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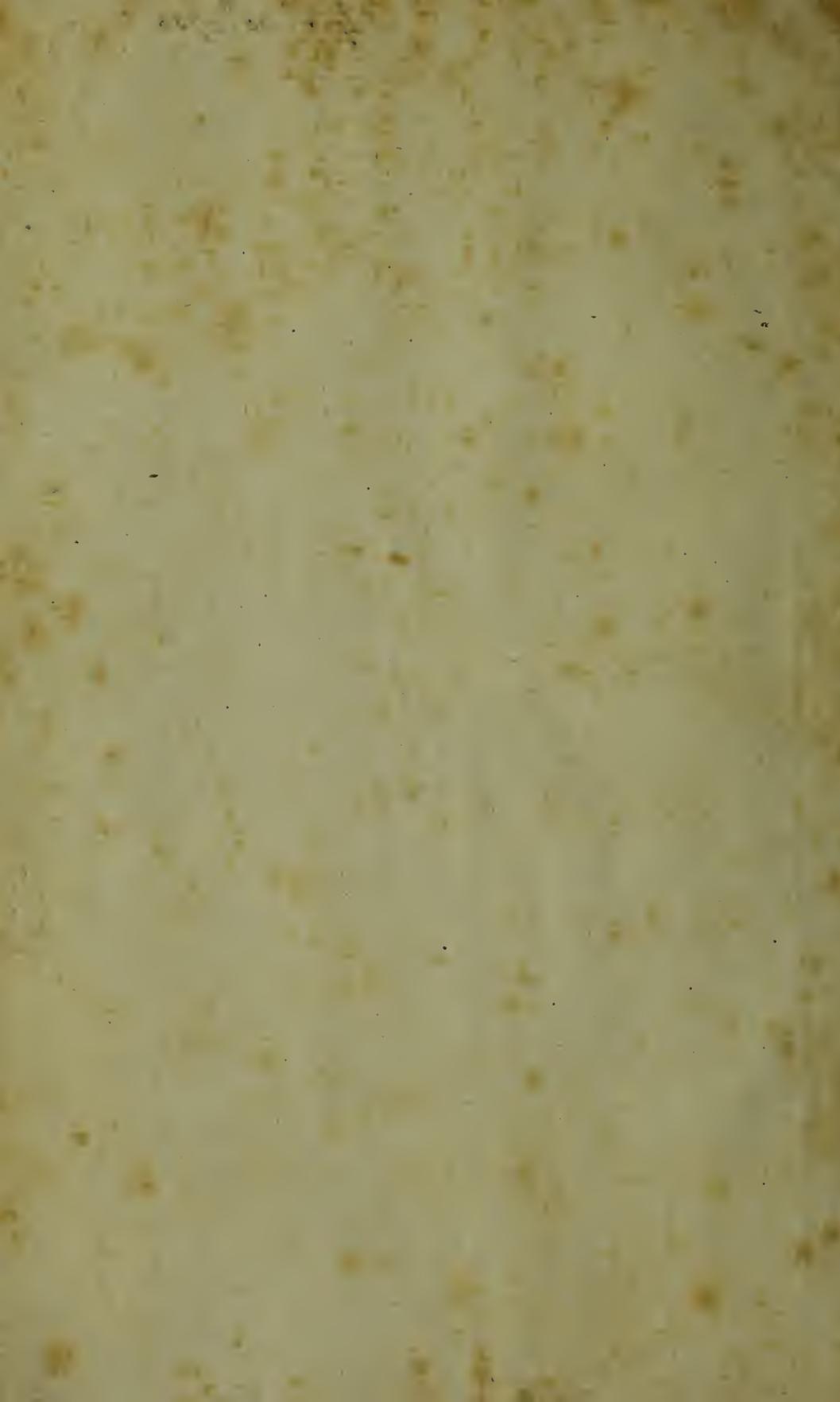
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Apr. 30th 1733.











A GENERAL

**ECCLESIASTICAL
HISTORY**

From the NATIVITY of our
BLESSED SAVIOUR

To the First ESTABLISHMENT of
Christianity by Human Laws,
Under the EMPEROR
CONSTANTINE the Great.

Containing the Space of about 313 Years.

With so much of the **JEWISH** and **ROMAN**
HISTORY as is Necessary and Convenient
to illustrate the WORK.

To which is added, A Large **CHRONOLOGICAL**
TABLE of all the *Roman and Ecclesiastical* Affairs,
included in the same Period of Time.

By **LAURENCE ECHARD**, A. M.
ARCH-DEACON of *Stowe.*

VOLUME *the* FIRST.

The SIXTH EDITION.

LONDON: Printed for *Jacob Tonson*, at *Shakespeare's-Head*
over-against *Katharine-Street* in the Strand. **MDCCXXII.**

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Mrs. Grant

May 18, 1863

PAID BY
MAY 18 1863
NEW YORK

A N N E R.



HEREAS Our Trusty and Well-beloved *Jacob Tonson*, of our City of *London*, Bookseller, hath humbly represented unto Us, that he hath, with great Labour and Expence, prepared for the Prefs a new Edition of *The Ecclesiastical History*, written by the Reverend Mr. *Laurence Echard*, and has therefore humbly besought Us to grant him Our Royal Privilege and Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing thereof for the Term of Fourteen Years. We being willing to give all due Encouragement to Works of this Nature, tending to the Advancement of Learning, are graciously pleased to condescend to his Request; and do therefore, by these Presents, grant to him the said *Jacob Tonson*, his Executors, Administrators and Assigns, Our Royal Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing *The Ecclesiastical History*, written by the Reverend Mr. *Laurence Echard*, for the Term of Fourteen Years from the Date hereof; Strictly forbidding all Our Subjects within Our Kingdoms and Dominions to Reprint the same, either in whole, or in part, or to import, buy, vend, utter or distribute any Copies thereof Reprinted beyond the Seas, during the aforesaid Term of Fourteen Years, without the Consent or Approbation of the said *Jacob Tonson*, his Heirs, Executors and Assigns, under his or their Hands and Seals first had and obtained, as they will Answer the contrary at their Perils: Whereof the Master, Wardens and Company of Stationers are to take Notice, that the same may be entered in their Register, and that due Obedience be rendred thereunto. Given at our Court at *St. James's* the 19th Day of *November*, 1709. In the Eighth Year of Our Reign.

By Her Majesty's Command,

S U N D E R L A N D.



TO THE
QUEEN.

MADAM,



WERE the Performance of this Work proportionable to the Dignity of its Subject, it might naturally hope for the Countenance and Protection of Persons of the highest Rank: Since it consists

Epistle Dedicatory.

of the principal Acts of the Church of God in the Times of its greatest Purity and Perfection, shewing the stupendious Progress it made throughout the World, and the glorious Conquests it obtain'd over all the Powers of Darknes.

But Your Majesty being no less remarkable for Goodness, than for Greatness, low as the Performance is, I am still encourag'd to offer this Address, and to lay this History before Your Majesty, as the great Protector and Nursing Mother of the noblest Branch of that Church here treated of and describ'd, and the true Defender
of

Epistle Dedicatory.

of that Faith which was deliver'd by the Mouth of our blessed Saviour, propagated by the Labours of his Apostles, and seal'd by the Blood of his Martyrs.

Your Majesty having shewn a hearty Love for Your Subjects, and a generous Regard for Your Allies, is become not only the Joy and Delight of our Nations, but also the very Hopes and Life of *Europe*; and the Eyes of its Inhabitants are fix'd upon Your Majesty, looking out for Protection and Assistance, as from a Deliverer sent from Heaven to break their Chains, to dissipate their Fears, and to secure to them the Blessings both of Peace and Liberty.

Epistle Dedicatory.

Liberty. These are noble Acts, the Compleating of which Providence seems to have reserv'd for Your Majesty's Reign, to render it glorious and triumphant: But Your Majesty's tender and affectionate Care for the Church of God, and those fresh Endeavours to destroy its greatest Enemies, Vice and Immorality, raise Your Majesty's Fame to the full Height, and cause it to triumph above all the Glories of this World.

The Freeing of *Europe*, and the Restoration of Peace, are Works truly great, and Worthy of the Crown Your Majesty wears; but the Nourishing God's Church,

Church,

Epistle Dedicatory.

Church, and the Extirpation of Impiety, surpass all Temporal Rewards, and will meet with an immortal and incorruptible Crown in the ineffable Glories of Eternity. The Former only makes this World happy, but the Latter adds Happiness even to Heaven it self; and whilst the One gives Joy to the Inhabitants of the Earth, the Other bears it to the Angels and blest Spirits above; raising Transports of Joy in that Place where all Joys are to be found, and creating Pleasures in those peaceful Regions where no true Pleasures can be wanting.

That

Epistle Dedicatory.

That Your Majesty may succeed in all the great Works You have so happily begun, is the hearty Prayer of all good Men and true Subjects, and can be no less of him who with all possible Veneration is,

MADAM,

Your Majesty's most dutiful,

most faithful and

devoted Subject,

May 29,
1702.

Laurence Echard.



T H E

P R E F A C E .



THE great Usefulness of the Subject of this Work, and the particular Incouragement it has met in the World, have strongly engag'd me to examine it a second Time, and revise it carefully for another Impression. And that nothing might be wanting towards a reasonable Promoting of it, the Publisher has perform'd his Part, in setting it forth in such a due Compass, and such a fair Letter, as may best contribute to the Ease and Conveniency, as well as Satisfaction, of the Reader. It is therefore hop'd, That the careful Endeavours of Both, will add new Life and Success to the Design it self.

As to the Subject in general, it is the greatest and most sublime in its Nature, that ever I did, or can ever Hope to attempt; such as deserves

The P R E F A C E.

serves the noblest and most learned Pens of our Nation; as may appear only from the Title, and the Beginning of the Introduction. It is a History greater than that of the Creation, even of the Salvation of Mankind, of the wonderful Propagation of the Gospel, and all the glorious Effects of it; which, IF DONE TO PERFECTION, might tend more to the Honour of God and the Christian Religion, and the real Benefit of the World, both as to Faith and Morality, than all the Discussions, Arguments and Sermons that Men can invent; and would in true Excellency be inferior to nothing but the Holy Scriptures. It is the History of Christianity in its utmost Purity and Prevalency, while it continued independent of all human Supports; in which are to be found the best of Sermons, and the noblest Sufferings; the profoundest Mysteries, and the greatest Miracles; besides many other uncommon and surprising Events, the Object of Mens Faith and Admiration.

These were sufficient Inducements to me formerly to undertake this Design, and now to revise and correct it; and tho' it be not brought to that Perfection as to deserve the Commendation before-mention'd, yet, after naming the great Assistances I had from the most eminent Men, I may venture to recommend it as, at least, an useful and laudable Performance; the Honour and Reputation whereof I freely surrender to Them. It is upon their Account also that, without Breach of Modesty, I might mention the Approbation the first Impression receiv'd from those

of

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of no little Worth and Knowledge; and likewise the Success it had in supporting some against the Efforts of Deists and others, who would either undermine, or much weaken the Christian Religion. I mention this to the Comfort both of my Assistants and my self: And for this Reason, after imploring a Blessing upon it from Heaven above, I here beg the reasonable Promotion of it from all pious Confessors, who are zealous for the Honour of their blessed Saviour, the glorious Apostles, and Evangelists, and the noble Army of Martyrs of those Ages.

I am sensible that since the first Appearance of this Work there have been some Writers, who have advanc'd such Notions, as, if strictly true, would by consequence invalidate many material Parts of my History. But upon a strict Review, in order to a more correct Edition, I did not find it necessary to alter any one Passage upon their Account. They did not immediately attack Me, nor had I Leisure, nor Inclination, to engage Them. I shall only say, I believe this History stands upon a more sure Foundation than to be overthrown by their Arguments, and that the Matters of Fact will out-ballance any Human Reasonings: And I further hope that this Work may live, when the Occasion of these Controversies shall be dead and forgotten.

But to come more immediately to the Particulars of this History: The Introduction is design'd to give a full Light to the succeeding Parts, that so all might be intelligible to the
meanest

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meanest Capacity. It is a sort of a smaller Explanation of the Old Testament, which illustrates many Passages in the New; and it is so necessary, and almost essential a Part of the rest, that it cannot be separated, without maiming the whole Body.

The first Book of the Three gives a compleat Account of all the Actions of our blessed Saviour, with several of the Jewish and Roman Affairs. And tho' this in a manner is only taken from the four Evangelists, Josephus, Dion-Cassius, Tacitus and Suetonius, yet I found it necessary to consult a great Number of modern Commentators, Harmonists and Chronologers: By whose Assistance, not only our Saviour's Actions are reduc'd to an exact Method and Order of Time, but almost every single Verse in the four Gospels is so explain'd, or set in such a Light, that I believe their Sense cannot be mistaken any further than I have been mis-led my self. The chief Commentators here us'd were Mede, Hammond, Lightfoot, Grotius and the Criticks; and the chief Harmonists, Chemnitius with his Finishers, Garthwart, Richardson, Lightfoot and Craddock, with some others of the same Nature, tho' not Name, as Bishop Taylor, Walker, &c. The Labour here taken, and the Perfection aim'd at, I hope will be an Answer to any who shall think the first Book too long for the rest of the History: For it could not be made shorter without a vast Diminution of its Usefulness, to the middle or inferior sort of Readers.

The

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The Second Book comprehends and explains The Acts of the Apostles, written by St. Luke, and all the rest that are authentick, with a greater Variety of Affairs than the First. The Third Book contains the Acts and Sufferings of the Primitive Christians, with a still greater Variety than the other. These two were not only taken from the New Testament, Josephus, Philo, Eusebius, Lactantius, Orosius, and Sul. Severus, but also from most of the Christian Writers in the four first Centuries, besides all the Roman Historians. All which are digested in as clear a Method, and in as intelligible a Manner, as independant Stories, incoherent Fragments, and heaps of Confusion would permit. I have generally avoided, tho' not absolutely rejected, the Authorities and Relations of Nicephorus, Metaphrastes, Suidas, with other uncertain Writers of those Ages. Those more Modern have been of greater Use and Advantage to me; and that my Book might be defective in no sort of helps, I consulted all those of the greatest Note, either Foreigners, or Englishmen. Among the Former, I made use of the Magdeburg Centuriators, Baronius, Brietius, Capellus, Valesius, Spanhemius, Noris, Pagi, Ruinart, Godeau, Le Sueur, Fleury, Du-Pin and Tillemont; among the Latter, I us'd Fox, Usher, Simpson, Montague, Pearson, Howel, Stillingfleet, Cave, Dodwell, Wake and Wotton. From these, and many others, I have occasionally borrow'd with all Freedom; avoiding nothing which I thought

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might contribute either to the Usefulness, or the Ornament of my Book.

The Quotations are almost wholly of the Ancients, from whence the Materials were originally taken, being sometimes in the Body of the Book, but most commonly in the Margin. They were made short, that they might not be offensive to the Eye of the Reader; but if any think them not particular enough, because the Page and Chapter of the Book are not nam'd, I have this to answer, That there is scarce any considerable Passage in the History, but from these short Quotations, the Place from whence it was taken may immediately be found by the Help of a good Index, which now few old Books want: And the quoting of Pages, &c. is of no Use to a Reader, who has not the same Editions with the Author.

That nothing might be wanting to make the Work compleat, besides a Map of the Holy Land, taken from the best Geographers, I have added a large Chronological Table, collected from the Works of the nicest Authors, and the Information of one of the greatest Chronologers now living. This shows all the Branches of the History in an easie, short and natural View; and is more particular in the Parts, and compleat in its Kind, than any other in the English Tongue. Only, by Reason of this smaller Edition, we were oblig'd to omit the Successions of the three Bishops of Rome, Alexandria and Antioch, which were in the former; but those the Reader

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der may find sufficiently particulariz'd in the Body of the Book.

As to this Second Edition, I have not much to say, but only That it is more correct than the former, and in some few Places alter'd and improv'd. I would have done more to it, had I found any Occasion for it: For after I had examin'd the former Impression, and consulted many judicious Friends, I could not learn that there was a real Occasion for any considerable Alterations; which has given me a greater Reason to value it than I had before.

Only I must not omit one Passage, where, in Point of Chronology, some worthy Persons have judg'd me to have been mistaken; and I cannot affirm that I am not. It is a nice Matter relating to the true Time of the Martyrdom of St. Ignatius, which I have plac'd in the 10th Year of Trajan's Reign, A. D. 107. The famous Bishop Pearson was once of the same Opinion, as well as Archbishop Usher; but at last having conquer'd several tedious Chronological Difficulties, and proceeding upon very exact Calculations, Bishop Pearson has fix'd it to the Year 116; upon which he has made an excellent Dissertation, lately publish'd with the new Edition of Ignatius's Epistles at Oxford. Mon. Pagi, and Bishop Lloyd are both of this last Opinion; as may be seen in the Critick of the former upon Baronius, under the Year 107. Yet still the Reasons and Arguments us'd by Mons. Tillemont, in his 17th Note upon the Reign of Trajan,

The P R E F A C E.

Jan, are so strong against this Opinion, and for the other, that I did not think it necessary to make any Alteration. I am sensible that there are Difficulties attending both Sides, that are not easily surmounted; and therefore I shall leave it to the Judgment of such as shall please to examine the Dissertations of those two great Men, Bishop Pearson, and Mon. Tillemont, to determine of this Point as they see Cause.

As to other Objections, I know of none worth the Reader's Notice; if any shall hereafter be discover'd, and Those who observe them will please to favour me with a private Information of them, it shall be accepted with all Gratitude and Acknowledgment; and accordingly Amendment shall be made the first Opportunity.

Louth in Lincolnshire,
November 19, 1709.

L. E.

THE

THE CONTENTS.

The INTRODUCTION.

Containing a short Description of the Holy Land, with an Account of the Jews, their Government and Legal Constitutions, their various Revolutions, Mixtures and Divisions; Observations upon the gradual and regular Manifestation of the Messiah; with some Historical Matters preceding the Nativity of our Saviour.

B O O K I.

From the Nativity of our Blessed Saviour, to his Ascension, according to the vulgar Computation. Containing the Space of 32 Years and 5 Months.

C H A P. I.

From the Nativity of our Blessed Saviour to the Beginning of the Gospel, and first Preaching of John Baptist, according to the vulgar Computation. Containing 28 Years, and above 6 Months.

C H A P. II.

From the Beginning of the Gospel, and first Preaching of John Baptist, to the Beginning of the first Passover after our Blessed Saviour's Baptism, according to the vulgar Computation. Containing 10 Months and 3 Days.

C H A P.

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CHAP. IV.

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CHAP. V.

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CHAP. II.

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CHAP. III.

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CHAP. VII.

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BOOK III.

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CH A P. III.

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CH A P. IV.

From the Middle of the fifth Persecution, and Conclusion of the second Century, to the beginning of the sixth General Persecution of the Church, under the Emperor Maximinus. Containing the Space of about 35 Years.

CH A P. V.

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CH A P. VI.

From the End of the seventh General Persecution of the Church, to the Beginning of the Dioclesian Æra, usually called the Æra of the Martyrs. Containing the Space of about 31 Years.

CH A P. VII.

From the Beginning of the Dioclesian Æra, to the Beginning of the tenth and last General Persecution of the Church, usually called the Dioclesian Persecution. Containing the Space of almost 19 Years.

CH A P. VIII.

From the Beginning of the tenth great Persecution of the Church, to the first Establishment of Christianity by Human Laws, under the Emperor Constantine the Great. Containing the Space of about 10 Years.

A MAP
of the
HOLY-LAND
according to its State in our
Blessed Saviours Time

Sold by Jacob Tonson at
Grays Inn Gate in Grays Inn
Lane. London.

Scale of Miles

ÆGYPT

THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

THE DEAD SEA

SYRIA

DECAPOLIS
TRACHONITIS

SAMARIA

PERRA

JUDEA

ARABIA

IDUMEA

The Desert of Idumea







T H E

INTRODUCTION.

Containing a short Description of the Holy-Land, with a particular Account of the Jews, their Government and Legal Constitutions, their various Revolutions, Mixtures and Divisions; Observations upon the gradual and regular Manifestation of the Messiah; with some Historical Matters preceding the Nativity of our SAVIOUR.

I.  MY Design, in this following Attempt, is to give a plain and intelligible Account of the chief *Ecclesiastical* Affairs in the Three first Ages of the Christian Church, and in part of the Fourth; to trace *Christianity* from its Birth and Infancy, thro' all its terrible Conflicts, to its full Growth and Vigour; to shew it in its Purity and Perfection, sometimes languishing and expiring, then reviving and prevailing in all Nations, till it became triumphant over the *Pagan* World, conquer'd all the Powers of Hell and Earth, and commanded the additional Support of Human Constitutions. But in this great Variety of Affairs, many Things have been defectively and confusedly transmitted to us; so that in writing such an History, Method and Perspicuity are almost as necessary as Fidelity and Impartiality. Therefore all things ought to be represented with an artful Simplicity, and in such a regular Manner, as they may be most easily comprehended,

VOL. I. B hended,

hended, and best retained ; which I shall endeavour to effect, partly by a Chronological Disposition of the Matter, and a Periodical Ordering of the main Parts, partly by a convenient Mixture of the *Jewish* and *Roman* History, and partly by recounting such Circumstances and preceding Accidents, as will give the greatest Light to the succeeding Story. And since *Geography* is a very necessary Illustration of *History*, it will not be improper to begin with some Account of that Country where *Christianity* had its Birth, and where the true Religion for many Ages was principally known ; for which Reason it is most commonly call'd by the Name of the *Holy-Land*.

The *Holy-Land*, first call'd the Land of *Canaan*, and the Land of *Promise*, lyes in *Asia*, near the most Western Part of that Quarter of the World, and is bounded on the East by *Arabia Deserta*, from which it is partly divided by Mount *Gilead*, and Mount *Arnon* ; on the West, or rather North-West, by the farthest End of the *Mediterranean* Sea, and some of that Part of *Syria* call'd *Phoenicia* ; on the North, or North-East, by the rest of *Syria*, from which it is divided by *Anti-Libanus*, and Mount *Hermon* ; and on the South, and South-West, by *Arabia Petraea*, and particularly by that Part of it call'd *Idumaea*. It is situated in a very warm Climate, between 30 Degr. 4 Min. and 33 Degr. 2 Min. of Northern Latitude ; and between 64 Degr. 49 Min. and 68 Degr. 20 Min. of Longitude ; being in Length, from the Northern Parts of *Galilee*, to the Southern Parts of *Judea*, about 200 *English* Miles ; and in Breadth, from the Eastern Parts of *Peraea*, to the Western Parts of *Samaria*, about half as much, and in some Places less : So that it contain'd a Spot of Land not half so large as the Kingdom of *England*. Yet notwithstanding the Smalness of the Limits, and the Heat of the Climate, it surpass'd all Countries in the World in Fertility and Pleasantness ; being a Land flowing with Milk and Honey, abounding with the most delicious Fruits and choicest Grains, replenish'd with beautiful Hills and Fountains, with luxurious Vales and Plains, and pleasant Groves and Forests, fill'd with such Numbers of rich Cities and Towns, and blest with such a sweet Temperature of Air, that God thought fit to assign it for the Habitation of his Elect People, and promis'd it to the Father of the Faithful, and his Posterity, as a Type of the Celestial *Canaan*, the Seat of the most perfect Felicity. This Country is divided into two unequal Parts by the River *Jordan*, and two Lakes, which are call'd the *Sea of Galilee*, and the *Dead Sea*. *Jordan* runs almost from North to South,

or rather from North-East to South-West; and that Part of the Country which lyes on the West, or North-West Side of this River, is the largest, and most considerable for Fruitfulness; but especially for being the Place of the principal Actions of our Saviour there perform'd; which have occasion'd some to call this Part alone by the Name of the *Holy-Land*; and the other, *The Country beyond Jordan*. This is the only *Natural* Division of this Country; as for *National* Divisions, I shall speak of them as Occasion shall require, and proceed next to

The Inhabitants of this Land, who were principally descended from *Canaan*, the fourth Son of accursed *Cham* or *Ham*, one of *Noah's* three Sons; from whom this Country was call'd the Land of *Canaan*. For immediately Old Test. Josephus. after the Confusion of Languages at *Babel*, and not much above 100 Years after the Flood, *Canaan* with his eleven Sons pass'd through *Syria* and *Phœnicia*, and took Possession of almost all that part of the Country on the West Side of *Jordan*, afterwards spreading themselves partly on the other Side of the River. Five of his Sons were left to inhabit *Phœnicia* and the Coasts of *Syria*; and from the other six, together with himself, sprung several remarkable Nations; who, for their Sins, afterwards by God's particular Appointment were to be utterly extirpated; namely, the *Canaanites*, the *Amorites*, the *Jebusites*, the *Hittites*, the *Hivites*, the *Perizzites*, and *Gergeshites*; of whom the three first were the most potent. The Numbers of these People increasing, their Families were subdivided into many inferior Branches and Sovereignties; so that when *Joshua* enter'd this Land, he found above thirty Kings amongst them. Besides which, they gradually admitted of several other Nations to be their Neighbours, and partly to mix with them; as particularly the *Philistines* on the Western Coasts, a Gigantick People of the Race of *Misraim*, the second Son of *Cham*; the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, beyond *Jordan*, both Descendants of *Lot* by his own Daughters; with part of the *Midianites* and *Edomites*, Descendants of *Midian* and *Esau*; both inhabiting the Southern Parts and Borders of *Arabia*. So that this Country, for several Ages after the Flood, was inhabited by a Mixture of divers Nations; most of them Idolatrous to a high Degree, and in a special manner hateful to God.

These Nations daily increas'd in Wealth and Numbers, and liv'd surrounded with Plenty and Pleasures; tho' not free from frequent Wars and Contests among themselves: Yet they never met with any dangerous or fatal Disturbance,

Ecclesiastical History.

Usher,

bance, 'till near 800 Years after the first Plantation of the Land; when the *Israelites*, under their great Commander *Joshua*, took forceable Possession of it, subdu'd these People, and in a few Ages enslav'd and destroy'd all the old Inhabitants. This memorable Invasion of the *Israelites* was in the 2553d Year of the World, 897 Years after the Flood, and about 1451 before our Saviour's Nativity; the Land of *Canaan* having been promis'd to them 470 Years before by the immediate Voice of Heaven. Therefore that I may pursue the Story regularly, it will be necessary to look a little back, and make some Enquiry into the Original and Circumstances of these People call'd *Israelites*.

They were call'd *Israelites*, from their first Founder *Israel*, or *Jacob*, the Son of *Isaac*, and Grandson of *Abraham*; and likewise *Hebrews*, from *Heber*, one of the Progenitors of that Patriarch, and of the Fourth Generation after *Noah*. These were particularly separated by Heaven, and in a short Time became a numerous and formidable Nation, had the Assistance of God's miraculous Hand, and were made a Scourge and a Terror to all their Opposers and Neighbours. Tho' they were for some Time under a miserable Servitude in *Ægypt*, yet Heaven came triumphantly in to their Succour, sent all kinds of Plagues among their Oppressors, and deliver'd them out of their Hands; loading them with the Riches of that Country, and amazingly destroying the King thereof, and his innumerable Army. After which, and their miraculous Passage through the *Red-Sea*, they were led by *Moses* into the Desarts of *Arabia*; in which wild Place they for their Sins were oblig'd to wander forty Years: Yet still they were protected from above, and supported by a continual Succession of Miracles, 'till they arrived at the Borders of the Land of *Canaan*. So that these People were sufficiently distinguished from all others in the World; and not only by God's immediate Protection, but likewise by his peculiar Promises; especially that of the *Messiah*, the Saviour of the World, who was to spring from their Nation. For which Reason, they were strictly prohibited not only from joining with the Worship of other Nations, but likewise from intermixing with them by Marriages, or any other kind of natural Alliance.

But what still farther distinguish'd these People from all others, was their Laws and Customs, which were establish'd by God himself; and, excepting the Moral Precepts, were in the main peculiar to this Nation; consisting of two kinds, *Ceremonial* and *Political*. The former were instituted

ted for a double End; partly for the more orderly Worship of God, and to preserve the People from Idolatry; but principally to be Types and Figures of the Evangelical State, *Shadows of good Things to come*, visible and symbolical Representations of the *Messiah*, and those mighty Blessings and Privileges to be introduc'd by Him; which no doubt was the Reason why God was so peculiarly punctual in the Directions he gave about the minutest Circumstances of the Temple-Ministration, because every Part of it had a Glance at a future and better state of Things. The Number of their Ceremonies and Customs was great, and the Observation so burthensom, that the whole Nation groan'd under the Weight of the Yoak. They were principally such as related to God's Worship; and may be reduc'd to, 1. Such Things as concern'd the *Worship* it self: 2. The Circumstance of the *Place* where: 3. The *Time* when: and 4. The *Persons* who were to attend it. Of all which it will be convenient to give some brief and general Account.

The *Worship* of the *Israelites*, besides their Prayers, consisted chiefly in two Things, *Sacrifices* and *Sacraments*. The former were the constant and most solemn Part of their publick Worship; for they had their continual Burnt-Offering, a Lamb offered every Morning and Evening with a Measure of Flower, Oil and Wine; and the Charge defray'd out of the publick Treasury. The rest of their Sacrifices may be consider'd either as they were *Expiatory* or *Eucharistical*. The former were those that were offer'd as an Atonement for the Sins of the People, to pacify the Divine Displeasure; which they effected by virtue of their typical Relation to that great Sacrifice which the Son of God was in the Fulness of Time to offer up for the Sins of the World. These were either for the Expiation of Sin in general, or design'd for particular Offences; of which were two kinds; the *Sin-Offering*, for involuntary Offences committed through Error, Ignorance, or Surprize; and the *Trespass-Offering*, for premeditated Transgressions, which the Party cou'd not pretend to have been the Effects of Surprize or Chance. *Eucharistical* Sacrifices were Testimonies of Gratitude for Mercies receiv'd from God; of which there were three kinds especially; namely, the *Meat-Offering*, compos'd of things without Life, and the Fruits of the Earth; which the Worshipper offer'd as a thankful Return for the daily Preservation and Provisions of Life: The *Peace-Offering*, made up of Living Creatures; offer'd either out of a grateful Sense of some particular Blessing conferr'd, or as a voluntary Offering to which the Party by Vow oblig'd

himself, in Expectation of some Benefit or Deliverance to come: And the *Thanksgiving-Offering*; a mixt Sacrifice, consisting of Living Creatures and the Fruits of the Earth, which they might offer at their own Pleasure, only with some Limitations. What other Provisions we find concerning *Ceremonial Uncleanesses, Purifications, First-Fruits, the First-Born, Tents, &c.* are easily reducible to some of those Heads already mention'd. The other Part of their Worship concern'd their *Sacraments*; which were two, *Circumcision*, and the *Paschal Supper*, or the *Passover*; *Circumcision* was the Federal Rite by God annex'd as a Seal to the Covenant which he made with *Abraham* and his Posterity, and was accordingly renewed and taken into the Body of the *Mosaical Constitutions*. This was to be administred the eighth Day after the Birth of the Child; which the *Jews* understand not of so many compleat Days, but the current Time, six full Days, and part of the other two. The other Sacrament was the *Passover*, or the Eating of the *Paschal Lamb*; which was instituted as an Annual Memorial of their miraculous Deliverance from their *Ægyptian Bondage*: This was celebrated with extraordinary Ceremony and Solemnity, because it so eminently typify'd the immaculate Lamb of God, and Man's Spiritual Deliverance from the Bondage of Sin and Hell.

Next we are to take notice of the *Places* of their Publick Worship, which were either the *Tabernacle* made in the Wilderness, or the *Temple* afterwards built at *Jerusalem*; between which there was no other Difference as to the essential Design, (tho' in the Beauty and Workmanship) than that the *Tabernacle* was a moveable Temple, as the *Temple* was an immoveable *Tabernacle*. No other Place was allow'd for Sacrifices and the Service belonging to them, these being a Type of that only Mediator *Jesus Christ*, in whom alone Mens Sins cou'd be expiated: So that for them to erect an Altar, or offer Sacrifices in any other Place, tho' it were to the true God, was a typical Idolatry, implying a Multiplicity of Mediators; of whose Unity, this one Place of Worship, and this one Altar, was a compleat Sign. The Parts of the *Tabernacle*, or *Temple*, were three; the *Holiest of all*, the *Holy Place*, and the *Outward Court*. Into the first of these, call'd *Sanctum Sanctorum*, none entered but the High Priest, and that but once a Year, it being a Type of Heaven. In this was the *Golden Censer*, the *Golden Pot of Manna*, the *Rod of Aaron that budded*, and the *Ark of the Covenant*; in which last were the *two Tables of the Law*, and over it the *Cherubims of Glory*, who looking towards

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towards each other, shadow'd the *Mercy-Seat*, which was the golden Covering to the Ark; where God veiling his Majesty, was wont to manifest his Presence, to give Answers, and to shew himself reconcil'd to his People. The second Partition, call'd the *Holy-Place* or *Sanctuary*, was that Place where the Priests only enter'd to perform their daily Ministrations; in which was the *Golden Candlestick*, with seven Branches, the *Table* surrounded with a Border and a Crown of Gold; upon which was plac'd the *Shew-Bread* for the Priests; and the *Golden Altar of Incense*, whereon they burnt the sweet Odors every Morning and Evening. The third Division, call'd the *Outward Court*, and the *Court of Israel*, was the Place appointed for the People to offer up their Prayers and Sacrifices; into which no unclean or uncircumcis'd Person was permitted to enter. In this Part stood the *Brazen Altar*, upon which the sacred Fire from Heaven, by which the Sacrifices were consum'd, was continually preserv'd; and the *Brazen Laver*, wherein the Priests wash'd their Hands and Feet, when going into the Sanctuary; and both they and the People, when ready to offer Sacrifices. To the Temple after several Ages an Addition was made of a fourth Court, call'd the *Court of the Gentiles*; into which all unclean Persons and Profelyte *Gentiles* might enter; and in this was the *Corban*, or Treasury belonging to the Temple. To these Laws concerning the Place of Worship, we may reduce those that relate to the holy Vessels and Utensils of the Tabernacle and the Temple; as *Candlesticks*, *Snuffers*, *Dishes*, and the like; all which, as well as the other Institutions, had their proper Mysteries and Significations.

The stated *Times* and *Seasons* of their Worship are in the third place to be consider'd; and they were either *Daily*, *Weekly*, *Monthly*, or *Yearly*. Their *Daily* Worship was at the Time of the Morning, and the Evening Sacrifice. Their *Weekly* Solemnity was the *Sabbath*, which was to be observ'd with all imaginable Care and Strictness; they being commanded to rest from all servile Labours, and to attend the Duties and Offices of Religion. Their *Monthly* Festivals were the *New-Moons*, wherein they were to sound the Trumpets over the Sacrifices and Oblations, and to celebrate them with great Expressions of Joy and Triumph, in a grateful Remembrance of the Blessings conferr'd upon them the preceding Month. Their *Annual* Solemnities were either Ordinary or Extraordinary; The *Ordinary* were those that return'd every Year; of which the first was the *Passo-*

ver, to be celebrated upon the fourteenth Day of the first Month, or *March*; as a Memorial of their Deliverance out of *Ægypt*; and to continue with many other Ceremonies, for seven Days. The second was *Pentecost*, called the *Feast of Weeks*; because it was exactly seven Weeks, or fifty Days after the *Passover*. It was also of seven Days Continuance, and instituted partly in Memory of the Promulgation of the Law at Mount *Sinai*, fifty Days after the first *Passover* in *Ægypt*; and partly as a Thanksgiving for their Harvest, which usually was fully gathered in about this Time. The third was the *Feast of Tabernacles*, begun on the fifteenth Day of the seventh Month, or *September*, continuing eight Days; at which Time they dwelt in Booths or Tabernacles made of green Boughs, as a *Memento* of their sojourning in Tents in the Wilderness, and a sensible Demonstration of the transitory Duration of the present Life. These were the three great Solemnities, wherein all the Males of *Israel* were oblig'd to appear before the Lord, and for many Ages at *Jerusalem* where the Temple stood, and to present themselves and their Offerings in Testimony of their Homage and Devotion. Besides which they had some Festivals of lesser Note, such as the *Feast of Trumpets*, and that of *Expiation*. The *Extraordinary Annual Solemnities*, were those that recurr'd but once in the Periodical Return of several Years; such was the *Sabbatical Year*, which was every seventh Year, wherein the Land was to lye fallow, and the People were to forbear Ploughing, or in any manner cultivating the same. But the great *Sabbatical Year* was that of *Jubilee*, which return'd at the End of seven ordinary *Sabbatical Years*; that is every fiftieth Year; the Approach of which was solemnly proclaim'd by the Sound of Trumpets: In it all Servants were released, all Debts discharg'd, and mortgag'd Estates reverted to their proper Heirs; which nobly shadow'd out the Freedom and Privileges of the Evangelical State.

Lastly, we are to consider the *Persons* by whom their publick Worship was administer'd: And these were, first an *High-Priest*, who had his proper Offices and Rules of Duty, and his peculiar Habit and Consecration; secondly, *Ordinary Priests*, whose Business was to instruct the People, to pray and offer Sacrifice, to bless the Congregation, and to judge in cases of Leprosie and such like; and thirdly, the *Levites*, who were to assist the Priests in preparing the Sacrifices, to bear the Tabernacle while it lasted, and lay up and cleanse its Vessels and Utensils, to guard the Courts
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and Chambers of the Temple, to watch weekly there by Turns, to sing and celebrate the Praises of God with Hymns and Musical Instruments, and to joyn with the Priests in judging and determining Ceremonial Cases. There were many Orders and Courses of Priests among the *Israelites*, and tho' all of them were Types of *Christ*, yet it was the High-Priest who did eminently typifie him, and that in several Particulars: As in the Unity and Singularity of his Office; in the Qualifications of his Person, which was to be in all Respects perfect and comely; in the Manner of his Consecration; and in his singular Capacity, that he alone might enter into the *Sanctum Sanctorum*; which he did once a Year upon the great Day of *Expiation*, with extraordinary Pomp and Solemnity, killing Sacrifices, burning Incense, sprinkling the Victim's Blood upon the Mercy-Seat, going within the Veil, and making an Atonement within the Holy Place. All which immediatly referr'd to that *one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Jesus Christ*, who, *by the Sacrifice of himself, and through the Veil of his own Flesh enter'd, not into the Holy Place made with Hands, but into Heaven it self, now to appear in the Presence of God for us.*

Besides these *Ceremonial Laws* already enumerated, the *Israelites* had several other particular Commands, and Ritual Constitutions about Meats and Drinks, and other Things relating to human Life. Such was the Difference they were to make between the Creatures, some to be clean, and others unclean; such were several sorts of Pollutions and Uncleanneses, which were not Sins in their own Nature, but Ceremonial Defilements; and of this Kind were several Provisions about Apparel, Diet, and the ordering Family Affairs, all evidently of a Ceremonial and Typical Aspect, but too long to be insisted on in this Place. Wherefore I shall proceed next, (tho' but to a bare mentioning) of

The other Sort of Laws given to the *Israelites*, which, besides those purely *Moral*, were *Political* and *Judicial*. These were the Municipal Laws of the Nation, enacted for the well Ordering of the State, and were a kind of an Appendage to the second Table of the Decalogue, as the *Ceremonial Laws* were to the first. They may be conceiv'd under these four Heads: First, such as respected Men in their private and domestick Capacities, concerning Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, and Masters and Servants: Secondly, such as concern'd the Publick and Commonwealth, relating to Magistrates and Courts of Justice, to Contracts and Bargains, to Estates and Inheritances, and

to Executions and Punishments: Thirdly, such as belonged to Strangers and Matters of foreign Nature; as Laws concerning Peace and War, Commerce and Dealing with Persons of other Nations: And lastly, such as secured the Honour and Interest of Religion, Laws against Apostates, and Idolaters, Wizards, Conjurers and False-Prophets, against Blasphemy, Sacrilege, and such like Crimes. All which Laws were peculiarly calculated for the *Israelites*; and tho' proceeding from the wisest Law-giver, they were not obligatory to other Nations, besides such of them as were Branches of the Law of Nature, the Reason of Them being immutable and eternal.

Thus were the *Israelites* distinguish'd from all other People and Nations, as well by the Favours and Promises from Heav'n, as their peculiar Laws and Customs. They were distinguish'd from each other only by their twelve Tribes, as being Descendants of the twelve Sons of *Jacob* or *Israel*; and when they enter'd the Land of *Canaan*, they divided it into twelve Parts or Portions, one for each Tribe. The Northern Parts were given to the Tribes of *Aser*, *Nephthali*, *Zabulon*, and *Iffachar*; the middle Parts, to that of *Ephraim*, and half of *Manasseh*; the Southern Parts to those of *Judab*, *Benjamin*, *Dan* and *Simeon*; and the Country beyond *Jordan*, to those of *Reuben*, *Gad*, and the other half of *Manasseh*. *Levi*, which makes a thirteenth Tribe, being selected for the special Service of God, was dispersed among all the other Tribes, had 48 Cities, the Tenths of all the Profits of the Land; and many other great Advantages and Privileges. At the first Entrance of the *Israelites*, and the Division of the Land, they had many miraculous Victories, and stupendous Successes; yet the old Inhabitants were not immediately destroy'd nor subdu'd, being particularly reserv'd by God for many Years to be Scourges, and Thorns in their Sides, whenever they became stubborn or idolatrous. Their Government at this Time was a kind of an *Aristocracy*, or rather, as the Fathers call it, a *Theocracy*; the Legislative Power being more immediately in God himself, and the Executive, as it is generally believed, in the Congregation of the Elders; which consisted of 70 Persons, and was usually stil'd the *Sanhedrim*, or Grand Council: Only upon all Exigencies, they had a supream Officer call'd a *Judge*, whose Authority was more properly that of a General of an Army, than a Governor of a Nation. This Government continu'd, under sixteen several *Judges*, from the Death of *Moses*, and the Passage into *Canaan*, 356 Years, according to the most exact

exact Chronologers. During which Space, the Tabernacle was principally fix'd at *Shiloh*, a City of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, almost in the Middle of the whole Country; and the *Israelites* met with many severe Oppressions from their Neighbours, and no less signal Deliverances from Heaven; which Vicissitudes continually hapned according to the Measures of their Obedience or Rebellion.

At length, after a great Reformation of Religion by *Samuel*, the last of the Judges, in the Year of the World 2909, the *Israelites* grew weary of this kind of Government, and mutinously cry'd out for a King; which so provok'd the Almighty that he sent them *Saul*, a Prince warlike and brave, but cruel and tyrannical, and disobedient to his Creator; 'till at last he was abandon'd by him, and plung'd into all the Miseries that attend Confusion and Despair. He was succeeded by *David*, a Man after God's own Heart; who happily restor'd the Church, took *Jerusalem*, and made it the Royal City of the Nation; conquer'd several Countries, and much enlarg'd his Dominions, even from *Ægypt* to *Euphrates*; the utmost Limits promis'd by God to *Abraham's* Seed above 880 Years before. But for some Sins which he committed, he was not permitted to effect that great Work, the Building of a Temple; yet at his Death, he left more Treasure, and vaster Sums we find for that Design, than ever was recorded in any History either sacred or prophane. After 40 Years Reign his Son *Solomon* succeeded him, a Prince the most renowned in the World, both for Wisdom and Magnificence, who undertook and finish'd what his Father *David* had design'd; having the Honour of being the first Man in the World, who erected a Temple to the true God. The 150000 Persons employ'd in the Undertaking, the 3600 general Overseers, together with the seven Years Building, give us a noble Idea of the Greatness of the Work; which was so surprizingly beautiful and glorious, that it was accounted one of the greatest Wonders of the World. This was finish'd in the 3000th Year of the World, and about 486 after the first erecting of the Tabernacle; at which Time, when the Temple was dedicated, the Majesty of God became conspicuous in it, by a Cloud of Glory, and Fire from Heaven. Now was the State of *Israel* in the Height of its Splendor and Glory, and so continu'd in the utmost Peace and Plenty most of this Reign; which lasted 40 Years. A King so wise and knowing, a Court so pompous and magnificent, a People so rich and flourishing, were never known before or since that Time. But the great Errors and Infirmities of Solo-

Usher.

mon in his latter Days caus'd God to deprive the Nation of this mighty Prosperity, and to put an End to the united Monarchy of *Israel*, which had, excepting two Years, continu'd intire about 120 Years from the first Establishment of *Saul*. Yet it is believ'd that it was not so absolute a Monarchy, but that the *Sanhedrim* retain'd a very great Power and Authority, tho' not equal to that in the Time of the Judges.

Upon the Death of *Solomon*, in the 3030th Year of the World, and 974th before our Saviour's Nativity, his Son *Rehoboam* by his indiscreet Roughness caus'd Ten of the Twelve Tribes to revolt from him; so that the Nation became divided into two distinct and independent Kingdoms, one call'd the Kingdom of *Judab*, and the other the Kingdom of *Israel*; the former adhering to *Rehoboam*, and the latter chusing *Jeroboam* for their King. The Kingdom of *Judab* contain'd all the Southern Parts of the Land, and about a Fourth of the whole, being about 100 Miles in length, and 60 in Breadth; consisting of the two Tribes of *Judab* and *Benjamin*, and so much of *Dan* and *Simeon* as lay intermix'd with *Judab*; its Royal City being *Jerusalem* in the Tribe of *Benjamin*. The Kingdom of *Israel* contain'd all the Northern and middle Parts of the Land, together with the Country beyond *Jordan*, consisting of the rest of the Tribes; the Royal City, during the Time of this Kingdom's Continuance, being *Samaria* in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, not much above 30 Miles North-East of *Jerusalem*. Notwithstanding the Smallness of these two Kingdoms, their Power and Forces were extraordinary; as appears from their vast Armies which they sent into the Field, particularly when *Abijah* the second King of *Judab* after the Division led an Army of 400000 Men against *Jeroboam* King of *Israel*, who brought double the Number; which latter was defeated with the loss of 500000 of his Men. Not long after *Abijah's* Son *Asa* led an Army against the *Arabians* or *Ethiopians* consisting of 580000 Men; yet he was much exceeded by his Son *Jehosaphat*, who had list'd 780000 Men out of the Tribe of *Judab*, and 380000 out of *Benjamin*, in all 1160000 Men: An infinite Proportion, for a Spot of Land not much larger than one particular County in *England*; and surpassing all Belief, had not the Holy Scriptures affirmed it, and God himself promised it to *Abraham*, That his Seed should be as the Dust of the Earth, and the Stars of Heaven for Multitude.

Upon the Division of the Kingdoms, *Jeroboam* judg'd no way more effectual to secure his new acquired Sovereignty, than

than by diverting his Subjects from the Temple and the Worship at *Jerusalem*; therefore out of a cursed Policy he erected two golden Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, one in the Tribe of *Neptali*, and the other in *Ephraim*; persuading the People there to make their publick Adorations and Sacrifices, appointing Priests and other Officers for that purpose. From which time the true Religion began visibly to ebb and decay, and Idolatry to gain ground after a notorious manner: And tho' God permitted the Kingdom to continue under the Government of nineteen several Kings, all of whom were idolatrous and impious; yet he soon made it decline, and after the space of 254 Years from the Death of *Solomon*, finally destroy'd it by the Hand of *Salmanasser* King of *Assyria*, who not only ravag'd the Country, but carry'd all the Ten Tribes captive into his own Dominions, and planted other Nations in their room. So that this Kingdom became a part of the great *Assyrian* Empire; only the *Moabites* and *Ammonites* by their Industry regain'd some part of their ancient Dominions in the Country beyond *Jordan*. This great Alteration and first Dispersion of the *Israelites* happened in the 3283d Year of the World, and 721 Years before our Saviour's Nativity; and as to their State and Fortunes afterwards we have no certain Account.

In the mean time the Kingdom of *Judah* was somewhat more prosperous, and continu'd 133 Years longer than the Kingdom of *Israel*, under the Government of twenty several Kings. These two Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin* were more obedient to God and their King, firmly adhering to the Worship of the Temple; tho' even here Idolatry in some Places maintain'd its Ground, having taken Root in the Reign of *Solomon*, who had been betray'd into these Follies by his exceeding Fondness to his Wives. Tho' some of the succeeding Princes much endeavour'd to destroy it, yet it was reviv'd again by others, and with other Impieties so much increas'd, that when the Preachings of the Prophets, and the Example of the other Tribes Punishment, would not avail, God thought fit to deliver the whole Nation into the Hands of *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, who first conquer'd the King and Kingdom, and nineteen Years after led all the Inhabitants captive to *Babylon*, and utterly destroy'd the City of *Jerusalem*, together with the glorious Temple, after it had stood 416 Years, the Wonder and Envy of the World. This was the second memorable Captivity of the *Israelites*, beginning 114 Years after the other, tho' not completed 'till the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and
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the Temple; when all things were left in a miserable Desolation, and the Inhabitants made a Scorn to all Nations.

After 70 Years Captivity, in the 3468th Year of the World, and 536 before our Saviour's Nativity, *Cyrus* the Great, King of *Persia* and *Babylon*, by means of a Divine Impulse, restor'd these two Tribes to their ancient Habitations, and gave them Commission to rebuild their City and Temple. Which last Work was immediately begun, and continu'd with great Diligence by *Zerubbabel* and others; but with so much Opposition from the neighbouring Inhabitants, that it was not finished 'till twenty Years after. And after all the Care and Zeal of the Undertakers, this second Temple was far inferior to the first, not only in the outward Beauty and Magnificence, but also in the want of five inward or more spiritual Advantages, which were accounted the Glory of the *Israelites*; namely, the *Ark of the Covenant*, the *Fire from Heaven* that lay upon the Altar, the *Shekinah* or Presence of the Divine Majesty on the Mercy Seat, the *Urim* and *Thummim*, and the *Spirit of Prophecy*, which departed from the Nation not many Years after. About 61 Years after the Dedication of this Temple, the Buildings of *Jerusalem* were all finish'd, and the Walls completed, 454 Years before the *Æra* of our Saviour's Nativity; in which Year, *Usher* and the best Chronologers place the Beginning of *Daniel's* seventy Weeks. And about this time, as *Josephus* informs us, these two surviving Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin* lost their ancient Name of *Israelites*, and have ever since been called by the Name of *Jews*. There was not only an Alteration in their Name, but also in their Language and their Government. Their Language was chang'd from the pure *Hebrew* to one compos'd of *Chaldee* and *Hebrew*, since call'd the *Syriack*; which Language they continually us'd 'till the last Destruction of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*. And their Government was now no longer Regal, but rather Sacerdotal, the High Priest having the greatest Authority, but the greatest Power was retain'd by the *Sanhedrim*.

Josephus.

For 122 Years after the Finishing of the Walls of *Jerusalem*, the *Jews*, tho' confin'd to small Dominions, and despis'd by their Neighbours, continu'd in a tolerable Degree of Quiet and Prosperity. At which time the whole Land of *Canaan* or *Israel* became subject to the *Macedonian* or *Grecian*, as before it had been to the *Babylonian* and *Persian* Empires. This was effected by *Alexander* the Great; after whose Death this Country fell to the Share of the Kings of *Syria*, by whom it began to be call'd by the Name of *Palestine*, and was divided into these five distinct Provinces,

vinces, three on the West Side, and two in the Country beyond *Jordan*. 1. *Galilee*, the most Northern Province, bordering upon *Syria* and *Phoenicia*, and containing the old Habitation of the four Tribes of *Aser*, *Neptali*, *Zabulon* and *Issachar*; being divided into the *Upper* and *Lower*, and about 85 Miles in Length, and 70 in Breadth. 2. *Samaria*, on the South of *Galilee*, and bordering upon the *Mediterranean Sea*, containing the old Habitation of the Tribe of *Ephraim* and half of *Manasseh*; being about 75 Miles long, and near 50 in Breadth. 3. *Judea*, South, or rather South-West of *Samaria*, containing the Habitation of the Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, together with *Dan* and *Simeon*, being almost the same with the old Kingdom of *Judah*, and about 100 Miles in Length, and 60 in Breadth. Beyond *Jordan* were, 4. *Traconitis*, on the East of *Galilee*, bordering upon *Syria*, and containing the old Habitation of the other half of *Manasseh*; being a Country less fruitful than the rest, and about 70 Miles in Length, and 50 in Breadth. 5. *Peræa*, (which Name was sometimes given to all that Country beyond *Jordan*) on the South of *Traconitis*, and East of *Samaria* and *Judea*, containing the old Habitation of the two Tribes of *Gad* and *Reuben*, and somewhat more; being about 110 Miles in Length, and near 60 in Breadth. This was the Division of the whole Land, which continu'd to our Saviour's Time; when another Province was added by the *Romans* to this Country, call'd *Idumæa*, which took in some of the Southern Parts of *Judea*, and Part of *Arabia*.

Of these five Provinces, the *Jews* only possess'd that call'd *Judæa*, and for a considerable Space not all that, being hated and oppress'd by all their Neighbours, especially the powerful Nations of *Ægypt* and *Syria*, two great Branches of the *Macedonian* or *Grecian* Empire. The King of the former, *Ptolemæus Lagi*, shortly after the Death of *Alexander*, enter'd *Judæa*, took *Jerusalem* it self, and carried infinite Numbers both of the City and the Country captive into *Ægypt*. This was the third remarkable Dispersion of this People, which happened in the 320th Year before Christ, and 216 Years after their Return from *Babylon*. After this, they were extremely harrass'd by the Kings of *Syria*, especially by *Antiochus Epiphanes*, who in the 170th Year before Christ enter'd *Jerusalem*, made a miserable Slaughter of the Inhabitants, prophan'd and pillag'd the Temple, and compell'd many by Tortures both to eat forbidden Meats, and offer Sacrifice to Idols. At which time God rais'd up *Mattathias* a Priest, and the Head of the *Asmonean* Family, who together with his three brave Sons and Successors, *Judas Mac-*
cabeus,

cabæus, *Jonathan*, and *Simon*, became so successful in asserting the Liberty of their Country, that the *Jews* in few Years not only freed *Judæa* from the *Syrians*, but likewise enlarg'd their Dominions to the gaining of almost all the old Possessions of the Twelve Tribes of *Israel*, together with *Idumæa*, whose Inhabitants they compell'd to be circumcis'd. Inſomuch, that in 62 Years, *Aristobulus*, one of the Successors of the *Maccabees*, thought fit to take the Crown upon him, and was the first King over the *Jews* after the *Babylonian* Captivity; their *Sacerdotal* Government, as it is called by some, having continu'd, without any noted Intermiſſion, 428 Years.

But this new Regal Government continu'd not free and independent above 46 Years; at which time *Pompey*, the great General of the *Romans*, coming down like a Torrent upon the East, was by the Uſurpation of *Aristobulus* II. and the Indiſcretion of his Brother *Hircanus*, made Maſter of all this Country: So that *Paleſtine* from this time became a Province of the *Roman* Empire; which happened 62 Years before the vulgar Æra of our Saviour's Nativity. Yet notwithstanding this Conqueſt, the former Laws and Cuſtoms were continu'd to this Country, as alſo the *Sacerdotal* Government, which remain'd about 22 Years longer in its full Force; 'till *Herod*, an *Idumæan* Prince, accidentally obtain'd the Kingdom of *Judæa* of the Senate of *Rome*, and in three Years became Maſter of the whole Country, which he enlarg'd, and brought to a greater Degree of Grandeur and Magnificence, than ever it had been in ſince the Reign of *Solomon*: Yet at the ſame time he depreſs'd the *Prieſthood*, extirpated the *Maccabæan* Family, and miſerably enſlav'd the Inhabitants. This was the first Foreigner to whom the *Jews* became immediately ſubject; in whoſe Reign our Bleſſed Saviour came into the World: So that the ancient Prophecy of the *Scepter's departing from Judah*, is by the beſt Criticks ſuppos'd to begin to take Place at this time, though it was not intirely completed 'till the laſt Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the fatal Diſſolution of the *Jewiſh* State.

II. From this ſhort Account already given, it will appear, that at the time of our Saviour's coming into the World, the Inhabitants of the Land of *Canaan* or *Paleſtine* were a Mixture of divers Nations, both of Foreigners and Natives; and that the *Jews* themſelves were but a Remnant of an often ſcatter'd, conquer'd, and captivated People; but two entire Tribes of Twelve, and thoſe tributary both to *Herod* and the *Romans*. The Foreigners who reſided in this

this Country were principally *Grecians* and *Romans*; the former being the Reliques of the *Macedonian* Empire, and the latter, Magistrates, Governors, and Soldiers, to keep it in Obedience, and to receive the Tributes. The rest of the Inhabitants, tho' of many different Extracts, may principally be conceiv'd under these two following Names. 1. *Jews*; and 2. *Samaritans*; of whom, for Dispatch sake, I shall first take notice of the latter.

