerly been maintained, and condemned, with an anathema, all who would not adhere to them. And thus they fulfilled the prophetic description, and "blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains, and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."

Verse 12. "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." The pouring out of this vial began at the reformation. As the great river Euphrates was a barrier against it, I shall attempt a description of it, and the drying up of its waters.

This famous river ran through the ancient Babylon, a city much spoken of in scripture for the impiety of its inhabitants, and the total destruction of it, and its people, for their crimes. The Babylonian monarchy was a scourge, in the hand of God, to punish the Jews, and all its neighboring nations, for their sins. It was the head, or first, of the four great monarchies which have succeeded each other; and, by a regular and gradual descent, ended in Daniel's little horn, or the spiritual empire of Rome.

As this celebrated river ran through Babylon, into the sea, so, in like manner, ran that great river of spiritual pollution and iniquity, the hierarchy of Rome; and descended into all nations, tongues, and languages. As the ancient Babylon was so completely destroyed, that the place of it can scarcely be found, so we are informed by the prophet, that "the spiritual Babylon, or mother of harlots, shall suffer the same fate, for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God

hath remembered her iniquities," and we have now visible signs of her approaching annihilation.

Thus it appears, that the source from whence the antichristian Euphrates flows, is the bishops, or, in another word, prelacy. In its course it overwhelmed the thrones of the Cæsars, and thereon placed an emperor, or pope, of its own, who claimed unlimited power in affairs either celestial, terrestrial, or infernal. As it advanced, it received the small rivers of offerings, invocation of saints, and image worship. When it ran a little farther, it received a supply from the little rivers of marriages, christenings, and burials. It soon after received the great rivers of transubstantiation, supererogation, and its five additional sacraments. In its farther advance, the wealthy rivers of purgatory, tythes, bulls, pardons, pilgrimages, masses, and indulgences, poured into it. It now became, as the prophet expresses it, "a great river." No power on earth could oppose its progress. It swept the scriptures of truth from the laity, and made them of no effect. It conveyed excommunication to emperors and kings, and absolved subjects from their allegiance. Its current carried with it, terror, persecution, torment, and death. And at last deluged mankind with ignorance, error, superstition, and idolatry.

"Euphrates was dried up." Since the art of printing became useful to man, this great river is in reality drying up, by the light and knowlege, which it has diffused among the inhabitants of Europe. Evil and corrupt as the generality of mankind are, there are numbers of laymen, who are seeking after true wisdom. May this spirit of inquiry increase among them; for convinced I am, that it is they who will open the way



to millennial knowlege. Then will the Redeemer's kingdom be established on earth, and all the forementioned sources of iniquity be dried up. Then will the way of the kings, and people of the east be prepared for the reception of the gospel. Then will the sons of Israel, as in the days of Moses, be led on by Jesus, the Captain of their salvation, and Judah, from whom the Redeemer sprang, stand foremost in the camp of the saints.

Verse 13. "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." This verse demands much serious enquiry. We know who the dragon, or satan is. See Rev. xii. We know who the Romish Beast, or papal power is. See Rev. xiii. But who is this false prophet, that acts in concert with the other two, since the reformation. I know some say, that it is mahometanism; But did the mahometans, in a religious sense, ever join issue with the professors of christianity.

That Mahomet and his followers disavowed christianity, is true; how then could he be the false prophet, or teacher of it? That he is a false prophet is true; but neither he, nor his adherents, taught the religion of Jesus. The scribes and pharisees never renounced the religion of Moses, yet they are condemned for being hypocrites, and blind guides. Matt. xxiii. 23, 24. They must be false teachers of any religion, when they become false prophets of it. Hence it appears that the false prophet must be found among the protestant professors of christianity, and we need not go to the Ottoman empire, to seek for him. Let it also be observed, that Mahomet began his imposture near a thousand

years before the reformation, and holy John is silent about him.

The conduct of the dragon, beast and false prophet, which John compares to that of frogs, and which has deceived the whole world, I shall now attempt to shew. And first, the frog, in appearance, is an unoffending creature; so appeared satan, when he deceived our first parents. Gen. iii. 1—5. Secondly, the frog is said to be amphibious; so the others can live in any place where they are permitted. Thirdly, the frog delights in stagnant, or impure waters; so satan, and his accomplices, delight in the waters of corruption and sensuality. Fourthly, the frog crawls into holes, and places of darkness; so the others keep men in darkness, and spiritual delusion, and pry into the secrets of all families. See auricular confession. And fifthly, the frog cannot bear the heat of the sun; neither can the others bear the enlivening rays of the gospel. By the artful insinuations of these three grand adversaries, they have introduced among the people, called christians, pride, covetousness, envy, ambition, hatred, malice, treachery, revenge, persecution, &c. which are all the children, or offspring, of the parents above mentioned.

Verse 14. “For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” From the corrupt state of human nature, man is easily prompted to do evil, but particularly so, when the clergy sanction it. The Jewish high priest was the bitterest enemy, that the Redeemer had, but he could not accomplish his wicked designs, until he made a tool of Pontius Pilate.—

Herod, because it pleased the Jews, "killed James, the brother of John, with the sword." Acts xii. 2. And thus it is to the present day; any thing detrimental to the temporal interest of the clergy, if they cannot remove it themselves, they will use all their art, to gain the aid of the regal power, to enable them to accomplish it. The see of Rome, in order to increase its power, formed the plan of the crusades against the Turks, drew the princes of Europe into the league, and carried on this war one hundred and ninety seven years, whereby christendom was almost ruined, and its crowned heads obliged to bow to the papal authority. And even since the reformation, see how the potentates of Europe became dupes to the enchanting, and miracle working power of prelacy.

As the prophet describes the pouring out of this vial, more particularly than any of the former, mankind should, at this time, pay all imaginable attention to it; as he calls it "the gathering of the whole world to the battle of that great day." From whence we may make the following observations; and first, the reformation was checked, in a great measure, by the artifice of the bishops; they perceived that it would injure their temporal interest, if it extended too far; they therefore, by the aid of the regal power, persecuted their opponents, and compelled great numbers, in order to escape their cruelty, to fly to the then inhospitable shores of North America, where they are now become a great people. Secondly, popish and protestant interests were formed soon after the reformation began; this bred cruel wars, and made miserable havoc among mankind. Thirdly, an ambitious interest succeeded, called the balance of power, which frequent-

ly drew almost all the princes of Europe into the contest, to the great ruin of their subjects. Fourthly, an avaricious interest followed, which has involved the poor inhabitants of the East and West Indies, in our European disputes, and made them curse the day, that we discovered their coasts.

Another interest has lately appeared on this stage of human misery, called the rights of man. The havoc which this has already made, far exceeds any thing that we read of, either in ancient or modern history, and from the present appearance of things, we may see the anger of a justly incensed God, manifesting itself among the inhabitants of Europe, and that ere long the prophetic description will be literally true, to wit, that "the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, shall be gathered to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." And it is well known that prelacy was not idle at the beginning of it.

At this desolating time, the prophet gives an admonition, very different from any that we find in all the scripture; "Behold," says he, "I come as a thief;" which implies, that evils will come unexpectedly.—"Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." Nakedness, through all the new testament, signifies, the want of that robe of righteousness, which Christ hath purchased for us, and to put on this robe, is "putting on Christ's righteousness," instead of our own, which the apostle Paul compares to "filthy rags." It is also "the putting on the new man, which is renewed in Christ Jesus unto good works," and "putting off the old man, with his deeds;" by which means we find acceptance with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.—

But the admonition here is of a different nature. To me it appears as a caution given, to guard the servants of God against the delusive, and political snares of the two grand contending parties, who at present make such a conspicuous appearance in the world. These adverse parties watch the political conduct of mankind, and have power to ruin them for it. In this critical situation, it is best to take the apostle's advice, and "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man can see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14. And if such are persecuted for righteousness' sake, happy are they.

Verse 16. "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." This Armageddon, or place of human carnage, does not seem to be confined to any one particular place; it is the great object, which the contending parties have in view, that the prophet directs the attention to. In the present contest it is evident, that one party exerts its strength to support the old establishments, in church and state; the other to overthrow them. That the present convulsed state of the christian world, so called, is the Armageddon, alluded to by the prophet, I am certain; but how far this scene of human destruction may extend, God only knows.

Verse 17. "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." This seventh, and last vial of wrath is to be poured into the air, or in other words, it is to affect the human reason, and understanding. Under it, mankind will come to the full knowledge of priestcraft, and detest it; nay, even put an end to its existence; they

will, by gradual advances, come to, “the knowlege of the truth as it is in Jesus,” their true interest, both spiritual, and temporal, will be fully understood; and when this great work is effected, the joint voice from the throne and the temple, will declare in favor of such a happy reformation, and say the work is done. God’s wrath against man, will then be ended, because he acts agreeable to the divine will. This will be the great door, or entrance, of the glorious millenium, or universal kingdom of Christ, when HE will triumphantly reign, with the saints a thousand years: All things will then become new; “the Son himself be subject to the Father, that God may be all, and in all.” 1 Cor. xv. 28.

Verse 18. Although this vial will terminate in the happy manner which I have attempted to describe; yet it is still a vial of wrath, and will be more terrible than any of the preceding: For in this verse the prophet informs us, that “there will be voices,” or different civil and religious opinons. “Thunders” or new religious systems. “Lightnings,” or quick and violent determinations. “And a great earthquake,” or overthrow of regal and religious establishments, “such as was not since men were upon the earth.” John even repeats it, “so mighty an earthquake and so great.” Since the American Revolution, we have beheld many of these dreadful appearances, which are all the effects of the seventh vial, and third woe.

Verse 19. “And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.” Even now the great city, or Romish church,

is broken and divided into three parts. First, its temporal power is separated from it. Secondly, infallibility is fled from it. And thirdly, the nomination of its bishops is chiefly in the power of the French emperor, and their number greatly reduced. "And the cities of the nations fell;" which implies the fall of all other church establishments, and then "great Babylon" is to receive her reward. See Rev. xviii. To complete the work, "every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." By which we may learn, that all the old establishments, in both church and state, shall become "like the chaff of the summer threshing floor," which the wind carrieth away. Dan. ii. 35. Or take the prophet's words in another sense; all these mountains, and islands of error, and ignorance, which prelacy had formed, shall entirely vanish away, and plague the world no more.

Verse 21. In this verse, more of the dreadful effects of this vial are enumerated. First, "a great hail out of heaven;" which means the heavy, and severe judgments of God; such as the sword, famine, and pestilence. Secondly, "every stone about the weight of a talent;" which shews, that these calamities will far exceed any thing of the kind yet known. And thirdly, the obstinacy, and rebellious dispositions of men, in the midst of these severe, and awful appearances.

From the nature of this vial, and the present situation of things, the time seems to be near, when our lofty church governments will lament the day, in which they led themselves, and others, into that labyrinth of woe, from which they cannot now extricate themselves.

Let it not be imagined, that any of the seven vials

of wrath are yet empty; they are not poured out in that successive order, that many have supposed, namely, that when one is poured out, the next begins. The "noisome and grievous sore, which fell upon the men, who had the mark of the beast, and worshipped his image," still continues, because such men still exist. The second vial is also pouring out, because a wilful ignorance continues, and such men will not "come to the knowlege of the truth, and be saved." 1 Tim. ii. 4. The third vial continues to pour out, because ungodly teachers are numerous, and bring on themselves swift destruction. The fourth vial still pours out because the established errors have not yet been relinquished. The fifth vial ceases not to affect the seat of the beast, because his kingdom, or the remains of it, continue in darkness. The sixth vial is pouring out violently, as the Armageddon still rages. The seventh vial has been pouring out about thirty years, and mankind must wait the issue.

From these considerations it is easy to see, that the christian world, so called, have brought these accumulated evils on themselves. They have sinned against light; they have sinned against knowlege; they have justly provoked the Lord, by their vices and crimes; the door of mercy seems, in a great measure, shut against them; national sins have brought on national calamities, and it appears as if an Almighty Hand was raised against them. The third woe continues, although about two hundred and forty years of it are past. The seven vials are pouring out, and all acting in conjunction to humble the nominal christian race; promises have failed, threatnings have failed; therefore in strict justice, God is exercising the rod of his great power.



## CHAP. XVII.

IN this chapter, we have a description of the great whore, or apostate church of Rome, with the causes of her exaltation, and also of her destruction.