1. The *Samaritans* were principally Descendents of those *Assyrians* whom *Salmanasser* sent to inhabit the Kingdom of *Israel*, when he carry'd the Ten Tribes captive; originally *Pagans*, and call'd *Cuthites* by the *Jews*, either from the Name of their Country, or by way of Reproach. But mixing with the Remainder of the Tribes, and being punish'd with Lions, and instructed by some *Israelitish* Priests, they gradually receded from their *Pagan* Idolatries; and after the *Babylonian* Captivity, they became zealous in the Worship of the true God. They were circumcis'd, offer'd Sacrifices, perform'd the Ceremonies of the Law, and expected the *Messiah*, who was to deliver them from all Calamities, and teach them all Things: Yet they never comply'd with *Judaism* any farther than to own the five Books of *Moses*, rejecting all the Prophets and the other Sacred Writings. And tho' they had Priests and Sacrifices like the *Jews*, yet they would not allow *Jerusalem* to be the Place of publick Worship; therefore to divert the common Sort from the Temple of God, by the means of *Sanballat*, a great Prince of their Nation, they erected another Temple of great Magnificence, upon Mount *Gerizim*, near *Sichem*, and not far from *Samaria*; imitating the Policy, tho' not the Idolatry of *Jeroboam*, the first King of *Israel* after the Division. This Temple was built 204 Years after the *Babylonian* Captivity, and 332 before our Saviour's Nativity, and prov'd a great weakning to the *Jewish* Church; for all profligate Wretches, Malefactors, and excommunicated Persons among the *Jews*, immediately repair'd to this Place, and join'd with the *Samaritan* Worship. This, with some former Resentments, occasion'd such violent Heats between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, tho' immediate Neighbours, that they would have no Commerce or Correspondence with each other, and one continually branded the other with the most reproachful Titles imaginable. About 200 Years after, the *Jews* growing powerful by the Valour of the *Maccabees*, the *Samaritans* were subdu'd by *John Hyrcanus*, who destroy'd *Samaria* and their Schismatical Temple, and confin'd them to a narrower Spot of Land, even to that little Pro-

vince of *Samaria*, which I have before describ'd. Yet this did not extinguish their Hatred and Prejudices, but they still kept Mount *Gerizim* for their Place of publick Worship, and continu'd their Schism 'till the total Destruction of both Nations by *Titus* the Emperor.

The Principles of the *Samaritans*, besides their rejecting all the Scriptures but the Books of *Moses*, were their denying the future Judgment, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the everlasting Life, because they thought those Doctrines not reveal'd in the *Pentateuch*; in which they agreed with the *Jewish Sadduces*. They were likewise noted for being much addicted to Sorcery, Magick, Witchcraft, and Inchantments, with all other curious and unlawful Arts; which gave occasion to the *Jews*, when they design'd to reproach our Saviour with having a Familiar Spirit, to call him a *Samaritan*. Besides which, they were so swell'd with their imaginary Perfections and Holiness, that they thought themselves defiled by any Company or *Conversation* but their own. Therefore if they convers'd or traded with any Foreigner, at their return, they sprinkled themselves with Urine: But if through Negligence or Necessity they had touch'd them, they wash'd themselves and all their Cloaths at the next Fountain; in which Superstition they resembled the Sectaries of the *Jews*. They maintain'd themselves to be the Descendents of *Joseph*, and Heirs of the *Aaronical* Priesthood; yet they had several Divisions and Sects among themselves, more particularly these three, the *Dositheans*, the *Sebueans*, and the *Gortheni*. 1. The *Dositheans*, were so called from *Dositheus* or *Dosthui*, suppos'd to be the first Priest sent into this Country by the King of *Assyria*. These disagreed with the rest of the *Samaritans* in owning the Doctrine of the Resurrection; did eat nothing that had Life, like the *Pythagoreans*; abstain'd from Marriage, like the *Jewish Essenes*; and in the Point of Sabbath-keeping exceeded the *Pharisees*; it being resolv'd amongst them, That in whatsoever Posture a Person was found on the Sabbath-day Morning, he ought to continue in the same the whole day without Alteration. 2. The *Sebueans*, so nam'd from *Sebua* or *Sebuiab*, one of the Associates of *Dositheus*; who, tho' they kept the same publick Festivals with the *Jews* and other *Samaritans*, yet observ'd not the same Time; transferring the *Passover* to *August*, the *Pentecost* to *Autumn*, and the *Feast of Tabernacles* to the time of the *Passover*: For which Reason they were not permitted to worship at the Temple of *Gerizim*. 3. The *Gortheni* kept the same Festivals, and observ'd the same Times of those Solemnities

lemnities as the Law required; but contrary to the Law they kept only one of the seven appointed Days, and neglected the rest as Days of ordinary Labour.

2. The *Jews* were most properly such as inhabited the Country of *Judæa*; but because in our Saviour's time all were call'd *Jews*, who observ'd the Law of *Moses* and all the Prophets, we shall take notice of them in their full Extent, and under these three Denominations and Distinctions. 1. *Hellenists*, 2. *Profelytes*, and 3. *Jews* in a proper Sense, who are often call'd by the Name of *Hebrews*.

The *Hellenists* or *Grecizing Jews*, were such as were real *Jews* by Descent and Profession, but living dispers'd in almost all Parts of the *Roman Empire*; they made use of the *Greek Tongue*, the most general Language of that Age, in their publick Offices of Religion, and also the *Septuagint's* Translation of the Old Testament: For which Reason they were call'd *Hellenists*, in Opposition to the other *Jews*, who in their Worship made use of the *Hebrew Tongue* only. They are likewise call'd *Jews* of the Western Dispersion, occasion'd principally by the Oppressions of the *Ægyptians* and *Syro-Macedonians*; and were very numerous, especially in *Ægypt*, *Libya* and *Cyrene*. These were as superstitious in their Sabbath, as tenacious of their Circumcision, and of the other Rites and Ceremonies of their Law, as the *Jews* of *Palestine*; for which Reason they were continually despised and hated by the *Romans* and *Grecians*, and other *Gentiles*, among whom they resided. Yet notwithstanding their Strictness, they were not thoroughly esteem'd by the *Hebrew Jews*, but reckon'd by them as *Jews* of an inferior Rank, upon the Account of the Heathen Language they us'd, and the Heathen Countries they inhabited.

The *Profelytes* were such as were *Gentiles* by Birth and Descent, but conform'd themselves to the *Jewish Customs*, and were admitted into their Religion: And these were of two distinct Kinds, one call'd *Profelytes of the Covenant*, and the other *Profelytes of the Gate*. The first were accounted as real, tho' but adopted *Jews*, bound to the same Observances with them, and convers'd as freely with them, as if they had been so born; neither might they eat, drink, or deal with the *Gentiles* more than the other, lest they became unclean. They worship'd in the same Court of the Temple with the *Hebrews*, where others were prohibited Entrance; and were Partakers with them in all Privileges both Divine and Human, differing in nothing but their Race and Parentage. The usual way of the *Jews* making these *Profelytes*, was by Circumcision, Baptism and Sacrifice, if they

were Males; and by only Baptism and Sacrifice, if Females; as *Maimonides* and the chief of the *Rabbins* assure us. Baptism was an ancient Custom among the *Jews*, and many Ages before our Saviour's Appearance in the World. Many account it as ancient as the Patriarch *Jacob*; but most do agree that it was practis'd before the Delivery of the Law in the Wilderness. And as Circumcision was us'd to the Children of the *Jews*, so was Baptism also to the Children and Infants of the *Profelytes*; the *Talmud* giving this Reason for it, *That they may privilege a Person, tho' he be incapable of knowing it; but they ought not to disprivilege a Person without his Knowledge.* 2. The *Profelytes of the Gate*, were such *Gentiles* as were by the *Jews* admitted to the Worship of the God of *Israel*, and the Hopes of a future Life; but were not circumcis'd, nor yet conform'd to the *Mosaical* Rites and Ordinances; being only oblig'd to the Observation of those Precepts which the *Hebrew* Doctors call *The seven Precepts of the Sons of Noah*, and are recorded under these following Titles: 'First, to renounce 'Idols, and all idolatrous Worship. Secondly, to worship 'the true God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Thirdly, to shed no Man's Blood. Fourthly, to refrain from all 'unlawful Lusts and Mixtures. Fifthly, to shun all Raping, Theft and Robbery. Sixthly, to administer true Justice. Lastly, not to eat the Flesh of any Beast taken 'from it alive; by which all Cruelty was prohibited. These *Profelytes*, tho' they were admitted to worship in the Temple; yet because they were uncircumcis'd, they were so far look'd upon as *Gentiles*, as not to be admitted into the same Court with the *Profelytes of the Covenant*; but were accounted as unclean, and had their particular Court assign'd them in their Worship of God, which was call'd the *Court of the Gentiles* and of the *Unclean*. As the first of these in the New Testament are call'd simply *Προσίλυτοι*, the latter are call'd *Σεβόλιθοι*, or *Worshippers*; and were much more numerous in all Parts of the *Roman* Empire than the former. Their Conditions were more free and unconfin'd, and their Precepts more easie and natural than the other; and their Principles fitting them for the Reception of the Gospel, they became the most apparent Cause of the first great Spreading of *Christianity*.

Lastly, We are to take notice of the *Jews* in a more proper Sense, who were often distinguish'd by the Name of *Hebrews*, and were the Inhabiters of *Palestine*, and more principally that part of it call'd *Judea*. These were the Persons with whom our Blessed Saviour was pleas'd chiefly to converse,

converse, at a remarkable Time when they were but the Relicts, and even the Dregs of an often broken, and then detested Generation; when to be a *Jew* was a Name of Disgrace, and to be *circumcis'd* a Mark of Infamy: So that then they might well be a peculiar People, not only because God separated them from all other Nations, but because all other Nations separated from them. God had now seem'd to have forsaken them, by his withdrawing from them the Spirit of Prophecy, and his frequent and immediate Revelations, formerly the Glory of their Nation; and likewise by his leaving them to the Mercy of every Tyrant and Conqueror. All which was but the just Punishment of their numerous Impieties and Corruptions; which had been provoking in all Ages, but more flagrant in this. Before the *Babylonian* Captivity, Idolatry was their great Crime; for which God so often punish'd them, and more particularly with that seventy Years Slavery. But after their Return, they gradually ran into a contrary Extreme, which was a rigid Superstition; and this encreasing, and receiving in some Notions of the *Grecian* Philosophers, it not only produc'd an insupportable Pride and Obstinacy, but likewise several Sects and Heresies amongst them. By this means their Lives and Morals became extremely corrupted, Lust and Avarice prevailing in a shameful manner; and as the *Roman* Yoak grew heavier, so their Notions of the *Messiah* became grosser than formerly; expecting instead of a spiritual, only a temporal Prince and Deliverer, who should raise them to the Height of worldly Grandeur. So that scarce ever any Church or Religion in the World was more basely degenerated, or more miserably corrupted, than that of the *Jews*, at the time of the Manifestation of our Blessed Saviour.

To descend a little to Particulars, we may pertinently take notice of these four; their *Temple*, their *Priesthood*, their *Law*, and their *Sects*. 1. Their *Temple* had lately been rebuilt by *Herod*, to almost an incredible degree of Beauty and Magnificence; yet as it had been prophan'd by *Antiochus*, *Pompey*, and *Crassus*, so it was likewise by Him, making it subservient to his impious Policies and Designs. And the *Jews* themselves were no less guilty of Prophanation, turning all that Part of it call'd the *Court of the Gentiles* into an Exchange and Market; so that the Place where Men were to meet with God, and to converse with Heaven, became Ware-houses for Merchants, and Shops for Usurers and Extortioners. The Worship formerly perform'd there with the most pious and devout Affections, was now become a meer Shell and outward Shew; Rites of human In-

vention had jultled out those of Divine Institution, and their very Prayers were made Snares to catch the unwary People, and to devour Widows and Orphans. 2. Their *Priesthood* was so chang'd and confounded, that it retain'd scarce any thing but its ancient Name: The High Priests, who by their original Institution were to succeed lineally, and to retain their Office for Life, were become almost annual, and which is worse, venal; *Herod* exposing the Priesthood to Sale, scarce admitting any who paid not well for his Patent. By which means this high Station was fill'd with the Refuse of the People, by Men of weak Abilities, and debauch'd Manners, who had neither Parts nor Piety to recommend them, he being accounted best and worthiest who offer'd most. 3. Their *Law* which had been deliver'd with the utmost Grandeur and Majesty, and for which they pretended the greatest Veneration, was by them miserably corrupted and depraved, especially the Moral Part of it; and that by their gross and absurd Interpretations, as also by their Oral Law and Traditions. The *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who rul'd the Chair in the *Jewish* Church, had by false and corrupt Glosses debas'd the Majesty and Purity of the Law, and made it serve the Purposes of an evil Life: They taught the People, that the Law requir'd no more than external Righteousness, that if there was but a visible Conformity of Life, they needed not be solicitous about the Government of their Minds, or the regular Conduct of their Thoughts or Passions; so that if Men did but preserve a laudable Appearance in the World, the secret Purity of the Soul was needless: And farther, that a punctual Observance of some external Precepts of the Law, would compensate for the Neglect or Violation of the rest. Their Oral Law and their Traditions was another way of weakning and debasing the Written Law of God; and of these they were so fond, that they preferr'd them before the Writings of *Moses*, some of them pretending that they were deliver'd by God himself to *Moses*, and so transmitted to Posterity. These brought them into infinite Niceties, and superstitious Practices, such as their frequent Washings and Purifications; in which, and innumerable other Trifles, they were so exceedingly scrupulous, that they made the Neglect of them of equal Guilt with the greatest Immorality, not fearing to assert, 'That he who eats Bread with unwashen Hands is as if he lay with an Harlot. 4. The *Sects* and Divisions among the *Jews* are lastly to be taken notice of; and these were partly religious, partly political, and partly distinct. Tho' there were many Branches and Distinctions among the *Jews*,

Jews, yet what are most proper for our Purpose to be taken notice of, may be comprehended under these seven Denominations. 1. *Pharisees*, 2. *Sadducees*, 3. *Essenes*, 4. *Scribes*, 5. *Publicans*, 6. *Herodians*, and 7. *Galileans*.

(1.) The *Pharisees* were so called from the Word *Perash*, importing *Exposition*, or rather *Parash*, implying *Separation*, because they were separated from all others in their extraordinary Pretences to Piety. It is uncertain when this Sect began to appear in the World, tho' it is most commonly believ'd to be about 300 Years before our Saviour's Birth. However, in a short time it became a bold and daring Sect, not fearing to affront Princes, and Persons of the greatest Quality; they were crafty and insinuating, and by a Shew of mighty Zeal, and infinite Strictness in Religion above the ordinary Rate of Mankind, had procur'd themselves a strange Veneration from the People. They fasted twice a Week with all imaginable Nicety, inured themselves to all kinds of Austerities, and discriminated themselves from the Herd and Community, not only by their sower and sanctified Countenances, but also by some peculiar Notes and Badges of Distinction; such as their *long Robes*, their *broad Phylacteries* or *Scrolls*, and their *large Fringes* and Borders of their Garments, whereby they made themselves known from the rest of the World. They were no less exact in the Payment of their Tithes, even to things of the least Value, and smallest Concernment; and were as careful in paying the Best of their Increase, the Top of the Heap, the Flower of the Wheat, the first Running of the Wine, &c. Yet notwithstanding their specious Pretences to an extraordinary Sanctity and Severity, they were but religious Villains, and the most insolent and implacable Generation that ever any Age produc'd; disdainful and trampling upon all but their own Party, and accounting the rest Slaves, and *Sons of the Earth*. They were spiteful and malicious, griping and voracious, merciless Dealers, and most superlatively censorious and uncharitable; and to sum up their Morality at once, it is hard to say which was most predominant, their insatiable Avarice, their insupportable Pride, or their unfathomable Hypocrisy. As to their Principles, they believ'd, that the Souls of Men are Immortal, and had their Dooms awarded in the subterraneous Regions; that there is a *Metempsychosis* or Transmigration of pious Souls out of one Body into another; that things came to pass by Fate, and an inevitable Necessity; and yet that Man's Will is free, that all Persons might be rewarded and punished according to their Works. They likewise held, that the *Oral Law* of the *Jews* was of far

greater Moment than the written Word; and that the *Traditions* of their Forefathers were above all things to be embrac'd and follow'd, the exact Observance of which would entitle a Man to eternal Life: And in this they ascrib'd so much Sanctity to frequent Washings, especially when they came from publick Places, and before Meals, that if any came to an House where there was not Water enough both to drink and wash, the *Pharisee* would chuse the latter, tho' he died with Thirst.

The *Pharisees* were distinguish'd into several Branches, the most remarkable of which were call'd by the Name of *Zealots*, by some accounted a distinct Sect. These were a most outrageous and ungovernable People, fierce and savage, who being zealous Assertors of the Honour of God's Laws, and the Strictness and Purity of Religion, assum'd to themselves a Liberty of Questioning notorious Offenders, without staying for the ordinary Formalities of the Law; nay, when they thought fit, and as the Case requir'd, they executed capital Punishment upon them with their own Hands. Thus when a Blasphemer cursed God by the Name of any Idol, the *Zealots* that next met him might immediately kill him, without bringing him before the *Sanhedrim*. They look'd upon themselves as the true Successors of *Phineas*, who in an extraordinary Zeal for the Honour of God, inflicted immediate Death upon *Zimri* and *Cozbi*; which Action was so pleasing to God, that he made *with him and his Seed* after him the Covenant of an everlasting Priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made an Atonement for Israel, as *Moses* assures us in the 25th of *Numbers*. In Imitation of him, these Men assum'd a Power of executing Judgment and Punishment in extraordinary Cases, and that not only by the Connivence but also with the Permission of the Rulers and the People; 'till in after-times, under a Pretence of this Liberty, their Zeal degenerated into all Kinds of Licentiousness and wild Extravagance; so that they became the Pest of the State, and the total Ruin of it, as shall be related afterwards.

(2.) Next were the *Sadducees*, opposite to the *Pharisees* both in Temper and Principles; so call'd either from *Sadock*, who liv'd near 300 Years before our Saviour's Birth, and is suppos'd to be the Founder of the Sect, or from *Sedeck*, which signifies Justice, as tho' they were the only exact Distributers of Justice, and able to justify themselves before the Tribunal of God. These pass under a very ill Character, even among the Writers of their own Nation, being stil'd impious Men, and of very loose and profligate

igitate Lives; which is no more than the natural Consequence of their Principles, this being one of their main *Dogmata* or Opinions, That the Soul is not immortal, and that there is no future State after this Life. The Occasion of which dangerous Heresie is said to have been a Mistake of the Doctrine of their Master *Antigonus Sochaus*, who was wont to press his Scholars not to be like mercenary Servants, who serve their Masters purely for their own Advantage, but to serve God for his own Sake, without Expectation of Rewards. Which being misunderstood, they at last concluded, that their Master had absolutely denied any State of future Rewards; and having laid this dangerous Foundation, these unhappy Superstructures were built upon it, ' That there is no Resurrection of the Dead; That the Soul is not Immortal, nor exists in a separate State; That there is no spiritual Substance distinct from Matter; and that there is no Divine Providence, but that God is perfectly plac'd as beyond the Commission, so beyond the Inspection of what Sins or Evils are done in this World. These pernicious and atheistical Principles justly expos'd them to the Reproach and Hatred of the People, who were wont to stile them particularly *The Hereticks*, as also *Infidels* and *Epicureans*; no Names being thought ill enough for Men of such Opinions. They were great Opposers of the *Pharisees*, and utterly rejected their *Traditions* for which they were so zealous, teaching that Men were to keep to the Letter of the Law, and that nothing was to be impos'd upon their Belief or Practice, but what was expressly contain'd in the *Pentateuch*. In which, as well as in many other of their Notions, they follow'd the Heresie, tho' not the Schism of the *Samaritans*. *Josephus* observes that they were the least numerous of the religious Sects, but usually Men of the better Rank and Quality; who having greatest Opportunities of following a loose and debauch'd Life, were ready to take Sanctuary in those Opinions which most extinguish'd the Apprehensions of an after-reckoning. For this Reason the *Saducees* ever appear'd most vigorous in preserving the Peace, being the most severe and implacable in their Punishment of all Tumults and Seditions, lest they should interrupt their soft and easie Course of Life, the only Happiness their Principles allow'd them to expect.

(3.) The *Essens* were a Sect distinct, and very different both from the *Pharisees* and *Saducees*; of whose Name and Original we have no very certain Account. They began in the Times of the *Maccabees*, above 150 Years before

fore

fore *Christ's* Nativity, after the violent Persecutions of *Antiochus* had forc'd great Numbers of the *Jews* to retire to the Woods and Mountains. Many of whom being pleas'd with these undisturb'd Solitudes, form'd themselves into Religious Societies, leading a Monastick and contemplative Course of Life, and following in many Things the *Pythagorean* Philosophers; particularly in Community of Goods, abstaining from lawful Pleasures, forbidding of Oaths, ascribing the Conduct of Affairs to Fate and Destiny, prohibiting the use of Wine, and using only inanimate or unbloody Sacrifices. They liv'd remote from all Cities and Places of publick Concourse, being usually about four or five thousand in Number, and very strict and methodical in their Rules and Discipline. They paid a due Reverence to the Temple, by sending Gifts and Presents thither; but yet worshiped God at Home, and us'd their own Rites and Ceremonies; in which they were Schismaticks, and differing from all other *Jews*. Every seventh Day they met at their Synagogues, were very harmless and innocent in their Manners, and exact Observers of the Rules of Justice, somewhat beyond the Practices of other Men. They industriously tilled and cultivated the Ground, and liv'd upon the Fruits of their own Labours; admitting none into their Society, unless he brought all that he had into their common Treasury, and that not 'till after three Years Probation. Out of a peculiar Regard to Wisdom and Virtue they neglected all Care of the Body, renounced all conjugal Embraces, abstained very much from Meats and Drinks, some of them not eating and drinking for three, others for five or six Days together; accounting it unbecoming Men of such a Philosophical Temper and Genius; to spend any part of the Day upon the Necessities of the Body. Their Way they call'd *ἑσπεράριον*, *Worship*, and their Rules *σοφίας νόσμησια*, *Doctrines of Wisdom*; their Contemplations were sublime and speculative, and of Things, beyond the ordinary Notions of other Sects; they study'd the Names and Mysteries of Angels, and in their whole Carriage they bore a great shew of Modesty and Humility. We find no mention of this Sect in the new Testament, they not concerning themselves with *Christ* or his Apostles; yet it is the Opinion of many judicious Men, that our Saviour and *St. Paul* did sometimes allude to the Customs and Discipline of these People.

(4.) We are to take Notice of the *Scribes*, which Word does more properly signify the Name of some Office or Function, than of any Sect; they being more antient than any

any Sect among the *Jews*. These were Persons of great Repute, being call'd in the New Testament *Scribes of the Law, Teachers of the People, Doctors of the Law*, and sometimes *Lawyers*; and as such, this Office began immediately after the *Babylonian Captivity*, above 500 Years before Christ, *Ezra* himself being one of the first. They were generally the most learned Men of the Nation, and regularly of the Tribe of *Levi*, their Office or Function consisting principally of two Branches. First they were the only Persons that were to copy out the Bible for any such as had occasion for it: For every one was not thought fit to transcribe the Original Scriptures, nor any vulgar Pen permitted to copy Things of so sublime a Nature. Therefore these were a peculiar and special Order of Men appointed to take care of the Preservation of the Purity of the Text, in all Bibles that should be copy'd out, that no Error or Corruption should creep into the Original of the Sacred Writ. Secondly they were the publick and common Preachers among the People, being more constant Teachers than any other of the Clergy; taking upon them not only to be the Preservers and Providers for the Purity of the Text, but also the most certain and constant Interpreters and Expounders of it in Sermons. In which Respect they may be compared to the Canonists in the Church of *Rome*, or the Divinity Lecturers in some publick Academies; and they grew into such Repute in the *Jewish* State, that it was hard to say, whether the *Pharisees* or they were held in greater Veneration. For what the *Pharisees* gain'd in the common People by their Pretensions to an extraordinary Sanctity, these obtain'd more justifiably by their Zeal for the written Word, which they preserv'd from the common Dangers of Corruption and Contempt. And tho' these *Scribes* were more properly an Order than a Sect; yet since they were so closely link'd with the *Pharisees*, and concurr'd with them in most of their Superstitions and Corruptions, we may look upon them as a strong and potent Faction, of great Authority and Influence in all Affairs of Moment.

(5.) The *Publicans* were Persons of no particular Sect, nor of any religious Function, but were certain publick Officers employ'd by the *Romans* to collect their Tributes, Tolls and Imposts; which Office was formerly of great Account and Reputation among the *Romans*, and conferr'd upon none less than the *Equestrian* Order; but afterwards falling into the Hands of inferior Farmers, and the worst of the Natives, it became base and infamous. But two things especially concurr'd to render this Office odious to the

the *Jews*. First, the Persons who manag'd it were usually covetous, and great Exacters; for having themselves farm'd the Customs of the *Romans*, they generally us'd all Methods of Extortion and Oppression, to enable them both to pay their Rents, and to raise Advantage to themselves: And upon this Account they became infamous, even among the *Gentiles* themselves, who frequently speak of them as Cheats, and Thieves, and publick Robbers, and worse Members of a Community, more voracious and destructive in a City, than wild Beasts in a Forest. Secondly, these Tributes were not only a Grievance to the Purfes of the *Jews*, but also an Affront to the Liberty and Freedom of their Nation; for they look'd upon themselves as a Free-born People, and that they had been immediately invested in this Privilege by God himself, and accordingly beheld this as a daily and standing Instance of their Slavery, which of all other things they could least endure. To which we may add, that these *Publicans* were not only oblig'd by the Necessity of their Employment to have frequent Dealings and Converse with the *Gentiles*, which the *Jews* held unlawful and abominable, but also being generally *Jews* themselves, they rigorously exacted these things of their own Brethren, and thereby seem'd to conspire with the *Romans* to entail perpetual Slavery upon their own Nation. Upon all which Accounts, *Publicans* became so universally abhorr'd by the *Jewish* Nation, that it was accounted unlawful to do them any Office of common Kindness or Courtesie, nay they held it no Sin to cozen and over-reach a *Publican*, and that with the Solemnity of an Oath; they might not eat or drink, walk or travel with them; they were look'd upon as common Thieves and Robbers, and Money receiv'd of them might not be put to the rest of a Man's Estate, it being presum'd to have been gain'd by Rapine and Violence; nor were they admitted as Persons fit to give Evidence in any Cause. They were so infamous, as not only to be banish'd all communion in the Matters of Divine Worship, but to be avoided in all Affairs of civil Society and Commerce, as the Pests of their Country, Persons of an infectious Converse, and of as vile a Class as Heathens and Sinners, with whom they were generally rank'd.

(6.) The *Herodians*, whom we are next to mention, were a Party of Men who were extraordinary Favourers and Assistants of *Herod* the Great, and also of his Son after him; but whether they were of a particular Sect or Heresie, or only of a Faction, Authors are not well agreed. Those who Account them of the former Kind, suppose them to

be Persons, who partly surpriz'd at the Grandeur and Magnificence of *Herod's* Court, and partly to ingratiate themselves with that Prince, maintain'd him to be the expected *Messiah*. But they seem more probably to be only a Faction or Party, who were great Espousers of *Herod's* secular Interest, and Supporters of his new-gotten Sovereignty. For *Herod* being a Stranger, and having by the *Roman* Power usurp'd the Kingdom, and afterwards govern'd it tyrannically, became generally hateful and burthenfom to the People; so that besides the Assistance of a Foreign Power, he wanted some to join with his Interest who were Natives. These were peculiarly active in pressing the People to pay Tribute to *Cæsar*, *Herod* being oblig'd by the Charter of his Sovereignty to be careful of the Tribute due to the *Romans*; and they could not do him a more acceptable Service, than by this means endearing him to his great Patrons at *Rome*. In Matters of Opinion they seem'd to have join'd with the *Sadducees*; for what *St. Matthew* calls *the Leaven of the Sadducees*, *St. Mark* stiles *the Leaven of Herod*. Probably they had induc'd *Herod* to be of their Principles, that as they had zealously asserted his Right to the Kingdom, he might favour and maintain their impious Opinions. And it is not unlikely but a Person of such enormous Vices as *Herod*, might very easily be tempted to take shelter under Principles so directly serving the Purposes of a wicked Life.

(7.) Lastly, we are to take some Notice of the *Galileans*, which Name either signifies a particular Faction, directly opposite to the *Herodians*, and call'd also by the Name of *Gaulonites*, or else the Inhabitants of that Part of *Palestine* call'd *Galilee*. But since that Faction of the *Galileans* or *Gaulonites* began after our Saviour's Birth, we shall refer our Account of them to their proper Place, and here only take Notice of the *Galileans* as they were Inhabitants of the Province of *Galilee*. These anciently were for the most part Descendents of those *Assyrians* whom *Salmanasser* sent to inhabit the Kingdom of *Israel*, when he carry'd the Ten Tribes captive; then *Pagans*, and of the same Extract with the old *Samaritans*, of whom they were a part. But mixing with the Remainders of the four Tribes of *Aser*, *Nephthali*, *Zabulon* and *Iffachar*, they in a great measure forsook their Paganism; and afterwards being subdued by the *Maccabees*, and receiving great Numbers of the Tribes of *Judab* and *Benjamin* among them, before our Saviour's time, they became true and orthodox *Jews*, and as great Abhorrrers of the *Gentiles* and *Samaritans* as the *Jews* in *Judea* were. They were exact Observers of the Temple Ministrations,

and

and constant Repairers to *Jerusalem* at the usual Times, and generally so zealous in their Religion, that no Threats nor Force could oblige them to offer Sacrifice for the Health of the *Roman* Emperors. They were also People of great Courage and Hardiness, and of no less Plainness and Unpoliteness; differing from the other *Jews* in several Customs, (but not such as could cause a Schism in Religion) and also in their Dialect, which was of a much broader and rougher Pronunciation than that in *Judea*. Tho' they were true *Jews* in all Respects, yet upon the Account of their near Communication with the *Gentiles*, their mixt Extract, and their rough Simplicity, they were extremely despis'd by the Inhabitants of *Judea*, as Persons mean and ignoble, and half Strangers. So that the Name of a *Galilean* was in some sort a reproachful and despicable Title, and *Galilee* a Province from whence no extraordinary Person was expected. Yet notwithstanding the *Galileans* were the most illiterate, and most despis'd part of the *Jews*, they were the Persons with whom our Saviour was pleas'd principally to converse, and from whom he chose most, if not all, of his Apostles.

III. Such was the State and Condition of the Inhabitants of *Palestine*, when our blessed Saviour came into the World; miserably corrupted and divided, and both in Policy and Religion declining, ~~and~~ running headlong to Ruin and Desolation. And tho' there was an extraordinary Appearance of Grandeur and worldly Prosperity in the Court of *Herod*, and still more in the *Roman* Empire, yet the Times were exorbitantly bad and deplorable, and the whole World as it were involv'd in Wickedness and Idolatry. However in these degenerate Times, and to the above describ'd degenerate People, did the all-merciful God send his eternal Son from the ineffable Glories of the Heaven of Heavens, to debase himself even to the Form of one of the meanest, and most despis'd of all rational Beings; and this to redeem lost Mankind; tho' before he promis'd the Blessing, they had not the least Right to claim it, the least Merit to procure it, nor the least Reason to expect it. This is that superlative Work which we are assur'd the *Angels* themselves desire to look into, and the Credit of which the Devils and wicked Men continually endeavour to enervate; and so stupendous, that it is beyond all the Tongues of Men and Angels to express. Upon which Occasion One thus emphatically observes, Suppose we could grasp in the whole Compass of Nature, as to all the Particulars and Varieties
of

of Being and Motion, yet we should find it a vast, if not an impossible Leap from thence to ascend to the full Comprehension of any one of God's Attributes; much more from thence to the mysterious Oeconomy of the Divine Persons; and most of all to the astonishing Work of the World's Redemption by the Blood of the Son of God himself, condescending to be a Man, that he might die for us. But since these are Heights above the Reach, and Depths beyond the Fathom of all mortal Intellects, we shall only take some Notice of the wise Methods of Providence in the regular Manifestation of this great Redeemer, and the gradual Appearance of the *Sun of Righteousness*, whose Course was correspondent to that of the Sun in the Firmament, from its first Dawnings to its full Splendor.

Immediately after the fatal Lapse of Mankind, God, that he might not leave them without all Comfort, before he denounc'd the Judgments due to their Transgressions, promis'd a Redeemer, who was to destroy the Sovereignty of Satan. And this was the first glimmering Appearance of that great Light which was to shine throughout the World; which tho' feebly represented, and as at a vast Distance, was yet suitable to the Weakness of the Eyes that then beheld it, enough to keep them from a total Darkness and Despair, and sufficient for a true Faith to lay hold on. And herein both the Wisdom and Mercy of God did wonderfully display themselves; that when he promis'd the World a Redeemer, he us'd such Means and Methods, that Human Kind, in the midst of all its miserable Blindness and vile Corruptions, should become capable both of seeing and receiving so mighty a Blessing: And this not by any extraordinary Addition of Strength to Man, or supernatural Restoration of his original Faculties, but by an amazing Condescension in his Divine Nature, and by accommodating his Manifestations, not only to the Lowness of Mankind in general, but even to the Frailties and Infirmities of the lapsed State. All which eminently appear in all his Revelations, more especially of his blessed Son, which were manifested by many Steps and Degrees, and at several Periods of time, as the World became fit and prepared to receive them. And in these he did not only treat Mankind with all the Tenderness of a Father towards his Children, but in all the Declarations of his Will, he freely convers'd and discours'd with them according to their own Stile and Capacities, and with as much Familiarity, as if there had been some Degree of Equality between the mighty Creator of Heaven and Earth, and mere Dust and Ashes.

The

The first Promise of a Redeemer was made to the Woman's Seed in general, and for many Ages not confin'd to any one Branch of Human Kind; so that any of *Adam's* Progeny, for what was then revealed, might have hoped to be the happy Parent of that Seed, which should deliver Man from the Slavery of the Devil. And thus it continu'd for above two thousand Years, in which Space the Church of God, tho' never extinguish'd, seem'd to have been limited to a very small Compass, and sometimes to a single Family. But at length, when God was pleas'd to call *Abraham* from his own Country, the Promise was made more Special, and particularly confin'd to the Offspring of his Loins; God several Times declaring to him, That *in his Seed all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*. *Abraham* had two Sons, *Ismael* the Son of his Bond-Woman, and *Isaac* the Son of his Wife; and from which of these two the *Messiah* should proceed, was undeterminable, 'till God entail'd the Blessing upon *Isaac*, declaring to *Abraham* that *in Isaac his Seed should be call'd*, and repeating to *Isaac* the Promise made formerly to his Father, That *in his Seed all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*. *Isaac* also had two Sons, *Esau* and *Jacob*; but the Elder was excluded, and the Promise entail'd upon *Jacob*; God likewise declaring to him, That *in his Seed all the Families of the Earth should be blessed*. From *Jacob* sprung the twelve Patriarchs, and from them the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, among whom the Promise of the *Messiah* was entail'd upon that of *Judah*; So that the Promise was now made more special, and confin'd to a particular Tribe, as 232 Years before it had been to that Nation that was to spring from the Loins of *Abraham*. And now the very Time of the Appearance of the *Messiah*, who is there term'd *Shiloh*, was likewise pointed out, namely before the Scepter and the Lawgiver departed from *Judah*; that is, before the temporal Government and Oeconomy of the *Jews* were dissolv'd.

For above 230 Years after this, we have no express Prophecie concerning the *Messiah*, yet in that Space God was pleas'd to make a farther Manifestation of him by other Means, namely, by instituting a great Number of typical Ordinances, and lively Representations of his Person and Function, which were to be continu'd by an uninterrupted Succession, 'till he Himself came to dissolve them. At this time the Church of God was much enlarg'd, even to the Compass of a whole and numerous Nation; and God having appointed certain special Rules and Laws for its Observation, his great Prophet *Moses*, before he left the World,

gave the People a more particular Knowledge of the *Messiah* that was to come, to whom all were to hearken as an extraordinary Person sent from God to procure Happiness to Mankind. The Tribes of *Israel* being settled in the Land of *Canaan*, and very greatly encreas'd, more especially that of *Judah*, about 400 Years after the Death of *Moses*, God thought fit to make the Promise of the *Messiah* yet more special; as there had been three great Limitations of it before, the first to the Seed of the Woman, the second to the Nation of the *Israelites*, and the third to the Tribe of *Judah*; this last was made to the Family of *David*, a Person whom God had exalted to be King of his People, as a Type of that Blessed King to come. The Promise was not only entail'd upon his Family, but also the Person of the *Messiah* was more fully represented to him than to any before him, as appears from the Writings of this inspir'd Prince, where he is clearly described in several Passages. ' He shew'd the ' Dignity of his Person by calling him Lord; yet he represented him as a suffering *Messiah*, that should be betray'd ' by one of his Disciples; should feel violent Agonies, be ' expos'd to cruel Mockings, and have Vinegar and Gall ' given to him; that he should be nail'd to the Cross, and ' have his Garments divided among the Soldiers; yet he ' should be the true Paschal Lamb, for not a Bone of him ' should be broken; after which he should arise from the ' Dead, and not see Corruption, and lastly he should ascend ' triumphantly into Heaven.

Above 200 Years after the Death of *David*, several other Prophets began to foretel the *Messiah*, especially that noble Person *Isaiah*, who was so particular concerning Him, that he is by several call'd the fifth Evangelist, or the Evangelical Prophet. He inform'd the *Israelites* ' of the Divinity ' of his Person, and of the extraordinary and miraculous ' Manner of his Birth, which should be of a pure Virgin, ' and of the Family of *David*; that he should have a Fore- ' runner to make Way for him; that he should begin to ' preach in the Province of *Galilee*, be endu'd with incom- ' parable Gifts and Graces, and perform many Miracles; ' that he should be a Man of Sorrows, be beaten, spit upon, ' treated as a Malefactor, suffer for our Sins, and be a Pro- ' pitiatory Sacrifice for all Mankind; and that he should ' obtain a decent Burial, and be deliver'd by a glorious Re- ' surrection. From *Hosea* the *Israelites* were inform'd of his flying into *Ægypt*, and from *Micah* soon after of the very Place of his Birth, ' which was to be *Bethlehem-E-* ' *phratab*, the least of the Cities of *Judah*, but honour'd

‘ above all the rest with the Nativity of a Prince, who was
 ‘ to be *Ruler in Israel, whose Going, forth had been from e-*
 ‘ *verlasting.* *Jeremiah* also after him asserted his Divinity,
 and that he should spring from the Posterity of *David*,
 with whom several other Prophecies agree: So that besides
 the constant and standing Types and Representations, there
 was frequently some new Revelation concerning this great
 Prince to come. But in the Time of the *Babylonian Cap-*
 tivity, *Daniel*, by a Message from the Angel *Gabriel*, gave a
 more lively and particular Account of the *Messiah* than e-
 ver, declaring, ‘ that he should come into the World to
 ‘ introduce a Law of everlasting Righteousness, and to die
 ‘ as a Sacrifice and Expiation for the Sins of the World, and
 ‘ particularly should put a Period to the *Levitical Sacrifices*
 ‘ and Oblations. And whereas other Prophecies had only
 in general defin’d the Time of his Appearance, this particu-
 larly determin’d the Period, ‘ That it should be at the end
 ‘ of seventy prophetic Weeks, that is, at the Expiration
 ‘ of 490 Years, after the rebuilding of the Walls of *Jeru-*
 ‘ *salem.*

From this time there were not many Revelations of the
Messiah, and but three Prophets succeeded *Daniel*, namely,
Haggai, *Zechariah*, and *Malachi*, who all declare something
 concerning him. The former, animating the People, who
 were much dejected by reason of the mean Appearance of
 the second Temple, inform’d them, ‘ *That the Glory of the*
 ‘ *latter House should be greater than of the former*, which should
 ‘ be effected by the Manifestation of *the desire of all Nati-*
 ‘ *ons*: which manifestly shew’d the Dignity of his Nature;
 for the first Temple had the Presence of God on the Mer-
 cy Seat, but this second was to be more glorious by means
 of a more lively Presence of his Son, the only true Sacri-
 fice, of whom all others were but Types and Shadows.
Zechariah immediately after inform’d them of the Humilia-
 tion of this Prince, ‘ That he should come riding into *Je-*
 ‘ *rusalem* upon an Ass, that he should be sold for thirty
 ‘ pieces of Silver, and that the Soldiers should pierce his
 ‘ Body. After him succeeded *Malachi*, the last of the Pro-
 phets, who, about the Restoration of *Jerusalem*, and the
 Beginning of the above named seventy Weeks, concluded
 his Prophecie with exhorting the People to a firm Adherence
 to the Law of *Moses*, ‘ till the great Prophet of the Church
 ‘ shou’d appear, whose Forerunner, *John* the Baptist, should
 ‘ first come, *in the Spirit and Power of Elias, to turn the*
 ‘ *Hearts of the Fathers to their Children, and the Disobedi-*
 ‘ *ent to the Wisdom of the Just.* After this, for above 400
 Years,

Years, 'till the second Appearance of the Angel *Gabriel* foretelling the Birth of *John*, all Kinds of immediate Revelations ceas'd among the *Jews*, and all other extraordinary Privileges and Favours were also remov'd not long before; as the Divine Presence on the Mercy Seat, the *Urim* and *Thummim*, and other things formerly mention'd. So that the *Jews* became in a great measure like other Nations, had no peculiar Advantages and Prerogatives to shew above other People, had no greater Distinctions than their ordinary and fixed Laws, and nothing to boast of but their former Revelations. And God's withdrawing these Favours, was not only justly due to their Degeneracy and Corruptions, but was also highly conducing to the Manifestation of the *Messiah*; for it is necessary that the Stars and inferior Lights should disappear and vanish before the Beams of the rising Sun. The want of these Benefits, as it was a manifest Sign of God's Displeasure, and a Foretoken of his rejecting a wicked Generation, so it was also a proper and powerful Means of awakening them to a more lively Expectation of a new and perfect State of things: And as the exact Time of the *Messiah* was particularly mark'd out, so about the time of his Appearance, the *Jews* were in such a great Expectation of him, that many of them were ready to imagine and conclude *Herod* the Great to be the Person.

Thus was God pleas'd to make Way for his only Son among his peculiar People; but as this great Blessing was design'd for the Benefit of the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, and for all that should believe in him, so Providence was no less careful to make Way for him in the *Pagan* World; and this was effected by divers Methods, particularly by some open Revelations, and prophetic Words put into the Mouths of *Gentile* Prophets; but more especially by means of several Dispersions of the *Israelites* and *Jews*. Among the prophetic Persons we may reckon *Balaam*, who gave a lively Account of the *Messiah* under the Name of a Star coming from *Jacob*; *Hydaspes*, *Trismegistus* and the *Sybil*s, who were all very particular concerning this Prince: Tho' these three latter have been very much question'd by some modern Criticks, yet they were never fully disprov'd, their Arguments being rather Presumptions than Proofs. And now it was that not in *Jewry* alone was God known, but he whose Name was great in *Israel*, did make Way for the Knowledge of himself among all the Nations of the Earth. In order to this, the Nation of the *Israelites*, the great Store-house of Divine Knowledge, which before was an inclosed Garden, was now thrown open, and great

Numbers of the Inhabitants transplanted into foreign and remote Countries. And this was done several times by the special Hand of Providence; but more especially at the times of the three great Captivities formerly taken notice of, *viz.* the *Affyrian*, by *Salmanassar*, in the Year 721 before Christ; the *Babylonian*, by *Nebuchadnezzar*, in the Year 607; and the *Ægyptian*, by *Prolemeus Lagi*, in the Year 320: Which Captivities occasion'd many other lesser Dispersions of this People, so that in our Saviour's time there were *Jews* dwelling in all the principal Countries of the World, *Jews of every Nation under Heaven*, as *St. Luke* expresses it, *Acts* 2. 5. These Captivities and Dispersions, tho' they seem'd to have been only the just Punishment of a disobedient and corrupted Nation, yet prov'd of infinite Advantage to the rest of the World, which was excited and enlightned by those People who were not worthy to inhabit their own Country. By these, the World had the Opportunity of looking into the holy Scriptures, and of being inform'd both of the Necessity and the Nature of a Mediator; and by these, great numbers of *Profelytes* were made, especially those call'd *Profelytes of the Gate*, whose Principles being so very conformable to the Laws of true Reason and Nature, they became the most visible Cause, as I hinted before, of the first Propagation of *Christianity*.

Partly by means of these dispersed, tho' generally detested *Jews*, partly by means of several peculiar Revelations to the *Gentiles*, and partly by the exceeding Growth of human Learning, not long before our Saviour's Birth, the whole World, as well as the Inhabitants of *Palesfine*, was awakened into an Expectation of the Appearance of some extraordinary and wonderful Person, who was to be exceedingly beneficial to all Mankind. Particularly the *Romans* were alarm'd upon every slight Occasion, and once so terrified upon the noise of *Nature's being about to bring forth a King*, that about the time of *Augustus's* Birth, the Senate made a Decree, tho' never executed, that no Male born that Year should be brought up; and those whose Wives were with Child, conceiv'd great Hopes, applying the Prophecy to themselves, as *Suetonius* reports it. The like kind of Alarms and Expectations are mention'd by *Dion Cassius* and *Tacitus*, as well as *Josephus* himself. So that there was a sort of an universal Impulse, to call it no more, imprinted upon the Minds of the whole Earth, which was a Divine Apparatus to introduce the Son of God into the World, with the general Curiosity and Commotion of all Nature.

So true was that Prophecy of *Haggai's*, which calls him *the Desire*, and consequently the Expectation of *all Nations*.

IV. Such was the Expectations, and such the Circumstances of the World about the Time of our Saviour's Appearance; the State of the *Roman Empire* and of Learning being at the highest, and the State of the *Jews* and of true Religion almost at the lowest: Yet in *Judea* there was a remarkable Appearance of Grandeur and State, by reason of the magnificent Court of *Herod the Great*; a Prince whose profuse Temper taught him sometimes to flatter and oblige, tho' much oftner to injure and oppress his Subjects. On the one side, he freely conform'd to the *Jewish* Religion, and was circumcis'd, and likewise rebuilt their Temple with all the Courts and Out-Buildings to a most surprizing Degree of Beauty and Glory; on the other, he introduc'd many of the *Pagan* Customs and Games us'd at *Rome*, suppress'd and chang'd the High Priest's Office as he thought fit, and profan'd even the Temple itself. He was exceedingly jealous and ambitious, cruel and tyrannical, and rag'd among the *Jews* like a Bear and a Lion, devouring and wasting on every side. He had slain their legal King, extirpated the whole Race of the *Maccabees*, and with them several of his own intimate Friends, and destroy'd the whole Body of the Grand *Sanhedrim*, and substituted others in their Places. Nor was his Rage confin'd to the *Jews*, but descended to his own Family and nearest Relations, even to the executing his beloved Wife *Mariamne*, and his own Sons *Alexander* and *Aristobulus*, upon slight and trivial Pretences. So that setting aside some Appearances of Generosity and Greatness, there never was a more merciless Governor, or a completer Tyrant than He: A manifest Sign that the Scepter was *departing*, if not *departed* from *Judab*, when instead of that, a Rod of Iron was put into the Hands of a bloody Executioner to bruise and break the Inhabitants all in Pieces.

In the thirty fifth Year of this Prince's Reign, when all the former Prophecies were almost compleated, and all holy Persons in a longing Expectation of a glorious Redeemer, God was pleas'd to make his last Manifestations concerning his Son, being about to shew him in the most conspicuous and lively Manner. But because it was not fit that so great a Person should come into the World without an eminent Harbinger to introduce and usher in his Arrival, a great Forerunner was design'd him, to prepare his Way, and to be a Morning Star to this Sun of Righteousness.

Luke 1.
5--20.

This Harbinger was promis'd to an eminent Priest of *Ju-
dea* call'd *Zacharias*, who with his Wife *Elizabeth*, of the
same Tribe of *Levi* and the Progeny of *Aaron*, were cele-
brated for their unspotted Lives; but had the Disgrace of
Barrenness laid upon them, being then very ancient, and
past Hopes of Issue. *Zacharias* executing his Office at *Je-
rusalem* according to his fixed Course, which was that of
Abia, or the eighth Course; and great Multitudes being as-
sembled at the Temple, probably on a Sabbath Day, he by
Lot was appointed to enter into the Body of the Temple
with his Censer to burn Incense, while the People were
offering up their Supplications in that Court call'd the Court
of *Israel*. At the Altar of Incense he was exceedingly sur-
priz'd with the Sight of an Angel from Heaven, who
stood on the North Side of it; which being an unusual Vi-
sion, rais'd a great Terror in him. But the Angel imme-
diately remov'd his Fears, assuring him, *That his Prayers
were heard, and his Wife should bear him a Son, call'd by the
Name of John: That he and many others should meet with
extraordinary Joy and Comfort at his Birth: That this Son
should be a Person of Austerities, abstaining from Wine and
spirituous Liquors, and so Great in the Sight of God, that he
should be replenish'd with the Holy-Ghost from his Mother's
Womb. That he should convert great numbers of the Jews
from their Corruptions, going before the Messiah in the Spirit
of the great Reformer Elias, to prepare his Ways for him,
and to dispose Men to receive him.* *Zacharias* was astonish'd
at this News, and rashly desir'd to be satisfy'd as to the
Truth of it, since he thought it beyond the Course of Na-
ture, both he and his Wife being very antient. Whereupon
the Angel let him know, *That he was no less than Gabriel,
a special Attendant of God's Throne, and dispatcht purposely
to inform him of this great Happiness: But since he was so in-
credulous as to require a Sign, he should have one, which should
be a Punishment of his Unbelief as well as a Confirmation of
his Faith, namely, that 'till after the Birth of the Child he
should be entirely dumb; intimating, as many believe, that
the Silencing of the Levitical Priesthood was now ap-
proaching, when Men were to expect another kind of
Worship.*

Luke 1.
21-25.

During this Intercourse, the People abroad were surpriz'd
at his long tarrying, expecting that he should come forth
and give them the usual Blessing; but upon his Appearance
their Wonder encreas'd, perceiving by his making of
Signs that he was unable to speak to them, and rightly
judging that he had seen some extraordinary Vision within
the

the Temple. This happened towards the latter end of the Month of *September*, according to the most common Account; but some others believe it to have been about the beginning of *June*, particularly Dr. *Lightfoot*, who infers it from the ordinary Courses of the Priests. After *Zacharias*'s Course was finish'd, which continu'd a Week, he repair'd to his own Habitation, which was *Hebron* in the Mountainous Part of the Province of *Judæa*, an ancient City about 24 Miles almost South of *Jerusalem*. Where, when his Wife *Elizabeth* perceiv'd her self with Child in her old Age, she retir'd her self from the World, probably 'till her Delivery, that she might be free from all Defilements, and have a truer Certainty and Sense of God's miraculous Favour, in taking away the Reproach of Barrenness, and giving her a Son, of whom such extraordinary Hopes were conceiv'd.

Thus did the Almighty think fit to revive his former Luke 1. 26-38. Way of Revelations, and then to proceed to the clearest and noblest Manifestations of his Son; which began to be display'd about six Months after, in the thirty sixth Year of the Reign of *Herod*. At which time the same Angel *Gabriel*, who appear'd to *Zacharias*, and above 500 Years before to the Prophet *Daniel*, was sent from God into *Galilee*, an opposite Province of *Palestine*, and to a mean City call'd *Nazareth*, about 60 Miles almost North of *Jerusalem*. And now was the fifth and last Limitation of the Promise of the *Messiah*; the first being to the Seed of the Woman, the second to the Nation of the *Israelites*, the third to the Tribe of *Judah*, the fourth to the Family of *David*, and this last to the Person of a most holy Virgin call'd *Mary*; a Person of low Condition, espous'd to *Joseph*, of the same Family of *David*, but of no higher Profession than a Carpenter: An instance of the profoundest Humility, as well as sublimest Mercy. At the Angel's Approach to this pious Maid, he immediately congratulated her with her *being most highly in Favour with the Almighty, and being blessed above the rest of her Sex*. Which surprising Words, and unusual Sight rais'd a strange Commotion in her Breast, and no less Admiration at such an uncommon Salutation. But the Angel bad her *suffer no Disturbance in her Mind, since she was so highly esteem'd by God: For she should have the Happiness of bearing a Son call'd by the Name of JESUS, or a Saviour, why should she be the long expected Messiah, to whom God should give the Throne of his Father David, and his Sovereignty and Kingdom should have no Period*. *Mary* not doubting the Angel's Veracity, but admiring

ring at the Greatness of the Work, modestly desir'd to be inform'd how this could be brought to pass, *since she was to continue a Virgin*, according to the ancient Prophecy. Whereupon the Angel very readily told her, *That this was to be effected by the invisible Power and Operation of the Holy-Ghost overshadowing her; for which Reason the Holy Person to be brought forth should be no less than the Son of God: And to shew that nothing was impossible to the Almighty, her Cousin Elizabeth, who was ancient and many Years barren, was now gone six Months with Child.* Being fully satisfy'd with this Answer, the pious Virgin with all Modesty and Humility accepted of the Divine Bounty; and upon the Angel's Departure, the Holy Ghost wrought in her this great Mystery, for which she had formerly been fitted and dispos'd by the plentiful Effusion of his Graces; she being then about 15 Years of Age, as it is conceiv'd by several, or twenty, as others believe.

Luke 1.
39-56.

The Angel's Message, and Consequence of it, immediately rais'd in this Virgin an extraordinary Desire of visiting her Cousin *Elizabeth*; therefore with all Speed she undertook a Journey of about 80 Miles to *Hebron*. Where, entering *Zacharias's* House, *Elizabeth* upon hearing her first Salutation, immediately perceiv'd the Child to spring up in her Womb; and being inspired with the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, she cry'd out, *Blessed art thou above thy Sex, and Blessed the Fruit of thy Body! How vast is my Felicity, to be visited by the Mother of my Lord!* And declaring the extraordinary Accident of her unborn Child, she farther pronounc'd her Blessed for the Greatness of her Faith, assuring her of the Accomplishment of all that the Angel had told her. Whereupon *Mary* without any Swelling or Ostentation, broke out into a Rapture of Thanksgiving, *glorifying and praising the Almighty with all the Faculties of Soul and Spirit, for looking down upon the mean Condition of her self, which should cause all succeeding Generations to pronounce her Blessed: Humbly acknowledging that this Favour proceeded from an omnipotent Being, whose Name was Holy, and whose Mercy extended to all Generations that obey'd him: One who by his powerful Arm had destroy'd the Imaginations of the Proud, thrown down the Haughty from their Thrones, elevated and furnish'd the humble and needy Souls, while the High and Wealthy were utterly rejected: And One who could not forget his select People, and his Promise of the Messiah made to the great Patriarch Abraham and his Progeny for ever.* Thus were their Joys testified on both Sides, being as great as any on this Side Heaven; and *Mary* to gain a full Assurance

rance of her own Pregnancy, tarry'd with her Cousin about three Months, and then return'd to her own Habitation at *Nazareth*.

Shortly after the Virgin's Departure, *Elizabeth* was deliver'd of her Son, and all her Neighbours and Relations repaired to her to congratulate the Favours she receiv'd from Heaven: And on the eighth Day, when the Child was to be circumcis'd and nam'd, they all gave him the Name of *Zacharias*, as his Father was call'd; but *Elizabeth* oppos'd them, declaring that he should be nam'd *John*: Whereupon they alledg'd that none of her Family was call'd by that Name, and made Signs to his Father to shew his Pleasure concerning it; which he did by requiring Writing-Tables, and writing *That his Name should be John*. This was a great Surprise to them, and a greater when they found that upon this His Speech was immediately restor'd to him, which he employ'd in the Praises of the Almighty. So that there was a great Rumor and Astonishment through all the neighbouring Parts of the Country; and all who heard the Report, lodg'd it in their Breasts, admiring what manner of Child this shou'd prove. But *Zacharias* now perceiving the Mystery of the Incarnation, and being inspired with a Prophetick Spirit, *blest the merciful God of Israel, for his Redemption of his People by a mighty Saviour, rais'd out of the Family of David; who had been promis'd from the Beginning of the World, to Eve, Abraham, and the succeeding Propheets; that Mankind might be freed from the Slavery of their Spiritual Enemies, and be obedient to their Creator in true Holiness, without Fear and Servility. As for his own Son, He should be nam'd the Prophet of the High God, to go before him, to prepare his Ways, and to manifest Salvation to his People by the Remission of their Sins; and all this through the unbounded Mercy of God, who sent the Sun of Righteousness amongst them, to illuminate those in Darkness and the Vale of Death, and to guide them into the Ways of eternal Peace, and Happiness.* All which was accomplish'd in process of Time; and God, that he might prepare this Infant for the Office he design'd him, daily strengthen'd him with all spiritual Gifts, and kept him in the Deserts of *Judaea* 'till the appointed time of his appearing to his People.

During this Space, the Holy Virgin being return'd to *Nazareth*, still conceal'd the Mystery that God had wrought in her from her espous'd Husband *Joseph*; but her pregnant Symptoms soon discover'd it, and tho' her Deportment had been pious and chaste to a Miracle, yet he was assur'd that she was with Child. This rais'd no little Concern in his Breast;

Luke 1.
57--80.

Matth. 1.
18--25.

Breast; but being a merciful good Man, and extremely unwilling to inflict a publick Punishment upon her, he resolv'd upon a Separation with all Privacy. But between his Resolution and the design'd Execution of it, an Angel from Heaven appear'd to him in a Vision, courteously saluting this mean Artificer by the Title of *Son of David*; assuring him, *That there was no Reason for any farther Concern, for his Wife's Conception was the immediate Work of the Holy Ghost; and that she should bear a Son, whose Name he should call Jesus, or a Saviour, because he should save his People from their Sins.* Joseph with great Satisfaction submitted to the Angel's Command, and gladly remain'd with his Wife, living in perfect Chastity both before and after her Delivery, according to the Opinion of most Interpreters. So that, as St. *Matthew* observes, here was a remarkable Completion of *Isaiah's* Prophecie, which says, *That a Virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son, who shall be call'd Immanuel, which signifies God with us.*

Thus we see the profound Humility of our Blessed Lord, who chose not to descend from Heaven with the Glories of a triumphant Monarch and Deliverer, but privately to enter into the Womb of a mean Virgin; from thence to be brought forth as an Infant, and then to appear in the World in the Form of the lowest Rank of Mankind. And th's eminently display'd the Wisdom as well as Mercy of the Almighty; for as he design'd to build the Exaltation of *Jesus* higher than all, so he laid his Humiliation lowest; that as Pride had been the Destruction of Mankind, so Humility should be their Restoration: An admirable Pattern to be imitated by all his Followers. Yet notwithstanding our Saviour's voluntary Appearance under these mean Circumstances, we are to remember that even in his Human Capacity he was true Heir to the Kingdom of *Israel*, which had been by God intail'd upon *David* and his Posterity; so that he was *the King of the Jews* in a natural and legal, as well as a spiritual and divine Sense. And this appears, not only from former Prophecies, Types, and other Circumstances, but also from the Genealogy of our Saviour's Ancestors, given us by the two Evangelists *Matthew* and *Luke*; which Genealogies, tho' they have their Difficulties, and their seeming Disagreements, yet they both manifest him to have been of the Line of *David*. The former draws the Pedigree of his reputed Father *Joseph*; and the latter, that of his Mother *Mary*: The former shews his Political or Royal Pedigree, and his Ancestors as they were Heirs to the Crown of *Israel*; and the latter shews his natural Descent through the
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Several Successions of those from whom he took Flesh and Blood : The former being a *Jew*, and writing to the *Jews*, represents him as the Son of *David* and *Abraham*, in whom they had so great an Interest ; but the latter being a *Gentile*, and writing to them, and being about to shew him *braising of the Serpent's Head*, he represents him as *the Seed of the Woman*, from whom *Gentiles* as well as *Jews* were to expect Salvation. And this is the most receiv'd and constant Opinion of orthodox Divines, which clears the main Difficulties of the Evangelists Accounts, and shews *Joseph* to have been of the Elder and Royal Branch, and *Mary* of the Younger Branch, but both of the Family of *David*.

Jesus's being rightful and legal *King of the Jews*, and that only by his reputed Father's Side, is an unanswerable Argument, both against those who affirm *Joseph* to have had other Children by a former Wife, as also against those who deny the perpetual Virginity of *Mary* ; affirming that *Joseph* had other Children by her after the Birth of *Jesus*. For had *Joseph* had any Children, either by *Mary*, or any other Wife, they as coming from the elder Branch by *Joseph* their Father, must have claim'd the Inheritance of the Kingdom in his Right, and not *Jesus* the Son of *Mary*, who descended from a younger Line, and therefore could not legally inherit, but upon Default of Issue from *Joseph* the only remaining Heir of the Elder. So that *Jesus* was the very last of the Royal Line of *David*, which was fully terminated in him, who is also *God blessed for evermore, and his Throne is for ever and ever.*

The End of the Introduction.





Ecclesiastical History.

B O O K I.

*From the Nativity of our Blessed Saviour,
to his Ascension, according to the vul-
gar Computation.*

Containing the Term of 32 Years and 5 Months.

C H A P. I.

*From the Nativity of our Blessed Saviour,
to the Beginning of the Gospel, and first
Preaching of John Baptist, according to the
vulgar Computation.*

Containing the Term of 28 Years and above 6 Months.

I  T the Time of our Blessed Saviour's first A. D. I. Appearance in the World, the *Romans* by many Steps and Advances had made themselves Masters of the most considerable Parts of *Europe, Asia, and Africa*; and the State of their Empire was then in the utmost Perfection, as to regular Establishments, liberal Arts, and outward Magnificence; but much declining as to the inward Vigour, and rigid Virtue of
its

AUGU-
STUS.

its ancient Subjects. This mighty Empire was now govern'd by *Augustus Caesar*, one of the most renowned Monarchs that ever appear'd in *Pagan History*; a Prince so remarkable for his vast Capacity and Policy, his sagacious Penetration and Management, his profound Knowledge and Wisdom, and withal, his singular Generosity and Humanity, that his Character cannot be much easier drawn, than his Actions can be represented, in a few Words. When he was but eighteen Years of Age, and the *Roman Common-Wealth* in a greater Ferment than it had been since the Building of the City, he enter'd upon Designs far above his Years; and in his Progress waded through innumerable Difficulties, 'till by his Policy and Management he freed himself from all Rivals and Pretenders, and made himself Emperor of the World, neither by Inheritance, nor Usurpation, nor Conquest, nor Election, but by a strange Mixture of all these together. The Beginnings of his Sovereignty, or rather his first Endeavours for Sovereignty, were too much mingled with Blood and Cruelty to be wholly vindicated; but in the Progress of it, his Actions became more unblameable, and were attended with such a Prosperity, that he not only allay'd all the Storms in the *Roman State*, but thrice shut up the Temple of *Janus* in Token of a Peace with all the World, which was oftner than it had been for above 700 Years before. So that considering the mighty Affluence of Pleasure and Plenty, and the Pomp and Splendor of this Reign, together with the extraordinary Encouragement of all kinds of polite Learning, none need to wonder that the Court of *Augustus* has been celebrated above all others in the World.

This Emperor having shut up the Temple of *Janus* the third and last time, bringing an universal Peace, not only to the *Roman Empire*, but probably to the whole World, after a Reign of 38 Years from the Death of *Julius Caesar*, he enter'd upon his twelfth Consulship together with *L. Sylla*. In which Year, being freed from all Troubles and Contests, he determin'd to enquire into the Strength and Riches of all his Dominions; and in order to that, he issu'd out a general Edi&t that all Persons in the *Roman Empire*, with their Estates and Conditions, shou'd be register'd at certain appointed Places, according to their respective Provinces, Cities, and Families; probably that they might be tax'd accordingly. For this purpose *Cyrenius* or *Quirinus* was sent over with extraordinary Power into *Syria*, which also included *Judea* and King *Herod's* Dominions, to entrol that Part of the Empire; which probably occasion'd *St. Luke* to call him Governor of *Syria*. By Vertue of this Edi&t *Joseph* and his espoused Wife

Luke 2.
I--5.

Wife *Mary*, being both of the Tribe of *Judab* and Family of *David*, were obliged to remove from their Habitation at *Nazareth*, and take a Journey of above 60 Miles into *Judæa*, to a City call'd *Bethlehem*; which tho' a small Place, was the Mother City of the Tribe of *Judab*, as *Jerusalem* was of *Benjamin*. This declining City, above five Miles South-West from *Jerusalem*, was the Place where this Couple were to be enroll'd, notwithstanding the near Approach of *Mary's* Delivery; and this was the Birth-place of *David* himself, and by God foretold to be that of his great Anti-Type the *Messiah*. And as this was necessary to the Completion of God's Word, so he wisely deriv'd the Cause of their coming hither as far as *Rome*, and brought it about without either Miracle or Revelation: And thus the Decree of a *Pagan* Emperor became the Occasion of the Accomplishment of the Decrees of Heaven.

It was in the beginning of the 37th Year of the Reign of *Herod*, and in the Month of *December*, according to the most receiv'd Opinion, that *Joseph* and *Mary* arriv'd at *Bethlehem*, for this Enrolment. In which City they might have expected a good Entertainment after a troublesom Journey; but the great Conflux of People upon this Occasion, had already fill'd up the Inns and Houses of Reception, so that they were constrain'd to repair to a Stable for Lodgings; which, according to Tradition, was a sort of a Cave cut out of a Rock, a common Receptacle for Beasts on the East-Side of the Town. In this mean Place, was the Blessed Virgin deliver'd of her Holy Burthen without Pain, since it was conceiv'd without Sin; and she her self perform'd the Office of a Midwife, bound the Infant in swadling Cloaths, and laid it to rest in a Manger: A noble Instance of the Humility of our Lord, who as the last Scene of his Life was represented among Thieves, so his first was among Beasts. But, as one observes, this Stable was then a Temple full of Religion, full of Glory, when Angels were the Ministers, the Holy Virgin the Worshipper, and Christ the Deity. This memorable Nativity happen'd 4000 Years after the Creation of the World and the Fall of Man, according to *Usher*, and many other great Chronologers, in the first Year of the 194th *Olympiad*, in the 749th of the City of *Rome*, in the 39th Year of *Augustus* from the Death of *Julius Caesar*, the 26th from his Overthrow of *Antony* at *Actium*, and the 22d from his full Establishment in the Empire by the Senate and People, he himself and *L. Sylla* being Consuls. This is the truest *Æra* we can find of our Blessed Saviour's Birth, beginning just four Years before the vulgar Computation now in Use, which commenc'd

menc'd in the 43d of *Augustus*, under the Consulships of *Cor. Lentulus*, and *Cal. Piso*; and this is apparent from the Reign and Death of *Herod*, and from many Circumstances in the *Roman* and *Jewish* History: But to avoid Confusion in our succeeding Chronology, we shall follow the vulgar Account now in use in all Christendom. The Day of this Birth, according to the most receiv'd Accounts and antient Traditions, was the 25th of *December*; tho' *Mede*, *Light-foot*, and some others have given very remarkable Arguments to prove it was in *September*, and more particularly at the Feast of *Tabernacles*.

Luke 2.
8--21.

Notwithstanding the Privacy and Obscurity of our Saviour's Entrance into the World, the same Night God was pleas'd to make a pompous Revelation of him to certain poor Shepherds, who were attending their Flocks not far distant, in those Plains where *David* the Father of our Lord had often attended his. For in the midst of their innocent Employment, an Angel from Heaven, surrounded with most refulgent Rays of Glory, descended upon them; which strange Sight caus'd a great Consternation among them. But the Angel soon remov'd their Fears by assuring them, *That he brought them such News as should prove the infinite Joy of all People; for a Saviour was born that Night in Bethlehem, who was no less than Christ the Lord.* But to prevent their Expectation of an Earthly Prince, he told them, *That the Token of knowing this Person, should be his being wrapt in swaddling Cloaths, and lying in no better Place than a Manger.* Upon this, immediately there appear'd an innumerable Company of the Militia of Heaven, all breaking out into this triumphant Doxology, *Glory to God in the highest Heavens, Peace to the Earth, and Good-will to Mankind!* Thus as all the Angels sung at the Beginning of the old World, at the Creation, *Job* 38. 7. so much more at the Beginning of the New, at the Redemption. Upon the Angel's Departure into Heaven, the over-joy'd Shepherds immediately hastened to *Bethlehem*, where they found *Joseph* and *Mary*, and the Infant in a Manger, as the Angel had inform'd them; and they return'd praising and extolling the Mercies of God, and publishing in all Places what they knew concerning this Child, to the exceeding Amazement of all that heard them. But *Mary* on the contrary kept all these Things secret, and lodg'd them in her Breast, as the Subject of her private Meditations. And as She and *Joseph* were exact Observers of the Law of *Moses*, and to testify that the Child was the Son of *Abraham*, they circumcis'd him on the eighth Day, and call'd his Name *Jesus*, according

ing to the Appointment of the Angel *Gabriel* before his Conception: A Name to which all Creatures shall pay a Reverence.

Having been punctual in observing the Law of Circumcision, they were no less exact in the Performance of two other Commandments of the Law; one concerning Mothers, and the other the first-born of their Bodies. The first oblig'd every Woman, after her Delivery, not to touch any holy Thing for a fix'd Time, nor to enter into the Temple for forty Days after the Birth of a Son, and at the end of that Term to go thither to be purify'd; for which purpose she was to offer a Lamb for a Burnt-Offering, if able, or else a pair of Pigeons or Turtles, which being sacrific'd by the Priest, she was clean. The second enjoyn'd all Persons to bring their First-born Males, both of Man and Beast, to be presented to God at the Temple, the latter to be sacrific'd; and the former to be redeem'd for five Shekels, or about ten Shillings; and this in Commemoration of God's slaying all the First-born of the *Ægyptians* to deliver the *Israelites*. In Obedience to these two Laws, forty Days after her Delivery, the Holy Virgin with *Joseph* went up to *Jerusalem*; to offer the Sacrifice prescrib'd by the Law for her Purification, tho' her Son's immaculate Conception needed not that Ceremony; And St. *Luke* observes that she offer'd the Sacrifice prescrib'd to such as were indigent, namely, two Turtle Doves, or two young Pigeons. This was perform'd at that remarkable Gate of the Temple, call'd the Gate of *Nicanor*, at the great Passage between the Court of the Women, and the Court of *Israel* and the Priests; in which Passage the Child *Jesus* was presented to the Lord, deliver'd into the Hands of the Priest, and redeemed according to Law. Thus was the only begotten Son of God, and the First-born of every Creature, presented at his own Temple; which began to verifie the Prophecie of *Haggai*, namely, *That the Glory of the latter House should be greater than of the former.*

*Luke 2:
22-24.*

But as there was no publick Act about this Child, but was attended by something miraculous and extraordinary; so at the same Instant a pious and devout Person of the City, nam'd *Simeon*, was directed by the Spirit of God into the Temple. This *Simeon*, suppos'd to be the Son of the famous *Hillel*, had long waited for the Redemption of *Israel*, and had been promis'd by the Mouth of Heaven, that he should not leave the World before he had seen the illustrious Person who should effect it. And when the Child was brought in, this ravish'd old Man took him in his Arms,

*Luke 2:
25-38.*

and being excited by a Divine Inspiration, bless'd the Almighty, begging, *That according to his Promise he might be dismiss'd this World, since his bodily Eyes had beheld his Salvation, design'd for all Nations; a Light to illuminate the Pagan World, as well as to be the Glory of the Jewish State.* From thence he turn'd to his astonish'd Parents, and Blessing them also, declar'd to *Mary, That this Child should be the Occasion of the Ruin or Happiness of many Israelites, and a Mark at which obdurate Sinners should level their malicious Obloquies; which tho' they should prove the Discovery of many Hearts, yet like a sharp Sword they should pierce her very Soul with Sorrow:* Which some think was a Prophecie of her Martyrdom. Now that the Divine Testimony concerning our Lord might be ratify'd by two witnesses in the Temple, and those of both Sexes, about the same time came an antient Widow of the Tribe of *Aser*, call'd *Anna*, 84 Years of Age; one noted in the Gospel for her constant Observance of the Temple-Ministration, and her frequent Fastings and Prayers. She likewise by a prophetick Spirit, gave God Thanks for this infinite Mercy, witnessing *Jesus* to be the *Messiah*, declaring the same to all such in *Jerusalem* as waited for his Coming. After the legal Performances *Joseph* and *Mary* with the Child return'd to *Bethlehem* with great Joy and Satisfaction, and there continu'd till they were order'd by God to remove; tho' *St. Luke*, who designedly omitted many things related by *St. Matthew*, seems to intimate their settling at *Nazareth* in *Galilee*.

A. D. 2. II. During these memorable Transactions, *Herod* at *Jerusalem* was embarras'd with many Mischiefs and Troubles, such as usually attend Tyrannical Governments, as not only Fears and Jealousies, but also real Conspiracies against his Person; which were carry'd on by several of his nearest Relations, particularly his Brother *Pheroras*, his Wife the High Priest's Daughter, and his Son and design'd Heir *Antipater*. These treasonable Designs were detected by means of the unnatural Death of *Pheroras*, and other Accidents: Several Persons were tortur'd, others executed, his Wife divorc'd, her Father depos'd from his High-Priesthood, and his Son *Antipater* imprison'd, in order to receive Sentence from the Court of *Rome*. But these things were scarcely effected, before this jealous Prince was alarm'd with a new and unexpected Accident, which was the Arrival of certain learned and eminent Astronomers or Magicians from *Arabia*, *Persia* or *Chaldea*, to *Jerusalem*. These having seen in their own Country a strange and extraordinary Star, and understanding
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by some old Propheſie, ſuch as that of *Balaam*, or ſome new Revelation, that this ſignify'd the Birth of the *Meſſiah* promis'd to the *Jews*, they travell'd to the Metropolis of *Judea*, there enquiring after this New-born Prince, that they might teſtifie their Adoration and Homage. Their publick Character and Appearance, and their open calling him the *King of the Jews*, drove the King into a great Conſternation, and the whole City into no little Commotion, as both fearing and hoping ſomething extraordinary. But *Herod*, reſolving to deſtroy this ſuppos'd Rival in his Kingdom either by Policy or Force, immediately aſſembled the whole Body of the *Sanhedrim*, conſiſting of the moſt learned of the *Jews*, and demanded of them the very Place where the *Meſſiah* ſhould be born. They readily answer'd him *Bethlehem* of *Judea*, for which they alledg'd the Senſe, tho' not the very Words, of *Micah's* Propheſie concerning that Matter. Upon which *Herod* with the utmoſt Privacy ſent for the above-mentioned *Aſtronomers*, and carefully enquiring of them the exact time of the Star's firſt Appearance, diſpatch'd them to *Bethlehem*, ordering them to make a diligent Search for this young Prince, and upon Diſcovery, to bring him word to *Jeruſalem*, that he might go and pay him Homage as well as they.

Theſe Perſons having receiv'd the King's Inſtructions, departed towards *Bethlehem*, and in their Way were ſurpriz'd with a new Sight of the ſame miraculous Star they had ſeen in their own Country, which went before them, and like the fiery Pillar in the Wilderneſs, directed them to the very Houſe where *Jeſus* and his Mother were lodg'd. The Sight of this was an extraordinary Comfort to theſe Travellers; who obſerving the Star's laſt Station, enter'd the Houſe, and finding the young Child with his Mother *Mary*, without deſpiſing his mean Appearance and Attendance, fell proſtrate to the Ground, according to the Eaſtern Cuſtom, and ador'd him. And having brought with them the richeſt Products of their own Country, they humbly made Preſents to him of Gold and precious Odors, particularly *Frankincenſe* and *Myrrh*; in all which Gifts, ſeveral believe that there was ſome myſtical Meaning. Thus was God pleas'd to manifeſt his Son by ſupernatural Means not only to *Jews*, but alſo to *Gentiles*; but by different Methods, as well as to different Underſtandings and Qualities. The former were poor illiterate Shepherds, the latter learned Philoſophers, probably of no mean Quality: The former, acquainted with the true Worſhip of the Creator, had an Angel for their Guide; the latter, contemplating the Creature, had a Star for theirs;

*Matth. 2.
9-11.*

the All-wise God accommodating his Revelations to the peculiar Circumstances of Mens natural Genius's and Educations.

Matth. 2.
12-15.

The Eastern Strangers design'd to have return'd to *Herod* at *Jerusalem*, but God, who knew the Heart of that Tyrant, prevented them by a Vision at Night, and directed them into their own Country by another Way. And the same Night he sent his Angel to *Joseph*, ordering him to arise immediately and take both Mother and Son with him, and fly as far as the Country of *Ægypt*, and to continue there 'till farther notice; informing him, *That Herod had a bloody Design of destroying the young Child.* *Joseph*, who was all Obedience, immediately got ready with his Wife, and with their greatest Treasure *Jesus*, undertook a Journey of above 200 Miles into *Ægypt*; the late Present of Gold being of special Use to them in the defraying of their Expences in a foreign Country. Thus did our Lord begin to take Possession, as it were, of his promis'd Inheritance of the *Gentiles*, which accomplish'd that prophetical Prefiguration of *Hosea's*, *Out of Ægypt have I call'd my Son.* At their first Arrival, as may be collected from *Eusebius* and *Athanasius*, the Child *Jesus* being by Design or Providence carry'd into a Temple at *Hermopolis* in the Province of *Thebais*, the Idol Gods fell down, like *Dagon* at the Presence of the Ark, and suffer'd their timely and just Dissolution: Which remarkably verify'd a Prophecy of *Isaiab*, which says, *That the Lord should come into Ægypt, and the Idols of Ægypt shou'd be moved at his Presence.* *Isai. 19. 1.*

Matth. 2.
26-18.

In the mean Time *Herod* impatiently waited for the Return of the Strangers; but shortly finding himself deluded, and his most secret and subtle Designs blasted, he fell into a violent Rage and Fury. And resolving to effect that by open Severity, which he had been disappointed of doing by Policy, he immediately sent out his Soldiers, and made a bloody Massacre of all the Children in the City of *Bethlehem* and the neighbouring Towns, that were two Years of Age and under; that he might be certain to include the whole Time, and more, from the first Appearance of the Star seen by the Eastern Astronomers: A Barbarity surpassing all Belief, had not *Herod* been the Contriver and Projector. This deplorable Cruelty was accompany'd with such Lamentations and Bemoanings, that the Evangelist thought fit to mention the Sorrows and Bemoanings taken notice of by *Jeremiab* concerning the *Babylonian* Captivity, as having a more eminent Completion at this Time. The *Abyssines* of *Æthiopia* in their Liturgy, and the *Greeks* in their Calendar, do

commemorate the Number of 14000 that were slain at this Time; which exceeds all Probability. However the Execution was so nicely rigorous, that one of *Herod's* Sons, then at Nurse, was also said to be slain in the Number. Upon which Account, *Augustus* hearing of this and his other Cruelties to his own Family, afterwards declar'd, *That he had rather be Herod's Hog than his Son*, as *Macrobius* assures us: For the Religion of his Nation was a Security for Swine, but no Religion cou'd be any Security for his Child.

Not long after this *Herod* began to feel the Vengeance of *Joseph*. Heaven upon him, being stricken with a strange and terrible Distemper, which made him exceedingly passionate and jealous of the just Hatred and Contempt of his Subjects. And this was heightned by Means of a bold Attempt made by several young Men of the City, who finding the King declining, and also hearing of his Death, pull'd down the large golden Eagle, which he had prophanely set upon the main Portal of the Temple; which being done in a tumultuous Manner, caus'd the Death of many of the Spectators by the Soldiers, and their own severe Executions by *Herod's* Command. His Distemper daily encreas'd after an unheard-of Manner, and he himself labour'd under the most loathsome and tormenting Accidents that can be imagin'd; as gradual Heats and grievous Ulcers in his Entrails and Bowels, a furious Cholick, a voracious and insatiable Appetite, venomous Swellings in his Feet, Convulsions in his Nerves, violent Asthmas, Rottenness in his Joints and Members, accompany'd with prodigious Itchings, crawling Worms, and intolerable Smells; so that he was a perfect Hospital of incurable Diseases. Yet all these furious Torments did not take away his Hopes of Recovery; for which Reason he sent for Physicians from all Places, and refus'd no Medicines that they judg'd proper for him. He also shifted his Post, and pass'd over the River *Jordan* to the hot Baths of *Callirrhoe*, which were both medicinal and potable, where his Physicians try'd many Experiments in vain upon him; from whence he remov'd to *Jericho*, his last Station, about 20 Miles almost East of *Jerusalem*.

But as the Bodies of Beasts grow hard and callous by Stripes, and the Pressures of the Yoak; so did the Heart of *Herod*, by these Loads of the Divine Vengeance. For finding that he must die shortly, and fearing nothing more than the Rejoicings of the Nation at his Death, he resolv'd that the last Scene of his Life should equal, if not surpass all the rest. Therefore having by the strictest Summons gather'd

together all the Nobility and most considerable Men of every City, Town and Village in *Judæa*, he commanded his Soldiers to shut them up in a spacious Place call'd the *Hippodrome*. And then calling his Sister *Salome*, her Husband *Alexas*, with a few choice Friends, he told them with Tears, *That he was sensible of the Jews Hatred to his Government and Person, and that his Death would be a high Satisfaction to them; therefore his Friends ought to procure him some Solace and Diversion in the midst of his bitter Anguish; which if they perform'd according to his Order, the Mournings and Lamentations at his Death would be as great and magnificent as ever any Prince had. And this Order was, that on the same Hour he should expire, the Soldiers should surround the Hippodrome, and put all the enclosed Persons to the Sword, and then publish his Death; which would cause his Exit to be doubly triumphant, first for the posthumous Execution of his Commands, and secondly for the Quality and Number of his Mourners.* Upon the Promises of his Friends to perform his Orders, and receiving some acceptable News from *Augustus* of the Execution of an Enemy, and of Power granted him to punish others, he began to revive; but his Torments still encreasing, shortly after he endeavour'd to stab himself, but was prevented by *Achaibus* his Grandchild. The Belief of his Death at this time encourag'd his imprison'd Son *Antipater* to attempt an Escape, but he was not only prevented, but also beheaded by his Father's Command, who five Days after dy'd himself, having by his Testament divided his Dominions between his three Sons *Archelaus*, *Antipas* and *Philip*. This happen'd between the 25th of *November*, and the 20th of *March* following, in the 750th or 751st Year of *Rome*, according to the nicest Chronologers; tho' most probably in the latter, and about a Year and a Quarter after our Saviour's Nativity, in the 70th of his Age, and the 37th of his Reign.

A. D. 3. III. For many Years, the Land of *Palestine* or *Canaan* was entire, and govern'd by one Person; but shortly after *Herod's* Decease, by his Will and *Cæsar's* Appointment, it was divided into three distinct Governments. Tho' for a short time *Archelaus* was look'd upon as King, and his Father's Successor, by the Soldiers and People; all acknowledging him with great Applauses, upon the Account of his specious Promises, and the Satisfaction they receiv'd from the Delivery of all those noble Persons whom his Father had design'd for Slaughter. But he had scarcely finish'd his
Father's

Father's Obsequies, which were very solemn and magnificent, before many in the City began to bewail *Matthias* and his Associates, who had been put to Death for pulling down the golden Eagle; tumultuously requiring that their Memories should be honour'd by a publick Mourning, and their Accusers condemn'd. And this Sedition encreasing at the Feast of the *Passover*, about that time they procur'd great Numbers to join with them, and secur'd themselves in the outward Courts of the Temple: Which caus'd *Archelaus* immediately to send out an armed Party of a thousand Men against them; but being repell'd with some Loss, he sent his whole Body of Foot, with a strong Party of Horse, who falling in with them, put about 3000 to the Sword, and forc'd the rest to the neighbouring Mountains. And having thus quell'd the Sedition, he with all Haste repair'd towards *Rome* with his Mother and his choicest Friends, to obtain the Confirmation of his Father's Testament by *Augustus*, and to procure himself to be settled in the Kingdom of *Judæa*; committing the Government of his Household and his Affairs to his Brother *Philip*.

In the Absence of *Archelaus*, the *Jews* fell into new Troubles and Confusions: first occasion'd by *Sabinus*, the Emperor's Agent in *Syria*, who enter'd *Jerusalem*, seiz'd upon *Herod's* Palace, and by his Avarice grievously oppress'd the Inhabitants: Insomuch that on the Feast of *Pentecost*, great Numbers repair'd thither from all Parts of the Land, resolving to be reveng'd on *Sabinus*, and possess'd themselves of the Porticos and Cloysters of the Temple. But the *Roman* Legion there under *Sabinus* vigorously attack'd them, set fire to some of the Buildings, and burnt down a considerable Part of the Cloysters, to the Destruction of many; and then pushing forwards, pillag'd the Treasure of the Temple where the Sacred Money was kept, and carry'd off above four hundred Talents. But the *Jews* rallying again in vast Numbers, and with part of *Herod's* Soldiers, besieg'd *Sabinus* in the Palace; which oblig'd him to send immediately to *Varus* Governour of *Syria* to come to his Relief. At the same time, the *Jews* who had taken too little notice of the true *Messiah*, were punish'd with several false *Messiahs*, or pretended Kings of the *Jews*; particularly *Simon*, one of *Herod's* Servants, remarkable for his Shape and Stature; who being follow'd by great Multitudes, pillag'd and ravag'd all the Country about *Jericho*. *Athronges* an obscure Shepherd, but of extraordinary Bulk and Strength, was another who aspir'd to the Crown, and for a considerable time retain'd all the Marks of Sovereignty, wasting all the

Country about *Jerusalem*. In *Idumæa* about 2000 of *Herod's* old Soldiers assembled together, to the great Damage of that Province; and in *Galilee*, *Judas* or *Theudas* (mention'd *Acts* 5. 36.) the Son of a famous Robber, with a Party of desperate Men, made Incurfions into *Judæa*. These and many other Troubles were quell'd in no long time, partly by some of *Herod's* Party, and principally by the coming down of *Varus* out of *Syria* with all his Force; who reliev'd *Sabinus* in *Jerusalem*, and put an end to these Seditions with the Crucifixion of no less than 2000 Persons. Thus God began to punish the *Jews*, both for their Corruptions, and their being so regardless of his Son, after he had sufficiently manifested him both at *Bethlehem* and *Jerusalem*.

In the mean time, *Archelaus* at *Rome* met with much Opposition and many Obstacles, not only from his Enemies, but several of his suppos'd Friends, who accus'd him of many Crimes before *Augustus*, and pleaded for his Brother *Antipas*, who had been appointed Successor to *Herod* in a former Testament. But *Augustus* had not fully determin'd to whom he should give the Preference, before fifty Ambassadors or Representatives of the *Jewish* Nation were, by *Varus's* Permission, arriv'd at *Rome*, and with no less than 8000 of their own Country Men in the City, repair'd to *Augustus* in their distressed Country's Behalf; First declaiming against the Memory of *Herod*, Alledging, *That he had been the most cruel Tyrant that ever reign'd, and so barbarous, that those who escaped with their Lives, thought themselves less happy than those who were executed. For he had not only torn his Subjects Bodies with Tortures, but also defaced the Cities of his own Country, to beautifie those of Strangers, and permitted Foreigners to massacre the Jews without Revenge. And their Country was so impoverish'd and wasted with Injustice, that during Herod's Reign they had suffer'd more Murthers and Miseries than their Ancestors had from the Babylonian Captivity to his time. That being inur'd to the Yoak, they had readily acknowledged Archelaus, notwithstanding he was the Son of such a Tyrant, and publickly mourned for his Father's Death. But that he, to shew himself the genuine Offspring of Herod, began his Reign with the Slaughter of 3000 Citizens, who fell a Sacrifice to his Rage even in the very Temple. Wherefore their humble Petition was, that Augustus would judge the Remainder of the Jews worthy of Compassion, and not abandon their Nation to Herod's Family, but that he would join it to the Province of Syria, and put it under the immediate Subjection of Roman Governors.* *Augustus* having

having heard these Complaints, and the Answers of the other Party, shortly after gave *Archelaus* half the Dominions of his Father, with the Title of *Ethnarch*, promising him that of King, if his Carriage deserved it; and dividing the other half into two Tetrarchies, he gave one to *Herod-Antipas*, and the other to his Brother *Philip*: So that we are to consider *Palestine* now as divided into three distinct Jurisdictions. 1. That under *Archelaus* consisted of the Provinces of *Judæa* and *Samaria*, together with *Idumæa*, a little Province taken out of *Arabia*, and of late including part of *Judæa*; all amounting to 500 Talents Yearly. 2. That under *Herod-Antipas* consisted of the Provinces of *Galilee* and *Peræa* beyond *Jordan*; amounting to 200 Talents. 3. That under *Philip* consisted of the Province of *Trachonitis*, including *Batanæa* and *Auranitis* or *Ituræa* in *Syria*; amounting to 100 Talents. *Gaza* in *Judæa*, and *Gadara* and *Hippon* in *Trachonitis* were join'd to the Government of *Syria*; *Jamnia*, *Azotus*, *Phaselis* and *Ascalon* were given to *Herod's* Sister *Salome*; and the Money which *Herod* gave to *Augustus* by Will, which amounted to 1500 Talents, he generously distributed among his Family, reserving for himself only some Jewels of small Value.

The State of *Palestine* being thus established by *Augustus*, God now thought fit to call his Son out of *Ægypt*; therefore by his Angel in a Vision he inform'd *Joseph* of the Death of all such as sought the Child's Life, and order'd him to take Him and his Mother, and return into the Land of *Israel*, or *Palestine*. All which he diligently perform'd; and arriving in *Judæa*, he was inform'd of the Return of *Archelaus*, and his governing that part of the Country; and knowing his natural Cruelty, and his near Relation to *Herod*, he fear'd to settle there. But being directed by God in another Vision he turn'd to the Dominions of his Brother *Herod-Antipas*, in *Galilee*, to his former Habitation at *Nazareth*, where the strange Occurrences of our Lord's Birth were utterly unknown. Which being a mean and despicable Place, it afterwards gained *Jesus* the reproachful Title of a *Nazarene*, according to the Aim and Tenor of several Prophecies, as *St. Matthew* observes. And this obscure Education not only contributed towards his intended Sufferings, but likewise serv'd to confound the Wisdom of the haughty *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who for their Contempt of these late Revelations, and their other Crimes, were justly hardened and blinded in their Understandings. He was now about two Years of Age, and for ten Years after, we have no certain Account of Him or his Parents,

only

Matth. 2.
19--23.
Luke 2.
39, 40.

only that they annually repair'd with Him to *Jerusalem* at the Passover, and as his Body increas'd in Stature, so more especially the Faculties of his Soul were enlar'd, being highly replenish'd with Wisdom and the Grace of God.

Dion, &c.

Not long after our Saviour's Settlement at *Nazareth*, *Augustus*, who had so often and easily dispos'd of the Kingdoms and Governments of the World, was extremely afflicted in his own Family, and by his own Daughter *Julia*, marry'd to his Wife's Son *Tiberius*, who by her luxurious Revels, and her adulterous Meetings, had render'd her self infamous in the whole City. This Emperor, tho' a *Pagan* by Education and Profession, had so great a Sense, not only of the Scandal, but also of the Immorality of her Actions, that he once resolv'd to have put her to Death; but upon Reconsideration he banish'd her to a desolate Island called *Pandataria*, strictly prohibiting her the use of Wine, and all kinds of Delicacies, either in Diet or Cloaths; and permitted no Persons to approach her who were not celebrated for their good Lives and Morals. Shortly after he was diverted by some Wars in *Armenia*, which, according to *Noris*, caus'd him to open the Temple of *Janus* the last time, which had continu'd shut for about six Years in Token of an universal Peace; which Peace being as it were to introduce our Saviour into the World, he has also upon that Occasion been stil'd *The Prince of Peace*. But what Ecclesiastical Writers do more particularly observe of this Emperor, is, that upon his Entrance on his fourth *Decennalia*, or ten years Government, he utterly refus'd the Title of LORD, which the People unanimously offer'd him; which many Christians believe not to have been without some Divine Influence, and particularly upon the Account of a *Sybil's* foretelling the Appearance of a greater Prince, to whom all the World should pay Adoration. And here we cannot easily omit a Relation mention'd by *Suidas*, who tells us that *Augustus* sending to the *Pythian* Oracle to enquire who should succeed him, was answer'd by that *Dæmon*, *That an Hebrew Child, Lord of the Gods, had commanded him to return to Hell, and that no farther Answer was to be expected*; and that upon this he erected an Altar in the *Capitol*, *Primogenito Dei, To the First-Born of God*. However in the same Year that he refus'd the Title of Lord, he appointed *Tiberius* for his Heir, obliging him to adopt his Brother *Drusus's* Son *Germanicus*; and being *Pontifex Maximus*, he made the last Regulation of the *Roman* Calendar, which continues in Use with us to this Day; tho' alter'd in some Countries by Pope *Gregory XIII.* a-

bove 120 Years ago. This Regulation was order'd by *Augustus* to be engraven in Brass, and was completed in *A. D. vul. ar. 4.*

In the mean time the three Brothers, *Archelaus*, *Herod Joseph*, and *Philip* govern'd *Palestine* without any open Sedition or Disturbance, each endeavouring to improve their Dominions by Buildings, and other publick Works. *Archelaus* re-edify'd the Palace in *Jericho*, and sumptuously adorn'd it; and drawing half the Waters from *Neara*, through the Field he had planted with Palm Trees, he built a Town in that Place call'd *Archelais*. *Herod* enclos'd *Sephoris* with a strong Wall, and made it the chiefest Ornament of *Galilee*; and also fortify'd another City call'd *Bataramphtha*, on the Sea of *Galilee*, and nam'd it *Julias* in Honour of *Julia*, before her Disgrace. *Philip* repair'd *Paneadas*, on the Head of *Jordan* and Borders of *Syria*, and call'd it *Casarea Philippi*; and likewise repaired the Borough of *Bethsaida*, on the Sea of *Galilee*, and gave it the Dignity of a City, both for the Number of the Inhabitants, and for other Pre-eminencies. But *Archelaus* following the Steps of his Father, in a short time made himself odious to the *Jews* not only for his dispossessing of the High-Priests, and his illegal marrying his Brother *Alexander's* Wife *Glaphyra*, but also for several Acts of Cruelty and Tyranny: insomuch, that after a Reign of nine Years and a few Days, the chief Governors among the *Jews* and *Samaritans* made a publick Complaint of him to *Augustus*; who being a generous Prince, and detesting all Oppressions, in a great Passion sent his Agent for him in Person to *Rome*, to answer to his Accusations. *Archelaus* was found feasting and banqueting with his Friends, and hurry'd away with great Precipitation to *Cæsar*; who upon a full Hearing both of his Crimes and Vindication, depriv'd him of his Dominions, confiscated all his Goods, banish'd him, and perpetually confin'd him to *Vienna* a City in *Gaul*. Upon this the Dominions of *Archelaus* were reduc'd into the Form of a *Roman* Province, and rul'd by a Governor of the Emperor's call'd by the Name of *Procurator*, but in some Cases subject to the President or Governor of *Syria*: So that there were two Alterations in *Palestine* between our Saviour's Birth and his Baptism; first, the Division of the whole Country among *Herod's* Sons; secondly, the subjecting the most considerable Parts of it, namely, *Judæa*, *Samaria* and *Idumæa*, to *Roman* Governors.

Immediately after the Banishment of *Archelaus*, *Augustus* sent over *Coponius* to be *Procurator* or Governor of *Judæa*, and

and with him *Cyrenius* or *Quirinus* into *Syria*, to make a second Taxation or Valuation of all Persons Estates in those Parts. Upon his Entrance into *Palestine*, the Inhabitants, tho' with some Regret, submitted; but in a short time there arose one *Judas* a *Gaulanite* by Birth, but a *Galilean* by Habitation, and so call'd *Acts* 5. 37. who with *Sadoc* a *Pharisee*, excited the People to a Rebellion; alleging, *That this Assessment was an open Acknowledgment of their Servitude*, exhorting the whole Nation *vigorously to maintain their Liberties*, and giving them Assurance *not only of Glory and Renown, but also of a full Deliverance from their Yoke*. These Persuasions, together with the corrupt Expectations of a Temporal Prince or *Messiah*, now ready to appear, drew great Numbers after him, who under the Pretence of Liberty, and disowning all Foreign Authority, committed infinite Murthers and Disorders in several Parts of the Land. And tho' they were timely suppress'd, and the Multitudes dispers'd, yet still they were so potent as to create a fourth Sect among the *Jews* not known before; the other three being *Pharisees*, *Sadducees* and *Essenes*. These were not only a Sect, but also a Faction directly opposite to those call'd *Herodians*, and had the Name of *Gaulanites* from the Birth-place of their Captain, and sometimes *Galileans*, as in *Luke* 13. 1. because they were then more numerous in the Province of *Galilee*. As the *Herodians* join'd with the Sect of the *Sadducees*, so these join'd with the *Pharisees* and more especially those call'd *Zealots*, already describ'd in the Introduction. And they became so zealous in asserting God alone to be their Lord and Master, that, as *Josephus* informs us, they would sooner chuse the most exquisite Torments for themselves and Children, than acknowledge any Man living for their Lord. And by joining with the *Zealots*, they together became the principal Cause of all the succeeding Miseries in the *Jewish* State, and the final Ruin of it at last.

Cyrenius having finish'd the Valuation of every Man's Estate, and confiscated the Goods of *Archelaus*, he depos'd *Joazer* the present High-Priest upon the People's Complaint and Sedition, and established *Ananus* in his Place, whom the Scriptures call *Annas*; and after that return'd to his Government in *Syria*, *Varus* being sent by *Augustus* to the *German* Wars. *Coponius* remain'd in his Province of *Judæa*; and in the second Year of his Government, in the beginning of the *Passover*, *Josephus* tells us of a remarkable Prophanation of the Temple by certain *Samaritans*, who when the Gates were opened at Midnight, according to the Custom

stom of the Feast, privately enter'd the Temple, and strewed the Porches and the principal Parts of it with dead Mens Bones; which was an extraordinary Offence to the *Jews*, and gave Occasion to the Priests to be much more careful and vigilant than formerly.

Luke 2:
41-52

It was at this same Feast, according to the most probable Accounts, that our Blessed Saviour began to shew some Rays of his extraordinary Wisdom and bright Faculties; who now being twelve Years of Age, came up to *Jerusalem* with his Parents, according to Custom. His Parents having perform'd the usual Ceremonies of the Feast, and tarry'd the whole seven Days, return'd with great Numbers of their Neighbours and Acquaintance towards *Galilee*, accidentally leaving *Jesus* behind them at *Jerusalem*. But not doubting but he had join'd himself with the Multitude of the *Galileans*, they patiently travell'd a Day's Journey; and at Night made a diligent Search for him among his Relations and particular Friends, but without any Success. It is not easy to imagine the Greatness of their Fears and Apprehensions at that time, which caus'd them to return hastily to *Jerusalem*, and make all possible Enquiry in that Place. But on the third Day after they miss'd him, to their exceeding Surprize, they found him in one of the Rooms of the Temple, probably in that of the grand *Sanhedrim*, sitting amidst the learned Doctors and Masters of *Israel*, hearing and propounding Questions to them; which he did in such Manner, as caus'd the Astonishment of all his Auditors, who were confounded at the Ripeness of his Understanding and Answers. His Parents were also amazed to find him in that Place; and his Mother telling him with what Impatience they had sought him, and blaming him for putting them into so great a Fright; he made Answer, *Why was this Search? Did you not know, that I must be employ'd in the House, or Service of my Father?* Intimating, as some good Criticks observe, that they had 'till then sought for him in a wrong Place: However they did not then understand his Answer; but *Mary* carefully lodg'd all his Words in her Heart. Soon after *Jesus* return'd home to *Nazareth* with his Parents, living in Subjection to them; and as he encreas'd in Body and Stature, so the Faculties of his created Soul were enlarg'd, and he daily grew more and more in Favour with God and Man.

About the same Year, *Augustus* made strict Laws concerning Marriages and Divorces, which are taken Notice of by several Ecclesiastical Writers; and were occasion'd by the great Numbers of the loose and unmarry'd *Equites*.
These

These the Emperor judg'd so fatal to good Policy, and true Morality, that upon a full Assembly, after a high applauding of the marry'd Sort, and a severe Reprimand of the others, he impos'd great Fines upon every *Knight* that continu'd unmarried after the Term of a Year. Yet to shew that he would discourage nothing that had the Appearance of Virtue and Abstinence, he bestow'd considerable Rewards on such as had vow'd a perpetual Virginity. And that no publick Promoter of Looseness might escape his Censure, shortly after he banish'd his Favourite *Ovid*, the celebrated Poet, for his amorous Epistles, and his *Art of Love*; the Softness thereof being thought capable of enervating and corrupting a larger Empire, than that of the *Romans*. About the same time he remov'd *Coponius* to another Place, and sent *M. Ambivius* into *Judea* in Quality of Procurator or Governor; in whose Government *Salome Herod's* Sister dy'd, and gave all her Possessions to the Emperor's Wife *Livia*. Shortly after, and two Years before *Augustus's* Death, his design'd Successor *Tiberius* was join'd with him with almost equal Authority in the Government of the Empire; which has caus'd some eminent Chronologers to reckon the Years of *Tiberius's* Reign from this *Æra*, particularly in *Luke* 3. 1. which 15th Year of the Reign of *Tiberius*, according to them, is meant the 13th from the Death of *Augustus*.

M. Ambivius having continu'd between two and three Years in *Judea*, *Annius Rufus* was sent by *Augustus* into his Place; and he was the third *Roman* Governor in those Parts. Not long after, *Augustus* having made his Will, and deliver'd it to the *Vestal Virgins*, he repair'd upon some Business to *Nola* near *Capua*: And there finding himself dangerously ill, he sent for *Tiberius*, and his choicest Friends and Acquaintance, to whom he recommended many wise and useful Things, particularly declaring to them, *That he had found Rome built with Clay, but he had left it of Marble*, meaning not so much the Beauty and Strength of the Buildings, as the Majesty and Firmness of the Empire. And that he might leave the World with the Triumphs of a *Pagan* Philosopher, he call'd for a Looking-Glass, caus'd his Hair to be comb'd, and his wrinkled Cheeks to be smooth'd up, and as Actors upon the Stage, he ask'd his Friends *whether he had play'd his Part well in this World*: And upon their answering *Yes*, he cry'd *Plaudite!* and expired in the Embraces of his beloved Wife *Livia*, bidding her *Remember their Marriage, and Farewel*. Thus dy'd *Augustus* on the 19th Day of *August*, in the Consulships of the

two *Sexti*, above 57 Years after the Death of his Great-Uncle *Julius*, A. D. *vul. ær.* 14. He dy'd to the unexpressible Grief of all his Subjects, having conquer'd greater Difficulties, met with greater Success, compleated greater Designs, and establish'd a greater Empire than any Prince in the World. According to the *Paganish* Superstition he had Temples erected to him, Divine Honours decreed him, and a large Sum of Mony was given by *Livia* to *Numerius Atticus*, a Senator, for having sworn that he saw him ascending into Heaven, as *Proculus* had anciently sworn of *Romulus*.

IV. The *Romans*, during the Administration of *Au-* A. D. *gustus*, had all the Happiness of a free People, and were re- 14. strain'd from nothing but those Mischiefs which a corrupted LIBERTY produce; but shortly after his Death they met with TIBERIUS, great Alterations, and a quite different Treatment from his the Third Roman Emperor. Successor *Tiberius*, whose Wisdom consisted of a mysterious Slyness and Suspicion, and his Policy of continu'd Artifices and Dissimulation. Yet in the Beginning of his Reign he made a great Shew of Modesty and Affability, and perform'd many laudable Actions towards the Reformation of Mens Lives and Manners: Particularly he regulated the Licentiousness of the Theatre, banish'd the Astrologers and Magicians from *Rome*, restrain'd the Delicacies of Eating-Houses and Taverns, severely punish'd the Looseness of young Persons of either Sex, prohibiting by Proclamation the Kisses which were daily given by way of Salutation, and administer'd Justice with great Exactness and Diligence. But afterwards, giving a Loose to his deprav'd Temper and Inclinations, he became Guilty of all kinds of Enormities and Oppressions, and prov'd to be the most subtle and designing Tyrant in Nature. *Dion* observes, that he never shew'd any Inclination to what he desired, nor ever spoke as he thought; he look'd sullenly on his Friends, cheerfully on his Enemies; was fair to those he design'd to punish, and severe to those he thought to pardon; and his Maxim was, *That a Prince's Mind must be known to no Man*. Hence all who were concern'd with him were in continual Danger; and to understand, or not to understand his Mind, was of equal Peril: For some were ruin'd for agreeing to his Words, because they disagreed to his Mind; and others were ruin'd for agreeing to his Mind, because he perceiv'd that they had discover'd his Thoughts. In short, he was a most exquisite State-Jugler, a most jealous and barbarous Governor, a Debauser of the *Roman* Empire, a Corrupter of all

all that was good, and an Introducer of all that was bad in it.

Joseph.

In the second Year of this Emperor's Reign, *Rufus* was recall'd from *Judea*, and *Valerius Gratus* sent to succeed him, who was the fourth Governour in those Parts, after the Banishment of *Archelaus*. In the beginning of his Government, the *Jews* address'd themselves to *Tiberius* for an Easement of their Imposts, who referr'd it to his Nephew *Germanicus*, then going into the East, but with no Success that we can find. About two Years after, the Villany of three or four profligate *Jews* in *Rome*, in imposing upon a Noble Lady call'd *Fulvia*, caus'd *Tiberius* to use great Severities to all the *Jews* in the City: Particularly 4000 of them were sent to *Sardinia* into hard Service, and the rest threatned with Banishment, if they did not renounce their Religious Ceremonies by an appointed Day. All which Troubles, and some others, *Philo* attributes principally to the impious Designs of the Emperor's Favourite *Sejanus*; for after his Death, the *Jews* met with a more moderate Treatment. In the mean time, *Gratus* in *Judea* made several Changes in the High-Priesthood; first deposing *Annas*, and appointing *Ismael* the Son of *Fabius* in his Place; and shortly after removing him, and putting *Eleazar* the Son of *Annas* in his Room; and about a Year after, he lastly made *Joseph* surnam'd *Caiaphas*, Son-in-Law to *Annas*, High-Priest; who continu'd in that Dignity 'till after our Saviour's Death. And tho' there could be but one High-Priest at the same time, yet we are to take Notice, that *Annas* is nam'd with *Caiaphas* by *St. Luke* as if they were High-Priests conjointly, *Luke* 3. 2. *Acts* 4. 6. because *Annas* was illegally depos'd, and still rightful High-Priest; or because he was Father-in-Law and *Sagan*, or Deputy to *Caiaphas*; or because he was *Nasi*, or President of the *Sanhedrim*, and represented *Moses* as the other did *Aaron*; or lastly, because the *Romans* had broke the Rules of the Original Institution. But in this the principal Criticks are not agreed.

A. D.

26.

Joseph.
Philo.

Gratus having continu'd in *Judea* eleven Years without any publick Disturbance, he return'd to *Rome*, and *Pontius Pilate* was sent Governour in his Place; a Person too like his Master *Tiberius*, of a fierce and irreconcilable Spirit, and of a cruel and covetous Disposition. He was made Procurator in the 12th Year of *Tiberius*'s Reign, and began his Government very much to the Displeasure and Disturbance of the *Jews*, bringing the Emperor's Images into *Jerusalem* by Night, in Contempt of their Law which strictly forbids such Practices. This unusual Action gave exceeding Dis-

content

content to the City and all the Country; who upon the Report of it, immediately repaired to *Jerusalem*, and from thence in vast Multitudes to *Cæsarea*, where *Pilate* then resided, earnestly begging of him not to violate their Law; but to remove the Images to some other Place. But when *Pilate* deny'd their Request, because it would redound to the Emperor's Dishonour, the whole Multitude fell prostrate upon their Faces, weeping and lamenting, and continu'd in that Posture five Days and five Nights, as *Josephus* relates it. On the sixth Day he sat upon the Tribunal, and sent for the Multitude to give them a final Answer; and at the same time he order'd his Soldiers suddenly to surround them, who with their drawn Swords threatned them all with immediate Death, if they would not desist in their Suit; and speedily return to their Habitations. But this had no Effect upon them; for they all unanimously offer'd their naked Throats, professing that they had rather dye than consent to the Violation of their Laws. *Pilate* amaz'd at their Constancy, and being order'd by *Tiberius*, remov'd the Images from *Jerusalem* to *Cæsarea*; a noble City built by *Herod* the Great, about 55 Miles almost North of *Jerusalem*, upon the Mediterranean Sea, and the most frequent Residence of the *Roman* Governours. After this *Pilate* gave the *Jews* a new Occasion of Sedition, by a sacrilegious Attempt upon some of the Sacred Money in the Temple, which he employ'd in bringing of Water by Conduits to the City. Which Work, tho' useful and beneficial to the City, yet the Inhabitants look'd upon it as so great a Prophanation, that when *Pilate* came to *Jerusalem*, they gather'd about him in vast Multitudes, openly murmuring at his Proceedings. But having before receiv'd Intelligence of their design'd Complaints; he caus'd Soldiers secretly arm'd to mingle themselves among the People in private Apparel, ordering them not to use their Swords, but to fall on with large Battoons, upon a Signal given. All which was executed in the Presence of *Pilate* upon his Tribunal, where many dy'd of the Blows receiv'd, and many were trodden to Death by the Throng; which put an End to this Tumult and Sedition.

Thus severely did *Pilate* exercise his Government over the *Jews*. At the same time *Philip* continued more moderate and peaceable in his Tetrarchy; and his Brother *Herod* not very burthensom in his, tho' extremely vicious and corrupt in his Actions. This latter gaining the Friendship of *Tiberius* founded a City in Honour of his Name, and call'd it *Tiberias*, where he kept his Court and usual Residence, it being situated in the fruitfulest Part of *Galilee*

upon the Lake of *Genezareth*, or the *Sea of Galilee*, which occasion'd that Lake to be often called the *Sea of Tiberias*. The City was peopled by Strangers, who repaired thither from all Parts, and by many of the Inhabitants of *Galilee*, who were both encourag'd by great Privileges, and constrain'd by Authority to dwell there: And that because it was built in a Place full of Sepulchres, which by the *Jewish Law* was accounted unclean. This was finish'd about the first Year of *Pilate's* Government in *Judæa*. On the following Year, and 13th of *Tiberius*, he travell'd towards *Rome* to wait upon the Emperor, together with a half Brother of his call'd *Herod*, or *Philip-Herodes*; which, according to *Josephus*, cannot be *Philip* the Tetrarch, as it is most commonly believ'd. In this Journey, he fell in Love with *Herodias*, this Brother *Philip's* Wife, and Daughter to their Brother *Aristobulus*; and by a private Agreement with her, after his Return from *Rome*, he took her from his Brother, and marry'd her himself, committing at the same Time both Incest and Adultery. And to compleat the Injuries done to his former Wife, he divorc'd her, tho' she was Daughter of *Aretas*, King of *Arabia-Petræa*, a potent Prince, who afterwards found a Sufficient Opportunity of Revenge.

Not long after this, and about a Year before the first Preaching of *John-Baptist*, *Joseph* the reputed Father of our Saviour dy'd, according to the most receiv'd Opinion; it seeming good to the Divine Wisdom, that he whose only true Father was in Heaven, after his Manifestation, should have no reputed Father to appear on Earth; and by his Death, he became legal Heir to the Crown of his Father *David*. What our Blessed Saviour's Employment was from the 12th Year of his Age 'till this Time, is only hinted at by the Evangelists; from whom we may collect, as also from other Writers, that he wrought with *Joseph* in the Trade of a Carpenter. And *Justin-Martyr* tells us that his main Business was making of Ploughs and Yokes, and other Instruments of Husbandry for the Use of his Neighbours. After the Death of his reputed Father, he still follow'd the same Employment, 'till the time of his Manifestation, as appears from *Mark* 6. 3. where as in other Places, by way of Contempt, he was call'd the *Carpenter's Son*, he is there call'd the *Carpenter* himself, as having alone practis'd that Trade. And we may also infer from the rude Treatment of the *Nazarenes* his Towns-Men, and their Surprize, as also from the total Silence of the Evangelists as to his Actions, that tho' he grew in Favour with God and Man, his

Life was a Life of Obscurity in respect of his Excellencies, and that he shew'd no miraculous Marks to distinguish him from the rest of the World. And this was the mean and obscure Education of the blessed *Jesus*; who instead of being taught in the most famous Schools of the *Rabbins*, or brought up in the Temple among the Priests, was constrain'd to earn his Bread by the Labour of his Body, and live under the Circumstances of the poorest Servant and Apprentice. Which was an Instance of the most amazing Condescension and Benignity; and not only so, but of the most surprizing Wisdom and Understanding: For he who was to guide and reform all Mankind; and to be their Example; thought fit to shew them the most perfect Instance of Humiliation; and he who was to be the Wonder, as well as the Saviour of the World, refus'd all Assurances of human Learning, that his Knowledge and his Works might be more manifestly and apparently the Effects of a supernatural Power.

C H A P. II.

From the Beginning of the Gospel, and first Preaching of John-Baptist, to the Beginning of the first Passover after our Blessed Saviour's Baptism, according to the vulgar Computation.

Containing the Term of 10 Months and 3 Days.

I. A FTER our Blessed Saviour had liv'd above thirty Years in the profoundest Retirement and Privacy as to his Office, and fully compleated the Age necessary for the *Jewish* Priesthood; when *Daniel's* seventy Weeks were almost expired; and all Persons in the highest Expectation of the *Messiah*, God was pleas'd to begin the clearest and noblest Manifestation of his Person and Function. But as *John* was design'd for a Harbinger to go before him in his Birth, and Entrance into the World; so much more to make Way for his publick Appearance, and Ministerial Office. Therefore *John* was first order'd by the immediate Mouth of Heaven to enter upon his Office, which was exceedingly rigid and austere, the better to

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29:
Tiber.
 $\frac{15}{16}$

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search and heal the Corruptions of a most degenerate, and profligate People. For which purpose he led the most severe and mortify'd Life in the Desarts on the Southern Parts of *Judæa*, spending his Time in Fastings, Prayers and Contemplation, without the least Delicacies either in Diet or Habit: A Life proper to rouse and awaken the languishing, as well as corrupted State of the *Jews*. *Nicephorus* tells us, That his Mother *Elizabeth* fled with him into the Desarts, when he was eighteen Months old, to avoid the Fury of *Herod* the Great, when he destroy'd the Children at and near *Bethlehem*; and shortly after both she and his Father dying, he became expos'd to all the Dangers and Infelicities of an Orphan. But when his natural Parents were remov'd, God became his peculiar Guardian, who, according to the *Greek Tradition*, sent his Angel to be his Nourisher, as he had formerly done to *Elias*, when he fled from the Rage of *Ahab*, who was the true Type of this great Prophet and Reformer *John*.

Matth. 3

2.

Mark I.

1--4.

Luke 3.

1, 2, 5.