Verses 1, 2. "And there came unto me one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore, that sitteth upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." This angel, whom the prophet represents as conversing with him, is the seventh, who poured his vial into the air, whereby reason, that great faculty of the human soul, became enlivened and enlightened with the knowledge of the truth, and is the real cause of the destruction of the Romish church; who, on the contrary, did all in its power to keep mankind in a lethargic or delusive state of mind; whereby their only hope lay in works of merit, (so called) and the power of the church for salvation. And if any doubted the doctrines taught by the church, and made any other rational enquiry, he was deemed a heretic, and doomed to damnation. This abuse, or rather disuse, of reason, by degrees became habitual; and to this day it is a proverbial expression among the poor Romanists, "the less we know, the less we have to account for." And thus, in the beautiful and expressive language of prophecy, "the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her," by assisting this apostate church in all her iniquitous pro-

ceedings. "And the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication," or drinking her evil and irrational doctrines.

Verse 3. "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads, and ten horns." In this verse the prophet shews how he was in spirit carried away to the wilderness, or barren empire of the papacy. There he saw a woman, true emblem of a church, seated on the throne of the seven supreme, or authoritative powers, who held the reins of the Roman government since its foundation. All these he describes as idolaters, or "full of the names of blasphemy." Even the ten horns, or kingdoms, that arose out of the ruins of the western empire, are included as idolaters.

Verse 4. "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication." John shews, in this verse, how the Romish church was arrayed in all her costly and outward attire, but never once mentions those ornaments by which the true church of Christ is adorned. She "was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour;" so we find the popes, cardinals, and others of its chief officers were. "She was decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls," which actually was so by her immense revenues. "She had a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication." It is well known, that her love for that precious metal, called gold, was such, that for it she held out pardon for the vilest offences, masses and prayers for the dead; in-

dulgences in the most criminal pursuits; and, in a word, all kind and manner of sin could be purchased, except it was committed against the holy church, and then no pardon could be obtained; the offender in such case was condemned to the flames. Thus, almost in the literal sense, "she had a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication."

Verse 5. "And upon her forehead she had a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." In this remarkable verse, John points out the visible marks and characters of the Romish church, by which it was so eminently distinguished from all others, and even marks that they, of the Romish religion, make their boast of. For "on her forehead she had a name written, mystery," because she openly avowed and maintained that none could understand the mysteries, or meaning of the sacred writings, but herself. And that all the acts and canons of her councils were of a mysterious and sacred nature, and of equal validity, if not superior, to scripture authority. Secondly, "Babylon the great," because she called herself the only true, universal, catholic, apostolic, and infallible church, and that none out of it could be saved. Thirdly, "the mother of harlots." It is well known that from the pope, down to the meanest monk, marriage is forbidden, which is the true mark and character of a harlot. She also renounced the church's espousal to Christ, and became a complete harlot, by making herself supreme head of it. Fourth, "and abominations of the earth." Let the abominations and crimes

of the earthly minded, the carnal and sensual part of mankind, be ever so great, provided they had faith in the church, it saved them. For if they were not pardoned in this life they were sure of it in the next, by the masses and prayers of the church for the souls of those confined in purgatory, and money caused a speedy release.

Verse 6. "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration." Is there any thing more manifest, when we consult the new testament, than that a persecuting spirit is the very opposite of true christianity. It bears the mark and character of the most accursed mind, and abandoned understanding. None will persecute but they who are really the children of their father, the devil, let their pretensions to religion be what they may. It is the abuse of reason; it rejects the gospel precepts, and is contrary to common sense, and in the expressive, and lively language of prophecy, it, and its sister crimes, are called drunkenness. Thus this holy mother church was drunken, with the blood of the saints, and martyrs of Jesus, whom she inhumanly put to death, merely for obeying the commands of their Saviour, instead of hers. When John saw her, or was shewn her, he wondered with great admiration. John's wonder and amazement must be great, when he who assisted, and supported the meek, peaceable, and persecuted church of Christ, beheld one assuming the name of christian, seated on the throne of the Cæsars; its chief wearing a triple crown, figurative of his pretended power, in heaven, earth, and hell; he carries keys, with which, it it said, that

the church can open and shut the gates of heaven, at pleasure, or let in, and keep out whom it pleases. She gives power to the meanest, and most ignorant of her priests, by which, as the credulous laity must believe, they can change bread and wine, into the real body and blood of Christ, and must adore them as such; and in short, her pretensions to miraculous power are such, that those performed by Christ, and his apostles, are trifles in comparison. When holy John beheld the Roman pontiff, in the full exercise of all his pretended power, he could not avoid wondering, with great admiration.

Verse 7. "And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads, and ten horns" Here a promise is made, to satisfy the prophet's amazement and curiosity; which is done in the remainder of this chapter.

Verse 8. "The beast thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, (whose names were not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world,) when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." Here it is, that the Spirit turned John's attention, first, to "the beast which was;" which he saw, and actually experienced the severity of his power; to wit, imperial Rome, in its heathen and idolatrous state. Secondly, imperial Rome, in its christian state, when it had renounced the principles of the former. Thirdly, "and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit," because it gave its bishops earthly gain, and unlimited power. Fourthly, "and shall go into perdition." These words prove the

great apostacy, that prevailed in the days of the christian emperors. "And they that dwell upon the earth, shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, is not, and yet is."—When these words are seriously considered, they imply, that none but they whose names are written in the book of life, can behold the beast that "was" imperial Rome, in its heathen state, "is not," which is imperial Rome, in its pretended christian state; And "yet is," which is imperial Rome, in its papal and apostate state, because she abandoned the truth, and fell back into the idolatrous errors of the first.

Verse 9. "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." In this verse, the prophet gives an exhortation to the encouragement of wisdom and knowledge of mankind, in order to comprehend what he is so beautifully and accurately describing. Then he informs us, that the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." Many have considered the seven hills on which the city of Rome is built, to be the "mountains on which the woman," or Romish church sat, or was the chief seat of her residence, and so far it is a fact that it was so. But the words of the inspired prophet are not to be confined to such narrow limits. It is the "mystery of the woman, and the beast which carrieth her." It is these mountains of earthly power, which contributed to raise, and advance her above all human judicature. It is also those mountains of spiritual power, which guarded and fortified her on every side, which John directs the attention to; and which I will endeavour to explain.

And first of the "beast which carrieth her," or the "seven mountains on which she sat." We find by Roman history, and John proves it in the next verse, that there were five different forms of government, which had existed in the Roman empire, since its foundation; that of these five were fallen, and on their ruins was founded the sixth, or imperial, which is, or was in being, when the book of the revelation was written. His next information is, that another was to succeed, but was not yet come, and when it cometh, it must continue but a short space. Which prediction was fully accomplished, by the fall of the sixth, who were heathen idolaters, in A. D. 303; and shortly after was succeeded by the seventh, or a new imperial government, which assumed the name of christian; which form lasted only a short space, as it ended, or was destroyed by the barbarous northern nations, in A. D. 476. On the fall of this head, or western empire; the woman's or church's policy was such, that in a short time, she forfeited what little of christian purity remained, and drew over to her interest those idolatrous people, who had so lately overturned the empire; and even became an idolatress, in common with them; for which reason she is so frequently termed by John, a whore, the mother of harlots, &c. And thus by this political, and earthly cunning, she has been above twelve hundred years seated, or riding triumphantly, on the back of the beast, or seven heads of the Roman empire.

Secondly, she sat supremé, or governed with spiritual might, and authority, over, first, Italy, and its dependant islands. Secondly, Poland. Thirdly, Germany, with its dependancies. Fourthly, Sweden, and Norway, or the ancient Scandinavia. Fifthly, Great

Britain, and Ireland. Sixthly, France, or ancient Gaul. Seventhly, Spain, and Portugal. These are also the seven mountains of earthly and regal power, over which, she sat as a queen, and never expected to become a widow, or to see sorrow by them.— These are the countries out of which she obtained her immense revenues, that “decked her with scarlet, and gold, and precious stones, and pearls.” Rev. xviii. 16. These are the countries, who committed fornication with her, by receiving and adhering to her doctrines; and these are the unhappy countries, most of whose sinful, and outwitted inhabitants are still groaning under the intolerable burden of ecclesiastical tyranny.

Thirdly, from the pope to the priest, they are all allied, according to their rank, to the first families, in the countries mentioned; and self interest, which prevails so much in the carnal mind, binds all together, and increases her power.

Verse 10. “And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.”— When this verse is considered, we may see, first, that by kings is meant the ruling power, in temporal affairs. Secondly, that five ruling powers had existed in the Roman empire, previous to John’s days. See Rev. xiii. Thirdly, that one is, or is in existence, at the time he wrote, namely, the imperial heathen power. Fourthly, that another was to come, which proved to be an imperial christian power. And fifthly, that an all powerful God, sets bounds and limits to human affairs; for the seventh king “must continue only a short space,” which accordingly happened, for the christian



imperial dignity in the west, continued only about one hundred and seventy years.

Verse 11. "And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seventh, and goeth into perdition." The bishops having arose to great power, under the seventh imperial head, this head when wounded to death, by the northern barbarians, did live.— The reason is, the bishops, by their devices, drew over to their interest the fierce conquerors of it; and by departing from what little remained among them of gospel purity, and cleaving to the abominations of these victorious idolaters, in a short time, elected over them, a new spiritual imperial head, or sovereign Roman pontiff, and blasphemously called him God's vicegerent on earth. Thus by the craft and ingenuity of the bishops, they founded, and established the eighth imperial or papal head, who it is plain was of, or arose out of the seventh. And singular it is, that in all the regions of the earth, the people, who adhere to the principles of popery, make it their boast that they are Romans, or Roman Catholics, and are all zealous advocates for the eighth or papal head; and also of the seventh, because, say they, it was governed by christian emperors.

The prophet now pronounces the awful sentence against these heads, or ruling powers. "And goeth into perdition." It is obvious, that under both these heads, prelacy made a shew of christianity; but as was foretold by the apostle Peter, it "brought in damnable heresies," 2 Pet. ii. 1. and by covetousness, and feigned words, made merchandize of the wretched laity, and led them into the grossest errors. "For which cause," as Paul saith, "God sent them strong delusion,

that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned, who believe not the truth, but take pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. Thus we may see, how dangerous it is for christian teachers, to become tools of any earthly state; they "cannot serve two masters;" they "cannot serve God and mammon;" for "Christ's kingdom is not of this world." John xviii. 36. Let our spiritual guides carefully examine, by whom they are sent; for if gain be their object, they run in vain, and cannot profit the people. Let them attentively consider the Redeemer's words, after his resurrection, to his disciples. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." John xx. 21.

Verse 12. "And the ten horns, which thou sawest, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast." These ten horns had received no kingdom, when John wrote, neither did they, till after A. D. 476; in which year the western empire ended. These swarms of northern barbarians, who destroyed it, finding the climate more agreeable than their own, and its productions in greater plenty, seated themselves in it, and gradually formed the ten kingdoms, or regal dignities, alluded to, by the prophet. These grew up with the eighth, beast, or papal power, and he with them, till at length his power exceeded theirs. Some he deposed, others he established, and to those who pleased him best, he granted new titles, or rather nick names, such as, "Apostolic Majesty." "Most Christian Majesty." "Most Catholic Majesty." "Most Faithful Majesty." "King, Defender of the Faith." &c. As papal power increased, regal power increased also; and as papal power declined, the regal power must de-

cline with it. Much of this has appeared since the reformation, but chiefly since the French revolution. Papal and regal power must live and die together; because the regal receive power, as kings, "one hour with the beast;" which in prophetic language, is during his continuance. Observe, that it is the powers who lived in obedience to the see of Rome, that the prophet here alludes to.

Verse 13. "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." This is a fact well known; for, before the reformation, let them make war and destroy each other as they pleased, they were still termed Roman Catholics, and of one mind. They also gave their power and strength to the beast, by assisting him in all his bloody persecutions.

Verse 14. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." These unhappy regal powers did make war with the Lamb, for they "would not have him to reign over them." Luke xix. 14. They must have a succession of papal tyrants, as universal head of the church, in the room of HIM, whom the eternal Jehovah hath appointed. They obeyed the erroneous canons, or decrees of popes and councils, in preference to the gospel of Jesus Christ. They acted by, and under the authority of his pretended holiness, and stained Europe with the blood of the saints. In this manner, the kings of Europe have actually made war against the Lamb; but "the Lamb will overcome them, he is King of kings, and Lord of lords." He is also Judge of the quick and the dead, and will pronounce against them that irreversible sentence,

“Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil, and his angels.” Matt. xxv. 41. In another sense, Christ “must reign, till all enemies are put under his feet.” 1 Cor. xv. 25. He will then have no triple crowned competitors to make war against him; no mitred bishops, or cardinals, to oppose his gospel; no regal powers to war against his saints; and none permitted to be with him, or allowed to preach his gospel, but those “who are called, who are chosen, and who are faithful.”