Prepared by so singular an Education, this Person, who was a Priest by Birth, and the greatest of all the Prophets, by an immediate Commission from Heaven, enter'd upon the actual Administration of his Office, lifting up his Voice like a Trumpet in the Desarts of *Judæa*, and about *Jordan*, being the Herald to proclaim the first Approaches of the long expected *Messiah*; accomplishing therein two ancient Prophecies, the one *Malachi's*, who calls him the *Messenger or Angel of God to prepare his Way before him*, *Mal.* 3. 1. and the other *Isaiab's*, who calls him *the Voice of one crying in the Desarts, Prepare the Ways of the Lord, and rectifie his Paths; all Valleys shall be rais'd; Mountains levell'd, crooked Paths streightned, and rough Ways plain'd*, *Isa.* 40. 3, 4. Which figurative Expressions import a new Regulation, and rectifying of Mens crooked and perverse Lives; or the removing all Obstacles and Impediments to Persons coming to *Christ*; for *all Flesh was to see the Salvation of the Lord*. *St. Luke* particularly points out the Time when he receiv'd his Commission from God, which was in the 15th Year of the Emperor *Tiberius*, when *Pontius Pilate* was Governour or Procurator of *Judæa*, *Samaria*, and *Idumæa*; *Herod Tetrarch* of *Galilee* and *Peræa*; *Philip Tetrarch* of *Trachonitis* with *Ituræa*; and *Lisanius Tetrarch* of *Abilene*, a little Province in the Limits of *Syria*; in the High-Priesthood of *Caiaphas*, to whom *Annas* seem'd join'd, for one of those Reasons formerly mention'd. This remarkable Period of Time is by *St. Mark* emphatically call'd *the Beginning of the Gospel*, or those glorious Things to be intro-

introduc'd by the *Messiah*; a noble *Æra* to be observed by all *Christians*, when the Renovation of the old World began, or a kind of a Creation of a new. The Time of the Year, according to the vulgar Computation, was about Midsummer, when *John* is suppos'd to begin to be 30 Years of Age. *Lightfoot* and some others, who believe our Saviour to have been born in *September*, and likewise that *John* was now beginning to be 30 Years of Age, are of Opinion that he began to Preach about the Passover. But *Usher* and his Followers do with most Probability suppose his Preaching to begin upon the tenth Day of the seventh Month, five Days before the Feast of Tabernacles, upon the great Day of Expiation, when the High-Priest enter'd the *Holy of Holies*, which was penitential, and join'd with so solemn a Fast, that whosoever did not afflict his Soul at that time, was to be cut off from the People. This, according to Him, answers to our 19th Day of *October*, and was likewise the Day, that by a solemn sounding of the Trumpet, the 30th and last *Jubilee* was proclaim'd among the *Jews*; which publick Time remarkably agrees with the Nature and Freedom of the Gospel, of which the *Jubilee* was a Type, and also with *Isaiab's* Prophecie of *proclaiming the acceptable Year of the Lord*, Isa. 61. 2.

This great Prophet began his Preaching about the River *Jordan*, with a solemn calling for Repentance and Reformation, proclaiming *That the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Messiah, was now approaching*: And to gain the greater Authority to his Sermons, he preach'd Repentance by his Example as well as Words, his Garb and Diet being most course, and suitable for a Penitent. The former was only rough Hair-cloth thrown about him, and fastned with a Leathern Girdle, literally making good the Character of *Elias*, who is describ'd as *an hairy Man, girt with a leathern Girdle about his Loins*, 2 Kings 1. 8. The latter was only Locusts and Wild-Honey, such as pure Nature had produc'd in those Desert Places; and his Abstinence was so great, and his Food so uncommon, that the Evangelist says of him, *That he came neither eating nor drinking*; so much eclipsing the ostentatious Fastings of the *Pharisees*, that they maliciously reported he had a Devil. His free and resolute Preaching, together with the great Severity of his Life, soon procur'd him a vast Auditory, and numerous Profelytes of all Ranks and Qualities, from *Jerusalem*, and all *Judæa*, and all the Region about *Jordan*, who confessing their Sins before God, were enter'd into this new Institution by Baptism; from whence he deriv'd the Title of the *Baptist*, or

Luke 3.

3--6.

Matth. 3.

2--6.

Mark 1.

4, 5.

Baptizer. And whereas Baptism was anciently and continually us'd among the *Jews* for the Admission of Profelytes to their Church and Religion, it was now propos'd by *John* to the *Jews* themselves to be receiv'd by them, shewing by it that they were now to be enter'd and transplanted into a new Profession. Many Things contributed to this great and sudden Conflux of People, as the solemn Time and Year of *John's* Preaching, and the great Multitudes at *Jerusalem* at the Feast of Tabernacles; the high Expectation of the *Messiah* just about this Time, and the Hopes he gave them of his immediate Appearance; and particularly the Belief that the *Messiah* expected a repenting Nation; for it was a common Saying among them, *If Israel repent but one Day, the Messiah immediately cometh.*

Matth. 3.
7, 8.
Luke 3.
7-14.

Among the great Multitudes that came to *John's* Preaching and Baptism, were many of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*; People of the most haughty and wicked Dispositions, brought hither both by Fear and Curiosity; upon whose offering themselves, *John* cry'd out, *O venomous Progeny! Who has warn'd you to fly from the Vengeance denounc'd against this Nation? Therefore produce Fruits that will manifest the Sincerity of your Repentance; and do not presume to boast of your being the promis'd Seed of Abraham; for I must tell you, That God is able to raise up such a promis'd Seed from these very Stones. And the Axe of God's Judgments is now already laid to the Root of the Tree; so that every Tree that bears not good Fruit, shall be hewn down and consum'd in the Fire.* Upon this solemn Denunciation, the Body of the People with no small Concern, demanded of him *What they should do to escape:* He immediately advis'd them to an extensive Charity; particularly, that *He who had two Coats should give to him who wanted one; and so likewise in Meat, and other Necessaries.* Among the Multitude were also many *Publicans* and *Roman Soldiers*, Persons highly detested of the *Jews*, who coming to his Baptism, demanded of him *What they should do:* Both of these he advis'd to beware of those Crimes to which their Employments made them most liable, particularly that the *Publicans* should use no Methods of Extortion and Exaction; and the *Soldiers* should offer at no Violence, nor false Accusations, but rest satisfy'd with their usual Pay.

Luke 3.
15-18.
Matth. 3.
11, 12.
Mark 1.
7, 8.

These solemn Admonitions, accompanied with so much Innocence and Authority, procur'd a mighty Veneration from the People, so that they generally conceiv'd that he himself was the *Messiah*. But to remove all Thoughts of this Nature, he freely declar'd *That he only baptiz'd them with Water to Repentance and a new Life, but there was One*

coming

coming after him who should baptize them by the Effusion of the Holy Ghost, which should purge them like Fire. And that this Person so much exceeded him in Power and Excellence, that he was not worthy to do him that mean Office of bearing or unloosing his Shoes. That He had his Fan ready for Separation, and would effectually cleanse the Floor of his Church, gather the good Wheat into his Repository, and consume the Chaffy Hypocrites with unextinguishable Fire. These and many other Things did *John* preach to the People; going into several Parts, but principally keeping to the River *Jordan*, for the Conveniency of Water; where he daily made great Numbers of Profelytes, several of whom were Foreigners, as we may collect from *St. Luke*, *Acts* 19. 3. These were the first Dawnings of the Gospel, and *John* was truly the Morning Star to *Jesus* the Sun of Righteousness. And from this Time, as our Saviour observes, *the Kingdom of Heaven suffer'd Violence, and the Violent took it by Force*; which appear'd from the Multitudes that throng'd and press'd into it, and chiefly of those who had the least Appearance of Right to it; as younger Brothers before the Elder, *Gentiles* before *Jews*, *Publicans* and *Prostitutes* before the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; who by their Vigilance and Importunity, like violent Invaders snatch'd the Kingdom from those to whom it was first offer'd.

The first Year of Christ's publick Ministry.

II. After *John* had preach'd and baptiz'd for several Months, our Blessed Lord *Jesus* thought fit to remove from his private Retirement at *Nazareth*, and to enter upon his publick Ministry. In order to which, he pass'd over into *Judaea*, to the River *Jordan*, where *John* was then baptizing: And tho' He, who was without Sin, needed not the Baptism of Repentance, yet being made Sin for Mankind, he scrupled not to perform the Sacrament of Sinners; and accordingly offer'd himself to be baptized by *John*. The Baptist had never seen his Face 'till now, being educated in a distant Part of the Country; but he was immediately inspired with so discerning a Spirit that he knew him, and so much of his Worth, that he utterly declin'd the Office, declaring, *That himself needed to be baptiz'd by him*; therefore he admir'd at *Jesus's* Humility in coming to him. But *Jesus* satisfy'd him, *That it was requisite for the Accomplishment of all Righteousness*; both for the Sanctification of the Institution, and the Fulfilling of the Law, which oblig'd all

A. D.
30.
Tiber.
16
17.
Matth. 3.
13--17.
Mark 1.
9--11.
Luke 3.
21, 22.

Priests to be inaugurated by Washing or Baptism. Upon which he admitted of the Honour, and baptized *Jesus* in the River *Jordan*; so that the same River which made Way for the *Israelites* Passage into the Earthly *Canaan*, now made Way for the Passage of Mankind into the Heavenly. Immediately after, there was made a more illustrious Manifestation of the Trinity; for upon our Lord's Addressees to Heaven, the Skies were divided with great Radiency, and the Holy Ghost gloriously descended upon him after the manner of a Dove, accompanied with the Voice of the Father from Heaven, pronouncing him *to be his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased with Mankind*. So that Christ was installed into his Ministerial Function, by Baptism and the Uction of the Holy Ghost, as the *Jewish* Priests were constantly installed into theirs by Washing and Anointing.

The Day of our Saviour's Baptism is most commonly believ'd to be the 6th of *January*, the same on which we celebrate the *Epiphany*; he being according to the vulgar Computation 29 Years of Age and 12 Days. Which Age and Computation seem to be warranted by *St. Luke* 3. 23. or at least by most of his Translators, who translate *ὁ δὲ ἄρχεται ἐπὶ τριακοσίαι ἀρχόμενος*, *began, or beginning to be about thirty Years of Age*, which is often interpreted to be his Entrance upon his 30th Year, or Completion of his 29th. But this will not agree with the Age of the *Jewish* Priests and Levites, who, according to what I can find, were oblig'd to be 30 Years of Age compleat before their Inauguration. Therefore some interpret *ἐπὶ τριακοσίαι ἀρχόμενος* his Entrance upon the following Year after he was compleatly thirty: But others more justly look upon *ἀρχόμενος* as a mere Expletive or Pleonasm, and therefore left out in the old *Syriack* Version; the Verb *ἀρχόμενος* being frequently us'd as such in the New Testament, particularly in the same Chapter, v. 8. and many other Places. So that that Word does not disprove our Saviour's being *above* thirty Years of Age when he was baptiz'd. This Sentence will also admit of another Interpretation, satisfactory I presume to those who will not readily allow *ἀρχόμενος* to be an Expletive, which is according to the *Mons* Translation of the New Testament, running thus, *He was thirty Years of Age when he began [the Exercise of his Ministry.]* Either of which Interpretations will serve for our Purpose. And since *St. Luke* only design'd to shew that our Saviour had compleated the Age for the Priesthood, and not the exact Year; we conclude, from all the main Circumstances of History and Chronology, that he was then about 33 Years of Age, and, if

born in the 25th of *December*, and baptiz'd the 6th of *January*, juſt 33 Years and 12 Days.

Our Lord being thus prepared for his Prophetick Office, *Matth. 4. 1--11.* by the Incitation, or Impulſion of the Holy Ghoſt, was carry'd into the Deſart of *Judea*, not far from the Place of his Baptiſm, there to be tempted by the old Serpent, and to enter upon that famous Combat foretold *Gen. 3. 15.* Here he continu'd forty Days and forty Nights without any Suſtenance, as *Moses* and *Elias*, as Types of him, were formerly enabled to do; being in the miſt of wild Beaſts, attended with all the Miſeries of Solitude and Watchings, and continually attack'd with the inward Suggeſtions and Temptations of the Devil, as we gather from *Mark 1. 13.* and *Luke 4. 2.* At the End of which Time, being aſſaulted with Hunger, *Satan* aſſum'd a bodily and viſible Shape, and vigorouſly ſet upon him with a threefold Temptation. Firſt of Diſtruſt and Deſpair of his Father's Care of him, in abandoning him to that Condition, perſuading him that he was not the Son of God, and putting him to prove himſelf ſo by *making the Stones become Bread.* But our Saviour immediately answer'd him out of *Deuteronomy*, intimating, *That Bread was not the only Support of Man's Life, but the Providence of God,* which continually attended the Obſervers of his Word. Whereupon the Devil enter'd upon a contrary Experiment, trying how far Preſumption and Pride would affect him; taking him up and ſetting him upon the higheſt Part of the magnificent Temple of *Jeruſalem*; which was ſo high on the South Side next the Valley, that *Joſephus* tells us, that no Man's Sight could reach the unmeaſurable Diſtance. Here he put him upon ſhewing himſelf to be the Son of God by throwing himſelf off, and flying in the Air, probably in View of the Inhabitants of that glorious City, attacking him with a Text out of the *Pſalms*, ſubtilly apply'd, namely, *That God would give his Angels Charge over him, to bear him up in their Arms, and keep his Feet from daſhing againſt the Stones.* But *Jeſus* as ſoon answer'd him with another Text out of *Deuteronomy*, commanding Men *not to tempt God*; which tho' us'd upon another Occaſion, was very applicable here, which was not to tempt God to an unneceſſary Conſervation. The Devil finding himſelf twice defeated, united all his Arts and Force, and reſolv'd to tempt him with the Charms of Ambition, the moſt boundleſs of all Paſſions; and accordingly tranſported him through the Air to the Top of an exceeding high Mountain, ſuppos'd to be *Pisgab*; where by an Angelical Power he made a lively Representation to him of all

the Kingdoms in the World, with all their dazling Glories at one view: And then he told him *That these, with all their Pomp and Splendor, were deliver'd to his Disposal, and should be given him, if he would but acknowledge his Benefactor, and adore him.* Which unparallel'd Boldness and Blasphemy provok'd the Indignation of our Lord, who peremptorily commanded him to depart from him, pronouncing a third Text out of *Deuteronomy*, which positively says, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and shalt serve him only.* Whereupon the Devil left him for that Time, and Angels from Heaven came in to refresh him after his triumphant Combat, wherein he began so signally to bruise the Serpent's Head, and after he had forty Days done Penance for Man's Sins, and consign'd to his Church the Doctrine and Discipline of Fasting, in order to the resisting and conquering all the Temptations of the Devil.

III. During our Saviour's Temptation in the Desert, his faithful Forerunner *John* continu'd his Baptism and Preaching with all Diligence; and upon our Lord's strange and sudden Removal from the People, when the Voice had pronounc'd him the Son of God, he cry'd out to them, *That this was the very Person whom I mention'd to you, one who comes after me, yet preferr'd before me, for he really was before me.* After which, he or the Evangelist adds, *And we have all receiv'd out of his Plenitude a Sufficiency of all Graces. For Moses only gave us the Law, which was severe and obscure; but Jesus Christ has brought Grace and Truth, or Mercy and Perspicuity. He is the only begotten Son, who is in the Bosom of his Father, and has reveal'd God to us, whom no Man has ever seen.*

John 1.
19-28.

Notwithstanding *John* spoke thus honourably and clearly of the *Messiah*, yet his own Worth and Fame were so spread abroad, that the grand *Sanhedrim* at *Jerusalem* were in dispute whether he was the Person or not; and accordingly deputed a set Number of Priests and Levites, who were *Pharisees*, to demand of him who he was; it being their Business to take Cognizance of all such Matters. *John* very readily acknowledg'd to them, That he was not the *Messiah*, nor, as they suppos'd, *Elias*, whom they imagin'd would personally appear among them; nor yet any other Prophet risen from the Dead, or he mention'd by *Moses*, *Deut.* 18. 18. Upon which Answers they were very urgent with him to declare who and what he was, that they might return an Answer to those who had deputed them. He immediately let them understand that tho' he was not *Elias* himself,

self, yet he was the Prophet whom *Isaiah* had foretold of the same Nature, *the Voice of one crying in the Desarts, Rectifie the Ways of the Lord*. Upon this they demanded of him, *since he was neither the Messiah, Elias, nor any of the ancient Prophets, Why did he presume to baptize Persons, which belonged to Men of a more publick Station?* To whom he made Answer, *That his Baptism was only of Water, but the Efficacy depended upon one among them, of whom they had no Knowledge; one who succeeded him in Time, but so surpass'd him in Dignity, that he was not worthy to unloose his Shoes.* St. *John* tells us that these things were transacted at *Bethabara* beyond *Jordan*; to which Place *John* had then remov'd his Station, to gain new Proselytes and Disciples. This is generally suppos'd to have been the Place of the *Israelites* first Passage into *Canaan*; but others with more Probability place it in *Trachonitis*; not far from *Jordan*, where it falls into the Sea of *Galilee*.

The next Day, after the Departure of the *Pharisees*, our Saviour return'd from the Desart and came to *Bethabara*; where *John* upon the Sight of him, alluding to the Lamb for the daily Sacrifices, cry'd out, *Behold the immaculate Lamb of God, which takes away the Sins of Mankind!* adding, *That this was the Person of whom he had said so much, namely, that tho' he came after him, he was before him both in Dignity and Existence: And that formerly he had no Knowledge of his Person; but his Coming and Baptism was purposely to make Way for the Other's Manifestation to Israel.* And he farther assured them, *That he saw the Spirit of God descending from Heaven like a Dove, and remaining upon him; and tho' he had not 'till then seen the Face of Jesus, yet he was inform'd by God, who had sent him to baptize, that whomsoever he saw attended with those Signs, was the very Person who was to baptize with the Holy Ghost. And since he had seen all this, he now solemnly witness'd him to be the Son of God.* And this was the second publick Testimony of *John* concerning the Person of the *Messiah*. John 1. 29-34.

Upon these Attestations, our Lord retir'd himself; but the next Day two Hours before Sun-set, he pass'd by the same Place, where *John* stood with two of his Disciples, one call'd *Andrew*, who afterwards follow'd *Jesus*, and the other *John*, as it is commonly believ'd. Upon Sight of him, the Baptist again pointed him out as the true Sacrifice for Sin, calling him *The Lamb of God*; which so excited the two Disciples that they immediately follow'd *Jesus*; who turning himself, demanded of them *whom they sought?* John 1. 35-42.

Sought? They immediately call'd him *Rabbi*, a Title given to no ordinary Person, desiring to know where he lodg'd; and the other courteously invited them to the Place, where they went and continu'd with him all Night. His Communication had such Effect upon them, that *Andrew* the same Night or the next Morning, hastned to an elder Brother of his call'd *Simon*, and told him the joyful News of their having found out the long expected *Messiah*, and brought him immediately to *Jesus*. Our Lord no sooner saw him, but (that He might not want as solid Proofs of his Divinity as *John's* Testimony was to his Brother) he call'd him by his Name, and declar'd his Parentage; and after that chang'd his Name from *Simon* to *Cephas* or *Peter*, which signifies a Rock; intimating that he should be afterwards a principal Foundation Stone in his Church. Thus was our Saviour made known to three of his Disciples at one Time; tho' they were not publickly call'd to that Office 'till about a Year after.

John I.
43--51.

The Day following *Jesus* thought fit to encrease the Number of his Disciples; for having cross'd *Jordan*, or perhaps the Lake, and arriv'd in *Galilee*, he found a Person nam'd *Philip*, an Inhabitant of the City *Bethsaida*, the Dwelling-Place of *Peter* and *Andrew*. Upon the first Sight of him, he commanded him to *follow him*, the constant Form he afterwards us'd in the Choice of his Disciples, and those who inseparably attended him; so that *Philip* was the first of all the Apostles who had the Honour of a publick Call. Upon this, *Philip* with great Joy sought out an intimate Friend of his call'd *Nathanael*, who is generally believ'd to be the same with the Apostle *Bartholomew*; and finding him under a Fig-tree, probably at his Devotions, he told him, *That they had found out the Messiah, whom Moses and the Prophets had foretold, and that Jesus of Nazareth the Son of Joseph was the Person.* *Nathanael*, a little confounded at the Name of *Nazareth*, instead of *Bethlehem*, demanded *Whether any good Thing could come from thence?* But the other desired him to come and satisfie himself; and upon his Approach towards *Jesus*, he immediately pronounc'd *Nathanael a true Israelite without Guile!* A Name which his Integrity had probably gain'd him among his Neighbours. Therefore he was surpriz'd, and desir'd to be inform'd how *Jesus* knew him; who readily told him, *That he had seen him under the Fig-tree before Philip came to call him.* Convinc'd with this Instance of our Lord's Divine Knowledge, he declar'd him *the Son of God, and the King*

King of Israel. Whereupon our Saviour told him, *That since upon such an Instance, he could believe him to be the Messiah, he should have greater Arguments to confirm his Faith, namely, he should afterwards see the Heavens opened, and the Angels ascending and descending to attend the triumphant Ascension of himself; whom, out of Humility and Love to Mankind, he there, as in many other Places, stil'd The Son of Man.*

Our Saviour having thus gain'd five Disciples, tho' so-^{John 2.}lemnly call'd but one, the next Day thought fit to make a ^{1--10,} more undeniable Manifestation of himself, for the Confirmation of their Faith; which he did at a Marriage Feast at *Cana*, a Place not far from *Nazareth* and the Sea of *Galilee*, where he and his Disciples were invited. His Mother was there before; which, together with her Care about the Feast, cause most Persons to believe that the Marriage was for some Relation of hers, and particularly in the House of *Cleopas* or *Alpheus*, Husband to her Sister, or Cousin German *Mary*. At this Solemnity there was a great Want of Wine; and the Holy Virgin pitying the unseasonable Scarcity, apply'd her self to her Son, hoping he would use some Means for a Supply. But *Jesus* to shew that in those Actions where the Service and Honour of God were concern'd, no Respect ought to be had to Men, made Answer, *Τὸ ἐμὸν καὶ σοὶ.* *What is that to me and you? my Hour is not yet come; or This is not a convenient Juncture.* His Mother still expecting something extraordinary, order'd the Servants to obey his Commands with the utmost Exactness; and he not long after order'd them to fill six large Water-Pots full with Water, which stood there for the ordinary Washings at Meals, each containing about twenty Gallons of our Measure. This being done, and the Pots full to the Brim, he immediately commanded the Servants to fill out, and carry the Liquor to the Governour of the Feast, for him to distribute to others, according to Custom. All which was done without his, and most of the Guests Knowledge; so that when the Governor tasted this excellent Wine, he was extremely surpriz'd, and with a pleasing Air told the Bridegroom, *That usually People brought out their best Wine in the Beginning of the Feast, and the worst when the Guests had drank plentifully; but he contrary to Custom had reserv'd the best Wine 'till the latter End.*

This Change of Water into Wine was the first Miracle ^{John 2.}that *Jesus* wrought, for *St. John* calls it *the Beginning of* ^{11, 12.}*Miracles*; which was perform'd chiefly to manifest his Glory to his Mother, Relations and Disciples, and was a great

Con-

Confirmation of their Faith. After which our Saviour departed from thence with his Mother, Brethren or Cousins, and those Disciples he had, to *Capernaum*, the Metropolis of all *Galilee* for Riches and Traffick, situated upon that Lake, call'd the Sea of *Galilee*, a Place where he afterwards had his chief Residence and Habitation. But he continu'd here not above a Fortnight or three Weeks, before he thought fit to go towards *Jerusalem* to the great Feast of the Passover, which hapned on the 6th Day of our Month *April*, and the 16th Year of the Reign of *Tiberius* the Emperor, and about three Months after his Baptism.

C H A P. III.

From the Beginning of the first Passover after our Blessed Saviour's Baptism, to the Beginning of the second.

Containing the Term of one Year, wanting 10 Days.

A. D.
30.
Tiber.
16
17.
John 2.
13--17.

I. OUR Lord arriving at *Jerusalem* at the great Feast of the Passover, when there was the most numerous Concourſe of People, began the first Manifestation of himself by a vigorous Regulation of a publick Abuse and Prophanation of the Temple at these Times, which was this. The Law requiring that all such as dwelt at a great Distance, should buy their Sacrifices at *Jerusalem*, and likewise that all Males from twenty Years of Age and upwards, should pay half a Shekel to the Lord; these, with the several voluntary Oblations of People of all Ranks, occasion'd a Necessity of changing greater Coin into less, and very often of Foreign Coin into that which was current in the Nation. Now the Rulers gradually had introduc'd Money-changing, and the Sale of Oxen, Sheep and Doves for Sacrifices, into the outward Court of the Temple, call'd the *Court of the Gentiles*, a spacious Place surrounding all the other Courts, together with the Body of the Temple. And this was done under a Pretext of having the Sacrifices near and ready for the People; tho' in reality it was a covetous Design of extorting and taking Advantage of the Peoples Necessities, and likewise Pride and Contempt of that Court where the *Gentile* Worshippers were

were permitted Entrance; for whom they had so little Esteem, that they join'd them with Beasts in their Devotion. Our Saviour look'd upon these Practices as notoriously scandalous and prophane; and therefore with a Scourge made of the Cords belonging to the Beasts, he drove all the Sellers and Barterers from the Sacred Ground, overthrew the Money-Changers Stalls, and pour'd down all their Money; particularly commanding the Dove-Sellers to *remove their Goods, and not make his Father's House an House of Merchandize.* This zealous Act of our Lord brought to the Remembrance of his Disciples what his Father *David* had formerly said, *viz. his Zeal for God's House had even devour'd his Spirits.*

Jesus shewing so much Bravery and Authority, the *Jews* John 2. 13--22. were exceedingly surpriz'd and incens'd, and demanded of him *What Miracle he would shew to evidence his Commission for acting after such an extraordinary Manner?* He immediately mention'd to them one of the greatest of his Miracles, which would be a sufficient Evidence, namely, *That they should destroy this Temple, and he would rebuild it in three Days.* The *Jews* still more surpriz'd, and concluding he meant that *Fabrick* built by *Herod*, reproachfully ask'd him, *How he could build up that Temple in three Days, which was began 46 Years since, and not yet compleatly finish'd?* But the Evangelist observes, that he meant his own Body, which might well be call'd a Temple, since the Deity inhabited it, the *Jerusalem* Temple being only a Type of this. This was also unintelligible to his Disciples; but after his Resurrection they recollected what he had said, and were fully confirm'd in their Faith. And this we may look upon as a kind of a Pattern of *Christ's* Manner of shewing himself to the *Jews*; which was frequently such a Manifestation of himself as all could not then understand, because he would not occasion them to shorten the Course of his Ministry, or make himself justly thought a Malefactor: But yet it carry'd such Evidence with it, as that all well dispos'd Persons might be convinc'd he was the *Messiah*, and the Son of God.

Tho' our Saviour refus'd to work any Miracle at the *In-* John 2. 23--25. *stigation* of the *Jews*, yet shortly after he wrought many, in the open View of the mixt Multitudes; but the Evangelist Chap. 3. 1--21. names them not, only that many believ'd in him who saw them. However *Jesus* would not confide in these Persons, well knowing the Bottom of their Hearts, and that many of them were unsound and imperfect in their Faith. The sight of his Miracles was a great Surprize to the City, and parti-

particularly they excited the Curiosity of a Person call'd Nicodemus, a considerable Man in the grand Sanhedrim, and of the Sect of the Pharisees, who privately repaired to Jesus in the Night, declaring, *that he believ'd him to come immediately from Heaven, and that his Miracles were a sufficient Demonstration of it.* Wherefore Jesus let this Pharisee know that such a Belief was insufficient, and that something more was expected; solemnly assuring him, *That without a second and a supernal Birth, no Man could enjoy the Benefits of his Kingdom.* Nicodemus being surpriz'd, and demanding *how a Man in Years could enter into his Mother's Womb, and be born a second time?* Jesus inform'd him, *That this Birth was not to be of a Woman, or the Flesh, for that would produce nothing but Flesh, and corrupted Nature; but of Water, washing away Sins, and of the holy Spirit, giving the Power and Efficacy; without which, no Person should enter the Kingdom of Heaven.* And this Spirit inspired as it pleased; and like the Wind, which no Man knows from whence it comes, or whither it goes, was only discernable by its Effects. Nicodemus still admiring, and even doubting the Possibility of these Things, Jesus gently reprov'd his Ignorance, *in that being a Master of Israel, he knew not the Nature of Baptism and Regeneration, so frequently intimated in the old Testament;* again solemnly assuring him, *That he spoke nothing but of what he had a certain Knowledge, tho' the Jews had not receiv'd his Testimony: And since he was not believ'd when he spoke in Similitudes taken from Earthly Things; How should it be expected, when he deliver'd them as Heavenly things?* After which he proceeded to sublimer Mysteries, intimating that from him alone they were to be learnt, namely, *The Son of Man, who came down from Heaven, and was still in Heaven, whither no Man could ascend. That the brazen Serpent set up by Moses in the Wilderness, for the Cure of those bitten by Serpents, was only a Type of Him; that as the Lookers on one receiv'd Relief, so the Believers on the other should have eternal Life. And all this through the unexpressible Love of God, who gave his only begotten Son to the World, that all Believers in Him should not perish, but enjoy everlasting Felicity: For he sent his Son not to condemn the World, but by his Merits to save it from Destruction. Therefore the Believers were safe, but the Unbelievers in an actual State of Condemnation, for not regarding the only begotten Son of God. The main Reason of which was, that tho' a Light was come to illuminate the World, yet they chose Darkness before it; for their Actions being evil, they hated the Light, and avoided*

it, lest they shou'd be detected and condemned. Whereas the Lovers of Truth approach'd the Light, that their Actions might become conspicuous, and appear to be the Work of Heaven.

Thus did our Saviour open to *Nicodemus* the great Doctrines of the New-Birth, Baptism, Free Grace, Faith, Obedience, and the Love of Truth; and made him a faithful, tho' secret Disciple, as appears from some other Passages in *St. John*. But he wou'd not trust himself with the unstable and malicious *Hierosolymites*, and therefore left *Jerusalem*,^{John 3. 22.} and went about the Province of *Judea*, where he continu'd about seven or eight Months. In which Space we have no Account of his Actions, but only that he baptiz'd, and made more Profelytes than the *Baptist* himself. But *St. John* tells us that He baptiz'd not with his own Hands, but by the Hands of his Disciples. For, as it is observ'd, being employ'd in greater Affairs, in teaching and relieving the Peoples necessities, he delegated this Office to his Disciples; as a Thing to be carefully continu'd after his Departure, in the Succession of them to the End of the World.

II. During these Transactions, *John* faithfully continu'd^{John 3. 23--36.} the Course of his Ministry, and crossing the River *Jordan*, remov'd his Station from *Bethabara* to *Ænon*, near *Salim*, a Place remarkable for Springs and Waters, within or near the Precincts of *Galilee*, where he had a great Conveniency for Baptizing. Here the Fame of *Jesus's* Progress occasion'd a sharp Dispute between some of *John's* Disciples, and the *Jews*, concerning Baptism; insomuch that they complain'd to their Master, *That the Person at Bethabara, of whom he had so honourably testify'd, baptiz'd as well as he, and was follow'd by all Men.* The *Baptist*, who would not have made Disciples but to resign them to the Son of God, made Answer, *That Jesus could not have had such Success, but by the Will of Heaven; appealing to their own Memories, That he had declar'd himself not to be the Messiah, but as a Paranympus to go before him: That the Other was the true Bridegroom of the Church, and himself his Friend or Attendant, who now had compleated his Joy in seeing the Bridegroom's Caresses. That therefore he was but the Morning-Star, whose Glory must decrease, as that of the Sun's increas'd. That he himself was of the Earth, and spok'd of earthly Things; but the Other came from Heaven, and was above all; having the clearest Knowledge of what he testified: Although the Generality of the Jews had not receiv'd his Doctrine, depriving themselves of the Honour of seeing their*

Seals to the Veracity of God, which was by undeniable Evidence deliver'd by him, as having the Holy Spirit without Measure, and so belov'd by his Father, as to have all Things deliver'd into his Hands. And that all Men might know what Person they slighted, and how great Salvation they neglected, he summ'd up all his Discourses, and concluded his Ministry with an important Sentence to this Effect; *Whosoever believes on the Son of God, shall enjoy Everlasting Life; but whosoever believes him not, shall never see Life, but is an Object of the Divine Wrath and Vengeance.*

Matth. 14.

3--5.

Mark 6.

17--20.

Luke 3.

19, 20.

Joseph.

John having diligently perform'd the rigid Course of his Ministry, and being in the Dominions of *Herod* the Tetrarch, he boldly repair'd to the Court of that subtle Prince, and with no less Freedom reprov'd him for his numerous Enormities, and more particularly for his cohabiting with *Herodias*, the Wife of his Brother *Philip-Herodes*, fearlessly pronouncing it unlawful. *Herod* was not immediately exasperated with this Holy Man; but on the contrary, believing him truly just and honest, had a great Veneration for him, fear'd him, was a diligent Hearer of him, and follow'd his Instructions in many Things. But *John* using the same Freedom to *Herod*, as *Elias* did to *Ahab*, met with the like Prosecution from the Wife *Herodias*, who like a second *Jezebel* sought all Occasions to destroy him. By her Malice and Instigation, *Herod* became daily more averse to him, and to satisfy her Importunities, sent him to Prison, designing also to put him to Death; but he fear'd an Insurrection of the People, who had the highest Veneration for him, and justly accounted him a Prophet. The *Pharisees* also representing him as an Author of a new Sect, a Promoter of Seditions and Revolts, and a Person dangerous by reason of the Multitude of his Followers, *Herod* craftily made that his Pretence of Imprisonment, as appears from *Josephus*. And the better to remove him from the People, he sent him bound out of *Galilee* into *Peræa*, to a strong Castle call'd *Machærus*, near the Dead Sea, and towards the Borders of *Arabia*, where he continu'd above a Year in Prison. Thus ended the famous Ministry of *John the Baptist*, the greatest Prophet that ever was born of a Woman, after a Course of one Year and a little above a Month.

John 4.

1--26.

III. About the Time of *John's* Imprisonment, our Lord, who had been baptizing about seven or eight Months in *Judæa*, understanding the *Pharisees* Concern for his great Numbers of *Profelytes*, resolv'd to leave that Province and pass into *Galilee*, where the *Pharisees* had less Interest, there to enter

enter upon a more solemn Part of his ministerial Function. In his Journey it was necessary for him to pass through *Samaria*, that Province lying between *Judaea* and *Galilee*; and about the middle of it he arriv'd near a considerable City call'd *Sychar* or *Sichem*, not far from the famous Mount *Gerizim*, in a Portion of Land which the Patriarch *Jacob* gave to his Son *Joseph*, where was a celebrated Well call'd *Jacob's Well*. *Jesus* travelling on Foot, and being wearied with the Journey, and the Heat of the Weather, about Noon time sat down on the Well Side, sending his Disciples into the City to buy Provisions. In their Absence a Woman of loose Life came out of the City, to draw Water at this Well; and *Jesus* being thirsty, and desirous to entertain some spiritual Conversation with her, requested of her some Water to drink. The Woman perceiving him to be a *Jew*, uncivilly demanded of him, *How he could offer any such Request to a Samaritan, since there were so great Feuds, and so little Dealings between each other?* But *Jesus* told her, *That if she had but known the Bounty of Heaven, and the Dignity of the Person who desir'd Water, she would have requested of him, and receiv'd from him living Water.* The Woman understanding him in a literal Sense, told him, *Since the Well was deep, and he had nothing to draw with, how could he produce such extraordinary Water; unless he could shew a better Well, and was greater than their Father Jacob, who with his whole Family had made use of this, and given it to them for an Inheritance?* Whereupon *Jesus* to shew his Preeminence, inform'd her, *That their Water would only give a temporary Satisfaction, but his a durable and lasting; and should become a Well in the Person springing up to everlasting Life.* Upon this the Woman deridingly ask'd for some of that Water, *that she might never have Occasion to come to that Well again.* But *Jesus* to make her sensible that he knew her Heart, and her loose Life, nam'd her Husband to her, bidding her go and call him thither; and when she told him, *That she had no Husband,* he made Answer, *That she had spoken truly, for tho' she had had five several Husbands, yet she now liv'd in a State of Adultery or Concubinage.* This remarkable Discovery made her more humble, and to acknowledge, *That he was a Prophet;* and thereupon propounded to him that great Question, controverted between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, concerning the Place of publick Worship and Sacrifice, namely, *Whether Mount Gerizim, according to their Father's Custom, or Jerusalem, according to the Jews, was the true Place?* *Jesus* readily inform'd her, *That the Samaritan Worship was un-*

certain and precarious, but the Jewish upon sure Grounds, that Nation having had the highest Advantages of Salvation. But that this Question was of no great Moment, since the Time was approaching, when neither Gerizim nor Jerusalem should be the Place of Worship: That the Sacrifices and ceremonial Rites were shortly to cease; and that God being a Spirit, expected to be worshipped in a more spiritual and sublime manner than formerly. The Woman saying, That when the Messiah came, he would put an end to all these Differences: Jesus knowing himself to be in a safe Country, frankly told her, That he himself was the very Person.

John 4.
27-42.

Immediately after the pronouncing of these Words, his Disciples return'd from the City with Food, being surpriz'd to find him conversing with a Woman, and a Samaritan; but the great Respect they had for him prevented their demanding the Reason of it. But the Woman in great Haste left her Water-Pot, and with no less Wonder ran into the City, and desir'd the Inhabitants to go immediately and see a Person who had told her all the Secrets of her Life, and undoubtedly must be the Messiah: Which was done according to her Request. In the mean time Jesus's Disciples having prepar'd the Food, desir'd their Master to eat; but he told them, That he had other Meat unknown to them, intimating the Conversion of many Souls in the City. But they taking it in a literal Sense, and thinking some others had furnish'd him, Jesus told them, That his Meat was the Performance of his Father's Will, and the Accomplishing his Work. Then pointing to the Multitudes coming out of the City, he said, You reckon it now four Months to Harvest, but behold yonder, and see what an evangelical Harvest there is already, just ripe with Expectation, and ready for the Sickle: And he who reaps here, shall receive the Wages of eternal Life; which will cause both Sower and Reaper to rejoice together; and accomplishes that Proverb, 'One soweth and another reapeth. I send you to reap where you have bestow'd no Labour; the Patriarchs and Prophets have labour'd here, and you enjoy the Benefits of their Labours. About the same Time the Woman, with the Inhabitants of the City, arriv'd at the Well, and earnestly requested of our Lord to tarry with them in their City, to which he readily comply'd: For tho' after this, during his own Ministry, he commanded his Apostles not to go to the Samaritans; and tho' the time of spreading his Glory to the World was not accomplished; yet as an Introduction to the Calling of the Gentiles, and in Compassion to these Peoples Wants and Desires, he was pleas'd to stay with them two Days. Here many

many believ'd in him only for the Woman's Relation of his extraordinary Knowledge; but many more upon the Account of his own Words, who declar'd to the Woman, *Now indeed we believe, not upon your Testimony alone, but because we have heard him our selves, and are convinc'd that he is indeed the Messiah, the Saviour of the World:* Which was more than any of the Jews at that time did acknowledge or believe; who look'd upon the *Messiah* as only a Saviour of their own Nation. And thus *Sichem*, which was the Place where the first Profelytes were made to the Church of *Israel*, *Gen. 34. 24. and 35. 2.* was the first Place profelyted to the Gospel.

After two Days tarrying, our Lord departed from this City, and leaving *Nazareth* in his Way, testifying, *That a Prophet had no Honour in his own Country,* he repaired to *Cana*, where he had chang'd the Water into Wine, being kindly entertain'd by the *Galileans*, who at the Passover had seen his Miracles at *Jerusalem*. To this Place came a certain Nobleman of *Capernaum*, suppos'd to be *Chuza*, *Herod's* Steward, who hearing of his Fame and Benignity, humbly begg'd of him *that he would please to come down and cure his Son, who by a violent feaver was brought to the Point of Death.* *Jesus*, perceiving this Person to apprehend him only as a Prophet, who could cure him if present, made Answer, *Except they saw Signs and Miracles, they would not believe what he was.* And upon the Nobleman's farther urging him to go with him, *lest it should prove too late,* he dismits'd him with this kind Assurance, *That his Son liv'd;* signifying that he could cure him as well absent as present. This was believ'd by the Nobleman, and the Son immediately receiv'd the Benefit of his Father's Faith; for being met the next Day by his Servants, who inform'd him of his Son's Recovery, he inquir'd into the Hour when it began, and was told it was the seventh Hour, or about one a Clock, when his Feaver left him. Which exactly agreeing with the Time that *Jesus* had told him of his Son's living, he and his whole Family believ'd, and became Profelytes to our Blessed Saviour. This, as *St. John* observes, was the second Miracle that he wrought in *Galilee*; which being done at the Request of so great a Man in *Capernaum*, was a happy Introduction towards his Settlement in that great City, which hapned not long after.

John 4.
43--54.

The second Year of Christ's publick Ministry.

IV.

Shortly after the great Prophet *John* had finish'd the Course of his Ministry, our Blessed Lord, being return'd by the Guidance of the Holy Spirit into *Galilee*, thought fit to make more illustrious Manifestations of himself, and in that despis'd Province to begin a more solemn Part of his Ministerial Function. Both *St. Matthew* and *St. Mark*, speaking of *John's* Imprisonment, observe, *That from that Time Jesus* began in more especial Manner to preach the Gospel, or Glad-Tidings of the Kingdom of God, proclaiming, *That the great Time was accomplish'd, and the Kingdom of the Messiah at hand; therefore all must repent and believe the Gospel.* This was done in many Parts of *Galilee*, where he daily taught, and preach'd in the Synagogues, or Places of ordinary Worship, in such an extraordinary Manner, that he was admir'd by all, and his Fame was spread throughout all the Country. This may be call'd a second *Æra* or Beginning of the Gospel, and is so intimated by *St. Peter* to *Cornelius*, who told him, *That the Word which was publish'd throughout all Judæa, began from Galilee, after the Baptism which John preach'd,* Acts 10. 37.

In this Progress he came to *Nazareth*, the Place of his Education, where a kind Entertainment was reasonably expected; and on a Sabbath Day, being in the Synagogue, he stood up to read, as was usual for Lay-Men at that Time. Here the Prophecy of *Isaiah* was deliver'd to him; out of which he read these Words, *'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has consecrated me to preach the Gospel to the Poor, sent me to cure the Broken-hearted, to pronounce Liberty to the Captives, and Recovery of Sight to the Blind, to free the Oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord.* Upon this he clos'd the Book, return'd it to the Minister, call'd *Angelus Ecclesiæ*, and explaining the Prophecy, declar'd, *That it was now accomplish'd in Himself.* Upon this the Eyes of the whole Congregation were fix'd upon him, admiring at his Discourse; but many who had known him in the Disadvantages of his Education, began to have too mean Thoughts of him upon the Account of his Extract, as if he had been Son to a Carpenter. Therefore our Lord knowing their Thoughts, told them, *That they wou'd undoubtedly apply the Proverb of Physician cure thy self, as a reproach to him, for not working Miracles in his own City, as well as in Capernaum.* But he farther

A. D.

31.
Tiber.17
18.

Luke 4.

14, 15.

Mark 1.

14, 15.

Matth. 4.

17.

Luke 4.

16--30.

ther assur'd them, *That a Prophet was never justly esteem'd in his own Country*; proving it by two eminent Examples, the first of *Elias*, who in a *Famine* of above three Years, was not sent by God to any of the distressed Widows of his own Country Israel, but to a *Widow at Sarepta* in another Country: And the other of *Elisha*, who cur'd a foreign Lord in *Affyria* of his *Leprosy*, when there were many Lepers in Israel, who would not desire a Cure from him. These Words, so highly reflecting upon the Ingratitude and Insensibility of the *Nazarens*, provok'd the whole Assembly; insomuch that they impiously hurry'd him out of the City, and brought him to the Brow of the Hill on which it was situated, with a Design to cast him down from it, and destroy him. But by a miraculous Power he withdrew himself from the Fury of these wretched People, and left their City.

From this barbarous Place our Lord repaired to *Capernaum*, and made that the chief Place of his Residence and Habitation, where it is conjectured that his reputed Father *Joseph* had some little Possessions, or at least a House. This Place being situated upon the Coasts of the old Tribes of *Zabulon* and *Nepthali*, *St. Matthew* observes that our Saviour's Habitation there remarkably accomplish'd a Prophecy of *Isaiah*, namely, *In the Land of Zabulon, the Land of Nepthali, the Sea-Coast beyond Jordan, and in Galilee of the Gentiles, the Inhabitants who sit in Darkness saw great Light, and new Light sprung up to them who sat in the Region and Shadow of Death*; intimating that all these Places, which had received the greatest Damages from Foreigners, should afterwards receive the greatest Light of the Gospel, and most of the Presence of the *Messiah*; the not understanding of which Passage, and others following it, very much confounded the *Jews*, who little imagin'd that the *Messiah's* chief Residence should be in *Galilee*. *Capernaum*, as was formerly observ'd, was the Metropolis of all *Galilee*, situated in a very rich and populous Country, upon the Lake of *Gennesareth*, or the Sea of *Galilee*; a famous Lake about 20 Miles in Length, and half as much in Breadth, replenish'd with all kinds of Fish, and surrounded with several remarkable Cities and Towns, which stood upon the Banks of it. On the East Side were *Corazin*, *Bethsaida*, *Julias* and *Hippo*; On the West, *Capernaum*, *Tiberias* and *Tarichæa*, besides other Places of inferior Note. And this Lake was highly convenient for our Lord's Ministry and Designs, his easie Passages, his breaking the Multitudes of his Followers, his Retirements, and also his avoiding the

wicked Designs of *Herod*, and the untimely Prosecutions of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* at *Jerusalem*.

Luke 5.
1--11.
Marth. 4.
18--21.
Mark I.
17--20.

V. Our Blessed Lord being thus settled in a convenient and populous Country, and finding the Ministry daily encreasing, thought fit to make Choice of some Disciples, who in a particular Manner should be Assistants and Witnesses of his Actions. Therefore walking by the Sea Shore, he saw two Fishing Vessels, one belonging to *Peter* and *Andrew*, and the other to *James* and *John*; who being all Companions, after a tedious and unsuccessful Night, were gone ashore to wash and dry their Nets. As our Saviour was press'd on by the Multitudes out of *Capernaum*, he step'd into *Peter's* Vessel, desiring him to put a little from the Shore, and from thence he preach'd to the People. Sermon ended, he resolv'd to seal up his Doctrine with a Miracle, to give them a full Assurance of his Mission; therefore he order'd *Peter* to launch out farther, and let down his Nets for a Draught. *Peter* inform'd him of their unsuccessful Tilling all Night, *but in Obedience to him he was willing*; and upon letting down their Nets, they immediately inclos'd such a Multitude of Fishes, that their Nets began to break; so that they were oblig'd to call to their Partners in the other Vessel, to come into their Assistance. This Draught was so great, that it fill'd both the Vessels, and so loaded them, that it endanger'd their sinking before they could get safe to Shore. All were amaz'd at this miraculous Sight, especially *Peter*, who in an Ecstasie of Admiration, and dreading the visible Appearance of so great a Power just by him, threw himself at the Feet of *Christ*, praying him to *depart from him as a vile and sinful Person*. But our Lord, to abate his Fears, let him understand that he had nobler Work and Employment for him, *That from this time he should catch the Souls of Men*. Upon which he pronounc'd these Words both to him and his Brother *Andrew*, *Follow me, and I will make you Fishers or Catchers of Men*; using also the same Call to *James* and *John*, who with their Father *Zebedee* were mending their Nets in the other Vessel. These four immediately obey'd his Call, being satisfy'd of his Divine Mission, and leaving their Vessels, Nets, and their Employment, they became constant and inseparable Disciples to our Lord; it being about a Year after their first Knowledge of him at *Bethabara*.

Mark I.
21--28.
Luke 4.
31--37.

Our Saviour after the Choice of these four Disciples, return'd with them into the City; and on the next Sabbath Day

Day he enter'd the chief Synagogue, and preach'd to the People, with so much Efficacy and Authority, and so differently from their usual Teachers the *Scribes*, that all were astonish'd at him. Among the Multitudes of his Auditors, there was a Man whose Body was possess'd and actuated by an impure Demon, who upon the sight of him roar'd out in a hideous Manner, *Let us alone! What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know that thou art the Son of God!* Whereupon *Jesus* rebuk'd him, and commanded his Silence, and Departure out of the poor Wretch's Body; and the Demon finding he must relinquish his Possession, rack'd the Man with most violent Convulsions, threw him upon the Ground, with a dismal Outcry, and at length left him sound in Body and Mind. Such possessed Persons were very frequent among the *Jews* at this Time; but the Cure of them was always look'd upon as beyond the Reach of humane Power: Therefore the Spectators were seiz'd with the greater Surprize and Amazement, questioning among themselves *what wonderful Doctrine and Authority this was, which commanded the Obedience even of the impure Spirits!* so call'd because they delighted in all Impurity. Upon which his Fame was spread throughout all *Galilee*, and the neighbouring Parts.

From the Synagogue, our Lord retired to the House of *Peter* and *Andrew*, who had lately remov'd from *Bethsaida* to this City: taking also *James* and *John* along with him. Here he was inform'd that *Peter's* Wife's Mother was seiz'd with a violent Fever, and was desired to have pity on her Condition, which he accordingly had. For going to her Bed's side, and taking her by the Hand, he rebuk'd the Paroxysms, commanded the Fever to depart, and in a Moment restor'd her to perfect Health; so that as if she had never been sick, she immediately arose, and waited upon the Company. This and the other Miracle in the Synagogue, caus'd the whole City to gather about *Peter's* House, as soon as the Sun was set, and the Sabbath ended, bringing with them all kinds of the Diseas'd and Possessed, begging the Bounty and Relief of this heavenly Physician. And he readily cured all their Diseases, by laying his Hand upon the sick Persons, in some Measure accomplishing that Prophecy of *Isaiab*, which says, *He took our Infirmities upon himself, and bore our Diseases.* He also cast out many Devils only by a Word, who cry'd out, *That he was the Messiah and the Son of God!* But *Jesus* would not permit them to discover that he was the *Messiah*, because of the ill Use likely to be made of it; for tho'

Mark I.

29-34.

Matth. 8.

14-17.

Luke 4.

38-41.

tho' all his Actions and his Discourses sufficiently manifested him to be the Person, yet for good Reasons, he usually declin'd owning it to the *Jews* in exprefs and positive Terms.

Mark 1.

35--39.

Matth. 4.

23--25.

Luke 4.

43, 44.

All People thus flocking after him, the next Morning, to prevent the like Concourse, and to prepare himself for his design'd Journey, he arose very early, and retir'd to a private Place to make his Prayers to God. And *Peter* and his other Disciples follow'd him, and hoping now to advance themselves in his terrestrial Kingdom, told him, *That all Men sought after him.* But *Jesus* let them know, *That he must now go to the neighbouring Towns, and preach to them; and that he came out for that Purpose.* In the mean time, the People who sought him arriv'd at that Place where he was, and would have engag'd him to continue still in *Capernaum*; but he told them, *That he must preach the Kingdom of Heaven to other Cities as well as theirs, and that his Father had sent him with that Design.* And thereupon he made a Progress about *Galilee*, in which little Province *Josephus* tells us there was 204 Cities and Towns; where he preach'd the Gospel in the publick Synagogues, cur'd all kinds of Distempers and Diseases, and dispossest all Demoniacks. The Evangelist particularly mentions *Demoniacks*, *Lunaticks*, and *Paraliticks*, as the principal Persons he recover'd in this Journey; which caus'd his Fame to be spread throughout all *Syria*, and engag'd infinite Numbers out of many several Provinces to follow him, not only out of *Galilee* where he taught, but also from the Region of *Decapolis*, *Judaea*, *Jerusalem*, and the Country beyond *Jordan*.

Mark 1.

40--45.

Luke 5.

12--16.

Matth. 8.

2--4.

In his Progress through *Galilee* our Lord was met by a Man overspread with a foul Leprosie, who falling prostrate at his Feet adored him, and cry'd, *Lord, if it be thy Pleasure, thou canst make me clean.* A Prayer so full of Faith and Humility, mov'd the Compassion of *Jesus*; who put forth his Hand and touch'd him, saying, *'Tis my Pleasure, be clean:* And he was perfectly cur'd in that Moment. Our Saviour strictly charg'd him to discover it to no Man, 'till he had perform'd the Rite of the Law in that Case, presented himself to the Priest, and offer'd a Sacrifice for a Testimony of his Cleanness. But the over-joy'd Person, instead of Secresie, publish'd it abroad in all Places; which still so increas'd his Fame, that *Jesus* could not openly enter into his City *Capernaum*, lest such Multitudes of Followers should carry a Shew of Sedition, and the pressing of Lepers contrary to Law, cause great Inconveniencies. And therefore after he

had taught the Multitudes, and cur'd all their Infirmities, he withdrew himself to a desert Place, where he spent some Time in Prayer; after he had made a glorious Progress in *Galilee* of near three Months.

Shortly after he enter'd privately into *Capernaum*, and probably *Peter's* House; but his Return was soon known to the City, and such a Multitude of People gather'd to him to hear his Sermons, and to bring their Diseas'd, that both the House and the Space about the Door could not contain them. In the House were many great Persons, *Pharisees* and Doctors of the Law, from *Jerusalem* and *Judæa*, as well as *Galilee*, who, brought thither by their Curiosity, came and sat down by him, rigidly examining his Sermons and his Miracles. Among the sick Persons, a Paralytick was brought; but so infirm, that four Men were hired to bear him in his Bed. But finding it impossible to pass so great a Throng, being confident of our Lord's Compassion and Assistance, they boldly uncover'd the Roof of the House, and with Cords let the sick Man down in his Bed, before the Place where he sat. *Jesus* being pleas'd with so much Faith, and such Reliance upon his Mercy, and to display his Glory, first apply'd himself to the Cure of his most valuable Part, his Soul, calling the Person *Son*, and bidding him *be of good Courage, for his Sins were forgiven him*. This extraordinary Mark of Authority provok'd the Indignation of the Proud *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who in their Hearts condemn'd him as a Blasphemer, since none could forgive Sins but the Almighty God. But *Jesus* knowing their secret Thoughts, demanded of those envious and conceited People, *why they cherish'd such evil Imaginations; and whether they thought it more difficult to forgive that sick Man's Sins, than to make him whole, and take up his Bed and walk?* But, proceeded he, *that the Son of Man has Power to forgive Sins on Earth, the Recovery of this Man shall be a Proof;* therefore he bad him, *Rise, take up his Bed, and go home to his House:* which was immediately done, to the exceeding Amazement of the whole Company. Tho' the Power of Healing be much less than Forgiving Sins, yet because it is not so easie to impose a Cure upon the World, where Mens Senses are Witnesses, as Remission of Sins, which is secret and invisible; therefore all the People, who were convinc'd by their Eyes of the Efficacy of Christ's Words, *Arise and walk,* were satisfy'd of the Truth of the former, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee.* For which Reason they glorify'd the Almighty, who had manifested such Power on Earth, and being fill'd with

Matth. 9.

2--8.

Mark 2.

1--12.

Luke 5.

17--26.

with a reverential Fear, declar'd, *That they had seen strange and wonderful Things that Day.*

Matth. 9. 9.
Mark. 2.
13, 14.
Luke 5.
27, 28.

From hence our Lord remov'd to the Sea Side, as he frequently did, where was more Air and Room for such a Conflux of People. As he pass'd along, teaching great Multitudes that follow'd him, he at length came to the Custom-House, where he espy'd a rich *Publican*, call'd *Levi* or *Matthew*, the Son of *Alpheus*, sitting in his Office; his Business being to gather the Customs of the Commodities that came by the Sea of *Galilee* and the usual Tribute which Passengers were to pay that went by Water; an Employment sufficiently odious to the *Jews*, as has been formerly observ'd: Upon the first Sight of him our Lord, according to his usual Manner of calling Disciples, bad him *follow him*. *Matthew*, tho' doubtless incumber'd with many Businesses and Accounts, yet being touch'd by the Divine Power, forsook his gainful Employment, and follow'd him, becoming not only an Apostle, but afterwards one of the Evangelists. And thus we have had a particular Account of *Christ's* calling six of his twelve Apostles; namely, *Philip*, *Peter*, *Andrew*, *James*, *John*, and *Matthew*. Some of the Harmonists have made *Matthew's* Feast immediately to succeed his Call; but for good Reasons we have follow'd *Chemnitius*, *Lightfoot*, and some others, who place *Jesus's* going to *Jerusalem* to the second great Passover, immediately after *Matthew's* Call; which Passover hapned on the 28th Day of our Month *March*, in the 17th Year of the Reign of *Tiberius*, and one Year wanting 10 Days after the last Passover.

C H A P. IV.

From the Beginning of the second Passover after our Blessed Saviour's Baptism, to the Beginning of the third.

Containing the Term of one Year, and 17 Days.

A. D.
31.
Tiber.
17
18.
Joh 5.
1--14.

I. **A**T the great Feast of the Passover our Lord repaired to *Jerusalem* a second Time after his Baptism, where he made a farther Manifestation of himself to the *Jews* upon this Occasion. In the South-East Part of the City, near the Sheep-Gate, was a famous Pool, or Pond, and a Building call'd *Bethesda*, or the *House of Mercy*,

Mercy, which consisted of five Porticos; in which lay a great Multitude of poor impotent People, as Blind, Lame, Wirther'd, &c. waiting for the moving of the Water of this Pool. For this Water serving for a holy Use, namely, the Washing of the Sacrifices before they were offer'd in the Temple, as is most generally believ'd, an Angel from Heaven descended at certain Times, and moving the Water, infus'd such Virtue, that the first Person who enter'd it after this Motion, was cur'd of whatsoever Distemper he had. It is uncertain at what particular Times the Water receiv'd this extraordinary Virtue, and when this Miracle began. But many Criticks do rationally believe that it began not long before our Saviour's Appearance, and was a Presage of his near Approach, and perhaps of the Virtue of the Water of Baptism. On the Sabbath Day *Jesus* repaired to this Hospital of sick Persons, out of whom he made Choice of one most impotent, and most unlikely to recover, having a languishing Infirmary of 38 Years Continuance: And to excite his Faith and Expectation, he first ask'd him *Whether he would be cured?* The Man not knowing him, sorrowfully told him, *That he had no Man to put him into the Pool as soon as the Water was mov'd; but that while he was endeavouring, another always step'd in before him, and prevented him.* Upon this *Jesus* bad him rise and walk, and to shew his Power over the Sabbath, *to take up his Bed also*; all which was immediately done, but much to the Displeasure of the *Jews*, who exclaim'd against him for bearing a Burthen on the Sabbath Day, directly contrary to their Law. The Man excus'd himself by declaring *That he was so order'd by the Person who had miraculously cur'd him*, thinking that a sufficient Warrant; which caus'd the *Jews* to make strict Enquiry after *Jesus*: But a Multitude being gather'd about the Place, he convey'd himself from thence. Shortly after, *Jesus* finding the Man in the Temple, probably returning Thanks for his Recovery, caution'd him, *since he was restor'd to his Health, not to sin again lest a greater Misfortune should befall him*: Intimating that some extraordinary Crime had caus'd this.

The overjoy'd Man, without designing any Malice, immediately went and inform'd the *Jews*, That *Jesus* was the Person who had wrought his Cure. Upon which they violently prosecuted him before the grand *Sanhedrim*, designing to take his Life, as a Prophaner of the Sabbath. Here in Defence of himself he declar'd, *That his Father wrought continually, and he did but the same*; which much more

*John 5.
15-47.*

provok'd

provok'd the *Jews* against him, not only as a Sabbath Breaker, but as the greatest Blasphemer, who said God was his Father, and made himself equal with Him. In farther Vindication of himself, he shew'd that he was the *Messiah*, tho' not in exprefs Terms; first manifesting his Power and Authority, and solemnly declaring, *That tho' according to his Office he could do nothing without the Concurrence and Co-operation of his Father; yet so great was his Father's Love to him, that he had communicated all Power to him, such as should produce greater Things than they had yet seen: Particularly raising the Dead, as his Father had done under the Old Testament; and judging the World, which Power was wholly committed to him, that all Men might honour him equally with his Father; for without one, the other would be ineffectual.* Then he solemnly assured them, *That whosoever barked to his Words, and believed his Mission, should never be condemn'd, but pass from a State of Death, to everlasting Life.* Farther declaring, *That the Time was coming, when the very Dead should hear the Voice of the Son of God, and such as heard, should live: For as the Father had Life within himself, so had the Son; and also Authority to pass Judgment at the last Day, not only as God, but also as Man.* And they needed not to wonder at this, for the time should come, when all Mankind in their Graves should hear his Voice, and come forth; the Good to the Resurrection of Life, and the Evil to the Resurrection of Damnation. But in these judicial Proceedings, he could act nothing but by Commission; therefore his Judgment was just, because he sought not his own, but his Father's Will, who had delegated him. After our Lord had thus fearlessly shewn the *Sanhedrim* the Greatness of his Authority, he proceeded to several undeniable Testimonies of it, and first of John Baptist, to whom they had sent Deputies, a burning and a shining Light, whom for a while they admired, of whose Testimony he was assured. Though he needed no Human Witness, yet he mention'd him to convince them, and bring them to Salvation. Secondly, he had a greater Testimony than John's, even the Miracles he had wrought, which were undeniable Evidences of his Divine Mission. Thirdly, the Father himself had declar'd him his Son; but as they had neither heard his Voice, nor seen his Shape, so they regarded not his Words, disbelieving the Person whom he had sent. Fourthly, the holy Scriptures, which they had search'd, and acknowledg'd the right Way to Happiness, did abundantly testify of him; and yet they refus'd to come to him, and receive that Happiness. And he sought not the Applauses of Men,

Men, but the Honour of God, which he knew they wanted; since they receiv'd not him who came in his Father's Name, when they were ready to receive any Impostor who came in his own. Which Infidelity was the less strange, because they were so zealous for the Glory of Men, and so little for the Glory of God. Lastly, Moses in whom they had the greatest Confidence, wrote concerning him; therefore he needed not to accuse them to the Father, since Moses would do it. But since they disbeliev'd their great Prophet's Writings, it was not to be expected that they should believe his Words.

We have no Account of the Issue of this remarkable Discourse; but by the Evangelist's Silence, we may conclude that there was such an irresistible Power in our Lord's Words, that tho' the *Sanhedrim* would not comply with them, yet they could not deny the Truth of them. However on the very next Sabbath Day, he gave the *Jews* a fresh Occasion of Complaint, in his Passage with his Disciples through some Corn Fields near the City, probably in going to some neighbouring Synagogue to preach. His Disciples being at this time very hungry, took some Ears of Corn as they pass'd, rubb'd them in their Hands and eat them, a thing usual on ordinary Days. Which piece of Labour was immediately observ'd by the malicious Eyes of some *Pharisees* then mix'd with the People, who exclaim'd, against them, as doing an Action unlawful on the Sabbath Day. But *Jesus* to vindicate them, first urg'd the Example of pious *David*, who when he wanted Sustenance, enter'd into the House of God with his Followers, and did eat the Sacred Bread, unlawful to be touch'd by any but the Priests; shewing that Necessity takes away the Rigour of the Law. Secondly, the Example of their own Priests, who were accounted blameless, tho' on the Sabbath Days they perform'd the Labours of the Temple: which Temple, if it justify'd their Actions, there was one present greater than the Temple, who could justify his Disciples. But if they had understood the Meaning of *Hosea's* Words, I chuse Mercy before Sacrifice, they would not so rashly have condemn'd the Innocent: But they inverted the Order of Things, supposing Man to be made for the Sabbath, and not the Sabbath for the Benefit of Man: And therefore the Son of Man was Lord even of the Sabbath Day.

Shortly after our Lord left *Jerusalem*, and return'd into *Galilee*, where on another Sabbath, or Saturday, he preach'd in a Synagogue, probably at his own City *Capernaum*; in which Place was a Man with a wither'd and mortify'd Hand, whom St. *Jerom* reports to have been a Mason. Here the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* were nicely observant, watch-

Matt. 12.

1--8.

Mark 2.

23--28.

Luke 6.

1--3.

Matt. 12.

9--13.

Mark 3.

1--5.

Luke 6.

6--10.

ing

ing for a Pretence of an Accufation againſt *Jeſus*, if he ſhould offer to cure on the Sabbath Day; therefore they firſt demanded of him *whether he thought it lawful to work Cures on the Day of Reſt?* *Jeſus* knowing their malicious Intentions, immediately bad the decrepid Perſon ſtand up in the miſt of the Aſſembly, as an Object of Commiſeration; and then deſired theſe haughty Perſons to answer him one Queſtion, viz. *Whether they thought it lawful on the Sabbath Day to do good, or ill; actually to ſave Life, or negligently to deſtroy it?* This Queſtion putting them to Silence, he farther demanded of them, *Whether any Man of their Opinions would not venture to pull a Sheep out of a Pit on the Sabbath Day; and much more help a Man, who was far more valuable than a Sheep?* An undeniable Proof, that they acknowledg'd it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath Day. Then looking about him with great Marks of Indignation, for their ſtrange Perverſeneſs, he commanded the poor Man only to ſtretch out his lame Hand; which being obey'd, it was perfectly reſtor'd, and made ſound as the other.

Matth. 12.

14--21.

Mark 3.

6--12.

Luke 6.

11.

Tho' the *Phariſees* were ſilenc'd by his Arguments, and ſurpriz'd by the Miracle, yet ſo great was their Stubbornneſs and Prejudice, that they reſolv'd to attempt even his Life; and that they might not fail of Succeſs, they join'd with the *Herodians*, tho' perfectly oppoſite in Principles, conſulting with thoſe State-Sectaries how they might deſtroy him. But *Jeſus* diſcovering their impious Deſigns, withdrew himſelf with his Diſciples to the Sea Side being follow'd by innumerable Multitudes not only from *Galilee*, but from *Jeruſalem*, the Provinces of *Judæa* and *Idumæa*, and all the Country about *Jordan*, as far as the Mediterranean Sea, to the Coaſts of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, who came in Throngs from all theſe Places to hear him, and to be cur'd of their Diſtempers: Inſomuch that he order'd his Diſciples to wait with a ſmall Veſſel at the Shore, that he might not be too much incommoded with them. As the Multitudes of diſeaſed Perſons preſs'd to touch him, ſo he was ready to afford them Relief, curing all their Diſtempers, and diſpoſſeſſing all the impure Spirits, who falling proſtrate before him, loudly proclaim'd him *the Son of God*. But our Lord with great Humility commanded their Silence in that Point; accompliſhing, as *St Matthew* obſerves, theſe Words of *Iſaiah*, *Obſerve my Servant whom I have choſen, my Beloved in whom my Soul is delighted: I will inſpire him, and he ſhall proclaim Juſtice to the Gentiles. He ſhall not be tumultuous, nor noiſy, nor ſhall his Voice be heard in the Streets. He ſhall not break the braiſed Reed,*

nor quench the smoking Flax, till he renders Judgment triumphant: And the Gentiles shall trust in his Name. All which truly represented the quiet, humble and meek Temper of the *Messiah*.

II. Above a Year and a Quarter after our Lord's Baptism, and above four Months after his most solemn Entrance upon his Ministry, and the Imprisonment of *John*, he resolv'd to make a publick Election of some particular Persons above all the rest, for more special Ends and Employments; both to be Witnesses of all his Actions and Discourses, and after his Departure out of the World to be his Vicegerents upon Earth, Founders of his Church, and Propagators of his Gospel. In order to which great Design, our Lord withdrew himself to a solitary Mountain, not many Miles from *Capernaum*, and commonly call'd the *Mount of Christ*, where he continued all Night in his solemn Addresses to Heaven for Success in this important Work; herein leaving an excellent Example to the Governors of his Church, how to proceed in Matters of the like Importance. The next Morning, out of the great Number of his Disciples, he made Choice of twelve Persons, according to the Number of the Patriarchs and Tribes of *Israel*; whom by a Prolepsis he call'd by the Name of **APOSTLES**; which imports a *special Messenger*, or *Ambassador*; and was an Honour the greatest that ever our Saviour conferr'd upon Man, and attended with the noblest Privileges.

Mark 3.
13--19.
Luke 6.
12--19.

This Election was made about the Time of the Feast of *Pentecost*; at which Time the Law was promulgated to the *Israelites* on *Mount Sinai*: And the Persons elected were these following. 1. *Simon* the Son of *Jonah*, whom *Jesus* nam'd *Peter*, a Fisher-Man of *Bethsaida*, who after his Marriage became an Inhabitant of *Capernaum*. He is generally acknowledg'd to be the eldest of all the Apostles, and at least ten Years older than our Lord himself; and his Age and Gravity may have caus'd both Sacred and Ecclesiastical Histories to give him a Precedency, tho' not a Superiority in the College of the Apostles. 2. *Andrew*, a younger Brother of *Peter's*, of the same Town and Employment, and formerly a Disciple to *John Baptist*, as *Peter* is reasonably suppos'd to have been. 3. *James*, commonly call'd *James the Great*, Son to *Zebedee* and *Salome*, an Inhabitant of *Bethsaida*, a Fisher-Man, and a Partner with *Peter* and *Andrew*, but suppos'd to exceed them in worldly Abilities, as having several Servants to assist him

in his Trade. 4. *John*, younger Brother to *James*, and much the youngest of all the Apostles, Fisher-Man and Partner with his Brother, and Disciple to the Baptist. These two were in some Degree related to our Saviour, and were by him firnam'd *Boanerges*, or the *Sons of Thunder*, upon the Account of their brave and resolute Tempers. 5. *Philip*, also an Inhabitant of *Bethsaida*; a Fisher-Man, and marry'd as is believed, who had the Honour of being first call'd by our Saviour. 6. *Bartholomew*, most probably the same with *Nathaniel* formerly mention'd; *Bar-Tholomeus* signifying only the Son of *Tholomeus*; an Inhabitant of *Cana* in *Galilee*, and suppos'd to have had some Skill in the *Jewish* Law. 7. *Matthew*, call'd also *Levi*, Son to one *Alpheus*, a rich *Publican* of *Capernaum*, but said to have been born at *Nazareth*, the Place of our Lord's Education. 8. *Thomas* call'd also *Didymus*, which in the *Syriack* signifies a *Twin*, a *Galilean* of mean Parents, who, as is reported, brought him up to the Fishing Trade. 9. *James* commonly distinguish'd by the Name of *James the less*, the Son of *Alpheus* or *Cleophas* and *Mary*, Cousin German, if not Sister to the Blessed Virgin; upon which Account, according to the *Jewish* Custom, he is often call'd the Brother of our Lord. 10. *Simon*, distinguish'd from *Simon-Peter* by the Title *Cananite*, from *Cana* the suppos'd Place of his Birth, and *Zealot*, from the Sect he was of. Whether he was that *Simon*, who was Brother to *James the less*, is very uncertain. 11. *Judas*, most commonly call'd *Jude*, and sometimes call'd *Thaddæus* and *Lebbæus*, a marry'd Man, Brother to *James the less*, and Kinsman to our Lord. 12. *Judas Iscariot*, or a Man of *Kerioth*, an ancient Place in *Judea*, of whom we have no other Account, but only his having so justly the Title of *Traitor* given him.

Thus did our blessed Saviour begin as it were the Foundation of his Church, chusing Persons of the lowest Conditions to effect it, Persons who were mostly poor Fisher-Men, honest and illiterate, ignorant of what they were to do, and chiefly expecting temporal Power and Advantages. Yet these *Galileans*, the most despis'd Part of the most despis'd Nation the *Jews*, were the Men design'd to reform the Errors of a proud and wicked World, to confound the Wisdom of the Learned, and to prevail against all the Powers of the Mighty. Certainly if human Wisdom had been to manage this Affair, it wou'd have taken contrary Measures, and chosen out the profoundest *Rabbins*, the acutest Philosophers, and the most charming Orators, who by the Powers of Reason and Arts of Eloquence might have triumph'd

triumph'd over the Minds of Men, grapp'l'd with the Stubbornness of the *Jews*, and baffled the fine Notions and nice Speculations of the *Greeks* and *Romans*. But the Wisdom of God is infinitely beyond that of Man: And as our Saviour was pleas'd to make use of the meanest Instruments, so he also thought fit to chuse one whom he knew wou'd prove a Villain and a Traytor. Which not only shews, That the Efficacy of the Ministrations depends not upon the Person, but the Institution; but also, That it is not to be expected that *Christ's* Church on Earth shou'd ever be in a better Condition, as to the Worthiness of its external Members, than when he first founded it himself.

Our Lord having chose his twelve Apostles, descended to the Plain and cured innumerable Diseases among the Multitudes, and cast out many Devils, giving Relief to all who touch'd him, by Means of an extraordinary Virtue that proceeded from him. And finding greater Throngs and a vaster Auditory than ever he had before, he thought fit to give the most eminent Marks of his prophetick Office, and upon a Mountain in *Galilee* to deliver the Evangelical Law, as *Moses* had done the old upon a Mountain in the Wilderness; tho' *St. Luke* makes it uncertain whether it was upon a Mountain or in a Plain. This celebrated Discourse is however generally call'd the Sermon upon the Mount, beginning with pronouncing Blessings, as the most proper and comfortable Tenor of the Gospel, and to such Persons as the *Jews* and the World accounted miserable; as particularly, *To the Poor and Humble-minded, who shou'd inherit the Kingdom of God: To the pious Mourners, who shou'd be comforted: To the Meek-spirited, who shou'd possess the Earth: To such as hunger'd and thirsted after Righteousness, who should be satisfy'd: To the Kind and Merciful, who should obtain Mercy: To the Pure-hearted, who should see God: To the Peace-makers, who shou'd be named The Children of God: And lastly, to such as were persecuted upon the Account of Righteousness, who shou'd enjoy the Kingdom of Heaven.* Adding a particular Blessing to his Disciples, when the World shou'd hate, revile, separate, persecute, and scandalize them for his Sake: *That they ought to rejoice to see that Time, and be ravish'd with Joy; for their Rewards shou'd be great in Heaven; and that the Prophets of old had met with the like Persecution.* But Woes were denounc'd against the Rich, who had already receiv'd their Consolation: *Against the Full, who shou'd find Want: Against the Scoffers, who shou'd mourn and weep: And against themselves, when the World spoke well of them; as it hapned*

Matth. 5.

1--16.

Luke 6.

20--26.

to the false Prophets. For all his Followers were the very Salt and Seasoning of the Earth, and if that once became insipid, it was the most Worthless Thing in Nature; and also the Light of the World, which shou'd be as conspicuous as a City on a Hill, and not to be lighted up and put under a Bushel, but on a Candlestick, that it might be visible to the whole House. Therefore their Lights ought so to shine before Men, that they might see their good Actions, and glorifie their Father in Heaven.

Matth. 5.
17--48.
Luke 6.
27--36.

Next he proceeded to condemn the wretched Glosses and Interpretations which the Jews had made on the moral Law, first solemnly declaring, *That he came not to destroy, but to accomplish the Law in the utmost Extent; and that Heaven and Earth should sooner be dissolv'd, than one Title of the Law lose its Force.* Therefore whoever violated the least moral Precept, and taught others the same Doctrine, shou'd be as little in the Esteem of Heaven; but whoever observ'd those Precepts and taught them others, shou'd be great in the Esteem of Heaven. And since the Scribes and Pharisees had introduc'd such Corruptions in the Law, except Mens Righteousness exceeded theirs, they should never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Then proceeding to the Laws themselves, he expounded the true Meaning of several of them, which had been so corrupted by human Traditions, that they were not understood: As 1. The Law against Murder, which, as they said, made only the Actor liable to the Judgment of Death by the Sword. But he declar'd, *That this Law prohibited all Degrees of unjust Anger, of which God's Punishment of the lowest was answerable to their ordinary Punishment of Murder: That of the second Degree, as calling a Man Raca or Worthless Fellow, was answerable to the grand Sanhedrim's Judgment, Stoning: And the highest Degree, as pronouncing a Man Fool, or rather Reprobate, was answerable to their highest Punishment, the Fire in the Valley of Hinnom.* Therefore whosoever brought his Offering to the Altar, and remember'd that he had injur'd any Man, ought to go immediately and be reconcil'd to him, before he presum'd to offer it: And this out of Policy as well as Piety: For else he wou'd be before God like a Bankrupt to his Creditor, who for want of timely Composition with him, should be delivered over to the Judge and his Officers, and so to Prison; from whence he shou'd never be freed, 'till he had compleatly discharged the Debt. 2. The Law against Adultery, which, as they thought, only prohibited the gross Act: But he declar'd, *That whosoever gazed on a Woman with a lustful Desire, had actually committed Adultery with her before*

fore God. Therefore they ought to cut off all Occasions of Sin, and mortifie the Lusts of the Flesh, tho' they were as dear to them as a right Eye, or a right Hand: For it was better to be depriv'd of those Enjoyments here, than to be deprived of all Enjoyments in Hell hereafter. Declaring farther, That tho' they thought it lawful to put away their Wives, only upon exhibiting a Bill of Divorcement; yet whoever did put away his Wife, except for the Cause of Whoredom, caus'd her to be an Adultrous, and the Person who marry'd her an Adulterer. 3. The Law against Perjury, which, as they interpreted it, only prohibited false Swearing: But he declar'd, That it prohibited all common Swearing, not only by the Creator, but also the Creature; as by Heaven, by Earth, by Jerusalem, or by their own Head; for the first was God's Throne, the second his Footstool, the third his City, and the last that over which Man had no Power: Therefore in common Conversation they ought to use nothing but plain Affirmations and Denials; for whatsoever exceeded those, proceeded from evil Principles. 4. The Law for punishing Offenders with an Eye for an Eye, a Tooth for a Tooth, which, as they judg'd, allow'd all private and proportionable Revenge: But he commanded them to retaliate no private Injuries, and rather than revenge them, upon the receiving of one Blow, to take another; upon the Loss of their Coat, to give up their Cloak also; and upon their being press'd for one Mile, to go two; and such ordinary Injuries: Always shewing an extensive Charity and Readiness to help such as begged, and such as won'd borrow, without exacting upon such as had receiv'd their Goods, and dealing with others as they expected from them. 5. The Law of loving our Neighbours, to which they had falsly added, That they should hate their Enemies: But he declar'd, That they ought to love their Enemies, to do good to, to bless and pray for, those very Persons who hated and prosecuted them; that they might be the true Sons of the God of Heaven, who dispens'd his Blessings of Sun and Rain upon the Bad and Good, the Just and Unjust: But if they lov'd, befriended, and did good only to their Friends and Brethren, and such as would return their Kindnesses; What Virtue and Reputation was that? How did they exceed the Publicans and Sinners? Therefore in their Bounty and Goodness, they ought to imitate the diffusive Perfection of their Father in Heaven.

Our Lord having thus shewn the true Extent of several Precepts, proceeded to explain and press three great Duties; Matth 6. 1--18.

1. Alms, which were not to be done in the Face of the World, like the hypocritical Pharisees, who proclaim'd theirs as it were with a Trumpet in the Synagogues and Streets, to gain the

Applauses of the People; which was all the Reward they had: But if they expected a Reward from Heaven, their Alms must be so secret, that one Hand shou'd not know what was done by the other; and their Father, the Seer of all Secrets, wou'd reward them publickly. 2. Prayer, in which they were to avoid the Custom of the Pharisees, who affected to pray openly in the Synagogues and Corners of the Streets, to be gaz'd on by the People, which was all the Reward they had: But their Prayers ought to be in their Closets, and in private; and particularly free from the vain Repetitions of the Pagans, who imagin'd that a Multiplicity of Words caus'd them to be heard, but their Father knew their Necessities before they ask'd him; therefore they should pray after this Manner: ' Our Father, ' which art in Heaven! Thy Name be sanctified: Thy King- ' dom come: Thy Will be accomplish'd, on Earth as it is in ' Heaven. Give us this Day our necessary Bread: And for- ' give us our Trespases as we forgive our Trespasers. And lead ' us not into Temptation: But deliver us from Evil. For the ' Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory are thine, for ever. ' Amen. As our Lord in this Form imitated the Jewish Form then in Use; so he intimates in the following Words, that forgiving of Trespases was the principal Part of the Prayer; namely, If they forgave Men their Trespases, their heavenly Father would forgive theirs; but if otherwise, they were to expect no Forgiveness. 3. Fasting, in which they were not to imitate the Pharisees, who with sower Countenances and disfigur'd Faces shew'd it to the World; which was all the Reward they had: But they should adorn their Heads and Faces in such a Manner, as their Fastings might not appear to Men, but to their Father who saw all Secrets, and would reward them publickly.

*Matth. 6.
19--34.*

After these Duties, he dissuaded them from all covetous Inclinations, advising them, *Not to heap up Treasure on Earth, which was liable to Corruption and Robbers, but an incorruptible Treasure in Heaven; for Mens Treasure would naturally draw their Hearts after it. And as the Eye was the Light and Director of the Body; so the Judgment was the Eye of the Soul; which if liberal, the whole would be illuminated; if covetous, darkned, and that to the highest Degree. For they could not serve two contrary Masters, God and Riches also. Therefore they ought not to be solicitous either about their Food, or their Raiment; since it was easier to give Food than Life, and to procure Raiment, than to produce a Body. As for Food, they might observe the Birds of the Air, who tho' they took no Pains for it, yet they receiv'd it from the Bounty of Heaven; and certainly They could not want it, who were so much more valuable*

valuable than the Birds; especially since they depended so much upon Providence, that they could not add one Cubit to their Stature. And as for Raiment, they might consider the Lilies in the Field, which without any Labour, exceeded the Splendor and Glory of King Solomon himself. And if God thus cloath'd the momentary and fading Products of the Field; how much more the nobler Parts of his Creation? Therefore they ought not to be solicitous about the common Necessaries of this Life, which was the Pagans Concern; nor be anxious about the following Day, for the Trouble of one Day was sufficient. But since their heavenly Father sufficiently knew all their Wants, if they first sought the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, all other Blessings and Necessaries should be given to them overplus.

After this he proceeded to several other Precepts and Instructions, as 1. To avoid all rash Censures and Judgments, and be ready to shew Acts of Kindness and Forgiveness; for they should receive the same Measure which they gave, and that with great Addition. Therefore they should beware of observing the small Faults of others, when they had greater themselves; nor could they with any Countenance bid their Brother pull the Mote out of his Eye, when they had a Beam in their own. 2. Not to give holy Things to Dogs, nor cast Pearls before Swine, lest the latter trampled them under their Feet, and the Dogs turn'd again and worry'd them. 3. To be instant and fervent in Prayer; and then they should not fail of Success from their heavenly Father. For no earthly Parents would give their Children Stones instead of Bread, nor Serpents instead of Fish; but tho' they who were niggardly and base, knew how to give them good Things; much more their heavenly Father knew how to be bountiful to those who faithfully ask'd him. Therefore for the more Certainty of Success, they ought to do the same to others, as they desir'd others should do to them; which was the Sum of the Law and the Prophets. 4. To strive to enter in at the Strait Gate; for the Gate was wide, and the Way spacious that led to Destruction, and great Numbers pass'd it; but the Gate was strait, and the Way narrow that led to eternal Life, and small Numbers found it. 5. To beware of false Prophets, who were ravenous Wolves, tho' in Sheeps Cloaths; but their Fruits were the certain Way to discover them: For as Grapes and Figs were known not to proceed from Thorns and Thistles; so good Fruit could not proceed from a corrupt Tree, nor yet corrupt Fruit from a good Tree: But now every Tree that bore not good Fruit, should be hewn down, and consum'd in the Fire. Therefore not every one who cry'd Lord, Lord! should enter the

Matth.

1--23.

Luke 6.

37--46.

Kingdom of Heaven, but such as rightly perform'd the Will of Heaven. For many in the last Day should cry to him, Lord, Lord, have we not prophecy'd, ejected Devils, and wrought many Miracles in thy Name? But he would declare to them, That he never knew them, but command them to depart from him, as Workers of Iniquity.

Matth. 7.
24--29.
Luke 6.
47--49.

Then he concluded his admirable Sermon with this important Exhortation: *Whoever hears these Discourses of mine, and practically observes them, shall be compar'd to a wise understanding Man, who laid a deep Foundation of his House upon a Rock; so that when great Rains, Floods and Storms beat violently upon it, it stood unmov'd; being so firmly founded: But every Hearer of these Discourses, who do's not practise them, shall be compar'd to an ignorant foolish Person, who without a Foundation built his House upon the Sand; so that when the Rains, Flood and Storms came upon it, it immediately fell down, and the Fall of it was great and terrible. All this Sermon was deliver'd with such extraordinary Gravity and Majesty, that it caus'd the Amazement of the Multitudes: For, as St. Matthew observes, he taught them as one having Authority, and not as their usual Teachers, the Scribes.*

Luke 7.
1--10.
Matth. 8.
5--13.

Our Lord having given these wise and useful Instructions, return'd to his own City *Capernaum*, where was a *Centurion*, a Roman Officer and Captain of a hundred Men; who hearing of his Fame, sent some of the chief of the City to him, humbly begging of him, *to come and cure his Servant, who was very dear to him, and just at the Point of Death with a Palsy.* These were very urgent with him, representing not only the Danger of the Servant, but the Worth of the Master, who tho' a *Gentile*, and but a Profelyte of the Gate, *had so lov'd the Jewish Nation, that he had built them a Synagogue.* Whereupon *Jesus* repaired with them towards the Place; and in his Way was met by more Friends from the *Centurion*, who with the profoundest Humility beg'd of him, *not to give himself so much trouble, for their Friend thought himself not worthy to receive him under his Roof, or so much as to meet him in Person; but if he pleas'd to speak the Word, he doubted not of its Power and Efficacy; since he himself, who was but a Subordinate Officer, and subject to the Commands of others, could be exactly obey'd by those Soldiers under him, who were ready to come, go and run at his Command.* *Jesus* was surpriz'd to find so much holy Confidence in a *Pagan*, and turning himself to his Followers, solemnly declar'd, *That he had not found so strong a Faith among the Israelites themselves: Adding withal, That many should*

should come from the farthest Part of the World, and have a Place in the Kingdom of Heaven with the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: While the Jews, the very Children of the Kingdom, should be excluded, and cast into the Place of the utmost Darkness, Outcries, and Despair. To this extraordinary Faith Jesus added the Cure, telling them, *It should be according to the Centurion's Belief*; and upon their Return, they found the Servant in perfect Health.

The next Day Jesus departed with his Disciples from *Ca-* Luke 7. 11--17.
pernaum, and in his Journey enter'd *Naim*, a City of *Galilee*, not far from *Nazareth*, with great Multitudes after him. At his Arrival at the City Gate, he was met by a Funeral Assembly, with a dead Corps, carry'd out upon a Bier, the only Son of a Widow, surrounded by a numerous Attendance. The Sight of this poor afflicted Widow mov'd the Compassion of our Lord, who bad her cease her Tears, and touching the Bier, and pronouncing these Words, *Young Man, I command thee to arise*; the dead Person reviv'd, sat up, and spoke, and was deliver'd sound to his Mother. This was the first Person that our Saviour rais'd from the Dead; which was a Thing so wonderful and surprizing, that it caus'd a great Terror to the whole Multitude, who glorifying God, declar'd, *That a mighty Prophet was sprung up among them, and that God had visited his People*: And the Fame of it was spread throughout the whole Country of *Judaea*, and the neighbouring Provinces.

III. Our Lord's Fame daily encreasing, and *John Bap-* Matth. II. 2--6.
ptist in *Macherus* Castle, being inform'd, of his great Miracles, after five Months Imprisonment, he sent two of his Disciples to *Jesus*, enquiring of him, *whether he was really the Messiah, or whether they were to expect another?* Designing by this the full Confirmation of his Disciples Faith; and perhaps not without some Expectation of being himself freed by his miraculous Power. Our Lord instead of giving a direct Answer to their Question, wrought many Miracles in their Presence, and then order'd them *to go and inform their Master what they had heard and seen*; particularly, *the Blind saw, the Lame walked, the Lepers were cleans'd, the Deaf heard, the Dead were rais'd, and the Poor had the Gospel preach'd to them*: Pronouncing a Blessing to all such as were not scandaliz'd at his mean Condition in this World. Luke 7. 18--23.

At the Departure of these Messengers, *Jesus* continu'd Matth. II. 7--30.
his Discourse concerning *John* to the Multitudes then pre- Luke 7. sent, 24--35.

sent, demanding of them *Why they in such Throngs went to the Desert? Was it to see some little Trifle; or to see a Man adorn'd with all the Marks of Splendor and Delicacy; or rather to see a Prophet? Adding withal, That he was more than a Prophet, being the very Person foretold by the Prophets; and there call'd the Messenger of God to prepare his Ways before him: Solemnly declaring, That there had not been a greater Prophet born of a Woman than he; yet the meanest evangelical Minister, in respect of the Clearness and Perfection of the Doctrine, exceeded him. From the Beginning of his Preaching, the Kingdom of Heaven was press'd into, and as it were invaded by the ordinary Persons and Publicans, who receiv'd his Baptism; but the proud Scribes and Pharisees, who pretended most Right to the Kingdom, had rejected his Baptism and the Counsel of God. All the Prophets and the Law did point out the Messiah 'till John; but he did it more illustriously, and was the very Elias, who was to come; therefore they ought to acknowledge him. And being deeply concern'd for the Blindness and Hardness of their Hearts, he compar'd them to those stubborn and perverse Children, who playing in the Market, would not answer their Companions either when they pip'd merrily, or sung mournfully to them. For when John appear'd with great Austerities, they declar'd him Mad and Possess'd; but when he himself came with a more open and free Conversation, they pronounc'd him a Glutton and a Sot, and a Friend to Publicans and Villains: But the Wisdom of God would be justify'd by her Genuine Offspring. From thence he took Occasion to upbraid the Obstinacy and Impenitency of several Cities where he had wrought Miracles; particularly denouncing Woes against Chorazin and Bethsaida, more especially his proud City Capernaum, which from its Exaltation to Heaven, should be brought down to Hell; declaring, That if the Pagan Cities, Tyre and Sidon, had seen the Miracles that were in Chorazin and Bethsaida, they would have repented even in Sackcloth and Ashes: And if that abominable Place Sodom had seen the Miracles that were wrought in Capernaum, it would have stood 'till that Day. Therefore in the dreadful Day of Judgment, it should be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, and even for Sodom it self, than for those impenitent Cities. But since these Things were mysterious, he celebrated the Name of his Father, the Lord of Heaven and Earth; whose good Pleasure it was to conceal the Gospel-Salvation from the Worldly-Wise, and reveal it to unexperienc'd Infants: Declaring, That the Father had deliver'd all Things into his Hands; who only knew the Son throughly:*

Nor

Nor cou'd any Man know the Father besides the Son, and he to whom the Son shou'd reveal him. Concluding his Discourse with these comfortable Expressions, Come to me, all you who labour under the Burthen of your Sins, and I will give you Rest: Take my Yoke upon you, and be taught by me, who am meek and humble-spirited, and your Souls shall find Refreshment: For my Yoke is pleasant, and my Burthen light. Alluding, as some think, to his former Trade of making Yokes and Ploughs.

Upon finishing his Discourse, a certain Pharisee call'd *Simon*, out of Curiosity, desired him to dine with him, which was readily granted. At the Table, a Woman of infamous Life, call'd *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom he had ejected seven impure Spirits, came trembling behind him, and with a Flood of Tears wash'd his Feet, wiped them with the Hair of her Head, kissed them, and anointed them with a most precious Ointment. Which Familiarity was a great offence to the Master of the House, who immediately concluded within himself, *That if Jesus had been a Prophet, he would have known her to have been a lewd Woman, and not have permitted her to touch him.* But Jesus knowing his Thoughts, and to rectifie his mistaken Notions, propos'd to him an Example of a certain Creditor, who had two Debtors, one owing him ten times as much as the other, but finding them unable to pay, he frankly forgave both their Debts: Demanding of this Pharisee, *Which of the two would have the greatest Love for his Creditor?* *Simon* answer'd him, *He suppos'd the greatest Debtor.* Which Answer being approv'd of by Jesus, he thus made the Application. *At my Entrance into your House you gave me no Water for my Feet, nor no Kiss, nor no Oil for my Head, according to the Customs of Hospitality; but this Woman has exceeded even those Customs, us'd her Tears instead of Water, bestow'd her Kiss upon my very Feet, and anointed them with rich Odors: Therefore her love was great, because her Sins that were forgiven her were great also; but of those who were less conscious of their Sins, the Love would be proportionable.* Upon which he made this noble Declaration to her, *That her Sins were forgiven her.* The Guests at the Table were inwardly offended at his pretending to forgive Sins; but our Lord contemning the private Murmurs of this proud Generation, bad the Women depart in Peace, for her Faith had sav'd her. It is very uncertain where this was transacted, whether in Galilee or Judæa: *Lightfoot* thinks in the latter, and at Bethany near Jerusalem: However we find him not long after in Galilee, go-
ing

Luke 7.
36--50.

Luke 8.
1--3.

ing through every City and Village, preaching the joyful Tidings of the Kingdom of God, being accompany'd not only with his twelve Apostles, but also with many pious Women, particulary *Mary Magdalene*, and *Joanna*, Wife to King *Herod's* Steward *Chuza*, with *Susanna*, and many others, who having been cured of several Diseases, out of Gratitude attended him, assisted him with their Purfes, and became part of his holy Colledge.

Matth. 12.

22--37.

Mark 3.

19--30.

After a few Months Progress, our Lord return'd again to his own City *Capernaum*, where in a short Time such Multitudes of People repaired to him, that neither he nor his Disciples could find Time to eat: which, when his Kindred heard, they went to rescue him, fearing he might be too much transported by his Ministry, and endanger'd by the Throng. At the same time he was presented with a miserable Spectacle, a poor Demoniack, depriv'd both of his Speech and Eye-Sight; but by his miraculous Power he soon restor'd him to both, to the great Astonishment of all the People, who immediately cry'd out, *Is not this the Son of David, or the Messiah?* But the proud *Pharisees* and Doctors of the Law, who came from *Jerusalem*, rather than acknowledge this Honour, most maliciously and impiously ascrib'd the Miracle to the Power of the Devil, and even to *Beelzebub* the worst of the Devils. Therefore our Lord, to vindicate himself, first urg'd, *That as every Kingdom, City or House must fall to the Ground, if it be divided against it self; so must Satan's Kingdom, if it was so far divided, as to lend Assistance against it self, and one Devil to cast out another.* Secondly, *If he ejected Devils by Beelzebub, by whom did their own Exorcists pretend to it? Therefore they were sufficient to condemn their ungrounded Malice.* But thirdly, *Since he did it by a Divine Power, it was evident that the Kingdom of God, or the Messiah was come amoag them: Or else how could Satan be thus master'd and pillag'd, but by one stronger than himself? And that he was an Enemy to Satan, their own Proverb testify'd, viz. He who was not for a Man was against him.* After this, he shew'd them the fatal Danger of their Malice, solemnly declaring, *That all other Sins and Blasphemies were of a pardonable Nature, but the Blasphemy against the Holy-Ghost was otherwise. That the Calumnies and Reflections that were made against his Person, were pardonable upon Repentance; but their blaspheming the Holy-Ghost, the clear Light of that Power by which he wrought his Miracles, should never be pardon'd, neither in this World, nor by Death it self; which, as they imagin'd, atton'd for all Blasphemies.* But since every good or bad Tree

was

was known by its Fruit, it was not to be expected that such a venomous Generation should utter any Thing that was good; for what Men spoke proceeded from the Plenitude or Repository of the Heart; and as that Treasure was good or evil, so were their Words. Declaring farther, That Men should give an Account at the Day of Judgment, for every evil Word they spoke; and that their Words should either clear or condemn them.

Notwithstanding the Scribes and Pharisees had sufficient Matth. 12. 38-50. Means of Conviction from our Saviour's Miracles; yet after this they impudently demanded of him some new Sign Mark 3. 31-35. or Miracle to evidence his Mission. But Jesus pronounc'd Luke 3. 19-21. them an impious and illegitimate Generation, and they should have no Sign for their Conviction, but only one for their Condemnation; namely that of Jonas, whose Deliverance from the Whale's Belly, after three Days Confinement, was an eminent Type of his Resurrection, after as long a Continuance of his Body in the Bowels of the Earth. And the Inhabitants of Nineveh, a Pagan City, and also the Queen of Sheba, should rise up in Judgment against this Generation, and condemn it; for the former repented at the Preaching of Jonas, and the latter took a vast Journey to partake of the Benefit of Solomon's Wisdom; but they refus'd to hearken to one far greater than either Jonas or Solomon. Therefore it should be with these impious People, as with a Man dispossest of an impure Demon, who having been cleans'd and reform'd, receives him again with seven other Spirits more wicked than the first, and so makes his Condition more wretched and deplorable than ever; Intimating and foretelling the dreadful Apostacies, as well as Corruptions of the Jewish Nation. In these Discourses he was interrupted by some who told him, That his Mother and his Kindred were without, desiring to speak with him; but he being dissatisfy'd with their unseasonable Pressing, to shew that those Relations were less than the Tyes of Duty and Religion, first ask'd, Who were his Mother and his Kindred? And then pointing to his Disciples, he declar'd, That they were his truest Relations, who heard the Word of God and practis'd it.

The same Day our Lord left the House, and for the Matth. 13. 1-9. greater Conveniency repaired to the Sea Shore; where being follow'd by the same Multitudes, to avoid the Throngs Mark 4. 1-9. he enter'd a Vessel, and taught them from thence. His Luke 3. 4-8. Preaching was now different from his former Way, yet very usual among the Jewish Nation, which was by way of Parables or obscure Similitudes, under which were hid mysterious

sterious Truths, bright enough to shew the Peoples Infidelity, tho' not to dispel their *Ægyptian* Darkness, which they had contracted by their habitual Obstinacy. 1. The Kingdom of Heaven was like a Sower of Corn, who scattering his Seed on several Sorts of Grounds, That which fell on the Path-Way, was devour'd by the Birds; That which fell among stony Places, for want of Mould and Depth of Earth sprung up suddenly, and upon the Sun's approach was scorch'd and wither'd away: That which fell among Thorns, was stifled by them; and that which fell upon good Ground, brought forth Fruit in Abundance, according to its Nature. 2. The Kingdom of Heaven was like a Man who sowed good Seed in his Field, but afterwards discover'd it to be mix'd with Tares, or Darnel, which his Enemy had sown in the Night; and tho' his Servants, when they saw it, desired to weed it up, yet he would not permit it, lest the Corn should be endanger'd by it, but ordered that both should grow up together till Harvest; and then the Reapers should bind the Darnel in Bundles to be burnt, and gather the Wheat into his Barn. 3. The Kingdom of Heaven was like a Grain of Mustard Seed sown in a Field, which was the smallest of all Seeds, yet when grown up, it was the largest of Herbs; and became a Tree sufficient for the Birds of the Air to lodge in its Branches. 4. The Kingdom of Heaven was like a little Leaven, which being put into a large Quantity of Meal, it leaven'd the whole Mass. These and many other Things did our Lord deliver to the Multitude, exciting their Attention, all in Parables, and nothing without; accomplishing, as St. Matthew observes, the Words of the Psalmist; ' I will open my Mouth in Parables, and publish Secrets which were so from the Creation of the World.

Matt. 13.
10--23.
Mark 4.
10--29.
Luke 8.
3--19.

Upon our Lord's Retirement from the Multitudes, his Disciples desir'd to be inform'd why he deliver'd himself to the People in Parables and Similitudes: He told them, That to them it was given to know the Mysteries of Heaven, but it was not to those obstinate People; for whosoever improv'd what he had, should receive in abundance; but he who did not so, should lose all. Therefore he spoke to them in obscure Parables, because they saw and did not perceive, heard and would not understand; therein verifying *Isaiah's* Prophecy, ' You shall hear with your Ears and not understand, and see with your Eyes and not perceive: For the Hearts of this People are grown stupid, their Ears deafned, and their Eyes clos'd; lest their Eyes should direct them, their Ears teach them, their Hearts instruct them, and convert them,

and

‘ and I shou’d heal them. But Their Eyes and Ears were blessed, for They both saw and heard; and had the Happiness of hearing and seeing what many great Prophets and holy Men earnestly long’d for without obtaining. Then he thus explain’d to them the Parable of the Sower: *The Seed is the Word of God, and that which fell on the Path-Way, relates to him who hears the Word, but for want of due Attention, Satan comes and catches what was sown in his Heart. That which fell among stony Places, relates to him who hears the Word, and immediately receives it with Joy; but for want of Root, continues but for a time, being discourag’d by the first Afflictions and Persecutions that arise upon its Account. That sown among Thorns relates to him, who after hearing the Word, is incumber’d with the Cares and Pleasures of the World, and the deceitfulness of Riches, which stifle it, and render it fruitless. But that sown in good Ground relates to him who hears the Word with Patience, and with an honest and good Heart, producing Fruit according to the utmost of his Abilities. It is not usual, added he, for People to light up a Candle and put it under a Bushel, but in a Place where it is most beneficial; so no advantageous Secret shou’d lie hid, but shou’d come abroad, and be made manifest. They ought therefore to take care how, and what they heard; for the Improver shou’d receive great Advantage, but the other lose all. And it was in the Kingdom of Heaven just as with a Man, who having once sown his Seed, it grew up gradually he knew not how; first the Blade, then the Ear, and then the full Corn, ’till it was fit for the Sickle.*

Upon this, his Disciples also desir’d him to explain to them the Parable of the Darnel in the Field, which he did in these Matth. 13, 36--52. Words: *The Sower of the good Seed is the Son of God, the Field is the World, the good Seed the Children of the Kingdom, the Darnel the Children of Darkness, the Enemy sowing it the Devil, the Harvest the End of the World, and the Reapers the Angels. Therefore as the Darnel is gather’d up, and burnt in the Fire; so at the End of the World shall the Son of God send his Angels, and gather out all wicked Offenders, and cast them into a fiery Furnace of Lamentations and Despair: while the Righteous shall be glorious as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father. After this he added three other Parables. 1. The Kingdom of Heaven was like a vast Treasure hid in a Field, which being found by a Man, he conceal’d it, and for Joy of the Discovery, sold all he was worth, to purchase that Field. 2. It was like a Merchant trading for rich Pearls, who finding one of extraordinary Value, sold all his other Stock, and bought that. 3. It was like a remarkable Net catching all kinds*

kinds of Fish; which being full, and drawn ashore, the good were gather'd into Vessels, and the bad cast away. Just so it shou'd be at the End of the World, when the Angels shou'd come forth, and separate the Wicked from among the Just, and cast them into a fiery Furnace of Lamentations and Despair. Last of all he ask'd them, *Whether they understood all these Things*; and upon their answering in the Affirmative, he told them, *That every Gospel-Teacher ought to resemble a well-furnish'd House-Keeper, who brings all things out of his Repository, both old and new, according to the Occasions of his Guests.*

IV.

Our Blessed Saviour continu'd but a short Time in Capernaum, before he resolv'd to cross the Lake, or Sea of Galilee, into the Dominions of Philip the Tetrarch, and order'd his Disciples to prepare a Vessel accordingly, it being now about Michaelmas time. As he was ready to take Shipping, a certain Scribe, hoping to gain some great Advantage of Reputation, came to him, and told him, *That he was ready to follow him whithersoever he went.* But Jesus soon gave him a Check, by letting him know, *That he was to expect no temporal Profit from him, who wanted even the Conveniences of Foxes and Birds, who had their Holes and their Nests, while he had no Place to lay his Head.* But tho' he rejected the proud Scribe, he treated one of his Disciples after another Manner, commanding him to follow him; but this Disciple desiring Leave to bury a dead Father first, he made answer, *Let the Dead, those who seek no Immortality, bury their Dead; but do you go and preach the Kingdom of God.* To these St. Luke adds a third Person, who being desirous to follow Christ, begg'd to go and bid them first Adieu that were of his Family, and dispose of his Goods; but Jesus let him know, *That whosoever laid his Hand to the Plough, and look'd back, was unfit for the Kingdom of God.* Intimating, that as a Plough-Man cannot look back without damaging his Work; so a Follower of Christ cannot look back without hazarding his Salvation.

About the Evening Jesus embark'd for the other Shore, with his Disciples, who had sent away the Multitudes; but there being several other small Ships in the Port, part of them made use of them, and accompany'd him. Being under Sail, and weary'd with his Day's Service, or to try the Faith of his Disciples, he retir'd himself to the Stern of the Ship, and fell asleep. At which Time there arose a most terrible Storm, so violent and impetuous, that the whole Ship was almost swallow'd with the Waves, and the Men

in

Matth. 8.

18--22.

Luke 9.

57--62.

Matth. 8.

23--27.

Mark 4.

36--41.

Luke 8.

22--25.

in the most imminent Danger. Whereupon his Disciples in a great Consternation awoke him, and with a dismal Outcry call'd, *Lood, save us, or we perish!* Then blaming them for their Fears, and the Weakness of their Faith, he arose, and rebuk'd the Storm, and commanded the Waters to be still. Immediately the Elements obey'd the Words of their Creator, and there was a great Calm, and no less Wonder and reverential Dread among his Disciples, and those in the other Ships, who were Partakers both of the Danger and Deliverance. And this being the first Miracle they had seen of this Kind, and having something in it very surprizing and astonishing, they cry'd out, *What sort of Man is this, to whom the very Winds and Seas are obedient!*

Our Lord the next Morning landed on the East Side of the Lake, in Philip's Dominions, and the Province of *Tracconitis*, in that Part of it call'd the Country of the *Gadarenes* or *Gergesenes*, the Relicts of one of the old *Canaanitish* Nations; a Country inhabited partly by *Jews*, and partly by *Gentiles*. Upon his first Arrival, two possessed Men grievously distracted, with some poor Rags about them, came running towards him, and fell at his Feet and adored him. Both were hideous Spectacles, but one much fiercer than the other, being only remember'd by *St. Mark* and *St. Luke*, who Day and Night made dismal Outcries, and cut his Flesh with sharp Stones; and tho' he had often been loaded with Fetters and Chains, he as often broke them in Pieces, ranging with his Companion among the Rocks and Tombs, and so furious and outrageous, that no Traveller durst pass that Way. Upon their Approach to *Jesus*, the Devils who spoke by their Mouths, cry'd out, *That he was the Son of the most high God, fearing that he came to torment them before their Time.* Our Lord ask'd the most furious Man, what was his Name; who answer'd him *Legion*, because such a Multitude of Devils had possess'd him: And since it is one of the greatest Torments for these infernal Spirits to be restrain'd from doing Mischief to Men, they earnestly implor'd him, *if he cast them out of the possess'd Persons, not to send them into the Abyss, but to permit them to enter into an Herd of Swine feeding upon the Mountains not far off*, probably for the use of the *Roman Garrisons* and *Foreigners*. *Jesus*, partly to shew his own Authority, and the Greatness of the Deliverance, and partly to try the Faith of the *Gadarenes*, and perhaps to punish the Owners for their Contempt of the Law, readily permitted them to enter the Swine, which was accompany'd with surprizing Effects; for the whole Herd ran furiously upon the Rocks,

Matth. 8.
28--34.
Mark 5.
1--20.
Luke 8.
26--39.

and cast themselves head-long into the Lake, where no less than two thousand were drowned, and utterly lost. The Devils immediately betray'd their malicious Designs of preventing the *Gadarenes* Conversion: For the Keepers of the Swine suddenly fled, and in a great Fright reported this strange Accident in the City *Gadara*, and the neighbouring Places; which brought great Multitudes to the Place, where they found the Man who was freed from the Legion of Devils, sitting at the Feet of *Jesus*, cloath'd, and perfectly found in Mind, to their great Fear and Amazement. And the whole City of *Gadara*, which consisted of *Jews*, *Greeks* and *Syrians*, went out to meet *Jesus*, looking upon him with a strange kind of Terror: For tho' they had a great Veneration for him who had so much Power over the Devils, yet they fear'd the Man who had driven their Swine into the Sea; and therefore, either thinking themselves unworthy of his Presence, or fearing farther Damages, they besought him to depart out of their Country. The Man who had receiv'd the greatest Deliverance was so sensible of the signal Mercy of God, that he begg'd of *Jesus* to suffer him to go along with him; but he order'd him to return to his House and his Friends, and to declare and publish what wonderful Things the Lord had done for him; which he did in many Places to the Wonder of all Men. By following *Christ*, he wou'd only have benefitted himself; but by publishing this Miracle to others, he might be a Means to cause them to believe in the *Messiah*.

Matth. 9.
1--17.
Mark 2.
15--22.
Luke 5.
29--38.]

Our Lord embarking again, cross'd the Lake, and return'd to his own City *Capernaum*, where the People were ready to receive him with great Joy and Satisfaction. And at the same Time, or shortly after, his Apostle *Matthew* made a great Feast for him; and among the Disciples were also many of his former Profession, *Publicans*, and several others of no strict Life and Manners. The Sight of which mix'd Company was a great Offence to the nice *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who murmur'd extremly, and demanded of the Disciples, *Why their Master wou'd offer to eat and drink with such scandalous Persons as Publicans and known Sinners?* But *Jesus* soon let them know, *That as the Healthful needed no Physician, so he came not to assist such, but Sinners who needed his Help: Therefore they ought to learn the Meaning of Hosea's Words, 'I chuse Mercy before Sacrifice, and they wou'd soon know that Charity toward Mens Souls was preferable to Sacrifice and Ceremonies.* But silenc'd by these Words, they join'd with some of *John's* Disciples then present, and maliciously demanded of him, *Why his Disciples ob-*
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serv'd no Fasts, when they themselves and the Disciples of John observ'd many? Whereupon our Lord told them, *That it was not to be expected that the special Friends of the Bridegroom should fast and afflict themselves, while they had his Company; but the Time shou'd come when the Bridegroom shou'd be remov'd, and then they shou'd have Reason to fast and mourn. Besides it wou'd be as preposterous to impose rigorous Austerities upon his Disciples, who were but Novices in Religion, as to sew a new piece of rough Cloth upon a rotten Garment, which tears it in pieces; or to put new Wine into old Wine-Bags, which breaks the Bags and destroys the Liquor.* Adding farther, *That such as have been long us'd to old Wine, cou'd not be immediately brought to drink new.*

This Discourse and Apology of our Lord's was interrupted by the coming in of *Fairus*, the chief Ruler of the Synagogue, who with the greatest Marks of Sorrow, fell prostrate at his Feet, humbly begging of him to come to his House and lay his Hands upon an only Daughter of his, about twelve Years of Age, and just ready to expire; but his Presence wou'd certainly recover her. *Jesus* being ready to assist all Believers and afflicted Persons, without Delay follow'd him, being accompany'd with his Disciples, and great Throngs of People, who press'd forwards to be Spectators of the Cure: Among whom was a certain Woman who was tormented with an unnatural Flux of Blood for twelve Years together, and had spent her whole Estate upon Physicians, but without any Relief; yet so strong and noble was her Faith, that she was certain of a Cure, if she cou'd get to touch but the Hem of his Garment: Which she did, and found her self perfectly sound. *Jesus*, to whom Secrecy it self was open and known, immediately turn'd himself about in the Throng, and demanded *who touch'd him?* On the other side *Peter* admir'd at this Question, when he was press'd and crowded by the Multitudes; but *Jesus* persisted in the Enquiry, declaring, *That some one had touch'd him, because he perceiv'd Virtue was gone out of him;* till the Woman with great Fear and Trembling, because it was unlawful for unclean Persons to touch others, discover'd before the People both the Cause, and miraculous Effects of her touching him. But our Lord was so far from rebuking her that he call'd her *Daughter*, applauded her Faith, and attributed her Cure to the Strength of that. *St. Ambrose* supposes this Woman to have been *Martha*, Sister to *Lazarus*; but *Eusebius* reports her to have been an Inhabitant of *Cesarea Philippi*, who out of Gratitude erected a brazen Statue of our Lord before her Door, and another of her

Matth. 9^a

18--22.

Mark 5^a

22--34-

Luke 8-

41--48^a

own prostrate at his Feet: But this and the rest of the Story has been often doubted.

Matth. 9.

23--26.

Mark 5.

35--43.

Mark I.

49--56.

During this Action, the Delay prov'd fatal to *Fairus*, as he imagin'd; for a Message was brought to him, *That his Daughter was really dead, and it was in vain to trouble Jesus any farther*; conceiving, that tho' he could cure Diseases, yet none could recover Life. But *Jesus* still bad *Fairus* fear nothing, if he did but believe, *she shou'd be restor'd*: And approaching the House, they found the Musicians and Mourners already come, who were deploring her Death with mournful Tunes and loud Lamentations, according to the Custom of those Times. *Jesus* desired them to cease their funeral Ceremonies, for the Girl was not dead, but only asleep; but they derided him, knowing she was dead, and not knowing, that with him there was no Difference between Death, and a common Sleep. Then chusing only *Peter*, *James* and *John*, a Triumvirate which he generally us'd upon extraordinary Occasions; and taking also the Girl's Father and Mother, he dismiss'd the rest of the Company, and enter'd the Chamber where the Corps lay. And taking her by the Hand, he commanded her to arise; by which powerful Words he restor'd her to Life, and she immediately rose up, and walked about the Room to the exceeding Amazement of her Parents, whom he order'd to give her something to eat. This was the second Person whom our Lord rais'd from the Dead; which still increas'd his Fame throughout all the Land: Yet at the same Time he wrought it in Secret, and strictly commanded the Silence of her Parents; and this either because *Capernaum* had so much forfeited the Benefit of his Revelations, or because he wou'd not too much hasten the Effects of the incurable Malice of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*.

Matth. 9.

27--34.