Verse 15. “And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Water, in scripture, and prophetic language, signifies the blessings, which flow from our obedience to the gospel precepts. Our Saviour informs us, that “whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing into everlasting life.” John iv. 14, 15. The Redeemer assures Nicodemus, that “except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” John iii. 5. “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 of the water of life freely.” Rev. xxii 17. But these salutary waters of the gospel, which are promised to the obedient, are very different from the waters, on which the whore sat, for she sat supreme over the wretched inhabitants of a large portion of the earth, administering to them her erroneous doctrines; and again, being her principal object, she made the ignorant laity pay well for the promised blessings, which she pretended to give.

Verse 16. "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." This work began at the reformation, as some of the nations, with their kings, began at that time to hate her. The French revolution gave her the severest blow she ever received, by the great reduction of her bishops, by which she is made desolate. The French have also stript her of her power whereby she is made naked. They are "eating her flesh," because they have devoured the revenues, which nourished her. And will in the end, or God's appointed time, utterly consume her.

Verse 17. "For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." When we consider the great sacrifice made for man's salvation, and the word, and will of God so fully made known, it is amazing, that the kings and potentates of Europe, should become such dupes to this antichristian beast, as to agree with, and give their power, and kingdom to it! Even in kingdoms professing protestantism, see how powerful papal influence is! Can any reason be assigned for this kind of conduct in the temporal powers, but wilful ignorance of the truths contained in the gospel? This fatal error has exposed them to all the delusive snares of popery, and makes them neglect "working out their own salvation, with fear and trembling." Phil. ii. 12.

It is truly astonishing, that at the commencement of the French revolution, almost all the powers of Europe, should enter into such a grand confederacy, to support the papal power; and that very combination, after

all their united efforts, could not prevent its ruin. Can we, with any propriety, ascribe this to the power of France? No, it is to HIM alone, who rules the universe. HE, in mercy, through Jesus Christ, gave laws to mankind, for their present and future happiness. These gracious injunctions they were not contented with; but they must establish gainful hierarchies; they were not pleased with the Creator's laws, must add inventions of their own, which has incurred the wrath of a holy and just God, who foreseeing the evils that would arise, has set bounds, and limits thereto; as we may plainly see, by perusing the book of Revelation, and will, ere long, bring swift destruction on the papacy, and all in connection with it; for the words of God, concerning this great apostacy, are nearly fulfilled.

Verse 18. "And the woman which thou sawest, is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." In this verse, the prophet completes his description of the Romish Church, in a threefold manner. First, as a woman, figurative of a church maintaining doctrines of its own, or peculiar to itself. Secondly, as a city, or body politic, making laws within its own jurisdiction. And thirdly, the vast extent of its dominion, and immense power, by reigning over the kings of the earth, or those earthly minded, and sensual powers, who adhered to her religion.

It is truly a melancholy consideration, to see the major part of the laity of this age, contenting themselves, with a mere shew of christianity; if they appear a few Sundays in the year, at their respective places of public worship, they imagine all is well; this, and a little moral honesty, satisfies them that they are good christians, especially, if they get what is com-

monly called the rites of the church, before death; but alas! what a vain hope is this; when they remain ignorant of the scriptures of God, and of themselves.

Since the reformation, so called, scarce an effort has been made, by our established clergy, towards any further reform. The reason is, they are as secure in their livings, as the king is on his throne; and if the laity were possessed of, or with true christian knowlege, the clergy stand in an awkward situation. Experience tells us, that from the Bishop, down to the curate, if a layman should differ in opinion, or lament the knowlege of primitive christianity, and shew a desire, that vital, real religion, should be restored, he would immediately be considered as a prating, impertinent fellow, and unworthy of their notice. Unhappily also, in the polite circles of the laity, the introduction of a religious subject, is considered as an insult. Thus a great part of mankind are jogging on, in the old broad way, and fatally content themselves with knowing nothing about those things, which lead to eternal life. A mercenary, and hireling clergy, undertake the salvation of a blind and ignorant laity, and when "the blind lead the blind," the situation of both is truly deplorable.





## CHAP. XVIII.

IN the the fourteenth chapter of this book, the prophet shews the fall of Babylon, from that state of purity, with which the church of it were blessed, in the apostles' days. He also shews the separation of the Asiatic churches from it, and the severe sentence, and condemnation of these churches, against that of Babylon, or Rome, for falling from its primitive purity. In the fifteenth chapter, he shews the happy state of the saints, who had got the victory over the antichristian beast, his image, the pope, his mark, and the number of his name, or in other words, his prelates. In the sixteenth chapter, John shews the detestable errors of this apostate church, wherewith it has deluded the christian world, so called, and brought on it the wrath and severe judgments of an offended God. In the seventeenth chapter, this harlot church is described in such variety of characters, that none, except they are wilfully ignorant, can mistake the application of them.

In this chapter, the inspired favorite of the Most High, shews us the utter destruction of antichrist's kingdom, and the causes of it. First, he "saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." These words plainly allude to the art of printing, whereby the gospel, and every other kind of useful knowlege has shone upon mankind. Although christendom is filled with violence and blood, yet light and knowlege are increasing, and papal darkness fast decreasing. Wicked as mankind are, they are viewing the cunning de-

vices of priestcraft, and detesting them, with utter abhorrence; and the lovers of papacy are beginning to hate it. France, the first of its lovers, has given it the most deadly wound, that it ever received; and it is evident, that the other nations ere it be long will follow the example.

Verses 2, 3. This angel of light is already "crying mightily, with a strong voice, saying, Babylon, the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Another cause of its destruction is, "For all nations have drunk of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich, through the abundance of her delicacies." In this verse are three causes of Rome's ruin namely, first, its false and impious doctrines. Secondly, the regal powers giving their support to her, whereby they ruined their subjects. And thirdly, her merchants, or clergy growing rich by the oppressive burdens, which they laid on the laity. These are the outward, or worldly causes of Rome's desolation, or rather dissolution.

In the five following verses, the prophet shews the real causes of her punishment. First, "by a voice, which he heard from heaven, commanding his people to come out of her, that they be not partakers of her sins, and that they receive not of her plagues." Secondly, "For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God had remembered her iniquities." It would next appear, that God is so justly offended by her iniquities, as to make it lawful to use the utmost severity in her punishment. The command seems to be of a posi-

tive nature; "Reward her, even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her works; in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double." How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment, and sorrow, give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore, shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." These verses shew, that man may be instrumental in her ruin; but the true cause proceeds from God alone.

Verses 9, 10. "And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off, for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city; for in one hour is thy judgment come! From these words we may see, first, the terror and confusion that will prevail among those kings who have espoused the cause of popery. Secondly, their grief and anguish on account of its fall. Thirdly, they must stand afar off, and mourn, because relief is impossible, in this hour of extremity. And fourthly, they fear the same torment. Is not this exactly the case now in Europe?

Verse 11—13. In these verses the Prophet turns our attention to her principal mourners, namely, the bishops, and inferior clergy. "And the merchants of the earth shall weep, and mourn over her; for no man buyeth her merchandize any more. The merchandize of gold and silver and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scar-

let, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men." From this long list of her merchandize, it is easy to see, that the prophet alludes to the sale of bulls, pardons, absolutions, indulgences, tythes, small dues, masses, marriages, christenings, anointings, beads, crucifixes, confessions, intercessions, &c. and particularly the ransom of souls in purgatory.

Verse 14. "And the fruits that thy soul lusteth after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all." These words prove, that the Romish church will be deserted by mankind, and its revenues, or dainty, and goodly things, taken from it.

Verses 15, 16. And "the merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! for in one hour so great riches is come to nought." From these words we may observe, first, the grief and sorrowful lamentation, of the clergy, and all others concerned in the wealthy traffic of the church. Secondly, the mournful outcry of the superior, and inferior clergy, for the loss of church power and riches. And thirdly, all hope of recovering their former wealth, and power,

in the church is ended, as the whole "is come to nought."

Verses 17—19. "And every ship master, and all the company in ships, and sailors and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried, when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas! that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour she is made desolate." Those three verses, show the panic, and consternation of all human church establishments, at the destruction of that of Rome, and also her certain and sudden dissolution.

The scene now changes; the long looked for day of deliverance arrives at last; prelacy, with all its sinful offspring, is become extinct; in consequence of which, the saints both living, and dead, are considered as in an extacy of joy, on the happy occasion. The prophet's words are remarkable; "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles, and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." From these words it appears, that Omnipotent power is the cause of her annihilation. "And a mighty angel took up a stone, like unto a great millstone, and cast into the sea, saying, Thus with violence, shall that great city, Babylon, be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." It is well known, that any religious liberty, obtained by the protestant party, was torn from the see of Rome, by violence; but the violence mentioned here, ends its existence for ever; for "the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever

er craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone, shall be heard no more at all in thee: and the light of a candle, shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom, and the bride, shall be heard no more all in thee; for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.”

From the prophet's dwelling so long on this subject, and mentioning the catastrophe of spiritual Babylon, so minutely, I would infer, that her judgment must be of an extraordinary nature; and what confirms me in this belief is, her being charged with such an immensity of guilt, by the prophet, in the last verse. “And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”

Thus prelacy laid the foundation of error. Popery and prelacy built up the wealthy and corrupt edifice; and God in his appointed time destroys the whole.— Out of the ruins of which, will arise “a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” 2 Pet. iii. 13.

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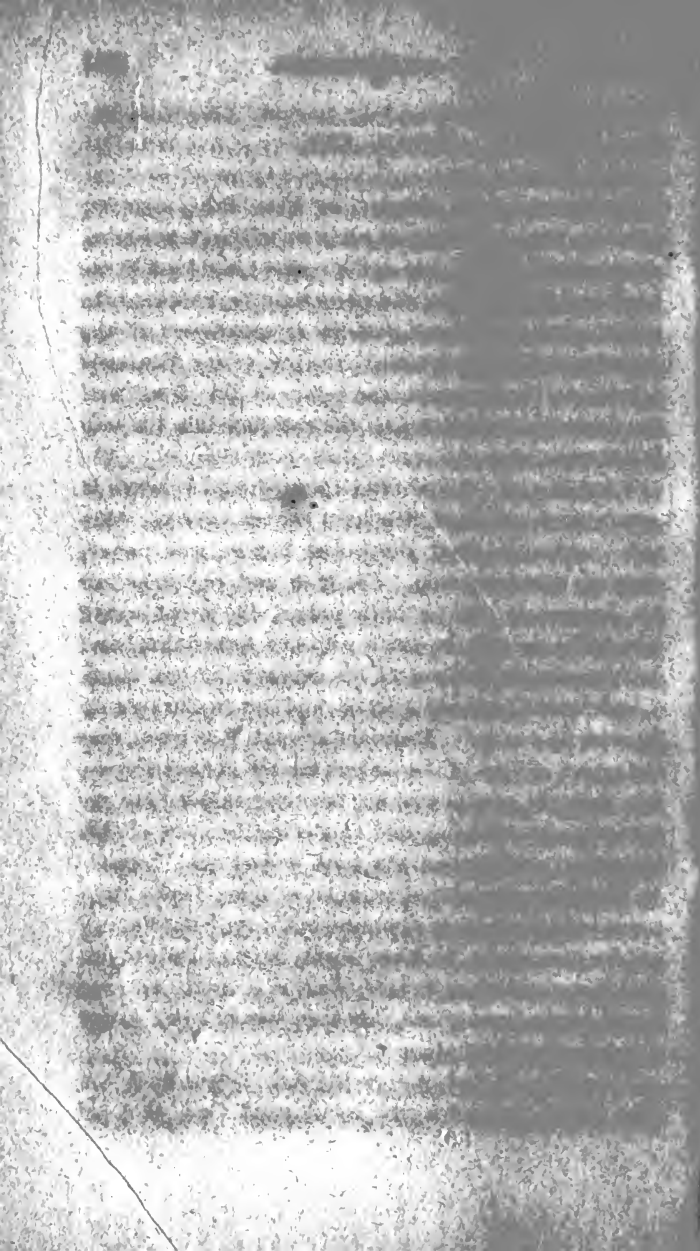
#### ADDITION TO THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

When these sheets were written, the bible and missionary societies were only in their infancy. From the rapid progress of these zealous missionaries, and the kind reception, that the scriptures have met with, in the regions of Asia, and other parts of the globe, it is now plain, that this is that angel, or spiritual government, that is come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth thus enlightening, with his glory. The river Euphrates is drying up fast, and the way

for the kings, or powers of the east are preparing for gospel knowlege; even in Europe, the papal power is greatly reduced; that grand prerogative, which it so long assumed, of nominating its bishops, is now no longer insisted on; instead of his bulls, and authoritative commands to the princes of Europe, he now stands indebted to them for his existence; and she, the papacy, cannot now say, "I am no widow; I sit as a queen, and see no sorrow." \*

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\* That the reader may better apprehend certain chronological references, it is proper to mention, that this work was written in the years 1802, and 1803, and the above appendage to the eighteenth chapter, was added, in April, 1818.