Our Lord returning from the House of *Fairus*, was follow'd in the Streets by two poor blind Men, who cry'd after him, *O Son of David have Mercy on us!* a true Acknowledgment of his Person. *Jesus* seem'd to take no Notice of them 'till he enter'd his House; but the Men following him thither, because of the great Infidelity of the City, he first demanded of them, *Whether they believ'd he was able to restore their Sight?* Upon their answering in the Affirmative, and calling him *Lord*, he touch'd their Eyes, saying, *Be it according to your Faith*; and their Eyes were immediately open'd. And tho' he strictly charg'd them to conceal the Miracle, yet these over-joy'd Persons could not contain themselves from spreading it in all Parts. After the blind Men were gone, the People brought to him a dumb

dumb Man possess'd with a Demon; which being cast out by our Lord, the Person immediately recover'd his Speech to the great Astonishment of the Multitudes, who cry'd out, *such Things were never seen in Israel!* But the *Pharisees*, persisting in their old Malice, and unpardonable Blasphemy, declar'd as formerly, *That he ejected Devils by the Help of Beelzebub their Prince.*

Our Lord having made no long Stay in *Capernaum*, departed with his Disciples to some other Places in *Galilee*; and tho' about a Year before he had been impiously and barbarously treated by his own City *Nazareth*, yet he thought fit to offer them Mercy once again. And on a Sabbath Day he enter'd their Synagogue, and taught the Inhabitants; who tho' they were all astonish'd at his Abilities, were yet scandaliz'd at his Person, crying out, *From whence has this Man these extraordinary Faculties, and these wonderful Endowments? Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Joseph and Mary, the Kinsman of James and Joses, Simon and Jude? And do not we know all his Kindred and Relations? Then how comes he by such Wisdom and Knowledge?* And they were exceedingly offended at him. But *Jesus* inform'd them, *That a Prophet never wanted Honour, but in his own Country, among his own Kindred, and in his own House.* And being surpriz'd and deeply concerned for their great Infidelity, he refus'd to work any Miracle there, but only the Cure of a few Sick Persons, leaving them to the Judgment of their impenitent Hearts.

This concluded the second Year of our Saviour's publick Ministry; in which Year the City of *Rome* suffered much from the wicked Policy of the Emperor *Tiberius*, and the subtle Designs of his great Favourite *Sejanus*. The Emperor had formerly been freed from his suppos'd Rival *Germanicus*, and in the Year when he sent *Pilate* into *Judæa*, by the crafty Insinuations of *Sejanus*, he retired wholly from *Rome*, and abandon'd himself to all the Mischiefs that attend Jealousie and Cruelty, as well as Lust and Debauchery; which occasion'd *Sejanus* to attempt both his Life and Empire; but he was prevented and punished with the Death of himself and Family, in the same Year of which we are treating. His Death rather encreas'd the Emperor's jealous Temper; but as *Philo* observes, he soon understood that the Crimes which *Sejanus* had laid to the *Jews* Charge, were feigned by himself; and therefore he commanded the Governors of all Provinces, that in every Town they shou'd spare that Nation, except a very few who were guilty of enormous Crimes; and that they should alter none of their

Matth. 13.

54--58.

Mark 6.

1--6.

Tacitus.

Dion.

Customs, but shou'd look upon those People as Lovers of Peace, and their Customs as conducing to the publick Tranquility. So that the *Jews* were generally unmolested in this Emperor's latter Days; and *Tacitus* observes that in *Judæa* they had a long Peace under *Tiberius*; that is, they had no such publick Seditions, as cou'd give any great Disturbance to the *Roman* State. Which we ought to consider as one great Reason, and a fair Solution of that Question, why among the *Roman* Writers there is so remarkable a Silence of our Saviour's Actions: For they scarce ever publish'd any thing of Foreign Countries, but where they themselves were concern'd, or where it tended to their particular Honour and Fame.

The third Year of Christ's publick Ministry.

V. The Beginning of our Saviour's third Year of his publick Ministry was with a general Visitation of *Galilee*, and his repairing to most of the Cities and Villages of that Province; teaching in the publick Synagogues, preaching the Gospel, and curing all Kinds of Diseases and Distempers among the People. But at length observing the numerous Multitudes and Throngs of People, he was mov'd with a generous Pity and Compassion towards them, as being like so many Sheep languishing, and dispers'd for want of Shepherds to take Care of them. Upon which Account he sorrowfully told his Disciples, *That there was a plentiful Gospel-Harvest, but a Scarcity of Reapers; Therefore they shou'd beg of the Lord of the Harvest, to send Reapers into his Field.*

For this Reason our Lord thought fit to send forth his twelve Apostles, to preach the Gospel, and to work Miracles like himself, after they had been a considerable Time Learners and Hearers, and about eight Months after their solemn Election. He sent them out by Two and Two together, and probably as *St. Matthew* joins them; namely *Peter* and his Brother *Andrew*, *James* and his Brother *John*, *Philip* and *Bartholomew*, *Thomas* and *Matthew*, *James* and his Brother *Jude*, and *Simon* and *Judas Iscariot*. And that they might especially depend upon his Protection, he commanded them *Not to incurber themselves in their Journey with any Kind of Money, or Provision-Bags, nor with Multiplicity of Cloaths, Shoes, or Staves for Defence: for as they deserv'd, so they might expect a Subsistence from those to whom they preach'd.* Next they shou'd preach *That the*

King-

Kingdom of Heaven or the Messiah was at hand; to which they were to add all Kinds of Miracles, as curing the Sick, cleansing the Lepers, raising the Dead, and ejecting Devils; dispensing those Gifts as freely as they receiv'd them: But still they were to avoid going either to the Gentiles, or Samaritans. That in whatsoever City or Town they enter'd, they should inquire after the most worthy Person, and to avoid Levity, continue there 'till they left the Place. And in every House they enter'd, they should offer Peace to it by the Gospel; which if qualify'd, should receive the Blessing; but if otherwise, it should return to them again. If any refus'd to hearken to them, and rejected them, they at their Departure should shake off the Dust of their Feet, for a Testimony against their Infidelity: solemnly assuring them, That it should be more tolerable for the Inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment, than for that People.

Our Lord next proceeded to let them know the Consequences of their Ministry, especially after his leaving the World, That they were not to expect Honours, Riches, or temporal Advantages; but on the contrary, were sent into the World like Sheep, amidst ravenous Wolves; which ought to teach them the Waryness of Serpents, as well as Innocence of Doves: For they should be deliver'd up to the Jewish Consistories, scourg'd in their Synagogues, and afterwards brought before foreign Governors and Potentates for his Sake, to be Witnesses to both Jew and Gentile. That when they were thus deliver'd up, they should not be solicitous about what Answer to make; for in the same Moment their Answer should be given them from above, and by the Impulse of their Father's Spirit within them. That they should be hated by all Men for his Sake; and such Heats should be rais'd, that Fathers and Children, and Brothers and Relations, should persecute each other to Death; but such as persever'd to the last, should escape. Next he advis'd them in these Times of Persecution, to fly from one City to another; and that the Son of Man should come to bring Vengeance upon the Nation, before they had gone through all the Cities of Israel. And since the Jews had blasphemously call'd him Beelzebub, it was not to be expected that his Disciples, who were not above their Master, should meet with a better Treatment. Therefore they ought to be courageous, and fearlessly bring the Secret Truths of the Gospel to Light, and proclaim them as it were from the House Tops: Not regarding them who could kill the Body, and not the Soul; but only him who was able to destroy both Body and Soul in the Eternal Flames of Hell. That God's Providence extended to the Sparrows, which were of so small a Price,

Matth. 10.
16-42.

and to the very Hairs of their Heads; and therefore certainly much rather to them, who were more valuable than a Multitude of Sparrows: Therefore whosoever should acknowledge him before Men, he would acknowledge that Person before his Father in Heaven; but whosoever deny'd him before Men, should meet with the same Treatment from Heaven. Then he let them understand, That the first Effects of his Doctrine would not be Peace, but War; causing such Marks of Distinction, as would set Fathers and Sons, Mothers and Daughters, and nearest Relations at Variance. For he who lov'd either Father or Mother, Brother or Sister, more than him, or refus'd even the Cross it self, when his Gospel requir'd it, was unworthy of his Favour: And he who sought his Life in this Case, should utterly lose it; and he who lost it, for his Sake, should eternally find it. Lastly, for an Encouragement to them, he inform'd them, That whosoever receiv'd them, receiv'd both Him and his Father who sent him; and whosoever receiv'd a Prophet in the Name of a Prophet, and out of Regard to his Office, should be Partaker of the Prophet's Reward; and so likewise of a Righteous Man. And farther, whosoever should only give a Cup of cold Water to the least of his Disciples, for his Master's Sake, that Person should in no wise miss of his Reward.

Matth. 11.

1.

Mark 6.

12, 13.

Luke 9.

6.

Our Lord having thus given Commission to his Apostles, continu'd the Course of his Preaching and Ministry in Galilee: At the same Time, according to Order, the Apostles went into all Parts of Palestine inhabited by the Jews, which their Master call'd the lost Sheep of the House of Israel, Preaching the Gospel, and the Doctrine of Repentance as a Part of it, and working Miracles for its Confirmation. And in their miraculous Cures, St. Mark informs us that they us'd the outward Rite or Ceremony of Anointing with Oil, which seem'd to have been implicitly included in that Part of their Commission, Heal the sick. And this being a Symbol of that miraculous Power, as the greatest Criticks believe, S. James, Chap. 5. 14. expressly enjoin'd the Use of this Ceremony to be continu'd in the Church, as long as this extraordinary Gift of Healing should continue.

Matth. 14.

6--12.

Mark 6.

21--29.

A few Weeeks after the Apostles Departure from our Lord, King Herod on his Birth-Day made a splendid Entertainment for the Lords and chief Officers of his Dominions, at the strong Castle of Macherus, beyond Jordan; which produc'd the last and fatal Scene of John Baptist's Life, who had been Prisoner above a Year in the same Castle. At this Feast Herod was infinitely pleas'd with the Dancing of a young Lady, Daughter to his illegal Wife Herodias;

and

and in the Height of his Mirth and Jollity promis'd with the Addition of an Oath, to grant her whatsoever she demand- ed, tho' it amounted to half of his Dominions. Unwilling to lose so fair an Opportunity, she immediately consulted with her Mother what Favour to ask; who being prompted by the Height of Malice and Revenge, nam'd the Head of *John Baptist* to be brought in in a Charger: Which in all Halte was demanded of the King, in the Presence of the whole Company. This strange Request at first caus'd an exceeding Damp upon the King's Spirits; but recovering himself, out of a pretended Reverence to his Oath, and Respect to his Nobility then present, he sent an Executioner, who beheaded the holy Man, and brought his Head in a Charger to the young Lady, who deliver'd it to her Mother, to glut her Eyes with the Sight of it: A Cruelty unknown among the Barbarities of the worst of People, to mingle Banquetings with human Blood, and Mirth and Pleasure with the hideous Sight of Death. Thus dy'd the great Fore-runner of our Blessed Saviour, about two Years and three Months after his Entrance upon his publick Ministry, being about 35 Years of Age and eight Months; and the first that suffer'd upon the Account of the Gospel, tho' seldom call'd the first Martyr. *Josephus* himself gives him the Character 'of a Man endu'd with all Virtue, who ' exhorted the *Jews* to the Practice of Justice towards Men, ' and Piety towards God; and also to Baptism, which ' would become acceptable to God, if they renounc'd their ' Sins, and to the Cleanness of their Bodies, added the Purity of their Souls.

VI. *Herod* had now secur'd himself against the great Disturber of his unlawful Pleasures, yet the encreasing Fame of our Lord *Jesus* alarm'd him, and gave him new Fears and Jealousies. Some of his Courtiers believ'd it was *Elias*, or some other of the ancient Prophets come to visit the Nation; but *Herod's* guilty Conscience, notwithstanding his *Sadducaical* Principles, made him with some others suspect that it was *John* himself risen from the Dead; fearing perhaps that he would now revenge his Blood upon him. About the same Time our Lord's Apostles return'd from their several Journeys, and gave him an Account of all their Actions and Sermons; and *Jesus* hearing of *John's* Murder by his Disciples who bury'd the Body, and well knowing the Subtilty and Cruelty of *Herod*, order'd the Apostles to prepare a Vessel, and to cross the Sea of *Galilee* with him to a Desart near *Bethsaida*; where they might retire

Matth. 14.

1, 2, 13, 14.

Mark 6.

14-16.

30-34.

Luke 9.

7-11.

John 6.

1-4.

tire and rest themselves for a while; for the Multitudes were so numerous and pressing, that they had no Leisure so much as to eat. To this private Place *Jesus* was follow'd by great Numbers, many of whom ran after him on Foot by the Lake-Side from the Place where he took Shipping. Seeing their Zeal and Earnestness, he receiv'd them with a generous Compassion, like so many Sheep without a Shepherd; and ascending a Mountain with his Apostles, he taught them many Things concerning the Kingdom of God, and cur'd all their Sick.

Matth. 14.

15--23.

Mark 6.

38--46.

Luke 9.

12--17.

John 6.

5--17.

Towards the Evening his Apostles desired him, *since they were in a Place destitute of all Provisions, to dismiss the Multitudes, that they might furnish themselves in the neighbouring Towns and Villages.* But *Jesus* told them, *That the People needed not to depart, for they might provide them one Meal;* and viewing their Numbers, he ask'd *Philip*, who well knew the Country, *Where they should buy Bread for all the Company?* *Philip* considering the Number of the Guests, more than his hospitable Master's Power, betray'd the Weakness of his Faith, and told him, *That six Pounds worth of Bread was not sufficient for every Person to take a little.* Upon this our Lord enquired what Bread they had among them, and was answer'd by *Andrew*, *That there was a young Man who had five Barly Loaves, and two small Fishes; a most inconsiderable Quantity for such a Multitude.* But *Jesus* forthwith order'd them to be brought to him, commanding his Disciples to cause all the People to sit down upon the Grass in distinct Companies, by Hundreds and Fifties in Ranks. Being plac'd in this Order, to the Number of five thousand Men, besides Women and Children, he took the Loaves and the Fish, and begging a Blessing upon them from Heaven, distributed them to his Apostles, and they regularly to the Multitudes, 'till all were fully satisfy'd. Then ordering the remaining Fragments to be gather'd up, both of the Bread and Fish, they fill'd twelve Baskets with them, each Apostle one. The People seeing such a miraculous Multiplication, were exceedingly astonish'd, and looking upon *Jesus* as the *Messiah*, declared, *This was really the Prophet which should come into the World:* Upon which they took a Resolution to set him up for a King by main Force, and to become subject to him. But he well knowing the Mischief of such a Design, immediately constrain'd his Disciples, who probably were too ready to join in it, to take Shipping, and to pass by *Bethsaida* to *Capernaum*, whilst he himself dismiss'd the Multitudes, and retir'd himself to a neighbouring Mountain for Prayer and Contemplation; where he continu'd till after Midnight.

In

In the mean Time, the Ship where the Apostles were enter'd was tofs'd with a great Storm in the middle of the Lake; the Waves ran so high, and the Wind was so contrary, that when the Morning was approaching, they had not got much above a League on their Voyage. Our Lord, who knew under what Pains and Fears they labour'd, immediately convey'd himself upon the Surface of the Sea; and tho' he refus'd to gratifie the Devil, when tempted to throw himself from the Temple, yet he readily committed himself to a boisterous and unstable Element, which in effect became as firm as Brass to serve its Creator. His miraculous walking upon the Sea near the Vessel, added new Fears to the Disciples, who took him for some strange Apparition, perhaps such as might cause the Storm, and cry'd out with the Terror. But he soon allay'd their Fears, by assuring them, *That it was he himself*: Whereupon Peter being eagerly affected both with the Novelty and Wonder of it, desir'd, *That if it were He, he might have leave to come walking to Him upon the Water*; which being granted, he left the Vessel, and went towards his Master upon the Sea: But finding the Winds bear hard against him, and the Waves rise round him, he began to fear, notwithstanding the Word of our Saviour; and being ready to sink, he in a passionate Fright cry'd out, *Lord, save me!* Jesus, who might have justly left him to the Punishment of his Infidelity, mercifully reach'd out his Hand, and set him again upon the Top of the Water, with a gentle Reproof of the Weakness of his Faith, and his doubting his Power. Being both enter'd the Ship, the Winds, observing their Duty to their Sovereign, ceas'd; and he himself was more than Wind to the Vessel, for it was instantly carry'd to the design'd Place of Landing, *Capernaum*. All these Miracles open'd the Eyes of the Disciples, who, as St. *Mark* observes, had their Hearts hardned, and had not sufficiently consider'd that of the Loaves; and being exceedingly amaz'd, they acknowledg'd the Author of them to be the Son of God, and ador'd him under that Title. At the same Time great Numbers out of the Country brought their Sick and Diseas'd on their Beds, and laid them before him in the Streets; beseeching him to permit them only to touch the Border of his Garment; and as many as touch'd him, were miraculously cured.

Jesus having thus withdrawn himself, the Multitudes, whom he had miraculously fed, were in great Expectations of finding him the next Morning on the Mountain; for they had seen the Disciples take Shipping without their Master, and no other Vessel left for him. But finding him departed as well

Matth. 1.

24--36.

Mark 6.

47--56.

John 6.

17--21.

John 6.

22--59.

well

well as them, and being provided with Boats from *Tiberias*, they pass'd over with all Expedition to *Capernaum*, where they found him teaching in the Synagogue, and with no small Surprize demanded of him, *How he got thither!* Our Lord knowing their corrupt Expectations of temporal Advantages, solemnly declar'd, *That they sought him not for his miraculous Gifts, but for the Plenty of Bread he had bestow'd upon them: Therefore they ought not to endeavour for that perishing Food, but for such as nourish'd them to everlasting Life; which shou'd be given them by himself, who had receiv'd his Sanction from God the Father.* Then demanding of him, *What they shou'd do to obtain this spiritual Food?* he let them understand, that the Foundation was *to believe on Him whom God had sent.* Upon which, finding themselves check'd in their Expectations, they insolently demanded of him *some new Sign or Miracle to confirm their Belief: since Moses their Master had already done as much; namely, had miraculously fed them with Manna from Heaven.* But Jesus shew'd them the great Difference, by letting them know, *That Moses gave them not the true Bread from Heaven, but only his Father, whose Bread would enliven the World.* Upon their desiring to be constant Partakers of it, he told them, *That he himself was the Bread of Life; that his Followers and Believers shou'd neither hunger nor thirst. Yet tho' they had seen him, and been Witnesses of so many Miracles, they wou'd not believe in him; but by their Infidelity depriv'd themselves of the great Advantages, which shou'd be enjoy'd by all those whom his Father had given him, namely, a certain Acceptance here, and a glorious Resurrection to eternal Life.* The Jews being confounded in their Understandings, began openly to murmur against him, crying, *Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph, whose Father and Mother we know? Why then does he tell us that he came down from Heaven?* But Jesus was so far from mollifying, or recanting these Truths, that he confirm'd them more strongly; first shewing them, *That it was their natural Impotency, and the Want of his Father's Grace that hinder'd them from coming to him; proving from the Scriptures, ' that they should be taught of God, and all whom his Father had taught shou'd come to him, tho' his Father was not to be seen by their bodily Eyes.* Then he again assured them, *That he was the Bread of Life, which came down from Heaven; that the Manna in the Desert did not preserve the Eaters of it from dying; but his Flesh was the true living Bread, which gave Life and Immortality to all that eat of it.* These last Words made them more averse to him, and they disputed among themselves *how he could possibly give*

give them his Flesh to eat? Nevertheless he pursu'd his Discourse, and assured them, *That his Flesh and his Blood was not imaginary, but real Food and Nourishment; and that without eating the one, and drinking the other, they cou'd have no Life in them; and such as fed on him, shou'd be rais'd up at the last Day, and obtain everlasting Life.* Lastly, he declar'd to them what great Effects his Body shou'd work in the Souls of all such as were Partakers of it; namely, *There shou'd be such an Union, that they shou'd dwell in him, and he in them; and that they shou'd live by him, as he himself liv'd by his Father.*

These sublime Truths of our Lord's Descent from Heaven, and the Benefits of his Incarnation, so gravell'd the Intellectuals of his Auditory, that even his Disciples began to murmur, saying, *Who can hear so harsh a Doctrine!* But Jesus to satisfy them, intimated, *That his Ascension into Heaven wou'd be a Proof of his coming from thence; and that their feeding upon him was not after a carnal Manner, which wou'd prove insignificant, but after a spiritual and divine, which wou'd give Life and Vigour.* Declaring again, *That their Infidelity proceeded from their natural Impotency, and the Want of his Father's Grace preventing them.* Notwithstanding this many of his Disciples and Followers, perceiving now that he was not such a *Messiah* as they imagin'd, whose Kingdom should consist in external Grandeur and Plenty, wholly deserted him, and never follow'd him after. Among which Number, *Epiphanius* believes *St. Mark* the Evangelist was one, tho' afterwards seasonably recover'd by *St. Peter*. Upon this great Defection, Jesus with no little Concern demanded of the twelve Apostles, *Whether they wou'd go away also?* *Peter*, whose Faith was sound, tho' small, as general Speaker for the rest, answer'd him with a seeming Abhorrence of the others Apostacy, *Lord! to whom shall we go? Thou hast the Words of eternal Life: We believe, and are convinc'd, That thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God.* But notwithstanding this Confidence and frank Confession, he let them understand, that they were not all equally sound, for among the twelve that he had selected, one of them was a *Devil and Traytor*.

These Things were transacted immediately before the third Passover, after our Saviour's Baptism, as may be collected from *John 6. 4.* which Passover hapned on the 14th Day of our Month *April*, in the 18th Year of the Reign of *Tiberius* the Emperor, and one Year and seventeen Days after the last Passover.

C H A P. V.

From the Beginning of the third Passover after our Blessed Saviour's Baptism, to the Beginning of the fourth and last; when the only true Passover was slain.

Containing the Term of one Year, wanting 12 Days.

A. D.

32.
Tiber. $\frac{18}{19}$

I. **A**T this third Passover after our Saviour's Baptism, according to the most probable Accounts, *Pilate* took an Occasion to chastise that turbulent Sect of the *Galileans* or *Gaulanites*, mention'd *Luke* 13. 1. who coming with the Multitudes to *Jerusalem* to sacrifice, the Governor sent some Soldiers into the Temple, who put many of them to the Sword in the Time of their Offerings, and so mingled the Blood of them, with the Blood of their Sacrifices at the Altar. And about the same Time a Tower in the City, call'd *Siloam*, fell down, and slew eighteen Persons; which with the other Calamity, were the Marks and Forerunners of God's Indignation against an obstinate and impenitent People. It is not absolutely certain whether our Lord was at this Passover or not; but it is highly probable, that he who came to fulfil all Righteousness, would not neglect that great Ordinance. It is most generally believ'd that he was there, tho' secretly, and as it were incognito; but the wicked Designs of the *Jews* hastned his Return from thence; and *St. John* tells us, 'that he walked 'in *Galilee*, for he would not walk in *Jury*, because the '*Jews* sought to kill him, *John* 7. 1.

Matth. 15.

1--20.

Mark 7.

1--23.

Shortly after the Passover, some of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* were sent from *Jerusalem* to *Galilee*, to search into our Lord's Doctrine, and to be Spies upon his Actions, whether he was a true Observer of the Law of *Moses*, and their Rites. These Persons being present where He and his Disciples were to eat, observ'd that they sat down without washing their Hands, contrary to the common Custom of the *Jews*, in which Matter many were grown exceeding nice and scrupulous, even to the making the Washing of Cups, Pots, &c. a religious Concern. Therefore they were extremely offended at the Apostles, and demanded of their Master, *Why they presum'd to violate the Tradition of*
the

the Elders, by eating with unclean Hands; Whereupon Jesus sharply reprov'd these Spies for their hypocritical Pretences, as Isaiah said of them, 'for honouring God with their Mouths, and neglecting of him in their Hearts; for their vain Worship, and their teaching the Doctrines of Men, instead of the Commandments of Heaven. Then by way of Recrimination he told them, That they by their Traditions and Glosses had vacated the Laws of God, particularly that solemn One which commanded 'all Men to honour their Parents, and relieve them in their Wants, denouncing Death against such as curs'd them and neglected them: But according to their Traditions, 'If a Man did but say to his needy Parent, That that Portion which should have gone for his Relief was Dedicated to God, it was sufficient to exempt him from all farther Care and Duty. Then disdain- ing to hold any farther Discourse with them, he turn'd to the Multitude, and urging their Attention, inform'd them of this Truth, that there was no real Turpitude in what enter'd a Man's Mouth, but only in what proceeded from thence. Upon this his Disciples came to him and let him know, That the Pharisees were offended at his Doctrine. But he made Answer, That every Plant not planted by his heavenly Father, should be rooted up; and that they were to be despis'd as blind Leaders of blind People, with whom they should fall into the Ditch, and perish eternally together. Upon his retiring, the Disciples, as yet unsatisfy'd, desir'd him to explain what he had said to the People. Jesus reprehending their weak Understandings, told them, that whatsoever a Man eat could not affect his Mind, the only Seat of Defilements, but pass'd through the Stomach, and was evacuated in course; but that what came out of the Heart was premeditated and voluntary, such as evil Thoughts, Adulteries, Fornications, Murthers, Thefts, Covetousness, Pride, Blasphemies, and the like: That these were real Defilements, and not eating with unclean Hands, which was a mere outward Rite and Ceremony.

Shortly after our Lord retired to the North-Western Parts of Galilee into the Limits of Phœnicia, and the Coasts of Tyre and Sidon; where entring into a House, he endeavour'd to conceal himself; but he was soon discover'd by a Pagan Woman, a Grecian by Birth, but a Phœnician by Habitation, therefore by St. Matthew call'd a Woman of Canaan, because Phœnicia was the ancient Seat of the Canaanites properly so call'd. This Woman finding him out, call'd him Lord, and Son of David; begging his Pity for a poor

Matth. 15.

21--28.

Mark 7.

24--30.

poor Daughter of hers, grievously tormented with a Demon. Jesus at first gave her no Answer; but when his Disciples desired him to free them from her troublesom Cries and Importunities, by granting her Request, he told them, *That his Mission was principally to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel.* But the Woman not discourag'd by his Coldness, but rather emboldned, threw her self at his Feet and ador'd him, crying, *Lord, help me!* Upon which our Lord seem'd to parly with her; telling her, *That the Children, the Jews, ought first to be filled, and that it was not fit to take their Bread and cast it to the Dogs.* The Woman sensible of her own, and her Nation's Unworthiness, readily reply'd, *That the Dogs however might reasonably be permitted to eat the Crumbs that fell from their Master's Table.* Jesus, highly pleas'd with so much Reliance and Humility from a Heathen, greatly applauded the Strength of her Faith, telling her that he had granted her Petition; and at her Return to her House, she found her Daughter laid upon her Bed, and perfectly cured.

Mark 7.

31--37.

Matth. 15.

29--31.

From these Retirements Jesus pass'd Eastward into *Decapolis*, a Region chiefly within the Bounds of *Galilee* and *Traconitis*, consisting of ten noted Cities, mostly inhabited by *Gentiles*; and from thence to the Sea of *Galilee*, where was brought to him a miserable Object, a Man both deaf and dumb, whom he was desired to lay his Hand upon. Our Lord taking him from the Throngs that were about him, and using as it were natural Means, put his Fingers in his Ears, and some of his Spittle upon his Tongue: Then lifting up his Eyes to Heaven, with a deep Sigh, he cry'd, *Be open'd and unloos'd;* and immediately his natural Faculties were restor'd, so that he heard and spoke plain. Jesus forbad those who had been Witnesses of this Miraculous Cure, to divulge it to any Person; but the more he charg'd them, the more they proclaim'd it, and in their Astonishment declared, *He had done all things perfectly, made the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak.*

Matth. 15.

31--39.

Mark 8.

1--10.

This Miracle was succeeded by many others, for upon his repairing to a Mountain, the Multitudes brought great Numbers of Persons troubled with all kinds of Lameness and Distempers, and laid them at the Feet of this heavenly Physician; who, as in many other Places, mercifully cured them all: Insomuch that they glorify'd God for what they saw, and could not but follow him, who had confirm'd his saving Doctrine with so many Miracles. Their Readiness to attend him had made them unmindful of their bodily

Food;

Food; so that when *Jesus* was ready to dismiss them, he told his Disciples, *that he could not but pity these People, who had now been with him three Days, and had nothing to eat: That therefore he would not send them home fasting, lest they should faint by the Way, for that several had a long Journey to go.* His Disciples, forgetting his former Miracle of the Loaves, ask'd How they could make sufficient Provision for such a Multitude, in a desert Place: But he only enquir'd what Provision they had; and being told seven Loaves and a few small Fishes, he order'd all the People to sit down upon the Ground; and taking the Bread and Fish, he blessed them, and distributed them to his Disciples, and they to the People, 'till all were fully satisfy'd. And tho' there were four thousand Men, besides Women and Children, yet the remaining Fragments filled seven Baskets. And this, with one formerly mention'd, were the only Miracles of this Nature which our Saviour is recorded to have wrought.

Our Lord having dismiss'd the Multitudes, embark'd with his Disciples, and landed on the South-East Parts of the Lake, on the Coast of *Dalmanutha* or *Magdala*; where the *Pharisees* joyning with their Enemies the *Sadducees*, again impudently demanded of him some new Sign or Miracle from Heaven. But instead of satisfying those obstinate and conceited People, he severely reprov'd them, for *that being so quick-sighted in foretelling the Fairness and Foulness of the Weather by the Face of the Skies, they were yet so blinded as not to perceive the manifest Signs of the Messiah's Arrival.* Then deeply sighing, he returned them the same Answer which he had formerly given to the like Demand, namely, *that such an impious and illegitimate Generation should have no other Sign, but that of the Prophet Jonas.* Upon this he immediately left them, and sailed back with his Disciples, whom he strictly cautioned in their Passage, *to beware of the Leaven of those sower People the Pharisees and Sadducees.* They having accidentally forgotten to take Bread with them, readily imagin'd that this was to prevent their seeking Bread from the *Pharisees.* But *Jesus* soon check'd them for the Weakness of their Faith, and the Blindness of their Understandings, as also for the Shortness of their Memories; putting them in Mind of the five Loaves and the five thousand, and the seven Loaves and the four thousand fed by them, and that with extraordinary Remains. Then he made them understand, that his Words did not concern the Leaven of Bread, but the corrupt Do-

Matth. 16.

1--12.

Matth. 8,

10--21.

Strine of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*; which last are by *St. Mark* call'd *Herodians*.

Mark 8.
22--26.

Our Lord landed at *Bethsaida*, the Birth-Place of several of the *Apostles*, where he had wrought many Miracles, but to no great Effect, as appears from *Matth.* 11. 21. Here a blind Man was brought to him, but he would not vouchsafe to cure him in that Place, where he had met with so much Perverseness and Infidelity; therefore taking him out of the City, like an ordinary Physician, he anointed his Eyes with a Collyrium of Spittle; and laying his Hands upon him, ask'd him *whether he saw any Object*; the Man looking up, made Answer, *That he saw Men walking, but so imperfectly that he could not have distinguished them from Trees, but by their being in Motion.* Whereupon *Jesus* a second Time put his Hands upon his Eyes, as tho' he had only made use of common Means, 'till the Man began to distinguish Things clearer, and at last came to his perfect Sight. After his Recovery he sent him home, and charg'd him not so much as to go into the City, or discover it to any one belonging to that Place.

Matth. 16.
13--20.
Mark 8.
27--30.
Luke 9.
18--21.

II. It was now about, or above, a Year after the solemn Election of the *Apostles*, that our Lord thought it convenient to make a particular Trial of their Faith and Understanding, and also to give them a farther Light into the Nature and Design of his Mission. Therefore taking them privately to the Northern Parts of *Galilee*, about *Cæsarea Philippi*, on the Borders of *Syria*, and within the Limits of *Philip's* Dominions, he demanded of them, *What the generality of the World said concerning him?* They made Answer, *That Mens Opinions were various, that some said he was John Baptist, risen from the Dead; some Elias, sent down from Heaven; and others Jeremias, or some other of the ancient Prophets restor'd again to Life.* Upon which he ask'd *What was Their real Opinion concerning him?* *Simon Peter*, always forward to speak for himself and Brethren, answer'd in positive Terms, *That he was the Messiah, the Son of the living God.* Upon this noble Confession *Jesus* pronounced him *Blessed*, since this could not proceed from any human Revelation, but only from his Father in Heaven: Declaring farther, *That as his Name imported a Rock, so he would make him a Foundation-Stone, and a prime Minister in building his Church; which should be so firmly establish'd upon that Faith which he had confess'd, that all the Powers of Hell should not prevail against it. And that for the more orderly Government of it, he would give him the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; so*

that

that his Sentence, whensoever he should regularly exclude, or receive in, any Person on Earth, should stand valid in Heaven. Then to prevent the ill Use that might be made of his Discovery, he strictly commanded his Apostles, not to declare to any Man that he was the *Messiah*.

By the former Discourse with *Peter*, *Jesus* perceiving that his Disciples had gotten a true Notion of his Office and Divinity, notwithstanding the different Opinions of the Nation, began to prepare their Minds for his Sufferings. And from that Time, as *St. Matthew* observes, he began to discover to them that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many Cruelties and Indignities from the Jewish Governors, the chief Priests and Scribes, and even Death it self; and that after three Days he should rise again. *Peter*, unable to endure a Thought so disagreeable to the Dignity of his Master, broke out into this unseasonable Interruption, *Far be it from you, Lord; this must not befall you.* But *Jesus* knowing that this Advice cross'd his gracious Purposes of Man's Redemption, with no little Indignation reply'd, *Away, Satan, who art a Scandal to me, and relishest earthly and not heavenly Things.* Then to remove the Notions of a temporal Kingdom from them, and from the People whom he then call'd to him, he solemnly declar'd, *That whoever would be his Disciple, must deny himself, daily take up his Cross, and follow him: That to lay down his Life for him and the Gospel, was the sure Way to be saved; but to seek Salvation without him, was to destroy himself: That a Man could gain nothing by the Possession of the whole World, if he lost that inestimable Treasure his Soul. And that whosoever should out of Shame disown him or his Gospel, before an impious and degenerated People, he would disown that Person when he came triumphantly at the last Day, surrounded with the Rays of his Father's Glory, and of the holy Angels, to reward every Man according to his Works.* Concluding, *That there were some then present who should not die, before they had seen the Beginnings of his glorious Kingdom and Power:* Particularly his Ascension into Heaven, and his coming to take Vengeance upon the Jewish People and Nation.

About a Week after, our Lord, who had given his Disciples a sad Description of his greatest Humiliation, thought it a seasonable Time to give some of them a Specimen of his future Glorification: Therefore taking with him his three more intimate Apostles, *Peter* and the two Sons of *Zebedee*, he ascended a very high Mountain, generally believ'd to be *Tabor*, a round Mount above four Miles in

Matth. 16.
21--28.
Mark 8.
31--38.
Chap. 9. 1.
Luke 9.
22--27.

Matth. 17.
1--8.
Mark 6.
2--8.
Luke 9.
28--36.

Height, situated in the Plains of *Galilee*. While he was earnestly employ'd in Prayer, he was suddenly transform'd into another kind of Appearance; a radiant Lustre darted from his Face more glorious than the Sun; and a dazzling Splendor proceeded from his Garments, exceeding not only the whitest Snow, and the utmost Power of Art, but also the Light it self. During this heavenly Scene, there appear'd *Moses* and *Elias*, cloath'd with all the Brightness and Majesty of a glorify'd State, familiarly conversing with him, and discoursing of his Death and Sufferings; by which he was to be exalted above every Name both in Heaven and Earth. While the Intercourse continu'd between these three, *Peter* and his two fellow Apostles were fallen asleep, it being probably Night when this hapned; but waking just before their Departure, they were exceedingly surpriz'd, and terrify'd at the Sight of so much Glory and Majesty. And *Peter* in an Ecstasie of Admiration address'd himself to his Master, begging, *that they might continue in that happy Place, and erect three Tabernacles or Tents, one for himself, and other two for Moses and Elias.* But while he was thus talking, scarce knowing what he said in this Fright and Transport, a bright and shining Cloud suddenly came over them, and a Voice from thence crying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleas'd; hear ye him!* Upon which the Apostles were seiz'd with a greater Consternation than ever, and fell prostrate upon the Ground, but our Lord gently touch'd them, bad them arise and fear nothing; and looking up, they saw none but their Master, the rest having vanish'd and disappear'd. In Memory of these great Transactions, *Bede* tells us, that in pursuance of *St. Peter's* Petition about the three Tabernacles, there were afterwards three Churches built upon the Top of this Mountain, which in later Ages were held in great Veneration.

Matth. 17.

9--13.

Mark 9.

9--13.

As they were descending the Mountain, *Jesus* strictly commanded them to discover to no Man what strange Things they had seen, *'till the Son of Man should be risen from the Dead.* They were ready to obey his Command, but did not understand the last Words; therefore they had some Dispute among themselves concerning the Meaning of that Expression, the Son of Man's rising from the Dead. At the same Time they had another Difficulty to solve; for having seen *Elias* with our Saviour upon the Mount, they took an Occasion to ask him, *Why the Scribes and Pharisees did assert, That that Prophet must come upon the Earth before*

before

before the Messiah? *Jesus* answer'd them, *That Elias shou'd come indeed, and be rejected and barbarously treated, as well as the Son of Man; adding withal, That he was already come, and that the Jews had done to him what they thought fit; so likewise would they cause the Son of Man to suffer as they had done his Fore-runner.* This Answer clearly discovered to the Apostles, that the last *Elias* of whom he had spoken, was *John Baptist*, who had gone before the first Coming of *Jesus Christ* in the Spirit and Power of *Elias*, as *Elias* himself, according to the Opinion of many, shou'd go before his second Coming.

The following Day, our Lord being returned to his other nine Apostles, he found a great Multitude about them, and the *Scribes* questioning and disputing with them: At his first Appearance the People ran to him, and saluted him with all the Marks of Joy and Admiration. *Jesus* demanded of the *Scribes*, *What was the Occasion and Subject of their Dispute?* But was interrupted by a certain Man, who breaking through the Press, fell prostrate at his Feet, beseeching him to have Pity upon his only Son, a deplorable Object, a Lunatick and Possessed, Deaf and Dumb, often thrown upon the Ground, and into the Fire and Water, rack'd with violent Convulsions, accompany'd with dismal Outcries, Foamings, gnashing of Teeth, Pinings, and miserable Bruises and Torments: *That he had brought this Child to his Disciples in his Absence, but they were not able to cure him.* The Unbelief of the *Jews*, as well as Weakness of the *Disciples* Faith, was now the most dangerous Distemper, and had been a frequent Impediment to our Saviour's Miracles, therefore he first aimed at the Cure of that; crying out, *O faithless and perverse Generation! How long shall I be with you to convince you? How long shall I endure your Infidelity?* Upon ordering the Child to be brought to him, the Devil began to tear him with fierce Convulsions, and threw him upon the Ground with terrible Struglings and Foamings. *Jesus* asking the Father, *how long he had been under these Afflictions*, was answer'd, *from his Childhood*; urging him again, *If he could do any Thing, to have Pity upon him:* *Jesus* told him, *If he could believe, all Things were possible to a true Believer.* Immediately the Father cry'd out with Tears, *Lord, I believe; supply thou my Unbelief!* Whereupon our Lord commanded the deaf and dumb Spirit to depart out of the Child, and never to return: And the Spirit with hideous Outcries tore the Child, and left him breathless upon the Ground, so that many concluded he was dead; but *Jesus* taking him by the Hand, lifted him up, and de-

Matth. 17.

14--21.

Mark 29.

14--9.

Luke 9.

37--43.

liver'd him to his Father, perfectly cur'd, to the great Astonishment of all the Spectators. *Jesus* retiring shortly after, his Disciples desired to know the Reason why they could not cast out this Spirit; he answer'd them, first, *because of their Unbelief; for that if they had but one Grain of true Faith, they might have remov'd Mountains by the bare Word of their Mouth:* Secondly, *because this was one of a peculiar Kind of Spirits, that were not to be ejected without Prayer and Fasting; in which they had been too negligent and deficient.*

Matth. 17.

22--27.

Mark 9.

30--33.

Luke 9.

44. 45.

Our Saviour shortly after pass'd from this Place through the midst of *Galilee* towards *Capernaum*, but with all Caution and Privacy, his Thoughts being much employ'd in fitting his Disciples for the ungrateful Approaches of his Death: Therefore he discovered it to them a second Time, desiring them to attend seriously, and let these Words sink into their Hearts; *That the Son of Man shou'd be delivered into the Hands of wicked Men, who should put him to Death, and that he shou'd rise again the third Day.* But their Hopes of a temporal Kingdom, and their natural Aversion to the Cross, made it very difficult for them to believe or conceive it; yet this Prediction cast them into such a melancholly Fear, that they durst not ask him to explain it to them. Being arrived at *Capernaum*, the Collectors of a certain Tribute of two Drachmas, or fifteen Pence an Head for the Use of the Temple, came to *Peter*, who was an Inhabitant of that City, and ask'd him, *If his Master did not pay that Tribute? Peter* knowing his Master's Readiness to pay all Dues, answer'd, *Yes;* but entering the House, was prevented by *Jesus*, who ask'd him, *Whether the Kings of the Earth exacted Tribute of their own Children, or of Strangers? Peter* answer'd, *Of Strangers;* upon which *Jesus* concluded, *That the Children were exempted;* leaving it to him to infer, That he being the Son of God ought to be excus'd paying Tribute to the Temple. But however, to avoid all Occasions of Offence, he ordered him *to go and cast a Hook into the Sea; telling him, that in the Mouth of the first Fish he caught, he should find a Stater, a piece of Money of half a Crown Value, which shou'd be given to the Collectors, both for his Master, and himself.*

Matth. 18.

1--15.

Mark 9.

33--50.

Luke 9.

46--50.

About the same Time there arose a Dispute among the Apostles, which of them should be the Greatest in their Master's Kingdom; still imagining and expecting a temporal Sovereignty. But *Jesus* knowing their Thoughts, and mistaken Ambition, ask'd them concerning their Dispute; to which they durst give no Answer: Only, when the twelve were together, they propos'd this Question to him, *Who*

was

was the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven? He answer'd them, That if any Man was ambitious to be first in his Kingdom, he should be last, and Servant to the rest. Then calling a little Child to him, whom some suppose to have been St. Ignatius, he took him in his Arms before them all, and told them, That except they imitated the Innocence and Humility of little Children, they should never enter the Kingdom of God; but that whosoever came nearest to them, should be greatest in that Kingdom: Adding withal, That whosoever should receive such a little Child, or humble Christian in his Name, receiv'd both him, and his Father who sent him, and that the most humble among them, should be most exalted. Hereupon John the Son of Zebedee interrupted him, saying, Master, we saw a Man ejecting Devils in your Name, but we forbid him to proceed, because he refus'd to follow us. Jesus disapprov'd of the Action, and told them, That he ought not to be look'd upon as an Enemy, who declar'd not against him, and had wrought Miracles in his Name. Then re-assuming his former Subject, he declar'd, That a Cup of Water only, given them for his Sake, should in no wise miss of a Reward: But that whosoever should offend and scandalize a little Child and weak Believer, it were better for him having a Millstone about his Neck, to be plung'd into the midst of the dead Sea. That they ought the more carefully to avoid contemning such Persons, because their Guardian-Angels had such free Access to the Throne of God: That the Son of Man came to recover such as were lost: That as a diligent Shepherd, having miss'd one Sheep out of a hundred, seeks in all Places for it; and having found it, rejoices more over that, than over all the rest that never went astray: So was the Father unwilling that any of these Believers should perish. That tho' the World was full of Scandals and Offences, and such Things wou'd necessarily come, yet it wou'd be dismal to that Person who caus'd them: That therefore they ought to remove all Occasions of falling, and to mortify their Affections, tho' they were as dear to them as an Eye, an Hand, or a Foot, because it was infinitely more eligible to be blind, maimed or lame, and to be depriv'd of the Enjoyment of these Members here on Earth, than to be depriv'd of all Enjoyments in the inextinguishable Flames of Hell. That as the Sacrifices were usually seasoned with Salt, so They were to be seasoned with Fire and Afflictions: And that as Salt was the most worthless thing in Nature, when it had lost its Savour, so would they be; for which Reason they ought to be careful to preserve it among themselves; namely, such a Peace and Unity, as wou'd stifle all ambitious intentions.

Matth. 18.
15--35.

Our Lord having shewn the fatal Dangers of Scandals and Offences, afterwards, in Order to preserve a due Charity and Compassion for Offenders, prescribed excellent Rules both for their Punishment and Pardon; and such as were very agreeable to the Customs and Discipline of the *Jewish Church*: *First, that if one Person offended another, the injured Person should admonish him privately, that if it were possible, he might be reclaim'd by that Means: And that if a private Admonition had no Effect upon him, it ought to be repeated before one or two more, who should be Witnesses of the Matter: But if that also prov'd unsuccessful, he should declare his Offence to the Church, and the publick Congregation; and upon the Offender's Contempt of that, he was to be cut off from her Communion, and look'd upon as a Heathen and an Infidel.* And that the Church might effectually separate all obstinate Offenders, he now gave to all, as he had done before to *Peter*, the Power of Binding and Loosing; solemnly assuring them, *That whatsoever they regularly pronounc'd and declar'd on Earth, he would ratifie and confirm in Heaven.* Promising farther, *That if but two of them on Earth did agree about any Thing to be demanded by Prayer, it should be granted by his heavenly Father: For that where two or three only were gather'd together in his Name, he would not fail to be with them.* *Peter* observing the Discourse, and learning from his Master's Words, that if a private Admonition prevail'd, the injur'd Person must forgive the other, desired to know, *how often he was oblig'd to forgive an offending Brother; Whether seven Times were not sufficient? Jesus* let him understand that the Number of Times was not to be limited, *that he was to forgive him, tho' he offended seventy Times as often.* And to shew the absolute Necessity of such a merciful and compassionate Temper, he propounded an excellent Parable of a certain King, who calling his Servants to Account, found one of them who owed him so vast a Sum that he was unable to pay it; namely, ten thousand Talents, or a Million eight hundred and seventy five thousand Pounds; whereupon he commanded him to be sold, with his Wife and Children, and all that he had, towards the Discharge of the Debt. But his Servant falling at his Feet, and humbly imploring his Mercy and Forbearance, out of a generous Pity, he freely forgave him the whole Debt. This Wretch was no sooner gone out, but he met one of his Fellow-Servants, who owed him a small Debt of an hundred *Denarii*, about three Pounds two Shillings and six Pence, and laying Hands upon him, took him roughly by the Throat, and cry'd, *Pay me my Debts.*

Debts. And tho' his Fellow-Servant us'd the same pathetic Intreaties that he had done to the King his Master, yet he would not hearken, but without any Pity immediately sent him to Prison. The King being inform'd of this Severity, sent for the ungrateful Servant, first upbraided him with his Baseness and Cruelty, when he had just receiv'd so much Favour and Mercy; and then in a great Rage order'd him to Racks and Tortures, 'till he should discharge the whole Debt. Then *Jesus* concluded with this most solemn Application, *so likewise shall my heavenly Father deal with all such as will not forgive their Brother's Trespasses from their Hearts.*

Our Lord having continu'd a short Time at *Capernaum*, John 7. 2--10. some of his Relations, whose Hopes and Faith were still unsound, became uneasy that he confin'd himself so much to one Province, and therefore urg'd him to shew his Miracles at the capital City of *Jerusalem*; for which he could not have, as they conceiv'd, a better Opportunity than the great Feast of Tabernacles then approaching: Desiring him, *If he expected to be famous, to shew himself to the World, and not deprive his Disciples at Jerusalem of the Happiness of his Presence.* But *Jesus* told them, *That they might go to the Feast as soon as they pleas'd, but he himself must be very wary and cautious, because he had many Enemies; that the World, which had nothing to object against them, hated him, because he reprov'd their sinful Actions: That therefore tho' they went to the Feast immediately, he would not go yet; for the proper Time was not fully come:* Whereupon he made a short Stay in *Galilee*; but soon after their Departure, he set forwards towards *Jerusalem*, not publickly, but as it were in secret, lest he should too much awaken the Jealousie of his Enemies.

In his Passage through the Province of *Samaria*, he sent Luke 9. 51--56. some of his Apostles as Harbingers to provide Lodgings in one of their Villages, who upon their first Trial were uncivilly rejected and refus'd Entertainment; because the *Samaritans* perceiv'd they were going to *Jerusalem* to the Feast, which they violently hated. This piece of Rudeness and Inhumanity was so deeply resent'd by *James* and his Brother *John*, that they immediately desir'd Permission of their Master, in Imitation of *Elias*, to command Fire down from Heaven, and consume these inhospitable Wretches. But the Son of God willing to teach them, that the Marks of a true Christian were Meekness and Love, not Fury and Revenge, gave them this serious Reproof, *Ye know not by what Spirit ye are acted; for the Son of Man is not come to destroy*

stroy Mens Lives, but to save them. And so they went and took Lodgings in another Village.

Luke 10.
1--16.

III. A little before our Lord's Arrival at *Jerusalem* at the Feast of Tabernacles, about sixteen Months after his solemn Election of his Apostles, and eight Months after their first Mission, he thought fit to make a second Choice of Disciples; and as his first was of Twelve, according to the Number of their Patriarchs and Tribes, this was of Seventy, according to the Number of the Elders or Senators of *Israel*. The Names of most of these are unknown to us; and we have only an uncertain Account of twenty eight of them out of *Eusebius*, *Epiphanius* and *Papias*, which are *Matthias*, *Mark*, *Luke*, *Barnabas*, *Stephen*, *Philip*, *Prochorus*, *Nicanor*, *Timon*, *Parmenas*, *Nicolas*, *Justus*, *Apelles*, *Sosthenes*, *Rufus*, *Niger*, *Cephas*, *Thaddæus*, *Aristion*, *John*, *Barsabas*, *Andronicus*, *Junius*, *Silas*, *Lucius*, *Manaen*, *Mnason*, and *Ananias*. These Seventy were sent out by two and two together as the Apostles; and tho' they were of an inferior Rank, yet our Lord gave the same Reason for their Mission; namely, *That the Evangelical Harvest was great, but the Reapers few.* The Apostles Commission was to go at la ge to any of the Cities of *Israel*; but these Seventy were to go only to those particular Places which *Jesus* himself design'd to visit, to make way for his Preaching and Reception; who design'd now a more full Revelation of himself. As their Journey was to be short and expeditious, he order'd them to avoid all Impediments, particularly the formal Salutations then in Use, and the great Scrupulousness that some had of eating such Things as were set before them by Strangers. The other Instructions to them were the same as he had given to the Apostles; only adding the same Woes against *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, and his own proud City *Capernaum*, which he formerly denounc'd before the Multitudes, when *John* had sent his Disciples to him.

John 7.
11--36.

The Feast of Tabernacles always continu'd eight Days, and began this Year on the seventh or eighth Day of our Month *October*; at which Time the *Jews* made great Enquiry after *Jesus* at *Jerusalem*, and had various Discourses concerning him; some saying he was a good Man, and others an Impostor. But when all Mens Expectations were almost over, on the fourth or fifth Day of the Feast, he shew'd himself openly, and taught in the Temple, to the great Wonder of the *Jews*, who were exceedingly surpriz'd to find him so perfect in the Scriptures, when his Education had

had been without Learning. Whereupon he told them, *That he spoke not of himself; and that if they were desirous of performing the Will of God, they wou'd soon perceive, that his Doctrine proceeded from God that sent him, whose Glory alone he sought to promote; but they were so far from keeping the Law of God, that they sought even his Life.* The People cry'd out, *He was possess'd;* and ask'd him, *Who sought his Life?* Upon which, he put them in mind of the infirm Man at the Pool of *Bethesda*, whom he cur'd a Year and a half before on the Sabbath Day; for which, tho' they themselves us'd *Circumcision* on the same Day, without accounting it a Breach of *Moses's Law*, yet they were so implacably incens'd against him, that they had resolv'd to slay him. At the same Time some who knew the great Hatred of the Magistrates against him, admired to see him speak with so much Freedom and Authority, and said, *Are they convinc'd that this is really the Messiah?* Adding withal, *That they knew this Man's Parentage, but the Messiah's would be wholly unknown.* But *Jesus* with a loud Voice declar'd, *That tho' they knew his Earthly Parentage, they knew not his Heavenly, which was beyond their Conception.* Then several of the People believ'd on him, being convinc'd by the Greatness of his Miracles, that he was the *Messiah*; but the *Pharisees* and Rulers of the People sent their Officers to secure him: *Jesus*, who could not suffer before his prefix'd Time, said to the Officers, *That he was with them but for a short Time, and should return to Him who sent him; that they should seek to him in vain, for he was going to a Place whither they could not come.* The *Jews* did not understand these Words, but believ'd that he design'd to leave *Judaea*, and teach the *Greeks* and *Gentiles*.

On the last and great Day of the Feast, when they perform'd the joyful and pompous Ceremony of offering and pouring out the Water, our Saviour stood up in the Temple, and cry'd out, *If any Man thirst, let him come to me and drink: Whosoever believeth on me, according to the Tenor of the Scriptures, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of living Water:* Meaning, as *St. John* observes, the abundant Graces of the Holy Spirit, which should be poured out upon the Souls of all Believers, after his Entrance into Glory. The People were much divided in their Opinions concerning this Sentence; for some accounted him a Prophet, others acknowledg'd him the *Messiah*, and others, who knew nothing of his Birth-Place, could not believe him to be the Person, because they knew that the *Messiah* should not be born in *Galilee*, but in the City of *Bethlehem*, and of the Family of *David*,

David. At the same Time the Magistrates belonging to the *Sanhedrim*, examin'd the Officers whom they had sent to take him, why they had not brought him; and they being charm'd with his Presence and Preaching, answer'd, *That never Man spoke like this Man.* The *Pharisees* being more inrag'd at their Reason, than the Neglect of their Office, upbraided them for being so foolishly seduc'd, and following the Error of the ignorant and cursed Populacy, when not one of the Rulers and learned Rabbies had own'd him. Upon this, *Nicodemus*, who had formerly convers'd with our Lord, and remain'd his secret Disciple, calmly told the Assembly, *That according to the Law, they ought not to condemn any Man unheard.* But they with some Anger, ask'd *Whether he was a Favourer of this Galilean?* and bad him search, and he shou'd find, that no Prophet ever came from thence. Thus the Assembly broke up without proceeding against him, and every Man return'd to his own House.

John 8.
1-11.

On the same Night *Jesus* repaired to the Mount of Olives about a Mile from the City, and probably lodg'd at *Bethany*, at the House of *Lazarus*. Early in the Morning, he return'd to the Temple, and in the Court of Women, at the Treasury, he sat down and taught the People that were gather'd about him. Shortly after, the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* with no little Solemnity brought in a Woman taken in Adultery, and placing her in the midst of them said, *Master, this Woman was taken in the very Act of Adultery: Now Moses in his Law expressly commanded, That such Persons shou'd be stoned to Death; but What is your Judgment and Determination?* This insnaring Question was to find an Occasion of accusing him, either of assuming Judicial Power, if he condemn'd her; or of nulling the Law, if he freed her. *Jesus*, like a Judge taking Minutes of a Cause before him, stooped down, and wrote something with his Finger upon the Dust of the Pavement: but they being urgent with him for an Answer, he rais'd himself up, saying, *He that is without Sin among you let him cast the first Stone;* and stooping down, wrote as before. This unexpected Answer amaz'd these designing Accusers; and finding themselves throughly convicted of their own Crimes, retired one by one, leaving the Woman by her self; which was little less than a Miracle. *Jesus* finding the Woman alone, ask'd her, *Where were her Accusers; and whether any Man had condemn'd her?* She answer'd, *no Man had:* Upon which he told her, *That neither did he condemn her, but bad her Go and sin no more.*

After this Interruption *Jesus* return'd to instruct the Peo-^{John 8.}
 ple, and taking occasion, probably from the Sun's bright^{12--59.}
 shining in the Morning, he declar'd, *That he was the true
 Light of the World, and that whosoever follow'd him, should
 not walk in Darkness, but in the Light of Life.* Hereupon
 the Pharisees reply'd, *That the Testimony he gave of himself
 was not worthy of Credit.* But he demonstrated to them,
*That they judg'd amiss, according to their own Law, and that
 the Testimony he gave of himself was of sufficient Force, be-
 cause it was confirm'd by the Testimony of his Father, who
 wrought such great Miracles by him: They then ask'd him,
 Where his Father was? He answer'd them, That they knew
 not his Father, because they wou'd not acknowledge his Son.*
 He added more over, and said, *I go my Way, and ye shall seek
 me, and shall die in your Sins: Whither I go, ye cannot come.*
 And because they ignorantly thought he wou'd kill himself,
 that they might not follow him, he declar'd, *That he was
 not from below, as they were, but from above; and that if they
 did not believe in him, they shou'd die in their Sins.* Then
 they asking him, *Who he was;* he answer'd, he was the *Mes-
 siah*, but in such Terms as they did not understand: Adding
 withal, *That when they had list'd him up upon the Cross,
 they shou'd know, that he had done nothing of himself, nor said
 any Thing, but what he had heard from his Father.* These
 Truths which blinded the Proud, enlightned several other
 Persons, who believed on him; to whom he declar'd, *That
 if they continu'd firm in the Observation of his Word, they were
 his real Disciples: That they shou'd know the Truth, and the
 Truth shou'd make them free.* The other *Jews* reply'd, *that
 they were never Servants, but free, as being the Children of
 Abraham.* He answer'd them, *That whosoever committed
 Sin, was the Servant of Sin; and tho' Servants might have
 some Temporary Privileges, they cou'd not be truly free, unless
 he made them so: That they were Abraham's Children ac-
 cording to the Flesh, but in rejecting the Truth, and seeking
 the Life of him who told them the Truth, they did not follow
 Abraham's Steps, but made themselves Children of another
 Father, by following his Example and imitating him.* They
 maintain'd, *That in that Sense they had no other Father but
 God; but Jesus* reply'd again, *That if they were the Children
 of God, they wou'd hearken to his Word, and love his only be-
 gotten Son, whom he had sent. That as Murther and Lying
 were the Works of the Devil, and the Marks of his Children;
 so such as sought the Destruction of an innocent Person, and
 refus'd their assent to the Truth, had the Devil for their Fa-
 ther.* They made no Reply to this, but by railling at him,
 calling

calling him a Samaritan, *that was possess'd with a Devil.* But *Jesus* calmly answer'd, *That he had no Devil, but honour'd his Father, who would do him Justice, because he sought not his own Glory:* Declaring afterwards, *That whosoever kept his Word, should never die,* meaning an eternal Death: But the *Jews*, who understood it of the Death of the Body, took occasion to insult over him; demanding of him, *Whether he was greater than Abraham and the Prophets, that he could preserve them from Death that kept his Commandments, which those great Men could not avoid; therefore what did he pretend to make himself?* He answer'd them again, *That he honour'd not himself, but deriv'd all his Honour from his Father, whom they worshipp'd as their God; but knew him not: That as for Abraham, in whom they so much boasted, he had earnestly desired to see his happy Day, did see it, and was fill'd with great Joy.* Upon this, they scoffingly ask'd, *Whether he could have seen Abraham, when he was not yet fifty years of Age?* That is, arriv'd at the common Years of Superannuation among the *Jews.* But he reply'd, *Verily, verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am.* Upon which Assertion, which they took for Blasphemy, after the manner of the *Zealots*, they took up some of the broken Stones of the new Buildings, designing to kill him. But he miraculously withdrew himself out of the Temple, and escap'd their Fury.