## CHAP. XIX.

IN the eighteenth chapter, we have the judgment, condemnation, and utter destruction of the great whore, or apostate church, which did corrupt mankind by its abominable doctrines, and persecuting principles. In this chapter God's omnipotency is manifested in the overthrow of papal tyranny, the joy of the heavenly minded on that account, the return of the Jews, and the doctrines maintained at the entrance into the millennial state, &c.

Verses 1—3. "And after these things I heard a great voice, of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God. For true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. "And again they said Alleluia, and her smoke rose up for ever and ever." From these words it is plain, that the power of God will be conspicuous in her overthrow; for, first, the people who are heavenly minded are represented as rejoicing, and rendering the glory of this wonderful work to him who hath judged her. Secondly, they are considered as acknowledging God's righteous judgments in her punishment. And thirdly, her smoke rose up, or, in other words, her sins and crimes, and the punishment thereof, shall be a visible warning to all future generations, lest they should come under the same condemnation.

Verse 4. "And the twenty-four elders, and the four beasts, fell down and worshipped God, that sat

on the throne, saying, Amen, Alleluia. Even the twenty-four elders, to whom the law and gospel were given, and the four powers, or visible attributes of divine nature, are considered by the prophet as giving their joint assent to her annihilation.

It might be expected, that I should here point out the time, when these great events should come to pass, but this is impossible to do with precision, until the time is accomplished. However, from the hints the prophet has given, the time is near; for, first, John, in his description of the mother of harlots, see chapter xvii. 12, says, "The ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore; and shall make her desolate and naked; and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." This work began among the horns, or kingdoms, in subjection to the Romish religion at the reformation; as some of them began at that time to hate the whore. Secondly, since the reformation no material change took place until the French revolution, which greatly reduced the number of her bishops, whereby she is made desolate. Thirdly, France, by granting free liberty of conscience to itself, and the nations under its influence, is also making her desolate, because many will renounce her errors. Fourthly, France, by stripping the Romish church of its images, and other rich ornaments, is making her naked, and, by the reduction of her revenues, it has the same effect. Fifthly, this reduction of power, and liberty of conscience, eats her flesh, because it devours her revenues, and reduces her to a skeleton. Sixthly, religious liberty is as a consuming fire to Romish principles, because she kept the laity from the use of the scriptures. And, sixthly, this

late attack upon the whore has produced no excommunications, no anathemas, as it did at the reformation; from whence it is plain, her dominion is almost ended.

In the eighteenth chapter her merchandize is mentioned, whereby she made rich all her clergy, who were the venders of it. These once valuable commodities are now of little estimation in Europe. The secularising the episcopal princes in Germany, and the reduction of their revenues, together with the suppression of the monastic orders, are all convincing proofs that her kingdom is nearly finished, and that the time is not very remote, when the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth her merchandize any more.

Being now under the sound of the seventh trumpet, the influence of the third woe, and the seventh vial of wrath; these united causes will operate powerfully on the minds of men; they will view with horror the cause of their calamities. The effect will be, mankind becomes enlightened; their crooked ways are made straight; and great Babylon, the primary cause of these evils, comes in remembrance before God, and the judgment of the great whore, and all her sinful progeny, commences. Compare these remarks with the present times.

Verse 5. "And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great." This voice from the throne, seems to be the voice of the Jews, as they still live under the law. They, also, are offering their tribute of praise to God for judging the great whore.

Verse 6. "And I heard, as it were, the voice of a

great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Oh ! happy day, when "the morning stars shall sing together, and all the sons of God shall shout for joy." Job xxxviii. 7. O ! comfortable time ; when mankind will rejoice in the God of their salvation, and will view with delight the omnipotent Jehovah, being all, and in all. 1 Cor. xv. 28. O blessed time ! when "Christ, who is the first fruits of them that slept, hath put all enemies under his feet, and makes us triumph over sin and death." 1 Cor. xv. 20. In this verse are three remarks made by the prophet, which demand our attention. First, "the voice of a great multitude," which shew that true worshippers in these days will be numerous. Secondly, "the voice of many waters," whereby we may learn that many nations will unite in this song of praise. Thirdly, "the voice of many thunderings," which prove that the religious systems of these days will be both new and very different from what they are at present. Mankind, in these days, will not be tributary to a mercenary and hireling clergy. They will praise and adore the omnipotent Jehovah without them.

Verse 7. "In this verse a new cause of rejoicing is manifested to the true servants of God, namely, the arrival of the Jews as auxiliaries to augment and strengthen the Messiah's kingdom. The words are remarkable, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to HIM : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." These words exactly agree with our Saviour's prediction concerning this people ; when, after enumerating their

crimes, he says, "For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. xxiii. 4. Or in other words, Ye shall not acknowledge me till the time comes, when ye shall know that I come in the name of the Lord.

It is to be remarked, that Jesus Christ, according to the flesh, was a Jew by birth; of the tribe of Judah; of the house, and lineage of David. He was also a King, a Prince, and a Saviour, to give deliverance to Israel, by the remission of their sins. They, by rejecting the Lord of life, brought on themselves the wrath of God, and have been a scattered people, among the nations of the earth, ever since. The prophet, in this verse, under the type, or simile of a marriage, shews their return, and reunion with him, who laid down his life for them. And thus the saints of the different nations are represented as testifying their joy, on the happy event, mentioned in the last clause of this verse, "and his wife hath made herself ready;" which proves to a certainty, that they will finally become willing to unite with him, whom they so long rejected. In the eighth verse, we have a further proof of this remarkable era. "And to her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white;" which shews their acceptance of, and obedience to the gospel; by which means, they become arrayed with Christ's righteousness, instead of their old ceremonials. For "the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints," or a true emblem of the purity of the gospel, and the righteousness which cometh by Christ.

Verse 9. "And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of

the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." In this verse are three things to be considered. First, the prophet was commanded to write; which proves this to be the era of a true reformation, agreeable to the dictates of the law and the gospel; whereas on the contrary, the seven thunders which uttered their voices at the reformation, John was commanded to write them not. The mighty thunderings mentioned in this chapter, all proclaimed the praise, and adored the omnipotent Jehovah. The thunders of our reformation were ordered to be sealed up, because they were defective. This true reformation produces joy, harmony, and peace. Ours produced a ferment among mankind, and the nations who call themselves christians envy each other, and carry on cruel wars. This new reformation promises purity, spiritual comfort, and consolation. Ours has a woe of opinions, errors, schisms, and contradictory writers. In this happy reformation the servants of God are called saints; in ours no such epithet is bestowed. In this new reformation, its happy effects are pointed out; in ours, the little book, or the doctrines of it, made John's belly bitter, or filled him with bitter reflections.

Secondly, a blessing is pronounced on "those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." From these words it appears, that none can be admitted, as guests, into this heaven born assembly, except those who obey the call and invitation of the gospel, and live conformably thereto. In our reformed churches, all who profess themselves members, are admitted into communion, be their lives ever so disorderly.—Christ, and his guests, are all unity and concord; they

bear the same relation to each other, as the vine and its branches, and God promotes their spiritual increase. John xv. 2. "The christians of these days are carnal, and earthly minded, for "one saith, I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos." 1 Cor. iii. 4. They do not obey the apostle's injunction, "therefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God." Rom. xv. 7. Christ, and his disciples, had only one main object in view, namely, the salvation, and edification of mankind. Our spiritual guides have many; they seek for riches, honors, and preferments, and by these means," neglect the one thing needful." Luke x. 42.

Thirdly, "And he saith unto me, these are the true sayings of God." These words may be applied thus; these are the wise determinations of God, and when these great events are made manifest, mankind will be convinced, and forced to acknowledge the truth of divine revelation. They are also affixed as a seal to strengthen the believer's faith, and prevent him from doubting the truth of this prophecy.

Verse 10. "And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: Worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." At present the prevailing and established notions, concerning christianity, is, that there are three distinct persons, equal in power and glory; and that each really and truly is God, and that these three are but one God. They of the Romish church believe God has a mother, and invoke her as such. This doctrine, or rather the belief of it, at once confounds the senses, and understanding; it destroys

the notions we ought to entertain of a great first Cause ; It has thrown the professors of christianity into a chaos of confusion, and disorder, since its establishment, at the great council of Nice, in A. D. 325. It is the doctrine taught by the great whore, or Romish church, which did corrupt the earth ; it is in part the doctrine which our reformers have taught us, when they attempted to emerge from Romish ignorance and error. It is also the doctrine established by regal, and episcopal authority. But it is very different from the doctrine taught by Moses, Jesus Christ, or any writers, either of the old, or new testaments.

It is the lie spoken of by Paul. "And for this cause God has sent them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. ii. 11. It is a doctrine invented by "the man of sin, and son of perdition." It is a falsehood imposed on the minds, and consciences of mankind, by the emperor Constantine, and the Romish bishops, at the council of Nice. It is an insult given to the Omnipotent Jehovah, who is God over all. And if war, persecution, and impurity of every kind, are marks of strong delusion, among the professors of christianity, there has been plenty of these since the year 325.

Much discord has happened among mankind, concerning the two natures of Christ ; as it caused the five months torment, and the first woe. I would ask, of what nature was he, after his resurrection ? had he the same body, which he had before his crucifixion, or had he not ? was he then really God, or was he raised up by the mighty power of the Father ? is he even



now God? or is he our Advocate, Intercessor, and Mediator, with God? whether he came into the world, to do his own will, or to execute the will of HIM who sent him? These are questions easily decided by scripture authority, if we would lay prejudice, and priest-craft aside. It is plain, that he rose from the dead by the power of his heavenly Father, and even foretold it. "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again on the third day." Matt. xvi. 21. When in the agony of death, he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Mark xv. 34. "He was seen by his disciples forty days, after his resurrection, and spoke to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Acts i. 3. When the disciples were "terrified, and affrighted," at his presence, "and supposed they had seen a spirit, he said unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands, and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have; and when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands, and his feet; and while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, HE said unto them, Have ye any meat? and they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honey comb, and he took it, and did eat before them." Luke xxiv. 37, 43. Again he says, "God is a Spirit, and they who worship him, must do it in spirit and in truth." John iv. 24. He informs the disciples, and says, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God, and your God." John xx. 17. And when he taught us to pray it was to God alone,

Math. vi. Paul speaking of the power and mercy of God, to a sinful world, draws this beautiful conclusion. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom, and knowlege of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! for who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompenced again? for of HIM, and through HIM, and to HIM, are all things, to whom be glory, for ever. Amen. Rom. xi. 33—36.

The word of faith which St. Paul preached, was, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. x. 9. See also God's great power shewn forth in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, by Peter, and the other apostles, in Acts ii, iii, and iv. Paul's prayer for the Ephesians was, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowlege of him." Eph. i. 17. He then proves the mighty power of God, in the resurrection, exaltation and vicegerency of the Redeemer. John, the Baptist, who saw, and baptized the Redeemer, says, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." John i. 18. I might add many other proofs of this nature, but these may suffice to excite the attention of my lay brethren.

God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the original and great first Cause. Revelation, reason, the universal voice of creation, proclaim the same important fact. His wisdom planned the whole of universal nature. His power brought all things

visible, and invisible, into existence. His providential care preserves, and governs the whole. But above all things, his mercy is most conspicuous, in the redemption of man, through Jesus Christ, whom he ordained, before the foundation of the world, to bruise satan's empire under his feet. The Redeemer is the eternal word, and promise of God, for man's salvation. He is the Advocate, and Intercessor, with God for us. "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12. He is the great High Priest, who made the atonement for mankind, by the sacrifice of himself. He was raised from the dead, by the mighty power of God, and ascended to him, which proves the certainty of our resurrection also; for "if Christ is not risen our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins." 1 Cor. xv. 17. He is King, and supreme Head over the church, and "is the way, the truth, and the life," to guide us to the mansions of his heavenly Father. But God's mercy extends further; for, HE, whom he wade, bare our infirmities, and suffered for our sins, and is appointed our final Judge. Thus, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and obedience to the divine will, we become branches of the true and living vine, and God enables us to grow to perfection.

God is a spirit, he cannot be divided. He is the same yesterday, to day, and forever. He pervades the whole of universal nature. No man hath seen him at any time; we cannot see his face and live. Yet if we abide in his love, he makes his abode with us. As his influence extends over universal nature; his rational creature, man, is not neglected, unless he, by his vices and crimes, becomes reprobate. A conscience he hath

implanted in us, as a monitor in our breasts, to guard us against the commission of evil; but this is often seared, and become callous by evil deeds. Reason he has given us, in a superior degree, by which we can distinguish good from evil, and know the will of our Creator, but this may be abused, and we become dead in trespasses and sins. The will is given by the same omnipotent hand; but alas! we oftener pursue that which is evil, than that which is good. Memory comes from the same original; but we oftener forget God, than remember, with thankfulness, the blessings conferred on us. In a word, all the faculties of the human soul, are gifts from our bounteous Creator; but many have received these blessings more abundantly, and walked so as to answer the great end for which they were given. These gifts of the Spirit, as it is frequently termed in scripture, are really the gifts of a gracious Creator. "For it is God who worketh in us both to will, and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. ii. 18. Paul, on the diversity of spiritual gifts, says, "it is the same God which worketh all in all; And that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man, to profit withal." I Cor. xii. 6, 7.

The Eternal Jehovah is the source, and fountain of all perfection, "By him we live, move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 28. Our Saviour to prove the omnipotency of God, and to shew his disciples, that the Holy Spirit was a gift, which they were to receive, says, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not; but ye know him for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John

xiv. 16, 17. Many other expressions of this nature we find in John's gospel. Paul, in order to guard the saints of Corinth against idolatry, says, "But to us, here is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him: And one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." 1 Cor. viii. 6. Peter proves the Holy Ghost to be the gift of God.— See his severe censure on the conduct of Simon, the sorcerer. Acts viii. 20, 23. The seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth, are also his spiritual gifts, which are freely given to those, who are found worthy. Rev. v. 5.

Through the whole of the new testament it appears, that the Holy Spirit is the gift of God, which he gave to his saints. They who receive it under the old law, had it through faith in the promises. They who enjoy it under the gospel, received it by faith in Jesus Christ, and obedience to the will of his heavenly Father. Let us now examine, and see whether it be the Giver, or the gift, that we ought to worship, or both.

John, in the verse under consideration, and also in the eighth and ninth verses of the twenty second chapter of this book, settles this matter beyond a doubt.— He, in order to rectify an error, which has existed in the church now above fifteen hundred years, and to shew us on what foundation true religion will stand, at the commencement of the millennium, gives us a view of the following important truths.

And first, the prophet tells us expressly, in the first chapter of this book, that God revealed his will to Jesus Christ "to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass;" and that the Redeemer did send his angel, or the gift of the Spirit, for that

purpose to his servant John. In the last chapter of this book, John confirms it, and says, "And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly be done." This may convince any serious mind, that John received this heavenly prophetic gift from God, through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, by the aid of this divine gift, he was enabled to foretel, with the greatest accuracy, the extraordinary things mentioned in the book of Revelation; particularly the judgment of the great whore; the joy among the saints, on that occasion; the calling in of his brethren, the Jews, to the marriage supper; the church arrayed in white, by Jews, and other nations putting on Christ's righteousness; and the church once more established, on the true principles of the law, and the gospel. He then saw with rapture, that "these were the true sayings of God." He was then instructed to write, or note this happy era, for "these sayings were true, and faithful."

Thirdly, John, to shew the change that would take place, at this period, places himself as a worshipper, according to the old established, or human form; He therefore fell down to worship the angel, who shewed him these things, and the same said unto him, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren" the saints, "that have the testimony," or faith "of Jesus: Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit," or life "of prophecy." This also proves the Redeemer's advocacy with God, who sent this precious gift, according to promise, to his disciples.

Fourthly, John was commanded to "worship God." If adoration was due to any other would he not, at this important time, receive a command to that purpose? On the contrary, he assures us, that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" from which words it is evident, that, "there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and men." 1 Tim. ii. 5. And that the spiritual blessings which we receive, are all the operative gifts of the same "God, who worketh all in all;" for "of ourselves we can do nothing." John xv. 5.

Fifthly, This doctrine of a trinity is the basis of popery. It is the foundation on which all its errors are built. It is amazing that protestants would detest Romish principles, when the major part of them maintain the essence of them; but old prejudices are deep rooted, and hard to erase. It must be the Jews who will be our first true reformers; it is they who will examine the bible without prejudice, and take away sackcloth, or filthy covering, which popery has thrown over it. It is they, who, on their embracing christianity, will take off every vestige of the whore's garment, and by divine aid will establish true religion on the firm basis of the law and the gospel.

I know I shall be severely censured, by many protestant teachers who maintain the old opinions; but let them remember, that God has promised to create all things anew. Let them not oppose his will; the kingdom of peace cannot be far distant; popery will soon be extinct; Mahometanism is tottering on its base; the Jews are looking forward with anxious expectation. These are sure signs of the near approach of "a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Pet. iii. 13. Let them not frustrate

the work of God, lest they bring on themselves condemnation; for if religion continues as it now is, the kingdom of peace cannot come.

The prophet, has now brought us to a period when the church is to cease from its sufferings, and in the remaining part of this chapter, shews us the era and progress of a true reformation.

Verse 11. "And I saw heaven opened;" which shews, that the way of truth, and righteousness, will be made known, and practiced. "And behold a white horse," this corresponds with the opening of the first seal, when the Redeemer taught the will of his heavenly Father, and founded religion on a true principle: "And he that sat upon him was called faithful, and true;" which implies that he who sat upon him, and held the reins of this divine government, was faithful and true; for, "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." 1 Pet. ii. 22. "And in righteousness doth he judge and make war" this clause is plain: As the Redeemer is ordained Judge of quick and dead, he will render to every man according to his work. Acts x. 42.

Verse 12. "His eyes were as a flame of fire." His zeal for God's glory, and man's salvation, prove this. "And on his head were many crowns." He was crowned, first, with the favor of his heavenly Father, when a voice came from heaven, which said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Luke iii. 22. Secondly, He was crowned king over the church, "for all power was given him of the Father." Matt. xxviii. 18. Thirdly, he was crowned by his conquest over sin and death. Fourthly, he was crowned by his glorious resurrection from the dead, and placed on the Father's right hand. And Fifthly, will be crowned



with victory over all his enemies. "And he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself."—When "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, 1 Cor. ii. 9.—What conception can we have of the glory, which the Redeemer enjoys at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Our ideas cannot comprehend it; none can know it but he himself.

Verse 13. "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood." This points out to us the burden laid on him, for our transgressions. It is a short but comprehensive view, of the atonement made for man's salvation. "And his name is called the Word of God." He was the Word, and promise of God, to our first parents, that "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Gen. iii. 14. The Jewish law giver, spake of this Word, by the inspiration of the Most High. Gen. xviii. David did the same. Psal. xlv.—Almost all the old prophets did so; and when the fullness of time came, the Word appeared. John i. 1.—The gospel of truth was made known, and thus he became the Word, or "the Word of God came by him," for man's salvation. "The Power of God, and the Wisdom of God," being made manifest in the person of Jesus Christ, for our redemption. 1 Cor. i. 24.

Verse 14. "And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." Thus it appears, that when true christianity is again revived, and mankind are beginning to "ride the white horse;" which is, to act on a principle of purity and truth, and "are clothed in white," or the rayment purchased by Chrsst, then

they will follow him, as did the primitive christians, in prosperity and adversity, through good and through bad report; they will follow him as the Captain of their salvation; they will grow in grace, and in favor with God, brotherly love will abound, and they will finally be conducted, by their victorious Captain, to the mansions of his heavenly Father.

Verse 15. "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations." From these words, and from the same in the last verse of this chapter, we may perceive the great work of conversion, which will prevail among the nations. They shall be smote with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" Eph. vi. 17. and become a "willing people, in these days of his power." Psal. cx. 3. "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron." All power being given to the Redeemer, the precepts which he received from the Father, and given for our instruction, contain no promises of pardon to the impenitent. After such a vast extension of mercy, through the Redeemer, God's laws are not to be trifled with; the terms are fixed; the sentence is, "Come ye blessed, or go ye cursed." "It is therefore a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Heb. x. 31. For "the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of HIM with whom we have to do." Heb. iv. 12, 13. Therefore let us dread the rod of his displeasure. "And he treadeth the winepress of the

fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." As the Redeemer is appointed the final Judge, he will consequently condemn the adversaries of God.

Verse 16. "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." As Christ Jesus is ordained to be the Judge of quick and dead, it naturally follows that he is King of kings, and Lord of lords. Paul also proves, that he "is the blessed, and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting," Amen. 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. Paul also assures Timothy, in the most solemn manner, that "the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing, and his kingdom." 2 Tim. iv. 1. From these, and other similar texts, it appears, that "he is raised far above all principality, and power, and is truly King of kings, and Lord of lords."

The prophet having, in the six foregoing verses, shewed us the might, majesty, and dominion of the Redeemer, in the remainder of this chapter, he shews us how true christianity is to be restored, previous to the millennium.

Verses 17, 18. "And I saw an angel standing in the sun: and he cried with a loud voice, saying, to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great."

These two verses naturally divide themselves into four parts; First, "An angel standing in the sun," shews a government founded on the true principles of the gospel; or, in other words, the sun, or gospel alone, is its support. Secondly, this government "cries with a loud voice to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven," which is a call to all that sincerely desire eternal happiness, to fly, or repair thither. Thirdly, they are invited to "come and gather themselves together unto the supper of the great God," and fourthly the kind of food they are to devour. From these I make the following short observations.

First, As to the gospel government. It requires us to "love the Lord, our God, with all our heart, soul, and mind, and our neighbor as ourselves. It requires us to "avoid offences" of every kind, and "as far as in us lies, to be at peace with all men." It requires us to "be patient under tribulation," and to "do to all men as we would that they should do unto us." It requires us even to "love our enemies, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us." It requires us to "be perfect, even as our Father, which is in heaven, is perfect." Matt. v. 48. These injunctions our Redeemer punctually adhered to, and left us an ensample, whereby we should follow his steps.

Secondly, As to the gospel invitation or call. It invites "all weary and heavy laden sinners" to come and partake of the benefits of the covenant of grace, purchased for them, by the Redeemer. It calls upon us to "repent, and be converted, that sin may be blotted out." It calls upon us to be born again, or truly

regenerated, and become new creatures; and it calls us to eternal life.

Thirdly, As to the supper. In the seventh, eighth, and ninth, verses of this chapter, when the standard of truth is erected, and the Jews engrafted into Christ the true and living vine, it is called the marriage supper of the Lamb, because they, and their brethren, the saints, are thereby restored to the favor, and protection of God. But in these verses, there is a very different kind of supper mentioned. It is the supper of the great God, whereby the saints are preserved, and all his, and their enemies are devoured. Even kings on their thrones, down to the meanest of their subjects, must suffer the same fate; for "with God there is no respect of persons."

Fourthly, As to the kind of food to be devoured. The increase of Christ's kingdom, and government, as it is not of this world has always been opposed, by the earthly minded powers, who are of this world; as one increases, the others must decrease. At this time, there will be two capital causes for the increase of the Redeemer's kingdom; the first is the judgment, and fall of the great whore; the second is the restoration of the Jews, who will then be as zealous in propagating the gospel, as many of them were, in the apostolic age. Thus they enlarge the kingdom of the Stone, or Rock, Christ; and as it is a kingdom set up by the God of heaven, it is never to be destroyed, but shall break in pieces, and consume all the earthly powers, who oppose it; not by the sword of human power, but by the sword, or gospel, that "proceedeth out of the mouth of HIM that is faithful and true." The Stone, or gospel, was cut out of the mountain of mercy and

love, without human hands. Dan. ii. 45. It was calculated for man's present, and future happiness, by the eternal Father. It was given to the disciples, by the Son of his love, whose prayer for them, on this head, is remarkable. "Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee; for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." John xvii. 7, 8. The gospel is perfect. It wants no human amendments: Obedience on our part, is what is required; and which qualifies us for being Christ's disciples.