Luke 10.
17--24.

A little before our Saviour's Departure from the City, the Seventy Disciples return'd from their Journey and Ministry, greatly rejoicing, *because the very Devils, by means of his Name, were subject to them.* *Jesus* in Confirmation of their Report, told them, *That while they were preaching, he saw the Prince of them, falling like Lightning from his Empire and Dominion:* Declaring farther, *That he gave them Power to tread upon the most venomous and malignant Powers of the Devil, without the least Damage:* Yet that they ought not so much to rejoyce for the Subjection of these evil Spirits, as for their having their Names written in Heaven. At the same Time *Jesus* was transported with the like Motion of the Spirit as formerly, glorifying the Name of the Lord of Heaven and Earth, for revealing the Mysteries of Heaven to such Infants and mean Instruments, and concealing them from the Great and Wise in the World. Then turning to his Disciples, he privately pronounc'd a Blessing upon their Eyes which were Partakers of such Happiness: Declaring, *That many great Prophets and Kings had passionately long'd to see and to hear what they had done, without obtaining the Blessing.*

About this Time, a certain Doctor of the Law among Luke 10. 25--37. the Company stood up, and that he might find Occasion against him, demanded of him, *What he must do to inherit everlasting Life?* Our Lord perceiving his Conceit, refer'd him to the Law, asking him, *What he read there?* The Man readily answer'd out of *Deuteronomy*, *'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, with all thy Strength, and with all thy Mind; and thy Neighbour as thy self.* Jesus told him, *He had rightly answer'd,* and bad him, *Perform that, and he should live.* But this Scribe being desirous to appear Holy, and an exact Observer of the Law, demanded farther of him, *Whom he ought to account his Neighbour?* Jesus answer'd him by a Parable of a certain Jew, who in the great Road between *Jerusalem* and *Jericho* was robbed, stripped, barbarously treated, and left almost dead with his Wounds: When a *Priest* and a *Levite*, both of his own Contry, pass'd severally that Way, they uncharitably avoided him, and gave him no Assistance: But a *Samaritan*, a Stranger, and abhor'd by the *Jews*, seeing this distressed Person, with great Compassion came to him, poured Oil and Wine into his Wounds, carefully bound them up, sat him upon his own Beast, and carry'd him to an Inn, where he committed him to the Care of the Host, and left him Mony to provide Necessaries for him, with a Promise of a farther Supply if Occasion requir'd it. Jesus desirous that the Doctor should make Application himself, ask'd him, *Which of these three Passengers was Neighbour to the distressed Man?* He answer'd, *He who shew'd Mercy to him.* And Jesus approving the Answer, bad him, *Go, and do likewise:* Intimating, that Mercy was due to all Persons, and that Neighbours were not confin'd to Countries and Relations, nor Religions.

Shortly after, our Lord departed from *Jerusalem* towards Luke 10. 38--42. *Galilee*; and in the Beginning of his Journey, he enter'd a small Village call'd *Bethany*, on the farthest Parts of *Mount Olivet*, about two Miles East of *Jerusalem*, where he was joyfully entertain'd by a Woman call'd *Martha*, who with a Sister *Mary*, and Brother *Lazarus* were highly in Favour with him. While *Martha* was busie in preparing what she could for her heavenly Guest, her Sister *Mary*, whom several believe to be the same with *Mary Magdalen*, sat at Jesus's Feet, hearing his Words with great Attention. Whereupon *Martha* complain'd to him, *That her Sister suffer'd her to take all the Trouble upon her, desiring that he would command her to help her.* But Jesus answer'd her with great Seriousness, *That she cumber'd and disturb'd her self with*

with worldly Cares, whereas one Thing was primarily needful, the hearing of his Word, which since Mary had chosen, she should never want the Benefit of it. By which Words he condemned not the Hospitality of *Martha*, but taught her, That her Care and Toil, tho' commendable in its self, was of far less Value and Concern than that of her Sister's.

Luke II.
1-13.

A few Days after, *Jesus* being probably return'd into *Galilee*, his Disciples seeing him at Prayers, one of them desired him to compose a Prayer for their Use, as *John* had done for his Disciples. Whereupon he gave them the same excellent Prayer, which he had done above eighteen Months before in his Sermon upon the Mount, only omitting the Doxology at last. Then he encourag'd them to use Fervour and Importunity in their Prayers, by producing two familiar Instances: The first of one Friend coming to another at Midnight to borrow Provisions for his Stranger, who at that unseasonable Hour might obtain his Request by his Importunity, when he could not by his Friendship: Much more they should obtain their Petitions, when ask'd with an instant Zeal and Perseverance. The second was of a common Parent, who would not give his Children Stones instead of Bread, nor Serpents instead of Fish, nor Scorpions instead of Eggs. And if evil Parents knew how to give good Gifts to their Children, much more their heavenly Father would give the Holy Spirit to such as ask'd him.

Luke II.
E4-54.

After this, *St. Luke* mentions our Lord's dispossessing a dumb *Demoniack*; upon which Occasion the *Pharisees* not only persisted in their former Blasphemy, that he ejected Devils by *Beelzebub* their Prince, but also again impudently demanded of him a Sign from Heaven. But *Jesus* confuted their Malice by the same Arguments he formerly us'd upon that Account; and likewise gave the same Answer to their demanding a Sign; declaring, That they should have no other but that of *Jonas the Prophet*: Adding some few of the same Instructions to the People, as he had formerly given in his Sermon upon the Mount. In the midst of his excellent Discourse, a Woman in a Transport cry'd out, Blessed was the Womb that bare him, and the Breasts that gave him Suck! But *Jesus* declar'd, That they were more blessed, who heard the Word of God and observ'd it. At the finishing his Discourse, he was invited by a certain *Pharisee* to dine with him, where he sat down without washing his Hands, contrary to the Traditions and Customs of those People; which both surpriz'd, and offended the nice Master of the House. But our Lord knowing the corrupt Designs
of

of him, and the rest that were with him, very freely told him, *That they were very careful in cleansing the Outsides of their Cups and Vessels, but their inward Parts, their Hearts, were full of Rapine and Impurity; shewing their Ignorance in not knowing that the same Workman made both; and prescribing a Remedy, namely, Alms and Acts of Mercy, which should make all Things clean and pure to them.* After which he took an Occasion to expose all the great Hypocrisie and Villanies of the whole Sect, together with the Scribes and Doctors of the Law, who were offended at his invective Discourse: Infomuch, that the Company were extreemly exasperated, and us'd all possible Methods to ensnare him, and to gain an Opportunity of destroying him.

In the mean Time, an innumerable Multitude of People Luke 12. 1--59. being gather'd about him, so that they trod one upon another, *Jesus admonish'd his Disciples to beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees, which was Soweriness and Hypocrisie; and not to be discouraged at the Malice and Persecutions of Men, but to fear God alone, and to repose a stedfast Confidence in him.* In the midst of his Discourse, one of the Company, more intent upon his temporal, than spiritual Concernment, desired him, *to speak to his Brother peaceably to divide the Estate lately fallen to them.* But *Jesus, to shew that every Person ought to keep within his Calling, answered, Who made him a Judge or a Surveyor of their Concerns?* Upon which he admonish'd his Auditory carefully to beware of Covetousness; for *Mens Happiness consisted not in plentiful Possessions.* And to enforce it the more, he propounded this Parable: *A certain wealthy Man, finding his Land to produce a vast Increase of Fruits and Goods, resolv'd to pull down his old Barns and Repositories, and build larger; and when he had thus secured his Profits, he would say to his Soul, Soul, thou hast plentifully provided for many Years, now take thine Ease, eat, drink and enjoy thy Pleasures: But God destroyed all his Designs, and said to him, Thou Fool, this very Night shall thy Soul be required of thee; for whom then hast thou secured these Things? Such is the Condition,* added he, *of him who hoards up Treasure for himself, and is not rich in his Actions to God.* For this Reason he taught his Disciples, *not to be solicitous or anxious for the Things of this Life; that they should be so far from heaping up Riches, that they ought to part with what they had to the Poor, that they might have a Treasury in Heaven, which would naturally draw their Hearts after it. That they were indeed small in Number, but however they should be of good Courage, since*

it was their Father's Pleasure to give them the Kingdom. He told them farther, That they should be always in a Readiness to appear before God, to have their Garments girt about them, and their Lights burning, as Servants who watch for the Return of their Master from the Wedding. That being made Stewards of God's House, to distribute to others the Food of his Word, they ought to discharge their Trust faithfully; not like the foolish Steward, who finding his Lord to defer his Return, consum'd the Goods intrusted to him in Debaucheries, and us'd his Authority to abuse his Fellow Servants; for which he should have his Portion with Hypocrites and Unbelievers. That since the Son of Man would come in a Day and Hour unknown to them, to require an Account of their Management, they should always watch as a Master of a House would do, if he knew what Night the Thief design'd to rob his House. That knowing the Will of their Master, they were the more culpable if they did not obey it; and the more they had entrusted with them, the greater their Accounts would be. To these Discourses he join'd and added some others, already observed in the Sermon upon the Mount, and his Instructions to the Apostles, when he first sent them to preach the Gospel.

Luke 13.

1--9.

Before the Multitude departed, some Persons then present mention'd to our Lord that severe Punishment inflicted upon the *Galileans* or *Gaulanites* by *Pilate*, whose Soldiers cut them in Pieces while they were sacrificing at the Altar; desiring to know his Opinion of those miserable Sufferers. *Jesus* discerning their Thoughts, first ask'd them, *Whether they believed those to be greater Sinners than the rest of their Sect, because God had abandon'd them to such dreadful Usage.* And then declared, *That without their Repentance, they should all meet with the same, or the like Judgment.* He also let them understand, *That they ought to make the same Application of the other Calamity that hapned in Jerusalem lately; namely, the Fall of the Tower of Siloam, which caus'd the Death of eighteen Persons of the City.* And that he might engage them to make the most profitable Use of their Time for a sincere Repentance, he set forth the Patience of the Almighty towards them by the Parable of a barren Fig-tree in a Vineyard, which wanting Fruit for three Years successively, the Master of the Vineyard order'd it to be cut down, as useless and cumbersome. But upon the Gardener's promising to use a more than ordinary Care about it, he deferred it a Year longer, with a Resolution of destroying it, if it continued unfruitful; as God would do to those

Peo-

People if they brought not forth Fruits as would Evidence a true Repentance.

On a Sabbath Day not long after, *Jesus*, according to his Custom taught in one of the *Jewish* Synagogues; in which Place there came a Woman grievously afflicted with an evil Spirit, which *St. Luke* calls a Spirit of Infirmity, which had continued eighteen Years, and so bowed her Body, that she could not lift her self up. *Jesus* seeing this deplorable Object, called her to him, mercifully laid his Hands upon her, and pronounced her freed from her Infirmity; and at the same Instant she was made strait, and glorify'd God for her Cure. Whereupon the Ruler of the Synagogue with a malignant Concern told the People, *That there were six Days in every Week by God allowed for Labour; that they might come for Cure in those Days, and not on the Sabbath, which was a Day of Rest.* But *Jesus* answering him, demanded of those Hypocrites, *Whether it was not equally lawful for him to loose a Daughter of Abraham and the Covenant, from eighteen Years Bondage of Satan, on the Sabbath; as for them to loose an Ox or an Ass on the same Day, and lead them to watering?* At which his Adversaries were silenced and exceedingly ashamed, while the People highly rejoyc'd at his glorious Actions. Wherefore that he might prevent them from being discouraged at the mean and small Beginnings of his Kingdom, he compared its spreading Nature to a Grain of Mustard Seed, which in Time comes to be the largest of Herbs; and to a small Quantity of Leaven, which in a short Time diffuses it self through a large Mass of Bread.

Luke 13:
10--21;

IV. A little above two Months after the Feast of Tabernacles, our Lord, after several Removals, repaired again to *Jerusalem*, at the Feast of Dedication, which this Year began on the 13th or 14th Day of our Month *December*. This Feast was instituted by *Judas Maccabeus*, in Memory of his Dedication of the Temple, after he had cleared that and the Altar from the horrid Prophanations of *Antiochus Epiphanes*; and was annually celebrated in the Month *Caseu*, and continued with great Solemnity eight Days. *Jesus* being arrived at this Time, and walking in the Streets on a Sabbath Day, saw a poor Man blind from his very Birth. Whereupon his Disciples, according to the *Jewish* Notion of Souls sinning in some pre-existent State, desired to be satisfy'd, *Whether it was his own, or his Parents Sins that caused this Calamity?* *Jesus* informed them, *That his Blindness was not upon the Account of any Sins committed by*

John 9:
1--12.

him or his Parents, but that God might more conspicuously manifest the Works of his Power: Adding, That it was his Office to do these Works in the Time allotted him, before he was taken from them; and that so long as he continued in the World, he was the Light and Guide of it. Then spitting upon the Ground, he form'd some Clay, and anointed the poor Man's Eyes with it; a Way the most unlikely to cure Blindness, sending him to wash in the Pool of Siloam, a Spring in the City remarkable for miraculous Accidents. The Man was obedient to his Commands; and upon his Return found his Sight perfectly restored, to the great Amazement of his Neighbours and Acquaintance; who at first doubted whether he was the same Man who sat begging in the Streets. But he assur'd them, *That he was the very Person, and that a Man call'd Jesus had restored his Sight*; and inform'd them how it was effected.

John 9.
13--34.

This surprizing Accident made some very inquisitive after Jesus; but not finding him, they carry'd the Man before the Grand Sanhedrim, to be examined by the Rulers. Here some of the Pharisees were very strict and uneasy; and being informed that the Cure was performed by the servile Works of making Clay and Washing, they declar'd, *That this Man was not of God, because he kept not the Sabbath Day*. But others could not believe that a wicked Man, or an Impostor, could work such Miracles; so that there was a great Division in the Assembly. Whereupon they asked the poor Man, *What he thought of himself*; who answered, *That he look'd upon Jesus as a Prophet*. These Things were surprizing and astonishing, but they would not believe the Miracle 'till they had sent for the Parents of the recover'd Man; of whom they enquired, *Whether he was really their Son who was born blind, and by what Means he was restored?* But they fearing the Pharisees, and knowing that they had made an Order to excommunicate any Person who should acknowledge Jesus to be Christ; made Answer, *That they knew the Party to be their Son, and that he was born blind, but were ignorant of the means of his Recovery, and of the Person who effected it; but that they might be thoroughly informed by their Son, who was of Age to answer for himself*. Whereupon they call'd the Man to them a second Time, and ordered him, *To give God the Glory, for they knew Jesus to be a Sinner*. He answer'd, *That he knew nothing of his being a Sinner; but so much he was assured of, that he had been blind, and was now recover'd*. But they, restless in their Inquiries, again ask'd him, *How he receiv'd his Sight?* He answer'd them with some Roughness, *That he already*
inform'd

inform'd them, but to no Effect; asking them, *Whether they design'd to be his Disciples?* At which, they told him in a great Rage, *That he was his Disciple, but they were Disciples of Moses, who they knew was commission'd from God; but as for this Jesus, they knew not whence he was.* The Man boldly reply'd, *That it was very unaccountable, that they should not perceive whence that Man was, whom God had indued with such a miraculous Power of opening the Eyes of one born blind; a Thing never heard of since the World began:* Adding, *if this Man were not of God, he could do nothing.* This extremely provok'd them, *That such a vile Sinner as he should presume to teach them;* and they cast him out of the Assembly. As *John Baptist* was the first who suffer'd Death, so this was the first who suffered Excommunication, upon the Account of the Gospel.

Jesus hearing of the poor Man's Fate, met him shortly after in some publick Place, and asked him, *whether he believ'd on the Son of God?* He reply'd, *Who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him?* *Jesus* telling him, *That he had already seen him, and that he who spoke to him was the Person;* he answer'd, *Lord, I believe!* and immediately fell down at his Feet and adored him. *Jesus* turning to the People, declar'd, *That he came into the World to bring an amazing Judgment, that the Blind might see, and such as saw might become blind;* that is, such whose Pride hinder'd them from acknowledging their spiritual Blindness: For some of the Pharisees demanding of him, *Whether they also were blind?* He answer'd them, *If they were sensible of their Blindness, they should be freed from their Sin; but because they disowned that Imperfection, their Sins wou'd be imputed to them.* And having expos'd the Pride and Vanity of those blind Guides, he pronounced to them three different Characters of such as undertook the Care of Souls, under the Parable of a Shepherd and his Sheep; teaching them, *That there were some, who instead of entring by the Door of the Sheep-fold, climb'd up some other Way, like Thieves and Robbers to steal and destroy.* And he explained this Similitude, which they did not understand, by declaring, *That he was the Door, by which Men must enter either for the Government of the Flock, or the Salvation of their Souls; that all other Pretenders were no better than Thieves and Robbers.* Secondly, *There were others, who having entered by the Door, guided and governed the Flock as Mercenaries and Hirelings, and upon the Appearance of the Wolf abandoned the Sheep, because they lov'd themselves only, and not the Flock.* Thirdly, *There were also good Shepherds, who entered the Sheep-Fold with*

John 9.

35-41.

Chap. 10.

1-21.

the Porter's Attendance, knew their Sheep and their Names, and were known and followed by them. Of these third Sort he declared himself to be, proving, That he was the good Shepherd, since he came to lay down his Life for his Sheep, and that willingly and freely, in Compliance to his Father's Pleasure: for as much as no Man could take it away from him; and when he had laid it down, he could take it up again, and none could hinder him. Then he declar'd, That the Jews were not the only Sheep for whom he wou'd die; that he had other Sheep, namely, the Gentiles, whom he wou'd bring into his Fold, and out of both would make up one Flock, consisting of such as heard his Voice, of whom he himself wou'd be the Shepherd alone. This Discourse rais'd a new Difference among his Auditors; some said He was possessed and mad; but others declared, That a Man possess'd cou'd not utter such excellent Things, much less open the Eyes of one born blind.

John 10.
22--39.

Before the Conclusion of the Feast, it being Winter and cold Weather, our Saviour, according to the Custom of the Jews, walk'd in those magnificent Cloysters on the Eastern Parts of the Temple and the Court of the Gentiles, called by the name of Solomon's Porch. Here the Jews soon gathered about him, and ask'd him, *How long he would keep them in Suspence; requiring him to tell them in positive Terms, whether he was the Messiah, or not. He made answer, That he had already informed them sufficiently, but to no Effect; that the Miracles he wrought in his Father's Name were a full Evidence of his Person; but that they believ'd not, because they were none of his Sheep, who both hearken'd to him, and follow'd him. And to shew them how great Losers they were by not being of his Fold, he added, That he gave to his Sheep eternal Life, and they shou'd never perish; for no Man cou'd pull them out of the all-powerful Hands of his Father, nor out of his own, because He and his Father were really One. Upon this last Expression the Jews concluded him a Blasphemer, and after the manner of the Zealots took up some of the Stones of the new Buildings to stone him. Whereupon Jesus asked them, For which of those many good Works which he had shew'd them from his Father it was that they went about to use him so barbarously? They readily made Answer, That it was not for any good Work, but for direct Blasphemy, for making himself God, when as he was but a Man. But he made it appear, That since in the Scriptures Men were sometimes called Gods, they cou'd not charge him with Blasphemy. for giving himself that Name, especially him who was really the Son of God, and sanctify'd by his Father. And that he was so, he told them, was evident from his Miracles,*

which

which should command their Belief, tho' his Words did not; they being real Proofs that He was in his Father, and his Father in Him. All this did not appease their Rage and Fury against him, for they sought still how they might take him, but he escaped out of the Temple, and shortly after departed from the City.

This concluded the third Year of our Saviour's publick Ministry; in which Year a new Volume of the *Sybil's* Books was received, and added to the rest by a Decree of the Senate of *Rome*; but not well relish'd by the Emperor *Tiberius*, who now more and more afflicted the City and Nobility by his subtil, jealous and tyrannical Behaviour. Tho' he liv'd retir'd from *Rome*, and at a considerable Distance, yet the Degeneracy of the Senate, and the Business of Spyes and other wicked Instruments, caus'd infinite Accusations, Punishments and Executions. This was the unfortunate State of *Rome*: A Concern for the Glory of the Empire, was accounted a Design of gaining it; an innocent Remembrance of Liberty, was thought an Aim to re-establish the Common-wealth; to praise *Brutus* and *Cassius*, was a capital Crime; to bewail *Augustus*, a secret Offence; and every Action became liable to forc'd Interpretations: Simplicity of Discourse, they said, exprest evil Designs; a Secret Silence, conceal'd mischievous Intentions; Joy, was the Hopes of the Emperor's Death; Melancholly, an Envyng his Prosperity; and Fear, the just Apprehensions of a guilty Conscience: So that Speaking or Silence, Joy or Grief, Fear or Assurance, were all Crimes, and often incurr'd the extreamest Punishments. Virtue and Caution were now no Security to great Men; for it was not sufficient for them to be freed from the Corruptions of Accusers, and the false Reports and Suspicions of wicked Informers, but they also stood in fear of the very Imagination of the Emperor; and when they justly thought themselves secure by the Innocence, not only of their Actions but their Thoughts also, they were often ruin'd by the Malice and Subtilty of his Conjectures.

Tacitus.
Dion.

The fourth Year of Christ's publick Ministry.

V. We are now arriv'd at the fourth and last Year of our Blessed Saviour's publick Ministry, which began in the fifth Month of the nineteenth of *Tiberius*; a Year the most happy and memorable that ever did or can happen within

A. D.
33.
Tiber.

19
20.

John 10.
40--42.

the whole Compass of Time ; in which were brought about those glorious and stupendous Acts, the Redemption of Mankind by the Death of the Son of God, his Resurrection from the Grave, his Ascension into Heaven, the Descent of the Holy-Ghost, and the Establishment of the *Christian* Church. This Year began with our Lord's Departure from *Jerusalem*, and his Passage over the River *Jordan* to *Bethabara*, where *John* had formerly baptiz'd. Here he was follow'd by great Multitudes, whom he taught according to his Custom, and cured all that were Sick and Distemper'd among them. This caus'd many new Followers and Believers, who declar'd, *That tho' John wrought no Miracle, yet they had found that all was true that he had spoken of this Man.*

Luke 13.
23--35.

While he continu'd in these Parts, a certain Man put a curious Question to him, concerning the Number of the Blessed, whether many or few should be sav'd : Upon which he took Occasion to advise his Auditors, *to use their quickest Endeavours to enter in at the strait Gate, for that many should seek to enter it, and not be able. That when once their Time was past, and the Door shut, it would be in vain for them to cry, Lord, open to us ! for the Master of the House would then declare that he knew them not : And when they should alledge, That they had eaten and drunk with him, and heard him teach in their Streets, he would command them to depart as Workers of Iniquity. That then should the Jews weep and lament to see so many Heathens, from all Parts of the Earth, possess'd of the Glories of Heaven, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the Prophets ; and themselves, who were Heirs of the Kingdom, thrust out ; and be made the last, who were once the first.* The same Day he was interrupted by some of the *Pharisees*, who advis'd him to depart immediately, for that *Herod* was resolv'd to have his Life if he stay'd in his Dominions. But *Jesus* knowing the Time of his Death, fearlessly bad them, *Go tell that subtle Fox, that he had still some Time remaining to eject Devils and cure Diseases, and that then he should consummate his Sacrifice by suffering Death at Jerusalem, which was the Place appointed, as it were, for the Slaughter of all the Prophets.* Whereupon he made a most pathetick Exclamation against that unhappy City, using the same Words which we shall have occasion to remember in another Place.

Luke 14.
1--24.

Shortly after, our Saviour was invited by one of the chief of the *Pharisees* to dine with him on a Sabbath Day ; whether he was follow'd by a Man sick of the Dropsy. *Jesus* observing the Man, first demanded of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*

rises then present, *whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath Day?* But receiving no Answer, he healed him; and having sent him away, justify'd what he had done, by asking them *Whether they would not have done as much to save an Oxe or an Ass on that Day?* To which they could make no Reply. Then observing that the Guests then invited endeavour'd every one for the chief Places at the Table, he took that Occasion to reprove such proud Contention for Precedence; telling them, *That when any Man was invited to a Feast, it was not Wisdom in him to take the highest Place, lest he should be forc'd with Disgrace to remove lower, to make Room for some more honourable Person: But that on the contrary, it was best to take the lowest Place, that so he who invited him might, if there were Cause, make him go higher, which would gain him more Honour among the Guests: For that the Proud should be debas'd, and the Humble exalted.* After thus instructing the Guests, he then turned his Discourse to the Master of the House, whom he found too regardless of the Poor and Needy; advising him in his Feasts, *Not to invite his rich Neighbours and Relations, who would be sure to return his Invitation; but rather the Poor, Blind, Lame and Impotent, who could make no Returns; for that God would recompence such charitable Acts at the Resurrection of the Just.* One of the Company hearing these last Words, repeated that common Saying among the Rabbins, *'Blessed is he that shall eat Bread in the Kingdom of God.'* Whereupon Jesus spake a Parable to them of a certain Man who made a noble Entertainment, and having invited many considerable Guests, sent his Servants to desire their Company just when the Supper was ready: But they all made Excuses; one had purchas'd Land, another had bought Oxen, a third had lately married, and all refused to come. This very much enrag'd the Master of the Feast, who in all Haste sent into the Streets and Lanes of the City, and gather'd together all the poor, lame and impotent Wretches that were to be found. But finding still that he had much Room for more Guests, he order'd his Servants to go out of the City, into the High-Ways and Hedges, and use Compulsion to such as they found, that his House might be fill'd; solemnly declaring, *That not one of the first invited Guests should taste of his Supper:* Intimating by this Parable, that the principal of the Jews should be rejected, while the most despicable Part of them in the Streets and Lanes, and the poor Gentiles in the High-Ways and Hedges, should be received.

Luke 14.
25--35.

Jesus pursuing his Progress, was follow'd by great Multitudes; and well knowing the unsound Minds of many of them, he declar'd to them, as formerly to his Apostles, *That whosoever hated not his Father and Mother, his Wife and Children, his Brothers and Sisters, and his own Life also, when it came in Competition with Him, could not be his Disciple.* And that they might not fail in the Day of Tryal, he advis'd them to cast up before-hand, what a real Possession of Christianity might cost them: *That as a Man who intends to build a Tower, ought first to compute whether he be able to defray the full Charges of it, lest he should be afterwards laugh'd at for his Folly; and as a King who makes War with another King, ought first to consider whether he has sufficient Power to engage him, and be provided with all Necessaries for such an Undertaking: So they ought to consider whether they could be content to relinquish all to be his Disciples.* Adding farther, *That his Followers ought to be the Salt and Seasoning of the World, which if it once lost its Savour, was the most useless and unprofitable Thing in Nature.*

Luke 15.
1--32.

Among the great Multitudes that daily follow'd our Saviour, were many Publicans, and others of a wicked Life, who throng'd to hear his Discourses; which gave great Offence to the proud Scribes and Pharisees, who murmur'd at his condescending Goodness, in freely conversing and eating with such infamous People. Therefore to convince them, that their Complaints were unreasonable, he ask'd them, *Whether if a Man had a hundred Sheep, and one of them stray'd, he would not leave his ninety nine, and seek for that One; and when he had found it, would not take it upon his Shoulders with great Joy, and call in his Friends to congratulate his good Fortune? And in the like Manner, whether a Woman, who had ten Pieces of Silver, if she should lose one of them, would not sweep the whole House for it; and upon finding it, rejoyce with her Neighbours: Telling them, That as in those Cases the finding of the Sheep and Piece of Silver, would cause greater Joy than all the rest that were never lost; so the Conversion of one profligate Sinner, would cause greater Joy among the Angels in Heaven, than ninety nine Persons who were never in that State.* Which Truth he then farther explain'd and prov'd by another excellent Parable. There was a Man who had two Sons, and the younger of them having receiv'd his Portion of Goods from his Father, travell'd into a foreign Country, and spent it all in Lewdness and Debauchery. After he had consum'd and devour'd all, he was necessitated through Want and a Famine to keep Swine to get a hard Livelihood; and in this abandon'd Con-

dition,

dition, reflecting upon his Folly and Misery, he resolv'd to return to his Father, and humbly acknowledging his Fault, to beg his Favour to entertain him again, not as his Son, but his Domestick Servant, that he might not perish with Hunger. As soon as his Father saw him at a Distance, he was affected with an extraordinary Joy and Compassion; and running to him, fell on his Neck, and kiss'd him; while the Son, not elevated with this Kindness, with the profoundest Marks of Sorrow and Humility, declar'd, *That he had sinned against Heaven, and before him, and was not worthy to be call'd his Son.* This free Confession wrought an entire Reconciliation to his Father; who in all Haste stripp'd him of his Rags, call'd for the richest Habit for him, and made a magnificent Feast in his House, to rejoyce for his Return. This generous Action was highly displeasing to the elder Brother; who returning out of the Field, and perceiving the Musick and Jollity, refus'd to enter into the House, because his Father had shewn greater Respect to his lewd extravagant Brother, than ever he had to him, tho' he had always been very faithful in his Duty towards him. This being objected to his Father, he made Answer, *That he was always with him, and all that he had was his; but it was Necessary to feast and rejoyce over his Brother, whose Case was extraordinary, having been dead and restor'd to Life, lost and found again.* By these Parables, he not only display'd the Tendernefs of God, and his Readiness to accept to Mercy all true Penitents; but also, under the Name of the elder Brother he reprov'd the unjust Murmurs of the *Pharisees*, who were displeas'd at his entertaining Sinners, tho' the Salvation of such was the main End of his coming into the World.

After *Jesus* had expos'd the Pride and Envy of the *Pharisees*, he proceeded to reprove their Covetousness, in another Parable propounded to his Disciples; which was of a certain rich Man, who had resolv'd to call his Steward to an Account, and to remove him from his Place, having receiv'd an Accusation against him, that he had embezled his Goods. The Steward finding himself in Danger of being reduc'd to a shameful Begging, or to such Labour as he could not sustain, invented this Project to make up his Loss, and cause others to entertain him; He call'd all his Lord's Debtors; one by one, and discharg'd them of a Part of their Debts; permitting him who owed a hundred Barrels of Oil, to set down but fifty in his Bill; and him who owed a hundred Measures of Wheat, to make it but eighty; and proportionably the rest. Then he taught his Disciples not

Luke 16.

1--13.

to imitate the Injustice, *but the Forecast and Policy of this Steward, by employing their earthly Riches to make them Friends in the Persons of the Poor, by that Means to be receiv'd into everlasting Habitations in Heaven; so that the Children of Light might not be less prudent in Things relating to their Salvation, than the Children of this World were in the Management of their temporal Affairs.* After which he taught them, *That as Men were faithful or unjust in smaller Things, they ought to be so accounted in greater; So that if they were unfaithful Stewards of the Riches of this World, they shou'd not be entrusted with the Riches of Heaven: And that God and the World's Riches were two such contrary Masters, as no Man cou'd serve at the same Time.*

Mathe 16.

14-31.

The covetous Pharisees heard these Truths with Contempt, and derided the Pronouncer of them; but Jesus sharply reprov'd their horrible Pride and Hypocrisie, and their Affectation of the Esteem of Men, *which was abominable in the Sight of God; and the more culpable in them, because they liv'd in the Time of the Preaching of the Kingdom of God, which began at John, and was press'd into by all the inferior People. And tho' it was easier for Heaven and Earth to be dissolv'd, than one Tittle of the Moral Law to fail, yet they had endeavour'd to weaken it by their Traditions; particularly the seventh Commandment, which they frequently broke by permitting and practising Divorces upon unjustifiable Grounds.* Then, as it were, re-assuming his Discourse against Covetousness, he propounded a most affecting Parable or Example of a certain pamper'd rich Man, every Day enjoying the Pleasures of Diet and Habit, Ease and Luxury; and of a certain miserable Beggar nam'd *Lazarus*, laid at his Gate, cover'd all over with Ulcers, and so oppress'd with Hunger, that he beg'd to be fed with the Crums that fell from the other's Table, but cou'd not obtain that Charity from the hard-hearted Wretch; whose Dogs, more merciful than their Master, went and apply'd their healing Tongues to his Sores. At the Deaths of these two, their Fates were as different as their Lives; the poor Man was transported by the Angels into *Abraham's Bosom*, the Place of the most perfect Felicity; the rich Man had the Honour of a splendid Funeral, but his Soul was carry'd to the dismal Regions of Hell: From whence, in the midst of his Torments, beholding the Happiness of the Beggar whom he had contemn'd, he cry'd out to *Abraham* for Mercy, begging, *That he wou'd send Lazarus but with one Drop of Water to cool his Tongue, for he sustained unexpressible Torments in that Flame.* But the holy Patriarch told him, *That it was just,*
that.

that as he had enjoy'd all the Pleasures in his Life Time, and Lazarus born all the Miseries, that he shou'd meet with Torments, and the other with Comfort. And farther, That it was impossible to afford him Relief, by Reason of that vast Abyss between them, that cut off all Intercourse whatsoever: The rich Man perceiving that there was no Mercy to be obtain'd for himself, thought of his five Brothers, then living in the same Luxury and Riot; beseeching Abraham to send Lazarus and give them an Account of his miserable Condition, to prevent their Coming into the same Place of Torment. But Abraham reply'd, That they had the Holy Scriptures, which were sufficient to teach them their Duty. Whereupon the other alledg'd, That if one went to them from the Dead, it wou'd work a certain Repentance. But the Patriarch gave him this preremptory Answer, That if Men refus'd to hearken to the Holy Scriptures, they wou'd never be persuaded by one who arose from the Dead. This Parable not only shew'd the miserable Fate of covetous and uncharitable Persons, but also hinted at the Destruction of the unbelieving Jews, who wou'd neither hearken to Moses and the Prophets, nor to Jesus rising from the Dead.

Then Jesus turning to his Disciples, acquainted them as formerly, *That it was impossible to prevent Scandals and Offences, but that it wou'd be dismal to that Person who caus'd them: That he who scandaliz'd or discourag'd the least Believer, had better be plung'd into the Ocean with a Milstone about his Neck: That it was their Duty to admonish and reprove an offending Brother, and to pardon him if he repented, tho' he trespass'd seven Times in one Day.* The Apostles apprehending some Difficulty in his Injunctions, pray'd, *That he wou'd increase their Faith;* Jesus answer'd them, *That if their Faith were but true, one Grain of it wou'd be of sufficient Force to command that Sycamore Tree to be remov'd into the midst of the Sea.* Then to remove from them all Thoughts of Merit, when they had done their best Services, he propounded an Example of a Servant, who after his Return from Ploughing and other Labour in the Field, was not immediately to find Ease and Refreshment, but to wait and attend his Master 'till he thought fit; and after he had us'd his utmost Diligence, was not to expect Thanks from his Master, as tho' he was oblig'd to him. *And so likewise that they, when they had observ'd all the Commands of God, were to account themselves unworthy and unprofitable Servants, for that they had only perform'd their Duty.*

VI.

Luke 17.
11--19.

After two Months Absence from *Jerusalem*, our Lord designing to begin his last Journey toward that City, pass'd between *Galilee* and *Samaria*, to take a short Circuit beyond *Jordan* in *Peræa*, and to enter *Judæa* not far from *Jericho*. In his Passage towards *Jordan*, at a certain Village, he saw ten Men together, all Lepers, who standing at a Distance, cry'd out, *Jesus, our Master, have Pity on us!* *Jesus* only order'd them to go and shew themselves to the Priests, according to the Law; which they obeying, were cur'd in the Way. One of them, who was a *Samaritan*, and a Stranger in respect of the *Jews*, immediately return'd back, glorifying God, and cast himself at our Lord's Feet, to return him Thanks for the extraordinary Favour. *Jesus* to shew the Gratitude of this Man, said in a kind of Astonishment, *Were there not Ten cleansed? Where then are the other Nine? It is surprizing, that none shou'd return to give God Glory for such a Mercy, but this Stranger.* And he said to him, *Arise, and depart, thy Faith has been thy Cure.*

Luke 17.
2e--37.

About this Time, the *Pharisees*, who waited for the Coming of the *Messiah*, and had drawn up a Romantick Scheme, that he shou'd appear with the utmost Glory of a temporal Monarch, demanded of him, *When the Kingdom of God shou'd come?* He answer'd them, *That it shou'd not appear with outward Pomp and Splendor, nor be confin'd to any particular Place, but that it was already come, and was begun amongst them.* From hence he took an Occasion to acquaint his Disciples, *That the Time wou'd come when they shou'd desire to enjoy his Presence but one Day, but shou'd not see him: That his next coming shou'd be sudden and glorious, like a Flash of Lightning flying along the Skies; but that he must first suffer many Things, and be rejected by the Jews. That as it was in the Days of Noah, when Men eat, and drank, and marry'd, not thinking upon the Flood, 'till it came suddenly upon them, and consum'd them; so it shou'd be at the Time of his second Coming: And that as the Fire from Heaven fell unexpectedly upon the Inhabitants of Sodom; so shou'd his Coming be, to take Vengeance upon the Jewish Nation, as unexpected as that. That then all their Thoughts shou'd be employ'd in saving themselves, without looking behind them, either to pity or save others; remembering the Fate of Lot's Wife, who for looking back was chang'd into a Pillar of Salt. That such as us'd any unchristian Course to save their Lives, shou'd lose them; but that such as ventur'd them, as they ought, shou'd preserve them. And that in that Time there shou'd be much of God's distinguishing Mercy and Providence*

Providence discern'd, in rescuing some, and leaving others to perish by the Calamity. His Disciples asking him, *Where these Things shou'd happen*: he hinted to them, *That Jerusalem and Judæa shou'd be the Carcass, that shou'd be torn in Pieces by the Roman Eagles.*

At the same Time *Jesus* taught his Disciples not to faint, Luke 18. 1--14. nor be weary of Prayer; and to shew of how great Advantage it was to pray with Fervency and Perseverance, he propounded a Parable of a poor Widow, who by her continu'd Importunity alone, prevail'd with an unjust Judge to vindicate her Wrongs, tho' he fear'd neither God nor Man. *And if so, much more might they expect that the just God wou'd revenge his Elect, who cry'd to him Day and Night, tho' he seem'd slow in the Execution.* He farther inform'd them, *That this Vengeance against the unbelieving Jews shou'd be speedy*; yet he intimated, that at his Coming to take it, he shou'd find but little Faith, but little of that patient Waiting for God, which he had been urging. Then to shew that Humility in Prayer was as Necessary as Perseverance, and to beat down the Pride and Confidence of the *Pharisees*, he deliver'd another Parable: Two Men went up into the Temple to pray, the one a *Pharisee*, a Man of Repute, the other a *Publican*, a Man of Infamy; the former went boldly up to the chief Place, and pray'd after this Manner, *God, I thank thee, I am not such a Sinner as other Men are, I am no Extortioner, not Unjust, no Adulterer, nor like you Publican; I fast twice every Week, and pay Tithes of all Things I possess.* But the poor *Publican* on the other Side, standing at a Distance in the Court of the *Gentiles*, out of a deep Sense of his Unworthiness, and not daring to lift up his Eyes towards Heaven, beat upon his Breast, and cry'd, *Lord, be merciful to me a Sinner!* Then *Jesus* declar'd, *That this latter departed more acceptable to God than the other; for that the Proud shou'd be debas'd, and the Humble be exalted.*

Shortly after, *Jesus* cross'd the River *Jordan* into *Peræa*, Matth. 19. 1--12. where he was follow'd again by vast Multitudes of People, whom he both taught and cured of such Distempers as they Mark 10. 1--12. had. Here the *Pharisees* came to him, and demanded of him, *Whether it was lawful for a Man to put away his Wife for every Cause?* By which Question they thought to ensnare him; for if he answer'd affirmatively, it wou'd contradict his former Doctrine; if negatively, it might render him odious to many of the People; Whereupon he ask'd them, *What Moses commanded in the Law?* They reply'd, *That Moses allow'd them to put away their Wives, upon*
giving

giving them a Writing to testify their Divorcement. But Jesus refer'd them to the first Institution of Marriage by God himself; where it was declar'd, when Male and Female were created, 'That a Man should leave Father and Mother and cleave to his Wife, and that they two shou'd become one Flesh: And that therefore seeing God had united them, Man ought not to separate them. They still insisted upon the Permission given them by Moses; but he answer'd them, That Moses allow'd it only for the Hardness of their Hearts, but that from the Beginning it was otherwise: That therefore whosoever put away his Wife, unless in the Case of Whoredom, and marry'd another, was an Adulterer; and whoever marry'd the divorc'd Party, was Guilty of the same Sin. His Disciples, when they had retir'd to a House, consulted him again upon the same Subject, and he return'd them the same Answer; from whence they made this Conclusion, That if the nuptial Laws were so strict, it was better not to marry at all. Jesus told them; That the Purity of a single Life was attainable by only a few, whom either Nature had befriended, or human Force had rendered incapable of Marriage, or whom the ardent Desire of Heaven had enabled to preserve a consummate Chastity. And since all Men were not capable of so great a Virtue, he concluded with these Words, He who is able to observe it, let him do so: That is to say, He who has the Gift of Continnence bestow'd on him, let him use it; it is more commendable for such an one to live single.

Matth. 19.

12--15.

Mark 10.

13--16.

Luke 18.

15--17.

Several of the Company perceiving how ready our Lord was to do good to all who came to him, brought little Children to him, that he might lay his Hands upon them and bless them. His Disciples, thinking it unfit that their Master shou'd be disturb'd and interrupted by Infants, rebuked and spoke roughly to the Persons who brought them. But Jesus, who had shewn his Regard to such not long before, was displeas'd at this Action, and order'd them, To suffer, and not forbid little Children to come to him and be his Disciples, for to such belonged the Kingdom of Heaven: Solemnly declaring, That whosoever receiv'd not the Kingdom of God with the Humility and Simplicity of a little Child, shou'd never enter into it. After this, he took the Children up in his Arms, laid his Hands upon them, and blessed them; and then departed from thence.

Matth. 19.

16--26.

Mark 10.

17--27.

Luke 18.

18--27.

As Jesus was on his Journey, a young Person of Quality, of great Riches and Authority, ran to him, and humbly upon his Knees propos'd to him this important Question; Good Master, what good Thing must I do to obtain eternal Life? Jesus knowing that he took him for a Man only, first ask'd

ask'd him, *Why he gave him the Title of Good, which only belong'd to God himself: And then in Answer to his Question told him, that if he expected eternal Life, he must begin with keeping the Commandments.* The young Man asking him, which of them he must keep, he referr'd him to all the Commandments of the second Table, as a certain Sign of his Keeping those of the first, and nam'd them distinctly to him. Upon which he return'd a ready Answer, *That he had kept all these from his Youth, desiring to know, in what he was yet defective.* Jesus looking on him, shew'd some Signs of Love and Pity towards one who was so solicitous concerning his eternal Happiness; but withal knowing his Covetousness, and willing to touch the secret Sore of his Mind, he gave him this extraordinary Command to try him; namely, *That he should go and sell all that he had, and distribute it to the Poor, and take up his Cross and follow him; telling him that if he did so, he should meet with a greater and more certain Treasure in Heaven.* This was like a Thunder-clap to the young Gentleman, who being unable to endure the Thoughts of parting with so vast an Estate, tho' for Heaven it self, departed with great Sorrow and Concern. Jesus seeing him thus troubled, look'd round about him, and declar'd to his Disciples, *That it was extremely difficult for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* And because they were much surpriz'd at these Words, he repeated the same Truth to them; saying, *Little Children, how hard is it for such as trust in their Riches, to enter into the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a Camel to pass through the Eye of a Needle, than for such to pass into Heaven.* This Assertion increas'd the Astonishment of the Apostles, who thereupon said one to another, *Who then can be saved?* But Jesus remov'd their Fears by letting them know, *That tho' these Things were impossible with Men, they were not so with God, who could change the Hearts and Affections of Men as he pleas'd.*

The Apostles having heard what Reward Jesus had promis'd to the young Man in Exchange for his earthly Riches, Peter in the Name of the rest, desir'd to know, *What Reward they might expect, since they had relinquish'd all and follow'd him?* Jesus reply'd, *That at the general Resurrection, when he himself should be seated upon his Throne of Glory, they also should sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel: Declaring farther, That not only they, but whosoever should forsake his House and Lands, his Kindred and Relations, for His and the Gospel's Sake, should receive such Comforts in this World, with his Persecutions, as should*

Matth. 19.

27--30.

Mark 10.

28--31.

Luke 18.

28--30.

Matth. 20.
1-16.

vastly exceed his former Losses, and in the World to come Eternal Life. But to teach them, that the first may come to be last, and the last first; and to shew them, that these high Rewards proceeded from the Bounty of Heaven, and not Mens Merits, he propounded this remarkable Parable. A certain Master of a Family went out early in a Morning to hire Labourers into his Vineyard; and agreeing with several at certain Wages, amounting to seven Pence half Penny of our Mony, he sent them immediately to work: About the third Hour of the Day, he found other Labourers unemploy'd, whom he also sent to work in his Vineyard; telling them, *That he would give them what was reasonable.* About the sixth and the ninth Hour he did the same, and also about the last Hour of the Day, still sending in new Labourers, with the same Promise of *giving them what was reasonable.* At Night, when all were to receive their Wages, he order'd his Steward to begin with the last Comers, and to pay them the same Wages that he had promis'd to the first; which caus'd the other to expect more, and to murmur against the Master *for equalling those who had wrought but one Hour, to them who had labour'd a whole Day.* But the Master reprov'd their invidious Complaints, and made it appear, *That he did them no Injury, because he paid them according to Agreement; and for the rest, it was lawful to give them as much as he pleas'd.* Thus those Workmen who most valu'd their Labour, notwithstanding they had wrought longest, were last regarded, and least esteem'd; and those who had least Confidence, were first rewarded, and liberally treated. From whence *Jesus* concluded, *That that last should be first, and the first last: For many were called, but few were chosen.*

John 11.
1-16.

VII. Our Blessed Saviour continu'd not many Days in *Peræa*, before he received a Message out of *Judæa* from two Sisters of *Bethany*, *Martha* and *Mary*, of the dangerous Sickness of their Brother *Lazarus*, a Person whom he lov'd in a particular Manner. *Jesus* made Answer, *that his Sick-ness was not irrecoverable, but inflicted on him to manifest both the Glory of God, and of his Son;* therefore, tho' he had a special Kindness for the Family, he hastned not, but tarri'd two Days still in the same Place. After that he propos'd to the Apostles his Returning into *Judæa*; but they, apprehensive of their own, as well as his Danger, objected the late Endeavours of the *Jews* to stone him, and were surpriz'd at his Design. *Jesus* acquainted them, *That his Time, like each particular Day, had its stated Length, in*

which

which he might walk in the Light without Danger, 'till the Night should put a period to it. Then he added, That their Friend Lazarus was fallen asleep, but he would go and awake him. His Disciples understanding his Words literally, made answer, That his sleeping would prove his Cure, therefore he need not go: But he told them in plain Terms, That Lazarus was really dead, and that for their Sakes, and to confirm their Faith, he was glad that he was not present at the Time; but that however now he would go to the Place. Thomas finding his Master resolv'd to go into Judæa, where there was so much Danger, with no little Courage cry'd out, Let us go also, and venture our Lives with him.

In this Journey, the Apostles Minds were fill'd with discouraging and melancholy Apprehensions; and Jesus to arm and prepare them against the Scandal of the Cross, taking them apart, declared a third Time, That he must go up to Jerusalem, where all Things that were written by the Prophets concerning him should be fully accomplish'd; particularly, that he should be deliver'd up to the Jewish Governors, the chief Priests and Scribes, who should pronounce him Guilty of Death, and turn him over to the Gentiles, from whom he should meet with the highest Indignation, and Crucifixion it self: But that he should rise again the third Day. But they still conceiving and expecting a temporal Kingdom, were at a Loss; and, as the Gospel observes, knew not the Things that were spoken. In hopes therefore of this imaginary Greatness, and supposing the Resurrection he had spoken of to be the Beginning of his terrestrial Kingdom, the two Sons of Zebedee, by the Mouth of their Mother Salome, humbly petition'd, That they two might have the Honour of Sitting one at his Right Hand, and the other at his Left in his Kingdom; as the Heads of Judah and Joseph had the first Places among the Rulers of the Tribes of Israel. Jesus immediately condemn'd their Rashness, and first ask'd them, Whether, as a Qualification for his Kingdom, they were able to endure that bitter Cup, and that bloody Baptism that were appointed for himself? They, without considering the Consequence, answer'd, That they were able. Jesus mercifully bearing with their Infirmities, told them, That they should partake with him in his Cup and his Baptism, but that the great Honour of the chief Places of his Kingdom was to be dispos'd of according to the Pre-determination of his Father. The Ambition of these two extremely provok'd the Indignation of the other Ten; but Jesus to cure their Jealousie, as well as the others Ambition, de-

Matth. 20.

17--28.

Mark 10.

32--44.

Luke 18.

31--34.

clar'd to them all, *That his Kingdom was far different from those of this World, whose Princes and Governors strove to exercise their utmost Power and Dominion over their Subjects; whereas, whosoever expected to be Great and Chief among his Followers, must be a Servant to the rest; according to the Example of himself, who came not to be waited on, but to serve others, and even to lay down his Life for their Redemption.*

Luke 19.
1--10.

Jesus crossing the River *Jordan* into *Judæa*, soon after pass'd through *Jericho*, a celebrated City, second to *Jerusalem*, and about twenty Miles almost East of it. In this City resided a certain general Collector among the *Publicans* called *Zaccheus*, a Man very rich, and not a little desirous of Seeing *Jesus*: But because the great Throngs prevented him, he ran before, and being of a very small Stature, climb'd up into a Sycamore Tree, in a Place by which he knew he was to pass. Our Lord, knowing the Hearts of Men, and being pleas'd with his Earnestness and Zeal, as he pass'd by, call'd him by his Name from the Tree, and desired him to *hasten down, for he design'd to be his Guest that Day.* This Call was receiv'd with great Joy and Satisfaction by *Zaccheus*; while others murmur'd and reflected upon *Jesus* for entering the House of a Man of so Scandalous a Profession. But he made it appear by the miraculous Change wrought in the Heart of this *Publican*, that he went thither only as a Physician for the Cure of a distemper'd Family: for *Zaccheus* presenting himself before him, solemnly declar'd, *That he would give even half of his Estate to the Poor, and if he had knowingly wrong'd any Man, he would restore him fourfold.* Whereupon our Lord pronounc'd, *That Salvation was come to his House, and that he was a Son of Abraham as well as others; for that the Son of Man was come to seek and to save what was lost.*

Luke 19.
11--27.

All those who were present, harkned to *Jesus* with great Attention; and as they were near to *Jerusalem*, they thought that the glorious and imaginary Reign of the *Messiah* would immediately commence, supposing that *Jesus* had undertaken this Journey to the Passover to seat himself upon his Throne, and to be install'd in his Kingdom. But he knowing their Thoughts and Expectations, propounded this Parable to them: A certain great and noble Man, being ready for a Journey into a foreign Country, in order to take Possession of a Kingdom just fallen to him, call'd all his Servants, and gave to every one an equal but small Sum of Money to trade withal, and improve, till he should return.

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Some of his Country-Men, who hated him, sent after him, and declared that they would not admit of him for their Governor: But notwithstanding this Opposition, having obtain'd his new Kingdom, he return'd again, and first call'd his Servants to Account to whom he had intrusted his Mony: And finding that one of them had improv'd his Mony to ten Times, and the other to five Times the Sum, he munificently rewarded the Industry of the first with the Government of ten, and of the second with the Government of five Cities. But calling a third Servant, who instead of trading with his Mony, had carefully lock'd it up, fearing, as he pretended, the great Severity of his Master, and not daring to hazard what was intrusted to him, the King immediately condemn'd him by his own Words, and that his fearing a severe Account was an Aggravation of his Neglect; therefore he took away his Mony and gave it to him whom he had most bountifully rewarded; declaring, *That all who improv'd what they had should have more, but that the others should lose all.* This done, he summon'd all those who refus'd to acknowledge him for their Governor, and ordered them to be put to Death in his Presence. By this Parable our Saviour intimated not only the Punishment of negligent *Christians*, but also the Destruction of the contumacious *Jews*.

The next Day, *Jesus* leaving *Jericho*, and being accompany'd with great Multitudes, a certain blind Man, named *Bartimæus*, the Son of *Timæus*, who sat by the Way-side begging, being inform'd of the Meaning of this great Concurrence of People, and hearing that *Jesus* pass'd by, cry'd out with another Blind Man in the same Road, *Jesus, thou Son of David, have Mercy on me!* The People who accompany'd *Jesus*, especially those who went before him, spoke roughly to him, urging him to keep Silence; but he cry'd out so much the louder, as also did his Companion, *Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!* *Jesus*, who had cured another blind Man at his Entrance into *Jericho*, stood still, and commanded him to be call'd; which caus'd some about him to bid him be of good Courage since *Jesus* call'd him. *Bartimæus* immediately cast away his Garment, arose and went with his Companion to *Jesus*; who asked them both, *What Favour they expected from him?* They answer'd, *Lord! that thou wouldst open our Eyes.* Whereupon our Saviour, being mov'd with Compassion, and pleas'd with their ready Faith, touch'd their Eyes, and immediately they receiv'd their Sight, and followed him, glorifying the Almighty God;

Mark 10.

40--52.

Matth. 20.

29--34.

as likewise did all the People, who had been Witnesses of this Miracle.

John II.
17-44.

Four Days after *Lazarus* was bury'd, our Lord arriv'd at *Bethany*, within two Miles of *Jerusalem*, where many of the *Jews* from *Jerusalem* had repaired to condole with the two Sisters *Martha* and *Mary*, for the Loss of their Brother. Before he enter'd the Town, *Martha* with great Eagerness met him, and in a most pathetick Manner cry'd out, *Lord! if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not dyed.* Adding, *That she was certain, that still God would grant whatsoever he pleas'd to ask;* doubting as it were, his, tho' not his Father's Power. *Jesus* assur'd her, *That her Brother should rise again;* which she readily granted, but believ'd it should be at the general Resurrection at the last Day. Whereupon *Jesus* declar'd, *That the Resurrection and the Life depended upon him alone, That such as believ'd in him, if they were dead, should be restor'd to Life;* and farther, *such as liv'd and believ'd in him, should not die eternally:* Demanding, *Whether she believ'd he had such a Power?* She assented to all at once; declaring, *That she believ'd him to be the promis'd Messiah, the Son of the living God.* After this Discourse, she return'd to her Sister *Mary*, and told her privately, *That the Master was come, and expected to see her;* upon which she immediately rose up, and hastned to the Place where *Martha* left him; which sudden Action caus'd the *Jews* to follow her at a Distance, supposing that, according to Custom, she went to lament at her Brother's Tomb. *Mary* approaching the Blessed *Jesus*, fell prostrate at his Feet, and with the profoundest Marks of Sorrow, cry'd, *Lord! If thou hadst been here, my Brother had not dy'd.* Her Tears and Sorrow, accompany'd with the Lamentations of her Followers, affected the Son of God, so that he groan'd within himself; shewing his Indignation against Sin, which had drawn on Death and this Affliction. Then demanding where they had bury'd the Body, he follow'd them to the Place, sympathizing with them, and weeping as well as they; which occasion'd some of the *Jews* to say, *Observe, how he lov'd him!* while others maliciously ask'd, *Could not he, who open'd the Eyes of the Blind, have prevented this Man's Death?* *Jesus* still manifesting the same Perturbation of Mind, came to the Grave, which was a Pit, with a Stone laid at the Mouth of it, which Stone he commanded to be remov'd; but *Martha* objected, *That the Body had been now dead four Days, and that the opening of the Grave would only occasion a noisome Smell.* *Je-*
sus

Jesus reprov'd her Infidelity, and told her, *She might expect to see the Glory of God manifested in him.* Then the Stone being remov'd, he solemnly lift up his Eyes to Heaven, and pray'd; saying, *Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me; I know that thou hearest me at all Times; but I speak this because of these People who stand by, that they may be convinced, and assur'd of my Divine Mission.* Having spoken these Words, he cry'd with a loud Voice, *Lazarus come forth:* And immediately he arose from his Bed of Darkness, having his Hands and Feet bound with Grave-Clothes, and his Head wrapp'd with a Napkin; all which *Jesus* order'd to be loos'd. This was the third and greatest Miracle our Saviour had wrought in this Kind; and was a noble Fore-runner of the greatest of all his Miracles, his own Resurrection.