To sum up the whole, it appears thus; that at the happy time alluded to, by the prophet, the power of the gospel prevails, and consumes, or "eats the flesh of kings, captains, mighty men, and the flesh of horses," or evil principles, "and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great;" or in plainer language, the power of the gospel will reduce human power, of every kind, to a skeleton.

Verses 19, 20. These two verses point particularly to that last struggle of the antichristian powers, against the Redeemer, and his saints. It appears to be the last effort of an expiring cause, in which the beast, and all in connection with him, shall be totally overthrown; and the beast and false prophet consigned to everlasting misery. Now, ye protestants of every description, be pleased to examine with care, and see whether ye have built on the same foundation, which so long has supported the beast. If your instructors have established any ceremonies, or taught any doctrines, contrary to those ordained by Christ, and his apostles, ye

come under the denomination of the miracle workers, deceivers, and false prophets; and I sincerely exhort all my lay brethren, to stand in the Sun, or pure gospel light, and fly from the wrath to come; "for if the righteous scarcely are saved, where shall the ungodly, and sinner appear?" 1 Pet. iv. 18.

Verse 21. "And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." This verse shews, first, the great work of conversion which will prevail when the beast and false prophet are removed out of its way. And secondly, the contentment which these converted ones will enjoy, when spiritual, and temporal oppressors, can torment them no more.





## CHAP. XX.

IN the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters, the prophet has shewn us the removal of the obstruction, and the cause which opened the way for the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom. In this chapter he opens to our view that happy kingdom, the glorious effects of it, and its duration; and even stretches our views to the last judgment, and general resurrection.

Verse 1. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand." Let it here be noted, that it was a star, of governing power, which the church assumed, that fell from heaven to the earth; that received the key of the bottomless pit, and opened it. It is now an angel, or governing spirit of truth, and holiness engraven on the mind of true believers, who shut it. By these means the efforts of satan cannot succeed; his kingdom is ruined, and religion being now founded on the firm basis of the law and gospel, the "gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. xvi. 18. Even satan, the grand adversary of man, cannot "go about," as formerly, "seeking whom he may devour." 1 Pet. v. 8. The christian armor in these days, will be proof against him. Eph. vi. Thus we may easily see, that the law and gospel precepts are the links of that great chain, by which satan shall be bound by millennial christians.

Verses 2, 3. This heavenly kingdom having at last subdued that of satan's, he is represented as being bound for a thousand years. Whether this be a real prophetic number of three hundred and sixty five thousand years, or a representation of a sabbath of rest,

when the children of God are to enjoy a thousand years of tranquillity, from the persecutions, and afflictions, which they have undergone, since the creation, is impossible to determine. However, it is highly probable, that as six thousand years are now nearly elapsed, in which the wicked have been the principal actors on this earthly stage, that the next thousand years will be a sabbath of rest, when "they shall cease to do evil, and learn to do well." Isa. i. 16.

Why the devil should be confined in the pit, whence an established clergy came out, would be a matter of great surprize, if our Saviour, and his apostles, had not solved the difficulty. Covetousness being the root of all evil, see how the Saviour condemns it, in severe terms, in Mark x, and Luke xviii. But when he applies this abominable vice to the Jewish teachers, he passes on them a sentence of damnation. See Matt. xxiii. Peter shews the covetous practices, that would arise among the teachers of christianity, and their dismal doom. See at large 2 Peter ii. John informs us, that "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John ii. 15. Paul's advice to Timothy against covetousness, and the danger of riches, is done in a masterly manner. 1 Tim. vi. He also calls it "a root of bitterness." Heb. xii. 15. James condemns this vice, in severe terms. James i. 1—4. Jude denounces a woe against all false, and covetous teachers. Jude, 11—13. From these joint testimonies, it is plain, that no hireling, or beneficed clergy were to exist, by the gospel dispensation. And that in this happy age, satan and they will be considered as fit companions for each other.

The prophet further informs us, that satan is to be

“shut up, and a seal set upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled.” The nature of this seal may be easily discovered. The christians of those days will abide by the law, and the gospel precepts, and what occasion then for either clergymen, or lawyers? False instructors, those emissaries of satan, will, by these means, be easily detected. There will be only one great church, established under the Lord Jesus Christ, its true and lawful Head. Covetousness, ambition, and persecution, those dangerous tools of priestcraft, will be all destroyed by the gospel plan of salvation, and mankind imitating apostolic purity. This is the broad seal, or determination of the Most High. And thus shall satan’s empire be trampled under foot, by that of the Redeemer.

Verses 4, 5. “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.” Christ now reigning over his church without a rival, his promise to his disciples will be fulfilled: For Jesus said unto them, “Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory; ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Matt. xix. 28. From these words it is plain, that the Jews will be guided by the apostolic writings, and acknowledge the Redeemer’s kingdom and power. Luke confirms the same, “Ye are they, which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat, and drink, at my table, in my kingdom, and sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Luke xxii. 28—30. Whether Christ’s

reign, during the millennium, will be personally on earth, cannot now be determined; but thus it appears, that the disciples, who were his companions on earth, will be seated with him, in the kingdom of his glory, that "where he is, there they may be also." John xiv. 3. In his prayer for them he says, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." John xvii. 24. The prophet also "saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." This proves the blessed state of those, who were martyred for the truth, under Romish apostacy, as they also are to live, and reign with Christ a thousand years. Thus the saints, at the millennium, have obtained their glorious reward, long before the rest of the dead shall arise, which is the first resurrection. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."

Verse 6. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." When this verse is seriously considered, it shews, First, the blessed and undefiled state of those who are entitled to the first resurrection. Secondly, that there is to be a first resurrection, wherein the saints are openly acknowledged by their Creator, and Redeemer. Thirdly, that these happy souls have nothing to fear from the second death, because they are already pass-

ed from death unto life eternal. And fourthly, that they are to reign on earth a thousand years.

Verses 7, 8. "And when the thousand years are expired, satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." From satan's being loosed from his confinement, I would infer, that mankind, after experiencing the blessings of the millennial state, will begin anew to fall into error, and that a spirit of delusion will once more manifest itself among the nations. By satan's gathering the wicked to battle against the saints, it is evident that war and persecution, with all the other evils attendant thereon, is to be again revived.

Verses 9, 10. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God, out of heaven, and devoured them: and the devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast, and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever." In these two verses, observe, first, at the end of the millennium, the wicked will become numerous. Secondly, their war, as usual, was against the saints. Thirdly, the merciful interposition of God in their favor. Fourthly, the devil that deceived this ungodly crew, is consigned to endless torment. And fifthly, the beast, and false prophet are to suffer the same fate.

Verses 11—15. The prophet, in these verses, gives a view of the end of all human affairs, or the general judgment. It is of so awful a nature, and so majestically grand, that I shall only transcribe it as it is.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

## CHAP. XXI.

IN the six last verses of the former chapter, the prophet has shewn us, first, that satan is to be consigned to a place of endless torment, accompanied by the beast and false prophet. Secondly, the present earth, and heavens, disappearing, or flying away from the face of its Creator, when he appears in judgment. Thirdly, the resurrection and general judgment. Fourthly, even death and hell being cast into a lake of fire. And, fifthly, all who have wrought iniquity are to suffer the same fate.

In this chapter he shews the astonishing change that is to succeed. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven, and the first earth, were passed away; and there was no more sea; and I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, behold 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, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne, said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful."

These words present to our view a new creation of endless happiness, attended with the joyful presence of the ever living God. It appears that this earthly

globe will be renewed, and undergo an entire change in order to make it the happy abode of the glorified saints at the resurrection. And when we consider the power and omnipresence of the eternal Creator, this earth, when thus renovated, may be the kingdom assigned for endless felicity, as easily as any other part of the universe. Our Saviour's description of the last judgment, as recorded by St. Matthew, seems to support this opinion. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," Matt. xxv. 31—34.

Paul, in his description of this heavenly kingdom, says, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. xv. 50—53. From these words, and even the whole of this chapter, it is plain, that at the last judgment, and general resurrection, any thing that is impure cannot inherit this new paradisiacal kingdom, let its place in the universe be where it may. He again informs us, "that if we believe that



Jesus died and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep." These words agree with the testimony of John, concerning the first and second resurrection. "For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch angel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. iv. 4, 18. The apostle then urges the belief of these important truths, by charging the faithful to "comfort one another, with these words."

Peter maintains the extraordinary change this globe has undergone, by the deluge; and also of a more tremendous one, that it is to suffer by fire, at the day of judgment. He informs us, "that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming; for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were, from the beginning of the creation." 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.— Can any thing be more evident than this at the present day? He then shews the true cause of these errors, and ascribes it to ignorance and infidelity. "For this," says he, "they are willingly ignorant of, that by the word of God, the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water, and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overwhelmed with water, perished." 2 Peter iii. 5, 6. It is certain that they who deny scripture authority, can have very little

knowledge of such an event, though the earth to this day bear evident marks of it. He then adds, "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Pet. iii. 5—7. When we consider the store houses of fire, which are visible in different parts of the earth, but particularly those of Etna, Vesuvius, Strombola, and Hecla, all situated in Europe, we may justly conclude with the apostle, that "they are kept in store, for that dreadful day of the Lord;" they have, for many ages, shewn evident marks of divine displeasure, by their frequent and calamitous eruptions; but at this awful crisis, aided by almighty Power, they may all burst forth, and at once overwhelm the earth with fire. The apostle, in the two following verses, shews us that "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, but is long suffering not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He then resumes the former subject, and assures us, "that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night: in the which the heavens shall pass away, with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up." He then enforces this belief on the minds of the faithful, in a very emphatic manner, "Seeing then," says he, "that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation, and godliness, looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." 2 Pet. iii. 10—12. Dreadful day truly! when the earth and its atmosphere shall be one un-

quenchable blaze ; one undistinguishable ruin ! The apostle, in order to console and encourage the righteous, and to convince them of the mighty power of God, adds “nevertheless we, according to his promise look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness !” 2 Pet. iii. 13. Through almost the whole of this chapter, the apostle plainly intimates ; that as the earth perished by the universal deluge, and was again made the abode of man ; so also after the general conflagration, it will be once more renewed, and made the habitation of the just made perfect. In this grand description of futurity, John has again outran Peter, as he dwells more particularly on this solemn, and sublime subject.

Verses 6, 7. “And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end : I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely : He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” These are great and precious promises, from HIM who is the fountain of all perfection.

Verse 8. “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : which is the second death.”

Verse 9. “And there came unto me one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” The angel, or spiritual government, mentioned here, is the seventh, or last, and by it the work is to be done. See Rev. xvi. As I observed before, it is to affect the

human reason and understanding; and although attended by a terrible scourge in the beginning, it will finish the work of true reformation, and cause mankind to know themselves, and come to the knowledge of the truth. In the beautiful language of prophecy, it invites John, as it were, to come, and he would show him the bride, or true church, espoused to Jesus Christ.

Verse 10. "And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." The prophet now proceeds to describe a true church, its faith, principles and practice, "whose builder and maker is God" Heb. xi. 10.

Verse 11 "Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." Christ's injunctions are here obeyed. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven," Matt. v. 16.

Verses 12, 13. "And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates."—These two verses plainly allude to the camp of Israel, where the law was given. Numb. i. ii.; And also to the promises concerning Christ. Deut. xviii. It was fortified by the law of Jehovah. It was guarded by the twelve tribes of Israel; and any thing polluted, or defiled, was not permitted to enter any of its twelve gates. Its ceremonial law prefigured HIM, who was to be sac-

rificed for the sins of mankind, in order that they might inherit eternal life, through faith in the promises; and its priesthood typified HIM who was to make the atonement. Heb. vii.

Verse 14. "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." By connecting this verse, with the two former the sum is, that the ceremonial law, with the promises annexed, opened the way to the kingdom of the Messiah, and that the gospel covenant secured the possession. Paul, in his usual elegance of stile, expresses it thus; "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith; but after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster, for ye are all the children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ." Gal. iii. 24—26. John to the same purpose, says, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John i. 17. Thus this city was founded by the Creator; for "HE that built all things is God." Heb. iii. 4. An entrance is administered by faith in the Redeemer, and obedience to his gospel; and the name of the twelve apostles were found in its foundation, as they were the writers and propagators of it, and the Jews at their return will be the purifiers of it.

Verse 15. "And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof." These words shew the right that we have to reason and private judgment.

Verse 16. "And the city lieth four square, and the length is as large as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs; the length, and the breadth, and the height of it are

equal." Here are the dimensions of a heavenly paradise, or city walled, and fortified by the law, and the gospel. From the description given, its form is a cube, having equal sides, and equal angles, through all its parts; which shews, that its blessed inhabitants are all on an equality, for "with God, there is no respect to persons." See Acts x. and Rom. ii. According to our geometric manner of measuring, each side is fifteen hundred miles in length; its area, or superficial content, is two millions, two hundred and fifty thousand square miles; this again multiplied by its height, gives a number which baffles the understanding, but at the same time shews the rich provision, which an all bounteous Creator hath made, for those who truly serve him.—Paul also, in allusion to the camp of Israel, and the terrible appearances on Mount Sinai, informs the saints in Christ, that they "are come unto mount Zion; and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly, and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Heb. xii. 22, 24. His exhortation to the saints is, "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire." Heb. xii. 28, 29.—Thus these holy apostles, and prophets have given us the portrait of a true and infallible church, which has not erred; and also a view of a heavenly paradise, or city, whose blessed inhabitants are restored from their

fallen state in the first Adam; by the mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, who is the second Adam, which was to come. 1 Cor. xv. 22.

Verse 17. "And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel." This is also the number of the twelve tribes of Israel, who received the law, and the twelve apostles of Christ, who received and published the gospel from him, multiplied into each other; which shows the multiplied mercy of God, in the salvation of man by a Redeemer. Paul's description of this building is, "That the middle wall of partition, which separated the Jew and Gentile, is broken down by the coming of Christ; that he might reconcile both unto God, in one body, by the cross, he having slain the enmity thereby; that through HIM both have an access, by one Spirit, unto the Father.— That the gentiles are no more strangers, and foreigners, but fellow citizens, with the saints, and of the household of God, and are 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. In whom you also, the gentiles, are builded together, for an habitation of God, through the Spirit." Eph. ii. 14—22.

Verse 18. "And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass." Since this city is composed of such precious materials, "what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation, and godliness," before we can enter therein! 2 Pet. iii. 11.

Verses 19, 20. "And the foundations of the wall of

the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrisolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst." These foundations are all figurative of the sure, and precious promises made known to us, in the gospel. Our Saviour informs us, "that blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Math. v. 8.

Verse 21. "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." Our Saviour compares the kingdom of heaven, to "a pearl of great price," for which we are to forfeit all earthly enjoyments, in order to obtain it. Math. xiii. 46. This verse also alludes to the doctrines taught by the twelve apostles; as every several gate was of one pearl, or in other words, every one of them received the same divine instructions. The beauty and transparency of the city, shews that sinners and unclean persons are not permitted to enter into it.

Verses 22, 23. "And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." These two verses shew, that God is the great source, and fountain of all perfection. From HIM who "is the King, eternal, immortal, and invisible," 1 Tim. i. 17. has proceeded our salvation, and redemption, by the Lord Jesus Christ. From him proceeds the operative



power, and influence of the "Holy Spirit, which is given to every man to profit withal." 1 Cor. xii. 7. From HIM proceeds "every good and perfect gift." James i. 17. In a word, "he is all in all." 1 Cor. xv. 28. And even in this heavenly paradise, the prophet shews, that he is still the same, for "the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

Verse 24. "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." In this verse we may observe, first, the happy state of those who are saved, and walk in the light of the new Jerusalem. Secondly, even regal power must bow, and render homage to him, who is here "King of kings, and Lord of lords," and placed "far above all principality and earthly power."

Verse 25. "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there." Here is a gracious invitation given; the gates being continually open to all who will come, that they may enjoy perpetual light.

Verse 26. "And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it." This verse proves, that the saints are the glory and honor of any nation; as none but the saints of God, and of Christ, are qualified to have an inheritance in this holy city.

Verse 27. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." The law, and the the gospel, which are to stand for ever; are an im-

pregnable barrier, against all the workers of iniquity. These, guarded by the eye of Omniscency, make it impossible for the wicked to enter into this abode of eternal felicity.

## CHAP. XXII.

IN this, as the former chapter, the prophet dwells with rapturous delight, on those scenes of never fading happiness, which the saints, made perfect, enjoy in the presence of God and of Christ, with many other particulars which demand our serious attention.

Verse 1. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throue of God and of the Lamb." The prophet in allusion to the first paradise, where sin entered into the world, and death by sin; calls our attention to this new paradise, where sin cannot enter. In this happy region sin can have no dominion, therefore its waters, or the precepts which its inhabitants adhere to, are as "a pure river, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb."

Verse 2. "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bear twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." At first view, this verse seems to contain an impossibility; but when we consider what the tree of life is, the difficulty ceases.

The tree of life is the law, or commands of God; these were broken by the disobedience of the first Adam, but fulfilled by the perfect obedience of the second. Had Adam lived in a state of innocence, he would have partook of the tree of life, and lived for ever; but the command was, "Thou shalt not eat of the tree of knowlege of good and evil;" which command implies; thou shalt not, or cannot be both saint

and sinner. By his disobedience, he, and his posterity, fell from that state of innocence, and purity, in which he was created, and could not regain the tree, or law of life, as it was guarded by the flaming sword of God's justice. Gen. iii. 24. Thus "by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous." Rom. v. 19. Therefore, it is God's mercy, through Jesus Christ, which again opens the door of paradise, and gives his saints a right to the tree, or law of life, by his mediatorial office.

By cleaving to the tree, or law of life, it causes the saint to bear twelve manner of fruits, such as faith, hope, charity, chastity, patience, temperance, meekness, humility, mercy, grace, peace, and joy. It yields this fruit every month, which shews a continual increase of grace, and perseverance therein. Its leaves, or good works, are also manifest in the lives, and conduct of the saints, and have a happy effect in healing, or converting the nations. These heavenly perfections are the same, in substance, with our Saviour's instruction. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven." Matt. v. 16.

Verses 3—5. In these verses, we see the happy consequences resulting from obedience. I do not here mean perfect obedience in this life, for "by grace we are saved, through faith; and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast." Eph. ii. 8, 9. But help must be upon One, who is mighty to save, and He in this life has graciously promised to aid and assist us; by these means our poor endeavors after perfection, are accepted of,

through his righteousness. But in this new, and heavenly state, obedience arrives to perfection; and John assigns the reason. "And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God, and of the Lamb, shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads, and there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."

Verses 6, 7. "And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel, to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold I come quickly: Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." In these two verses, we may observe, first, an assurance given, that the sayings of this book are both faithful and true. Secondly, that he had this extraordinary knowlege sent from HIM, who knoweth all things. Thirdly, the speedy execution of them, in their appointed time. And fourthly, a blessing pronounced on them, who keep, or treasure up the sayings of this book.

Verses 8, 9. "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard, and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren, the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: Worship God." In these two verses we have, first, the prophet's declaration, that he had heard and seen these things, - as if he had been personally present. By which we may learn, that it

was by the operative power, and influence of God, that he attained to this knowlege, it being now above eighteen hundred years since he wrote, and many of his sayings are not yet accomplished. Secondly, that he fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, which shewed him these things, as if this knowlege was given by him alone. Thirdly, the same angel said unto him, "See thou do it not;" by which we may see, that this angel was not the primary cause of John's knowlege, and should not be adored, or worshipped as God. Fourthly, the same angel declares, "I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren, the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book;" which proves, that this angel, or ministering spirit, was a gift, given to John, and also to his brethren, the prophets. Fifthly, John was, by the same angel, directed to worship God, by which we may understand, that God alone is the primary, or great first Cause of all things, and that HE only is the object of worship, and adoration. Isa. xlv.

This doctrine is strongly supported through all the writings of Moses, and particularly in the first commandment; all the old prophets maintained it; and Jesus Christ acknowleges him, as his heavenly Father, and prayed to him as such. Peter and Paul calls him the God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. See 1 Pet. i. 2.—2 Cor. i. 3.—2 Cor. xi. 31. and Phil. i. 3. Among the christian converts, it was the first article of their faith, to believe that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, by the mighty power of God. See Acts ii. 24; iii. 15; iv. 10. and x. 40. and also Rom. x. 9. and Eph. i. 20. Paul assures Timothy, that there is one God and one Mediator. 1 Tim. ii. 5. I must here

observe, that the phrase "God our Saviour," was well known among the primitive christiáns, as it pointed out the mighty power of God, in the incarnation and atonement of Christ Jesus; and Paul was "not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. i. 16. And again he shews that, "Christ is the power and wisdom of God unto them which are called." 1 Cor. i. 21.

That the manifestation of the Spirit is a gift, given to every man to profit withal, Paul proves at large. See 1 Cor. xii. Peter proves the Holy Ghost to be the gift of God. See the case of Simon the sorcerer; Acts viii. 18—23. and in that of Cornelius; Acts x. 45. James proves, that "every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James i. 17. The Redeemer says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi. 44. These words prove the operative power, or gift, to come from God; and also the reviving and efficacious power of the Mediator. The parable of the talents proves the gifts of God to man, and the dangerous consequences of our not improving these spiritual gifts. Matt. 25. And holy John, in these verses, gives a demonstrative proof, that it is not the gift, but the Giver that is to be adored.

Verses 10, 11. "And he saith unto me, seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand, he that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he

that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." From these words we may see the mercy, and goodness of our bounteous Creator, in giving us this book of revelation. In it is shewn the way of life, immortality, and endless happiness; and also the ways of sin, and death. Therefore, the sayings of it are not to be sealed up. Reason is given unto us; freedom of will is given unto us; if we walk in the way of life, we are sure of his aid and assistance; if we continue in sin, the fault is ours; "The Spirit will not always strive with man." Gen. vi. 3. Therefore, let him that is desirous of being unjust, be unjust still; and he who delights in filth, let him be filthy still; he who hath pleasure in righteousness, let him be righteous without wavering; and he who finds comfort in holiness, let him persevere therein unto the end.

Verse 12. "And behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." In order to convince us of the danger of a sinful life, and to encourage a life of holiness, we are shewn in this verse, how cautiously we ought to act. Our life at best is but a span; the hour of death is coming on apace; we know not the time, but we know that "there is neither work, nor device, in the grave, whither we are all hastening." Eccl. ix. 10. Therefore let us be wise unto salvation, and give no sleep to our eyes, nor slumber to our eyelids, till by sincere repentance of our sins, and faith unfeigned in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are prepared to meet our God, with serenity, and holy boldness.

Verses 13, 14. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, blessed are



they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." In these two verses the prophet shews us, first, that there is a great first Cause, whose existence is from eternity, to eternity. Secondly, that this great and eternal Being, has given us his laws and commandments. Thirdly, the blessed state of those who obey his commandments. And fourthly, that these laws are the gates, or entrances, into the city of the living God, where his saints, through mercy, may have a right to the tree, or law of life, and reign with him for evermore.

Verse 15. "For without are dogs, and sorcerors, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth, and maketh a lie." From these words we may observe, first, the estimation in which those are held, who live without the boundaries, or limits of the divine laws. Secondly, that all such obstinate sinners cannot enter the gates of the city, or inherit eternal life.

Verse 16. "I Jesus have sent mine angel, to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." This verse presents to the mind many considerations, the principal of which are, first, God's loving kindness, and tender mercy, to fallen man, by sending his beloved Son into the world, to shew us the way of salvation. Secondly, it reminds us of the promises concerning the Redeemer, through all the old testament. Thirdly, it is a convincing proof of the glory, which he hath with the Father, as Mediator. Fourthly, by his power, and advocacy with God, he sent his angel, or spiritual gift, to John, in order to

have these things testified in the churches. Fifthly, it proves the Mediator's care and concern for the spiritual welfare of the churches. Sixthly, Christ being "the root, and the offspring of David," shews his kingly power, and that none but he hath a right to rule, and govern the churches. Seventhly, the Redeemer being "the bright and morning star;" shews his willingness to guide the churches to glory, or eternal day. And eighthly, that any mortal assuming this prerogative is an antichrist.

Verse 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 of the water of life freely." Here are a variety of invitations to come to the fountain of salvation, and inherit eternal life. First, the "Spirit" invites; for "God willeth not the the death of a sinner." Secondly, the "bride," or true church espoused to Christ, invites all to join with them, and be saved. Thirdly, "and let him that heareth," and understandeth the gospel, "say," to his fellow mortals, "Come," and partake of all the blessings purchased for you by the Redeemer. Fourthly, "let him that is athirst come" to that pure river, whose waters "spring up into everlasting life." John iv. 14. Fifthly, "and whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely." Here we see what a powerful invitation comes to lost sinners, by the free grace of God, through Christ Jesus!

Verse 18, 19. "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the

book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." This wonderful book, being "the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him," Rev. i. 1. is to stand on record for ever. It cannot receive any addition, without incurring the wrath of God, he being the Author of it; neither can any part of it be taken away, for the same reason. The eternal Father having revealed his will to his Son, the Son sent, and signified it, by divine inspiration, to his faithful disciple and servant John; its veracity, therefore, cannot be doubted. It contains the very essence of true christianity, and the faith of the primitive church. Its prophetic parts are so exactly calculated, as to time, place, and circumstances, as to become the wonder and admiration of mankind, and time will make it more so. It is a treasury of divine knowlege, and is a barrier against deism and infidelity, and which will, ere long, completely overthrow them. It is written in such characters, that neither heathen, papal, or other enemies, could understand them. John, in his usual modesty of style, claims no merit by writing this book; on the contrary, he repeatedly assures us, that he did it by divine command, and that they are the true sayings of God.

The right exercise of reason, aided by revelation, will, I am fully convinced, before this century ends, manifest to mankind, the great and important end, that God had in view, by giving us this revelation of his will. At present, that part of mankind, who are called christian, are mad and distracted, and the nations of it are angry with each other; but it is still darkest, just before the dawn of day. Thus it was be-

fore the deluge, when men became corrupt before God, and filled the earth with violence. Thus it was before the light of the gospel shined forth into the world, and instructed mankind in the knowlege of divine truth. Thus it was before that glimmering light of the reformation appeared, and partially disclosed the enormities of popery. At present christendom is corrupt, and filled with violence and blood; the delusive mists of covetousness and ambition, with their pernicious train, have overspread it, and kept from us those rays of celestial light, which the gospel affords. This true light, which was given to "enlighten every man," now "shineth in darkness," but alas! "the darkness comprehends it not." John i. 5. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John iii. 19. Thus evil deeds, and willful ignorance, have brought on the calamities, which are desolating the nations of Europe. When these severe judgments are ended, the christian world will renounce their errors, and millennial light will begin to dawn upon it.

Verse 20. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." By considering these words, we shall find, first, an additional proof of the Redeemer's power, for quickly may our souls be required of us. Luke xii. 20. Quickly must our consciences acquit or condemn us. Quickly may he, from his judgment seat, decide our eternal condition. Quickly shall we receive our reward, whether good or evil; and quickly may calamities assail us, on every side, even in this life, as we are constantly exposed to known and unknown

dangers. Secondly, we may see how strongly a true resignation to the divine will is here recommended! Let our situation in life be what it may, either in prosperity or adversity, in tribulation and persecution, in sickness and in health, and at all times, we should be ready to say, in the sublime words of the prophet, "Even so, come, LORD JESUS!

To conclude, this holy, beloved, and faithful apostle, and prophet, after having left on record the word, and will of God, for our instruction and salvation; after having shewn us the attributes, and perfections of the eternal Jehovah, and his merciful interposition in behalf of his fallen creature, man, by the Lord Jesus Christ; after having made known the Redeemer's power, in opening the seals, and shewing the strait and narrow way to eternal life, and the broad ways to sin and death; after shewing the various ways, by which the gospel would be sounded to mankind, and the fatal errors established by the false sounds of it; after shewing the three woes, which these erroneous doctrines occasioned, and the vials of God's wrath, in consequence thereof; after shewing the rise, continuance, and number of the papal beast, and its power, in endeavoring to kill the witnesses; after shewing the woman, or true church, arrayed in robes of righteousness, her conflicts with satan, the Romish beast, and papal power, her flight into the wilderness, and her dismal abode in it, until the art of printing became useful; after shewing the overthrow of the papal empire, the return of the Jews to Jesus, the Captain of their salvation, and the annihilation of all earthly church establishments, previous to the millenium; after shewing the millennial state, the binding

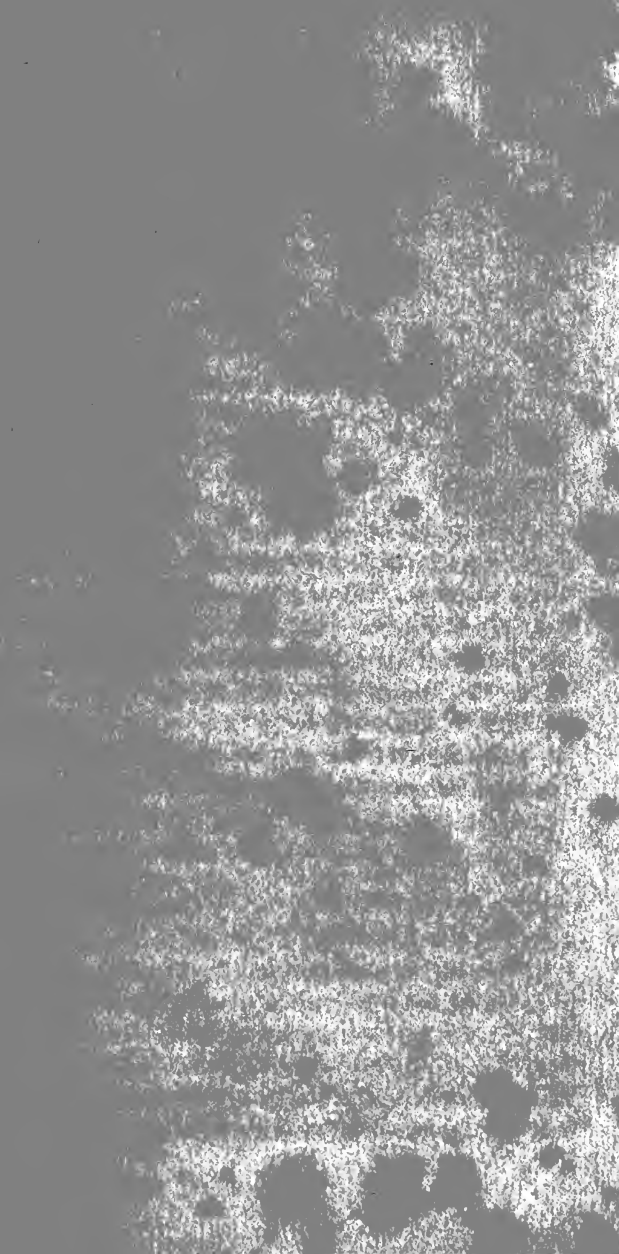
of satan, and the first resurrection; after shewing the last resurrection, and the general judgment, the dissolution of the present earth and heavens, the creation of new ones on their ruins, the new Jerusalem, or heavenly paradise, and the eternal happiness of its inhabitants, in the presence of God, and of Christ; after shewing us the truth, and certainty of the sayings contained in this book, with many other truly interesting particulars, this heavenly minded man then leaves to the churches his own prayer, or blessing, by saying, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

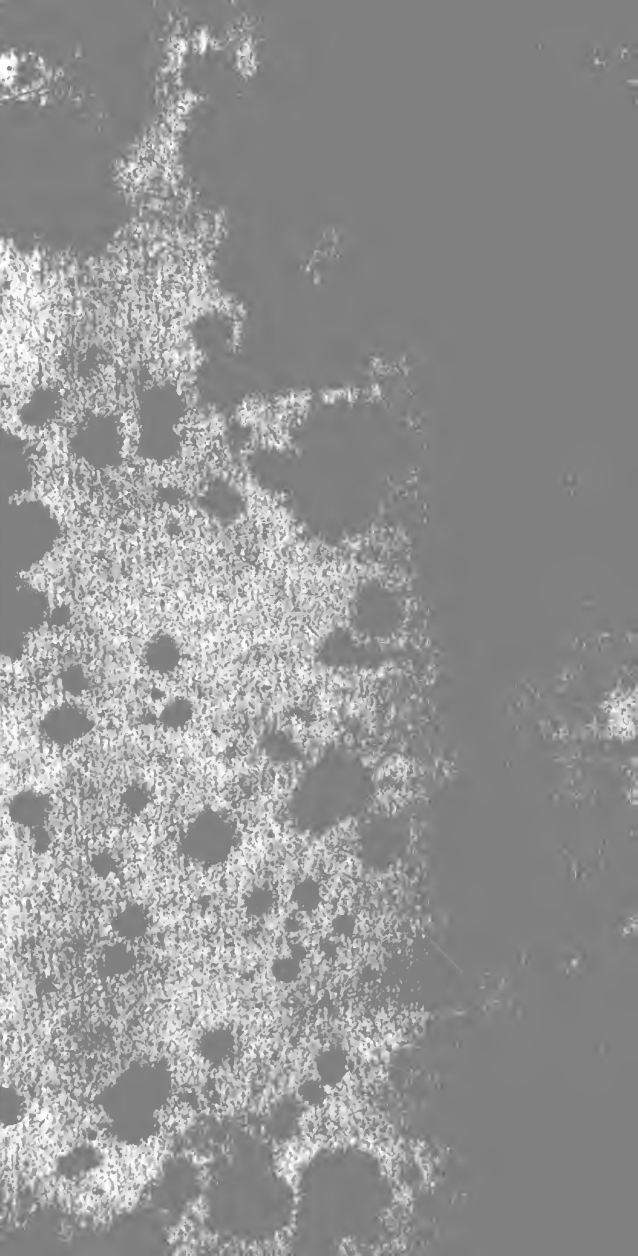
THE END.

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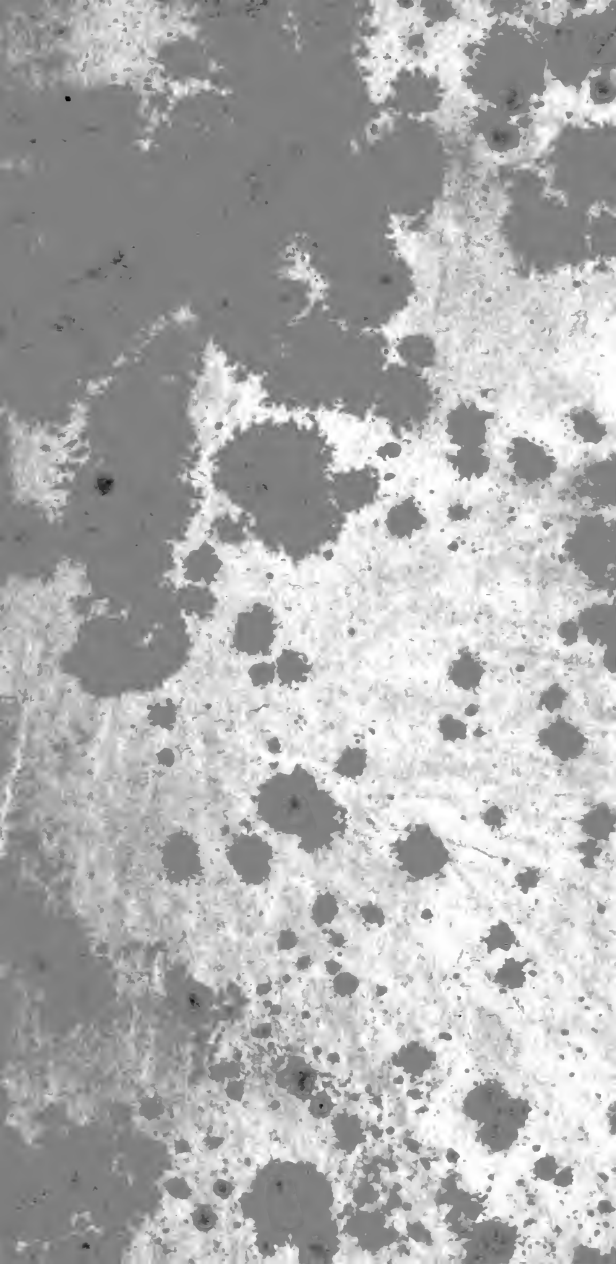
*Erratum.* The 7th and 8th lines from the bottom, in page 161, ought to be read thus.

pal authority over them. Beyond these limits, the papal jurisdiction never extended itself in Europe; Mus-  
*Other smaller errors, few it is hoped, the candid Reader is requested to excuse and correct.*









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