This solemn and incontestable Miracle caus'd the greatest Surprise and Astonishment to all the Spectators, and convinc'd the greatest Part of them, who from that Time believ'd in *Jesus*; but others more obstinate, reported the Matter in *Jerusalem* to his mortal Enemies the *Pharisees*. Upon which Report immediately the grand *Sanhedrim* met, and had a solemn Debate, *What they should do, since this Man had wrought many Miracles? That if they thus permitted him to go on, all the Nation would believe him to be the Messiah; and that then the Romans fearing he should set up for a King, and withdraw the People from their Obedience, would come and destroy their City and Nation.* Whereupon the High-Priest *Caiaphas* stood up, and very imperiously deliver'd his Opinion, *That they understood nothing, nor consider'd, that the publickly Safety was first to be consulted, that it was necessary for one Man to die, rather than a whole Nation should perish.* Thus did this wretched Man express the Cruel Motions of his Hatred against the Son of God; but though he knew nothing of the Designs of Heaven for the Salvation of Mankind, yet God was pleas'd at this Time to honour his Priesthood in the Person of his High-Priest, and prophecy'd by his Mouth *of the Death which Jesus should suffer, to save not only the Jews, but also to gather together into one Church the Children of God, which were dispersed in all other Nations.* This Advice was so well approv'd by the rest, that from that Time the Priests and *Pharisees* sought all Opportunities to put him to Death; and to that End issu'd out Orders, *That if any Man knew where he was, he should discover him, that he might be apprehended.* But because his Hour was not yet come, tho' it drew very near, he declin'd their Fury for a short Time, by not appearing

John II.
45--57.

in Publick, but retiring into a desert Place, and a little City call'd *Ephraim*, in the Borders of *Samarina*, not far from *Fericho*, where he continu'd a few Days with his Apostles.

John 12.
1--11.

Six Days before this last Passover, our Lord, in Order to go up to *Jerusalem*, repaired again to *Bethany*, where he was gratefully entertain'd at a Supper by the two Sisters; *Martha* waited, but *Lazarus* whom he had rais'd was one of those who sat at the Table with him. This Supper was made upon a Sabbath Night, which, according to Custom, was always more plentiful than any other; and *Mary* to express her Love and Bounty, took a Pound of the most valuable Ointment compos'd of Spikenard, and anointed the Feet of *Jesus*, and wiped them with the Hair of her Head; and the whole House was fill'd with the fragrant Perfumes. The Sight of this costly Entertainment provok'd the corrupt Humours of *Judas Iscariot*, who complain'd, That this might have been sold for 300 *Denarii*, about 9l. 7s. 6d. of our Mony, and given to the Poor; not that he valu'd the Poor, but, as the Gospel observes that he might gratifie his Avarice. But *Jesus* order'd him, *Not to hinder her, for she had reserv'd it against the Day of his Funeral; and they had always Opportunity to shew their Charity to the Poor, but not so to him.* At this Supper great Numbers of *Jews* out of Curiosity came to *Bethany*, not only to gain a Sight of *Jesus*, but also of *Lazarus*, whom he had so miraculously rais'd from the Dead. But the chief Priests out of Fear and Envy consulted also to put *Lazarus* to death, because that by Means of his Resurrection many of the *Jews* believ'd and were converted to *Christ*.

PALM-SUNDAY.

VIII.

The following Day after our Saviour's Supper at *Bethany*, began the last great Week of his Passion, which was the Tenth Day of the Month *Nisan*, answering to our 29th of *March*, and was the same Day that the Paschal Lamb was taken up and presented at *Jerusalem*. On this Day, our Lord, designing no longer to avoid the Fury of the *Jews*, resolv'd to make his publick and Kingly Entry into *Jerusalem*, and present himself in the Temple as the true Lamb of God, that was to take away the Sins of the World. Therefore leaving *Bethany* in the Morning, and taking his Disciples and others with him, he arriv'd at a Place call'd *Bethpage*, upon Mount *Olivet*, somewhat less than

Matth. 21.

1--9.

Mark 11.

1--10.

Luke 19.

29--38.

John 12.

12--19.

than a Mile from *Jerusalem*: From whence he sent two of his Apostles, probably *Peter* and *John*, to a neighbouring Village, telling them, *That at a Place where two Ways met, they should find a She-Ass, and a Colt with her that was never back'd; ordering them, to loose them both and bring them to him: And that if the Owner interrupted them, they should let him know, That the Lord had Occasion for them; upon their saying those Words, he would freely let them go: Shewing by this his Divine Power over the Hearts and Wills of Men.* The two Apostles exactly obey'd this Order, and finding all Things as *Jesus* had foretold, they brought the Ass and Colt to them; and laying their Garments upon the latter, they mounted *Jesus* upon him, who in that solemn Manner rode to *Jerusalem*; accomplishing thereby that Prophecie of *Zechary*, *Fear not, Daughter of Sion, behold thy King cometh, full of Meekness, and riding upon the Colt of an Ass.* In the mean time, the People who repaired to the Feast, being inform'd by several Eye-Witnesses of the Resurrection of *Lazarus*, and excited by an extraordinary Impulse, came running out of the City in mighty Throngs to meet *Jesus* with Branches of Palm-Trees in their Hands, crying out, *Hosanna! Salvation and Glory! Blessed be the King of Israel, who cometh in the Name of the Lord!* And great Numbers of People spread their Garments in the Way, and others cut down Branches from the Trees, and strew'd them where he was to pass; hereby giving him those Honours that were us'd only in the Triumphs of Kings and Emperors. When he was arriv'd at the Descent of Mount *Olivet*, the whole Body of the Disciples being transported with the Honours shewn to their Master, broke out into Raptures of Thanksgiving, and loud Doxologies to God for all the mighty Works they had seen. And all the People, as well those who went before, as those who follow'd after, join'd with the Disciples in their triumphant Acclamations; so that *Jesus* was surrounded with solemn Shouts and Applauses, crying still, *Hosanna! Honour to the Son of David! Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the Lord: Blessed be the Kingdom of our Father David, which we have now seen: Hosanna! Peace and Honour in the highest Heavens!*

The *Pharisees* could not see such extraordinary Honours shewn to one whose Death they had resolv'd, without great Indignation, and therefore thus argu'd among themselves, *Do ye not perceive, that we prevail nothing? Behold all the World is gone after him!* But some of them could not so easily conceal their Envy and Displeasure, but with some seeming

John 12.

19.

Luke 19.

39-44.

Matth. 24.

10, 11.

seeming Complaisance, desir'd *Jesus* to command the Silence of his Disciples. *Jesus* to give them a final Answer, declar'd, *That if his Disciples should join so far as to smother his Honour, the very Stones would proclaim it.* Upon their near Approach to *Jerusalem*, and a full View of that glorious City and Temple, *Jesus* casting his Eyes upon that wretched Place, whose deplorable Miseries he foresaw, shed forth Tears as a Sign of his Tenderness and Compassion for Her; crying, *Oh that thou hadst known, at least in this thy appointed Day, the Things conducing to thy Peace! But now, alas, they are hidden from thine Eyes. For the fatal Time shall come when thy Enemies shall throw up Trenches about thee, hem thee in on every Side, destroy thy Children, demolish thee, and not leave in thee one Stone upon another, because thou would'st not know the happy Time of thy Visitation.* By which he shew'd himself more affected with the Calamities of the City, than the Acclamations of the People. Being enter'd the City with such a vast Concurrence of People, all the Citizens were mov'd with an extraordinary Curiosity, and every Person enquir'd, *Who it was?* The Multitude made Answer, *That it was Jesus, the great Prophet of Nazareth in Galilee.*

Matth 21.

12--16.

Luke 19.

45--48.

Our Lord, to shew that his Kingdom was a spiritual Kingdom, did not repair to the Palace, but went directly to the Temple; where, looking about him, he saw the Court of the *Gentiles* notoriously prophan'd and dishonour'd by Trading and Merchandize. Therefore to shew his Authority, and just Indignation, as he did three Years before, he drove out all the Buyers and Sellers from the sacred Ground, overthrew the Tables of the Money-Changers, and the Stalls of the Dove-Sellers; declaring, that according to the Scriptures, *His House should be call'd a House of Prayer, but they had made it a very Den of Thieves.* Then to manifest his Authority and Power, he miraculously cur'd many blind and lame Persons, who were brought to him into the Temple. The People were fill'd with Admiration at these Things; but the chief Priests and Scribes seeing these Miracles, and perceiving the Acclamations of the Children who cry'd out in the Temple, *Hosanna, to the Son of David!* were extremely enrag'd, and discover'd their Anger by asking him, *If he heard what they said?* But he silenc'd them by shewing, That what was so highly displeasing to them, did really fulfil the Scriptures, particularly that place in the Psalms, where it is said, *Out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings thou hast perfected Praise.* This so little satisfy'd them, that they more earnestly sought Occasions to destroy him;

him; but they were much aw'd by the People, who heard him with the greatest Readiness and Attention.

Besides, the *Jews*, who were come to *Jerusalem* at the *Passover*, great Numbers of *Gentiles*, being Profelytes of the Gate, also repaired thither to worship God at that Feast. Some of these, whom the Evangelist calls *Greeks*, excited by Curiosity, desired *Philip*, one of the Apostles, to bring them to a sight of *Jesus*; which was soon effected by the Assistance of *Andrew*. *Jesus*, who by his Death was to obtain Salvation for *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, to remove the Scandal of the Cross, declar'd to them, *That the Hour was now approaching that he should be glorify'd: And that as a Grain of Wheat brought forth no Fruit, 'till it was dead in the Earth where it was sown; so should his Death be the Seed which should produce a plentiful Harvest; that the Product of it, the faithful, should learn by his Example to hate their Lives in this World, that they might be preserv'd in the next, and that their Service in following him through all Troubles, might be rewarded with eternal Glory.* While he was thus Preaching concerning his Death and Sufferings, he seem'd seiz'd with a natural Horrour of his approaching Passion, and God's Wrath against Mens Sins that were laid upon him; crying, *My Soul is oppress'd, what shall I say? Father, save me from this Hour.* But considering again what great Glory God would receive by his Death, he added, *But for this Cause came I to this Hour: Father, glorifie thy Name.* At the same time there came a Voice like Thunder from Heaven, saying, *I have glorify'd it already, and will glorifie it again.* Of those who were present, some thought it only a Clap of Thunder, others that an Angel spoke to him; but he assur'd them, *That this Voice came not for his but for their Sakes.* And to let them know what Influence his Death upon the Cross ought to have upon all Mankind, he declar'd, *That now was the World judged, and the Prince of it, the Devil, cast out; and that when the Son of Man was lifted up from the Earth, he would draw all Men to him.* Upon this the *Jews* demanded of him, *How the Death of the Son of Man could be consonant to the Holy Scriptures, which say, That Christ must endure for ever?* Asking farther, *Who was the Son of Man?* *Jesus* answer'd them, *That they should enjoy that Light but a short Time; therefore since they could not walk nor act, when they were depriv'd of it, they ought to believe in the Light while he was with them.* But neither these Divine Discourses, nor the miraculous Cures could gain the Faith of many of the *Jews*, who were determined by their human Interest; for tho' many of the Rulers

Rulers believ'd in him, yet they durst not confess it because of the *Pharisees*, valuing the Praises of Men more than the Esteem of Heaven. At the Evening, *Jesus*, to avoid Suspicion, return'd to *Bethany* with his Apostles, and lodg'd there.

M O N D A Y.

Mark 11.
12--19.
Matth. 21.
18, 19.
John 12.
44--50.

The next Morning *Jesus* return'd again to *Jerusalem*, and finding himself hungry by the Way, he went to a Fig-Tree not far distant, which being full of Leaves he expected old Fruit upon it, tho' it was not the Season for new: But finding nothing to satisfy his Hunger, for the Instruction of his Disciples, he was willing to shew a Miracle upon a fruitless Tree; and thereupon curst it in their Presence, saying, *Let there be no Fruit grow on thee for ever*: And immediately the Fig-Tree wither'd away. And hereby, as in a Type, he fore-shew'd the Curse and Judgment of God, which shou'd come upon that hypocritical and barren Nation the *Jews*, for rejecting the Means of Grace and Salvation now offer'd to them. Then entering the Temple, he again clear'd it from all Traders, as appears from *St. Mark*, not permitting any Man to carry a Vessel through the Court of the *Gentiles*; alledging, that it was written, *That his House shou'd be call'd a House of Prayer to all Nations*, to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*: Intimating that the Partition-Wall shou'd be remov'd, and all Nations partake of the same Privileges. These things encreas'd the Indignation of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who continually sought his Life, but were much restrain'd by the Esteem and Veneration the People had for him. After this *Jesus* cry'd out in the Temple, *That whosoever believ'd and saw him, both believ'd and saw him who sent him: That he was come a Light into the World, that whosoever believ'd on him, might be freed from Darkness: That he came to save, and not to judge; and that he who rejected his Words, shou'd be judged by the same Word at the last Day; for that he had not spoken of himself, nor taught any thing but by the express Orders of his Father, whose Commandments were eternal Life*. Having taught this Day publickly in the Temple, at the Evening he retir'd again from the Multitudes, and return'd with his Apostles to *Bethany*.

T U E S D A Y.

Mark 11.
20--26.
Matth. 21.
20--22.

The next Morning our Lord repaired a third Time to *Jerusalem*; in his Passage the Apostles having cast their Eyes

Eyes upon the Fig-tree which *Jesus* had cursed the Day before, and observ'd that it was quite wither'd away, and dead to the very Roots, *Peter* with no little Admiration shew'd it to his Master, as a thing very surprizing and astonishing. Whereupon *Jesus* took an Occasion to shew them, how great was the Power of Faith when join'd with Prayer, declaring, *That if they had a stedfast Faith in God, they shou'd be enabled to perform greater Miracles than this, not only to blast a Fig-Tree, but to remove Mountains, and conquer all the Difficulties in the Work of their Ministry: And whatsoever they shou'd ask with Faith in Prayer, shou'd be certainly granted them, provided that they were careful before Prayer to pardon all those who had offended them; for that unless that were done, God wou'd never pardon their Offences.*

Jesus again enter'd the Temple, and while he was teaching and preaching the Gospel to the People, the chief Priests, Scribes and Rulers of the People, whose Business it was to enquire into Affairs of this Nature, came to him, and imperiously demanded of him, *By what Authority, and by whose Commission he did these Things?* *Jesus*, who had at other Times sufficiently vindicated his Authority, wou'd give them no direct Answer, but told them, *That he wou'd propose one Question to them, which if they answer'd he wou'd give them full Satisfaction; and that was, Whether the Baptism of John was from Heaven or of Men, of Divine or Human Institution?* This prov'd a very knotty Question to them, for they durst not affirm that his Baptism was from Heaven, lest *Jesus* shou'd retort it upon them, *Why they refus'd to believe it?* And shou'd they have affirm'd it to be a mere human Institution, they fear'd that the Multitude, who had so great an Assurance of *John's* being a Prophet, wou'd stone them: Therefore, as the safest way, they made Answer, *They cou'd not tell.* *Jesus* let them know, That his Answer shou'd be to the same Effect, by declaring, *That neither wou'd he tell them, by what Authority he did these things.* And to this he subjoin'd a Parable of a certain Man, who commanded his two Sons to go and work in his Vineyard: The first told him plainly, *That he wou'd not go,* but afterwards repented, and went; the other promis'd him to go, but went not. Then *Jesus* demanded of the Priests and Scribes, *Which of the two Sons perform'd the Will of his Father?* They readily answer'd, *The first.* Whereupon he shew'd, That the first signify'd the *Publicans* and common Prostitutes, *Who believed and repented at the Preaching of John Baptist; and that they themselves not believing this his holy Fore-runner, who came to them in the Way*

Matth. 21.
23--32.
Mark II.
27--33.
Luke 20.
1--8.

Way of Righteousness, shou'd not enter into Heaven so easily as those impious and scandalous People, whose Faith and Example they refus'd to follow.

Math. 21.

33--46.

Mark 12.

1--12.

Luke 20.

9--19.

After this, Our Lord added another Parable, which more particularly represented the Perverseness and Obstinacy of the *Jews*; and this was of a certain Master of a Family, who planted a Vineyard, carefully enclos'd it with a Fence, digg'd a Wine-Press, and built a Tower in it; and then letting it out to Husbandmen, travell'd into a foreign Country. About the Time of the Vintage he sent one of his Servants to the Husbandmen, to receive the Fruits of it; but they took the Servant, beat him, and sent him away empty. Then he sent another to them, whom they abus'd and wounded; and a third, whom they ston'd and murder'd; and likewise many others, whom they treated after the like barbarous Manner. At length he resolv'd to send his only Son, whom he lov'd most tenderly, being persuaded that they cou'd not but shew Respect to him: But on the contrary, as soon as they saw him, they impiously resolv'd to kill him, hoping the Inheritance wou'd be their own; and thereupon seiz'd him, ignominiously cast him out of the Vineyard, and slew him. Then *Jesus* said to the People, *When the Lord of the Vineyard returns, how will he deal with these Husbandmen?* Some of them answer'd, *That he cou'd do no less than exterminate those impious Wretches, and let out his Vineyard to other Husbandmen, who wou'd pay him the Fruits when due.* He approv'd of their Answer, and assur'd them, *That these Wretches shou'd indeed be treated in that Manner, and the Vineyard given to others;* but others perceiving how nearly the Parable concern'd them, cry'd, *God forbid.* Whereupon *Jesus* looking upon them, ask'd them, *Whether they understood the Meaning of that Passage in the Psalms, 'The same Stone that the Builders rejected, is become the Head of the Corner; This is the Lord's Doing, and marvellous in your Eyes;* And to make a full Application he declar'd, *That the Kingdom of Heaven shou'd be taken from them, and given to a Nation producing the Fruits of it: And that whosoever shou'd stumble on that Stone, shou'd be bruise'd by it; but that whosoever shou'd feel the full Weight of it, shou'd be grown'd to Powder.* The Priests and Scribes readily perceiv'd that *Jesus* aim'd at them, and wou'd then willingly have seiz'd on him; but still the Fear of the People restrain'd them from attempting it, tho' they were exceedingly enrag'd, and asham'd to see themselves so lively painted out in this Parable.

To much the same Purpose *Jesus* deliver'd a third Parable, *Matth.* 22. which was of a certain King, who having made a great and solemn Invitation to the Marriage of his Son, sent his Servants when all things were ready to desire the Company of those who had been invited; but because they refus'd to come, he sent other Servants to persuade them, and to let them know, what extraordinary Preparations were made for them: But this made no Impression upon them; for one went to his Farm, another to his Merchandize, and the rest laid violent Hands upon the King's Servants, treated them outrageously, and slew them. The King hearing of this ungrateful and barbarous Usage, in a great Fury sent out his Armies, destroy'd those Murtherers, and burnt down their Cities; and instead of these, he sent for all that cou'd be found out of the High-ways, bad and good, to be his Guests; so that the House was fill'd: This being done, the King came to see his Guests, and there perceiving a Man, who, contrary to Custom and Law, had no Wedding-Garment, he ask'd him, *How he dar'd to come there in such a Habit?* And the Wretch was Speechless. Whereupon he commanded his Servants to bind him Hand and Foot, and to cast him into a Place of the extreamest Darkness, Lamentations and Despair. Then *Jesus* made the Application, *That among the many that were call'd, both of the Jews and Gentiles, few were chosen;* for that some rejected the Call, and others came unprepared.

The *Pharisees*, who had as great a Share in the Application of these Parables as any other, departed with much Anger, and a firm Resolution to search out all Occasions of destroying the Person who had thus confounded them. At length they imagined that they had found out an infallible Expedient, by ensnaring him in his Discourse: Whereupon they sent some of their Disciples, as great Hypocrites as themselves, together with the *Herodians*, Men of a contrary Faction, all counterfeiting themselves Men of great Holiness, to tempt him to speak something which might render him obnoxious to the Government, or at least odious to the People. These Men therefore went and address'd themselves to him with their utmost Arts of Insinuation, saying, *Master, we are sensible that you are a Person of Honesty and Integrity, one who teaches the Way of God in Truth and Sincerity, without Fear or Regard to any Man; Therefore pray favour us with your Opinion: Is it lawful to pay Tribute to Cæsar, the Roman Emperor, or not?* Now if he had answer'd in the Affirmative, the Multitude might have detested him as a Betrayer of their ancient Liberties, or abandon'd him as a

Disclaimer of his own Sovereignty; if in the Negative, the *Herodians* would have accus'd him as a Rebel against the jealous Emperor *Tiberius*. But he well knowing their malicious and subtle Intentions, declar'd them *Hypocrites*, and demanded a Sight of the *Roman Denarius*, the common Tribute Money; and taking it in his Hands, he ask'd them, *Whose Image and Superscription it had?* They answer'd him, *Cæsar's*. Then reply'd *Jesus*, *Render therefore to Cæsar the Things that are Cæsar's, and to God the Things that are God's*; as if he had said, Pay *Cæsar* his own Money, and God his own Dues. In which Answer, since they could find no Fault, they departed with Shame and Silence, as well as Admiration.

Matth. 22.
23--33.
Mark 12.
18--27.
Luke 20.
27--40.

Shortly after the Departure of these Men, the *Sadducees*, having gather'd all their Strength together, resolv'd to attack him with a Question and a Difficulty concerning the Resurrection, which they thought insuperable. Their Question was founded upon a Command in the Law of *Moses*, which oblig'd a Man to marry the Widow of his elder Brother dying without Issue; upon which they put the Case to him of a certain Woman who was marry'd according to this Law to seven Brothers successively, who all dy'd without Children, wherefore they desir'd to know of him *Whose Wife of the seven she should be esteem'd after the Resurrection?* Imagining, that a Woman's being marry'd to seven Husbands, and yet Wife but to one, was an Absurdity sufficient to destroy the Belief of that State. But *Jesus* shewed them, *That they neither understood the Sense of the Scriptures, nor the Extent of the Divine Power: For that Marriage, tho' it was necessary in this World to raise up Children and Posterity to mortal Men, was not so in another, where, after the Resurrection, Men should be immortal, and like the Angels in Heaven.* Having thus answer'd their Question, he then destroy'd their Principles, and prov'd the Truth of the Resurrection from those very Scriptures which they acknowledged, particularly where the Lord call'd himself the God of *Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob*, after their Bodies were actually dead; for he could not be the God of those who were finally dead, but of those who in effect were living. Certain of the *Scribes* who heard this Answer, cou'd not but acknowledge that he had made a sufficient Reply, and all the People continu'd their Admiration of his Doctrine.

Matth. 22.
34--46.
Mark 12.
123--34.

The *Pharisees* hearing that the *Sadducees* were silenc'd, began to rally again; and one of them, who was a Doctor of the Law, by way of Tryal ask'd our Saviour, *Which*
was

was the greatest Commandment of the Law? it being much disputed at that Time, whether the ceremonial, or the moral Precepts were the greater. Jesus answered him out of Deuteronomy, That the greatest Commandment was 'to acknowledge one God, and to love him with all their Hearts, with all their Souls, with all their Minds, and with all their Strength; and that the next was like unto it; namely' 'To love their Neighbours as their selves: On which two depended all the Law and the Prophets. The Pharisee highly approved of his Answer, and confess'd, That as he had rightly acknowledged the one God, so he had deservedly preferred Love to him and our Neighbours above all other things; as what was more acceptable to God than all Burnt-Offerings and Sacrifices. Jesus finding that he answered discreetly, and that he did not wilfully oppose the Truth, pronounced him not far from the Kingdom of God. And now Jesus having answered several Questions, put one himself to the Pharisees, who in great Numbers gathered about him, asking them, What they thought of the Messiah, whose Son was he? They readily answered, The Son of David. Whereupon Jesus objected to them these Words of the Psalmist, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, &c. and propos'd to them to explain how he could be David's Son, when by the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he called him his Lord? This Question confounded them, for they would not acknowledge the Divine Nature of Jesus Christ; so that they were ignorant that as God he was really Lord of David, tho' as Man he was his Son.

Our Lord having defeated all Parties and Opposers, turned his Discourse to the People, but chiefly to the Disciples, admonishing them to observe and practise those Truths, which the Scribes and Pharisees taught them, since they sat in Moses's Chair, and had a right to instruct them. But that they ought to beware of imitating their Actions; because they were Hypocrites, teaching without practising, and binding insupportable Burthens on others, without bearing the least Weight themselves: That they performed all their Works to be admired by the World; enlarged their Phylacteries and Fringes, to shew a greater Degree of Sanctity; affected the highest Places in Feasts and Synagogues, the chief Salutations in the Markets, and the distinguishing Title of Rabbi. But that for their Parts they were to avoid the Titles of Master and Father, and to acknowledge themselves to be all Brethren, since they had but one Father, who was God, and one Master Jesus Christ. Adding, That the Greatest among them should be Servant to the rest; that the Proud should be debased,

Matth. 23.
1-39.
Mark 12.
38-40.
Luke 20.
45-47.

and the Humble exalted. Then turning his Speech directly against the Hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees, with the Authority of a Judge and Law-giver, he denounced eight solemn Woes and Execrations against them. 1. For shutting the Kingdom of Heaven against others, without so much as entering themselves. 2. For making long Prayers a Pretence and Occasion of devouring and ruining Widows; for which they shou'd receive the greater Damnation. 3. For traversing Sea and Land to gain one Profelyte, and then making him double more the Child of Hell than themselves. 4. For teaching Men, that they were free from their Oaths when they swore by the Temple and the Altar, and only oblig'd when they swore by the Corban and the Oblation; when as in reality the former sanctified the latter, and included them and all their Appurtenances, as well as Heaven suppos'd the Throne of God, and Him who sat thereon. 5. For being so nice in paying the Tythes of their Garden-Herbs and smallest Concerns, and omitting the most important Duties of the Law, Justice, Mercy, and Faith in God, which more especially ought to have been practis'd. 6. For cleansing the Outside of the Cup and the Dish, while within they were full of Rapine and Incontinence. 7. For being like painted Sepulchres, whose Outsides were beautiful, but their Insides full of rotten Bones and Putrefaction; so were they outwardly righteous, and inwardly villanious. 8. For repairing and beautifying the Monuments of the Prophets and Righteous, and shewing an Abhorrence of their Fathers Cruelty, when by their Actions they testified themselves to be of the Posterity of the Prophets Murtherers, and had fill'd up the Measure of their Ancestors Wickedness. To these Woes our Lord joined several Invective Words and Expressions, calling them Hypocrites, Blind-Guides, Strainers at Gnats and Swallowers of Camels, Serpents, Progeny of Vipers, who were to expect the hottest Flames of Hell. Then he added this dreadful Threatning, Behold I will send to you Prophets, Wise-men and Instructors, and some of them you will kill and crucifie, others scourge in your Assemblies, and persecute from City to City; that all the innocent Blood shed by your Fathers may fall upon your Heads, from the Blood of Abel down to that of Zacharias, who shall be slain between the Temple and the Altar. Then he concluded with this pathetic Exclamation used formerly, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou who murtherest God's Prophets, and the Messengers of Heaven! how often would I have gather'd thy Children together, with the same Tenderness that a Hen does her Chickens under her Wings, but ye refused my Love. Know therefore, your House is left desolate; and after a while ye shall not see my Face,

'till you shall be glad to say, ' *Blessed is he who cometh in the Name of the Lord.*

Our Lord having concluded his Discourses, and being in that part of the Temple called the *Court of the Women*, over-against the Treasury, before he departed, he carefully observed great Numbers, who according to the Custom at or near the Feast, threw Money into the Chests for that purpose; some of whom being rich, gave considerable Sums. And seeing a certain poor Widow casting in two Mites, amounting to no more than a Farthing, he called to his Apostles, and to her lasting Honour assur'd them, *That that poor Widow had been more generous and bountiful than all the rest; for the rich Men who had made large Oblations, had done it out of their Abundance; but on the contrary that Woman from her meer Necessaries had offered to God all that she had, even her whole Livelyhood.*

Mark 12.
41--44.
Luke 21.
1--4.

On the Afternoon our Lord departed from the Temple, in order to return to *Bethany*; at which time the Apostles took a View of the several Buildings of the Temple, and with no small Admiration shewed their Master those rare and magnificent Structures, all built with the finest Marble, beautified with the richest Ornaments, and endowed with the noblest Presents. Whereupon *Jesus* acquainted them with the approaching Ruin and Destruction of the whole, *That all those stately Works should be demolished, and not one Stone left upon another.* This was very surprizing to the Apostles, who had been taught with the other *Jews*, That the Destruction of the Temple should be the Conclusion or Consummation of the Age: Therefore when *Jesus* had seated himself upon *Mount Olivet*, in full View of that glorious Pile of Buildings, four of them, *Peter*, *James*, *John*, and *Andrew*, desired to be satisfied in two Questions, namely, *When this Destruction should happen? And what were the fore-running Signs of his Coming to take this Vengeance, and his shutting up the present Age?* Which they supposed would be the Beginning of the new World, and the temporal Kingdom of the *Messiah*. *Jesus* beginning with their latter Question, first informed them of such Signs as should at some distance precede this Destruction; namely, *That there should appear many Impostors and False Messiah's, who should seduce and mis-lead great Numbers. That there should be Wars, Seditions and Commotions, Nation rising against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom, accompanied with violent Earthquakes, Famines and Pestilences, and other Miseries, and with dreadful Prodigies, and amazing Signs in the Heavens: All which should be but the Beginnings of those*

Matth. 24.
1--16.
Mark 13.
1--23.
Luke 21.
5--24.

Sorrows and Calamities which should befall the Jewish Nation. But that before these things hapned, they were to expect to be persecuted, brought before Judges, scourged in Synagogues, delivered to Punishment by the nearest Relations, hated by all Men for his sake, and many of them to suffer Death. But that for their Incouragement, the Holy Ghost should give them such Wisdom to speak before their Judges, as their Adversaries should not be able to answer or resist; that they should secure and save their Souls by Patience, and in spite of all the Rage of their Persecutors, not one Hair of their Heads should perish: That False Prophets and Hereticks should deceive many, that Persecutions should cause great Numbers to apostatize; that Iniquity should abound, Charity grow cold, and Parents and Children, and nearest Relations destroy each other; and that such as persevered to the last should be saved. But that before the great Destruction came, the Gospel should be preached throughout all, or the principal Parts of the World. Then Jesus proceeded to inform them of such Signs as should more immediately precede this great Destruction; particularly, That when they saw Jerusalem invested with Armies, and God's Temple polluted with execrable Abominations, they might assure themselves that the Desolation of them was nigh; that then the Inhabitants of Judæa ought to fly to the Mountains and Desarts with the utmost Expedition, not turning back for their Cloaths, or their greatest Necessaries, that they might not be involved in their Country's Calamities. Therefore, it would be dismal to such as were with Child, or suckled Children, or if their Flight hapned in the Winter, or on the Sabbath: for in those Days there should be such extreme Miseries and Calamities, such dreadful Wrath and Vengeance, as never hapned from the Creation of the World to that Time, nor ever should again: When the Jews should be miserably slaughter'd, made Slaves and Captives to all Nations, and their magnificent City trodden under Foot by the Gentiles. And this should be executed with such Rigour and Severity, that if did God not shorten the Days upon the Account of his Elect, no Flesh could escape: That then they ought more especially to beware of false Messiahs and Impostors, who should rise up and shew such Signs and Miracles, that if it were possible, would deceive the Elect.

Matth. 24.

27--51.

Mark 13.

24--37.

Luke 21.

25--36.

Our Lord having thus shewn the fore-running Signs, he proceeded to describe the Destruction it self, comparing it as it were to the Destruction of the World, of which many believe it to be a Type: Declaring That his Coming should be impetuous, and swift as a Flash of Lightning darting from the East to the West; which should expose the Jewish

Nation

Nation as a Carcass to be devoured by the Roman Eagles. At which Time there should be a strange Concussion of Nature; above, Signs in the Sun, Moon and Stars; on Earth, Distress and Anxiety, the Sea and Waves roaring, and all Men in a general Consternation and Amazement. Then the Jewish Tribes should mourn, and be sensible of his Coming, by the signal Marks of his Glory and Majesty in the Heavens; and he should send out his Ministers with the Trumpet of his Gospel, and from all Parts of the World gather together his chosen People, and constitute a Church out of the Gentiles, after the Dissolution of that of the Jews. Upon this, his faithful Servants, who had been under severe Persecutions, might lift up their Heads with Confidence; for as they might know the approaching Summer by the Tenderness and Buddings of the Fig-trees; so by these Signs they might know that their Redemption and Deliverance drew near, and that the Kingdom of God was even at their Doors. All which Things he assured them should be accomplish'd before that Generation pass'd away; and that his Words were more firm than Heaven and Earth. But for the precise Time of his Coming, of which they were so inquisitive, that was unknown to all created Beings; for it should happen as in the Days of Noah, while Men were eating and drinking, marrying and espousing, they were suddenly swept away by the Flood. At which Time there should be many Instances of God's discriminating Providence, in saving some and leaving others to perish in the Calamity: That therefore they ought to be watchful over themselves, and not suffer their Minds to be overcharged with Riot and Drunkenness, and the Cares of this Life. That they should watch and pray continually, that they might be accounted worthy to escape those Miseries, and appear before the Son of Man: And that they ought to be as much upon the Guard as a Master of a Family would be, if he knew the exact Time when Thieves would come to rob his House. Whereupon he produced a Parable of a Servant whom his Master upon a Journey had made Governor of his Household, to provide his other Servants with Necessaries and Employment; whose Case should be very happy, and he should be highly rewarded, if his Master at his Return found him doing his Duty: But that if this Servant should foolishly imagine that his Master delay'd his Return, and thereupon abuse his Authority by beating his Fellow-Servants, and spending his Time with Sots and Epicures; his Master would return in an unexpected Hour, would cut him asunder, and appoint him his Portion with Hypocrites, where should be Lamentations and Despair. Then our Lord a second Time repeated his former Command to them, To

watch, lest the Son of Man should come suddenly upon them, and find them sleeping.

Matth. 25.

1-46.

Our Saviour having earnestly exhorted his Disciples to Watchfulness, and knowing that Human Infirmary would incline them to Remissness, re-urged the Necessity of it by two eminent Parables. The first was of ten Virgins, who by Night took their Lamps, and went out to meet the Bridegroom and Bride, and accompany them to the Nuptial Entertainment. Five of them who were foolish, only lighted up their Lamps without any farther Care; but the other five, wisely foreseeing that the Bridegroom might tarry, carry'd Oil along with them in their Vessels, to supply their Lamps if they were in Danger of going out. And thus it happened, for the Bridegroom deferred his Coming, and they all ventured to repose themselves; 'till at Midnight they were suddenly awakened with a Cry of the Bridegroom's Coming, which caused them to rise immediately and trim their Lamps: But the foolish Virgins perceiving their Lamps just going out, desir'd some Oil of the others, who excused themselves, and sent them to the Oil-Sellers; and in their Absence the Bridegroom came, and all such as were ready entered with him to the nuptial Feast. The other Virgins came afterwards, but the Door was then shut, and when they knock'd and cry'd, *Lord open to us!* he gave them this peremptory Answer, *I know you not.* Jesus concluded the Parable with exhorting them, *to watch therefore, because they knew not the Day nor the Hour of the Son of Man's Coming.* The second Parable was of a Man who being about to travel into a far Country, put his Stock into the Hands of his Servants, delivering five Talents to one, two to another, and one to a third; to every one according to their Abilities, to trade with. At his Return he found that most of them by their Industry had doubled what Money they had received, and therefore said to them one by one, *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant, because thou hast been faithful in a few Things, I will make thee Ruler over many, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* But finding one among them, who out of Fear and Slothfulness had hid his Money in the Ground, he first convinced that unprofitable Servant of his notorious Neglect, and then cast him into a Place of Darkness and Despair. From this Parable our Lord proceeded to describe the Manner of the last and universal Judgment. When the Son of Man should come surrounded with the most refulgent Rays of his Majesty, and all the holy Angels of Heaven; and being seated on his bright Throne of Glory, all the Nations in the World shou'd

should be assembled before him, and he should separate them as a Shepherd does his Sheep from his Goats, placing the Sheep on his right Hand, and the Goats on his left. That then the Judge of Heaven and Earth would say to those on his right Hand, *Come, ye blessed Saints, enjoy the glorious Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World: For I was Hungry, and Thirsty, and a Stranger, and Naked, and Sick, and a Prisoner, and ye mercifully assisted, and relieved me in all these Distresses.* That these good Men being surpriz'd with the King's bountiful Acknowledgments, would then ask him, *When they assisted him in any of these Extremities?* and that he would solemnly assure them, *That inasmuch as they had been serviceable to the meanest Christian, they had been serviceable to him.* And that then he would proceed to those on his left Hand, and say, *Go, ye execrable Wretches, into everlasting Flames, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels: For when I was in all the above-named Distresses, of Hunger, Thirst, Travel, Nakedness, Sickness and Imprisonment, ye were hard-hearted, and refus'd your Charity.* And that when they should alledge, that they wanted Opportunity, because they never saw him in those Circumstances; he would silence them by this Answer, *That inasmuch as they neglected the meanest Christian, they neglected him:* And that thereupon these uncharitable Creatures should be condemn'd to everlasting Punishment, and the Righteous exalted to eternal Life.

Our Lord having finish'd his Prophetick Sermon upon Mount Olivet, at the Evening repaired again to Bethany, and supp'd at the House of one call'd *Simon the Leper*, who probably had been cur'd by him formerly. At this Supper, *Mary*, who had been before reprov'd by *Judas* for her profuse anointing *Jesus's* Feet, resolv'd once more to testify the Greatness of her Love and Respect, and out of an Alabaster Cruse pour'd a large Quantity of the same rich Ointment upon his Head; so that the whole House was fill'd with fragrant Odours. The seeming Luxury and Prodigality of this Woman now provok'd the Indignation of the rest of the Apostles, as well as *Judas*, who like him made the same Objection, *That it might better have been sold for a large Sum of Money, and given to the Poor.* But *Jesus* undertook the Defence of her, and inform'd those who condemn'd her, *That she had done a noble Work, and had embalm'd his Body before-hand, against the Day of his Burial; and as for the Poor, for whose Relief they seem'd so solicitous, they always had an Opportunity of shewing their Care and Charity to them, but not so to him: Therefore since*

that Woman had done so much, he solemnly declar'd, That wheresoever the Gospel should be preach'd throughout the whole World, her munificent Regard of him should be publish'd to her perpetual Honour and Renown. Supper being ended, Jesus bearing in Mind his Departure, that he was now going to God, where he should take Possession of all Power in Heaven and Earth, and having constantly and immutably lov'd his own, resolv'd to give them a signal Testimony of his Love and Humility. Wherefore rising from the Table, he laid aside his loose upper Garment, like a Servant attending his Master, and girding himself with a Towel, he pour'd Water into a Bason, and began to wash his Apostles Feet, and to wipe them with the Towel. Peter amaz'd at such extraordinary Condescension, utterly refus'd at first, and likewise a second time, 'till Jesus inform'd him, That he had a more spiritual and holy Intention in it, and that unless he were wash'd, he could have no Part nor Portion in him. Whereupon Peter desir'd, that he would wash him in all Parts, if that might secure his Interest; but our Lord answer'd him in Allusion to a Man's coming from a Bath, who needed not to wash his whole Body again, but only his Feet, which contracted Soil by walking: Declaring farther, That they were really clean, but not all; meaning Judas, then designing to betray him.

Jesus having wash'd his Apostles Feet, put on his Garment, sat down, and gave them the Reason of this Action; telling them, That he design'd it for an Example of Humility to them; that since he who was justly acknowledg'd to be their Lord and Master, had so far debas'd himself as to wash their Feet, they should think it no Dishonour to perform the meanest Offices of Kindness and Charity to each other: For tho' they were exalted to the Dignity of his Apostles, yet they were but his Servants, and it would be a high piece of Arrogance for them to assume more State and Grandeur than their own Lord had done: Adding, That if they knew these things, they were happy if they perform'd them. Then being mov'd with the near Prospect of his sad Sufferings, or the monstrous Treason of Judas, he declar'd, That one of them present should betray him, verifying that Scripture, 'He that eateth Bread with me, hath lift up his Heel against me. Peter hearing so plain an Intimation, that one of the Apostles should be so great a Traitor, was very desirous to know the Person, possibly that he might endeavour to dissuade him from such an horrid Attempt; and seeing John the beloved Disciple leaning upon Jesus's Bosom, beckn'd to him, that he would ask Jesus who it was, who accordingly put the

Question;

Question, and receiv'd this private Answer, *That he would give a Sop to the Person who should do it.* Then having dipped the Sop, he gave it to *Judas Iscariot*; into whose Heart at the same time *Satan* enter'd, to embolden him in that impious Design, which he had in his Thoughts some time before. *Jesus* by way of Irony bad him, *Do what he had design'd with all Expedition*; whereupon *Judas* went out; but the other Apostles knew not whither he was gone; supposing that *Jesus* had sent him to provide for the approaching Feast, or to give something to the Poor, because it was he who carry'd the Purse. Upon *Judas's* Departure our Saviour comforted himself against his approaching Death; declaring, *That he shortly should be glorify'd, and also his Father glorify'd in him, who should raise him from this low Estate, and exalt him above the highest Heavens.* Then calling them, *little Children*, he told them, *That he could be with them but a short time, and that as he told the Jews, he was going to a Place whither they could not come.* But in the Words of a parting Friend, he strictly engag'd them, *To observe his new Commandment to love one another, with such a Love as he himself had given them an illustrious Example of;* telling them also, *that their Love should be as a glorious Badge, by which they might be known to be his Disciples, from all other Religions and Professions.* *Peter* reflecting upon his Master's Departure, desir'd to know, *Whither he went*; but *Jesus* told him, *That at present he could not follow him, but should hereafter.* *Peter* agriev'd at this Answer, rashly proffer'd to follow him, *tho' he should lay down his Life for his Sake*: But our Lord advis'd him not to be too confident, and solemnly assur'd him, *That he himself should deny him three Times, all within the usual Time of Cock-crowing.*

W E D N E S D A Y.

On the following Day, our Lord in all probability continu'd wholly at *Bethany*, without repairing to the City as usually. In the mean Time the grand *Sanhedrim* assembled at the Palace of *Caiaphas* the High-Priest, where the Priests, Scribes and Senators of the People had a solemn Debate and Consultation how they might take *Jesus* by some secret Stratagem, and put him to Death. This was the second Council they had held upon this Occasion, and in which they had resolv'd upon his Death; yet they thought it not so safe and proper to do it at this great Solemnity, lest it might cause a Sedition among the People, who had the highest Veneration for him. In the midst of their Doubts

and

Matth. 26.

3--5.

14--16.

Mark 14.

1, 2, 10, 11.

Luke 28.

1--6.

and Projects, *Judas* came among them, and put an end to all their Difficulties, promising them that for a Sum of Mony, *he would deliver Jesus safely into their Hands, when the Multitude should be absent*; for that he knew where he usually retired himself, and all his cautious Methods; and therefore had a greater Opportunity than any other. to betray him. This Proposition was highly pleasing to the *Sanhedrim*, who immediately bargain'd with him for thirty Pieces of Silver, call'd *Staters*, or *Shekles of the Sanctuary*, amounting to three Pounds and fifteen Shillings of our Mony, the most usual Price for Slaves at that time: Which accomplish'd *Zechary's* Prophecy, *Chap. 11. v. 12.* *Judas* taking the Mony, sought all Opportunities of betraying him in the Absence of the Multitude.

This Day the whole Nation of the *Jews* always apply'd themselves to put away all Leaven from their Houses, and it was the Day immediately preceding the fourth and last Passover after our Saviour's Baptism, which Passover hapned on the second Day of our Month *April*, in the 19th Year of the Reign of *Tiberius* the Emperor, and one Year wanting twelve Days after the third Passover.

C H A P. VI.

From the Beginning of the fourth and last Passover, to the Ascension of our Blessed Saviour; which concluded the whole Series of his Actions upon Earth.

Containing the Term of six Weeks and one Day.

T H U R S D A Y.

A. D. 33.
Tiber.
19.
20.
Matth. 26.
12--16.
Mark 14.
14, 15.
Luke 22.
7--13.

I. WE are now arriv'd at the last and great Passover in our Saviour's Time, a Passover the most memorable and renowned that was ever solemniz'd; in which the only true Paschal Lamb was slain and offer'd, whereof all others were only Types and Shadows. In the Morning, the Apostles, knowing that their Master was careful in observing this Solemnity, desir'd to know where he would eat the Passover, and where the Lamb should be made ready. Whereupon *Jesus* sent *Peter* and *John* into *Jerusalem* to prepare all things according to Law, telling

telling them, *That as soon as they were enter'd the City, they should meet a Man bearing a Pitcher of Water, by following of whom, they should find a spacious Guest-Chamber ready furnish'd by the Master of the House, whose Heart should be so inclin'd by the Divine Power, as to be willing to accommodate them upon that Occasion.* The two Disciples being directed by this special Token, went directly to the City, and found all things to succeed as he had foretold them; and having provided a Lamb, slain it in the Temple, sprinkled the Blood on the Altar, and got all other Things necessary for the Celebration of the Paschal Supper, they return'd to their Master at *Bethany*.

Before our Lord's Departure to *Jerusalem*, the Apostles, whose Minds had formerly been elevated with all the Imaginations of Pomp and Grandeur, were now depress'd with melancholy Thoughts, and dismal Apprehensions of some great approaching Misfortune. Therefore, perceiving their Concern, he bad them *Not be dejected, but believe in him,* John 14. 1--31. *as they had believ'd in God; for that in his Father's House were many Mansions, whither he was going to prepare Places for them, and returning would receive them into the same glorious Habitations with Himself; and that the Place and Way were already made known to them.* Thomas, supposing he meant some Earthly Palace, made Answer, *That they knew not the Place, much less the Way leading to it.* Whereupon Jesus declar'd, *That he himself was the Way, the Truth and the Life; that none could go to God but by him only; and that if they knew him as they ought, they would know his Father also, since he was the express Image of his Person.* Philip, not considering the Force of our Saviour's Reasonings, desired him to *shew them the Father*, by giving them a visible Representation of his Glory. But Jesus ask'd him, *Whether he knew not Him, after so long a Continuance with them?* Adding, *That in seeing him, they saw the Father; for he was in the Father, and the Father in him; which they might have discern'd by the Miracles he wrought: Assuring them, That if they believ'd in him, they should work the same Miracles, and greater; because whatsoever they ask'd of God his Father in his Name, it should be obtain'd: But if they lov'd him, they must shew it by their Obedience.* Then he promis'd them, *That he would by his Prayers obtain another Comforter for them, who should remain with them for ever; namely, the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, whom the World could not receive, because it knew him not; but that they should know him, and be inhabited by him. That he would not leave them comfortless, but would return to them, and they should see him,*
when

when the World should not have that Happiness: That he wou'd one day shew them that he was in his Father; for he wou'd manifest himself to such as lov'd him, and prov'd it by keeping his Commandments. Hereupon Jude, whose Thoughts as well as the rest were taken up with the Expectations of a Temporal Kingdom, interpos'd, and ask'd him, *Why he wou'd manifest himself to them, and not to the World!* Jesus intimat-ed, that the Reason was because the World had no Love for him nor his Doctrine; therefore this Blessing was only designed for such as obey'd his Laws, with whom his Father and he wou'd made their Abode. Adding, *That the Doctrine he had taught them, was his Father's; and the Holy Spirit he had promised wou'd make them understand and remember all those Truths he had deliver'd.* Then for a Farewel, he told them, *He left his Peace with them, and that in a more affectionate manner than the World ever did; that if they lov'd him, they wou'd rejoice that he return'd to his Father, who was greater than him, as he was Mediator. That he foretold them what shou'd come to pass, that when the Time was expir'd, they might believe on him who had foretold it: That he wou'd not say much more to them, for he was just ready to enter the Lists with Satan, the Prince of the World, who tho' he had no Power over him, yet he was willing to suffer what was brought upon him, that he might signally testifie his Love and Obedience to his Father.* Upon finishing his Discourse, he order'd his Disciples to arise, and go with him towards the City Jerusalem.

Matth. 26.

20--29.

Mark 14.

17--25.

Luke 22.

14--23.

At the Evening they all arriv'd at the Place appointed, which some believe was in the House of one of our Lord's Disciples call'd *John*, and surnamed *Mark*. The usual Hour being come, which was never before it was dark, *Jesus* and his twelve Apostles sat down at the Table, using all a leaning Posture, as was particularly necessary in that Solemnity. He began his Discourse with declaring, *That with great Earnestness he had desir'd to eat the Passover with them before he suffer'd; for this was the last he shou'd eat with them, 'till it was fulfill'd in Heaven, where that and all other Mysteries shou'd have a full Accomplishment.* Then taking the first Cup of Wine, with which the Paschal Supper always began, he bless'd it, drank of it, ordering them *To take it, and divide it among themselves, for that this was the last Time he shou'd drink with them, 'till the Kingdom of God shou'd come,* meaning perhaps his Resurrection. When they had begun the Supper, *Jesus* a second time assur'd his Apostles, *That one of them shou'd betray him;* which rais'd a general Sorrow and Sadness amongst them, every one asking, *Whether*

ther

ther he was the Person? He told them, *that he who dipped his Hand with him in the Dish was the Person: Adding, That the Son of Man went forth to suffer, according to the Scriptures; but that it would be miserable to that Man who should betray him; that it wou'd have been better for him never to have been born.* Notwithstanding this fearful Denunciation, Judas boldly ask'd him, *Whether it was he?* And Jesus made Answer, *He had nam'd the Man.* At the Conclusion of the Supper, when the third Cup was usually drank, our Lord thought fit to institute a new Rite and Sacrament, instead of the Passover, in Commemoration of his infinite Love to Mankind. Therefore first taking Bread, he bless'd it, brake it, and distributed it to his Apostles, with this Injunction, *Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you: Do this in Remembrance of me.* Then blessing the Cup also, he gave it to them, saying, *Drink ye all of this, for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for the Remission of the Sins of many.* Intimating, that the Bread was now his Body, in the same Sense as the Paschal Lamb had been before; and the Wine was now his Blood, of the New Testament, in the same Sense as the Blood of Bulls and Goats had been under the Old. Then he told them, *That that was the last Wine he must drink, for the Hand of him who betray'd him was at the Table.*

Immediately after there hapned a very unseasonable Con-^{Luke 22,} tention among the Apostles concerning Priority, which of^{24-38.} them should have the greatest Share in their Master's Kingdom. Jesus check'd their Ambition, by repeating the Substance of what he had formerly said to them upon the like Occasion, *That it should not be so with them, as with terrestrial Kings, who govern'd their Subjects with Power and Authority; but the greatest among them should be least, as he their Master had been, not as one sitting at the Table, but as a Servant waiting. But since they had held firm to him in all his Persecutions, he would prepare for them a Kingdom, as his Father had done for him; where they should be nearest to himself; sitting on Thrones, and judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.* He added, *That at this Time Satan had a more than ordinary Desire to shake them and sift them like Wheat; but he had pray'd for them, and particularly for Peter, that his Faith might not fail; bidding him when he had recover'd, to strengthen his Brethren.* Whereupon Peter to shew his Resolution told him, *That he was ready to follow him both to Prison and to Death;* but he knowing his Weakness, declar'd a second time, *That before the second Crowing of the Cock that Night, he should deny him thrice.* Then turning
to

to the rest of the Apostles, he ask'd them, *Whether they wanted any Thing, when he sent them without Purse, or Bag, or Shoes?* Upon their answering *No*, he inform'd them, *That now it would be otherwise; for such Distresses should happen, that they would stand in need of all these, and of a Sword more than of a Garment to put on: For all that was written concerning him, was just ready to be accomplish'd; namely, 'He was reckon'd among the Transgressors.* The Apostles taking his Words in the most literal Sense, told him, *They had two Swords there;* but he, to intimate that he had another Meaning, gave them this short Reply, *It is enough.*

Matth. 26.

30.

Mark 4.

26.

John 15.

1--27.

Chap. 16.

1--4.

After this they proceeded to sing the Hymn, or rather to finish the *Hallel*, which in all consisted of six Eucharistical Psalms, beginning at the 113th, and concluding with the 118th. A little before their Departure our Lord gave his farewell Exhortations to his Apostles, and taking Occasion probably from the Sight of Vines from out the Window, he told them, *That they were holy and pure, because they had receiv'd the Doctrine of the Gospel; but that they might bring forth such Fruit as the Gospel requir'd, they must of Necessity abide in him, as the Branches of the Vine must abide in the Body of it, without which they could not bear Grapes: That his Father was glorify'd when his Disciples brought forth much Fruit; but that he would cut off and cast into the Fire such as bore no Fruit, as the Vine-Dressers usually cut off and burn'd the dry and dead Branches of their Vines: That the principal Fruit his Father expected was that Love which they ought to have to one another, imitating their Master who shewed the sublimest Instance of it, even the laying down his Life for his Enemies: That they had not chosen him, but he had chosen them to bring forth continual Fruit, and that he had not us'd them as Servants, but as Friends, in teaching them what he had learnt from his Father: That in chusing them to be his Followers, he had separated them from the World; and that not being of the World themselves, they were to expect to be hated and persecuted by it, as he himself was. Then he inform'd them, That the Jews should be so zealous against them, as not only to excommunicate them, but also to think they did God a special Service in taking away their Lives; and this because they knew not the Son, nor the Father who sent him: That he had forewarn'd them of these Afflictions, because he was leaving them; and that they might remember his Words when they came to pass; and by remembering, fortifie their Minds under the most violent Persecutions.*

The Apostles heard these Truths with a profound Sorrow and Silence, being much afflicted, and astonish'd at the Loss of their dear Master. He mildly reprov'd their Silence, telling them, *That he was going to him that sent him, and none of them ask'd whither he went.* But for their Comfort he let them know, *That his Departure would be highly for their Advantage; for 'till then, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, would not come: That when this Comforter was come, he would convince the World, especially the Jews, of Sin, in not believing his Mission; of Righteousness, by manifesting his glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and of Judgment, because he had condemn'd the Devil, the Prince of this World. That that same Spirit of Truth should make them understand all the Truths they had heard, and should teach them those Doctrines, which at present they were not able to bear. That the same Spirit should glorify him also, by a more illustrious Manifestation of his miraculous Gifts, which had been communicated to him by the Father.* Then he added, *A little while, and they should not see him; and after a little while they should see him, because he went to the Father.* The Apostles understood not the Meaning of these last Words, but questioned each other concerning them, desiring also to ask Jesus himself. He perceiving this, assur'd them, *That they should weep and lament; but the World should rejoice and triumph; but yet as a Woman, who in the Time of her Labour had great Sorrow, but upon her Delivery forgot all her Pains, for Joy of an Heir's being born; in like manner they should be in Sorrow for a Time, but that he would soon return to them again at his Resurrection, and then their Sorrow should be chang'd into Joy, such as no Man could take from them.* After this he promis'd them two Things, First, *That after his Resurrection, he would not speak to them in Proverbs and Parables as formerly, but would speak to them plainly of the Father.* Secondly, *That praying to the Father in his Name, which they had not as yet done, they should obtain whatsoever they petition'd of him; for that the Father loved them, because they had loved the Son, and believed that he came from God.* Then he declar'd in plain Terms, *That he came from the Father into the World; and that he was now leaving the World, and returning to the Father.* Upon this the Apostles acknowledg'd, *That he had spoken plainly, without Proverbs; and were assur'd that he knew all Things, even their very Thoughts, and therefore must come from God.* Jesus intimated, *That their Assurance was yet but weak; for the Time was just approaching, when every one of them should fly from him, be dispers'd, and leave him alone; who yet was not wholly so,*
because

because his Father was with him. Concluding all with these Words, *I have told you these Things, that in me ye might have Peace; in the World ye shall have Tribulation: But be of good Comfort, I have conquer'd the World.*

John 17.
2--26.

Having ended these comfortable and dying Exhortations, our Lord thought fit to leave us a noble Pattern of his perpetual Intercession in Heaven as our great High-Priest; and in the Audience of the rest poured forth a most divine and heavenly Prayer, supplicating for Himself, for his Apostles, and for all other succeeding Christians. First for Himself. *' O Father, the Hour is come, glorifie thy Son, that thy Son may glorifie thee: And as thou hast given him Power over all Flesh, so to as many as thou hast given him, he has given eternal Life; which consists in the Knowledge of thee, the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorify'd thy Name on Earth; I have accomplish'd the great Work thou hast appointed for me: And now, O Father, glorifie me with thy divine Majesty, and with the same Glory I had before the Creation of the World.* Secondly, for his Apostles: *' I have manifested thy Name to those whom thou hast selected for me out of the World: They have kept thy Word: They have known, that whatsoever thou hast given me, proceeded from thee; and they assuredly believe that thou didst send me. I intercede now for them, and not for the wicked World, but for them whom thou hast given me, who are thine, and in whom I am glorify'd. And now, Holy Father, as I am leaving the World, and they continuing behind, preserve these chosen Persons for thy Name Sake, That there may be a perfect Union amongst them. Whilst I continu'd with them, I have preserved them, and have lost none, but the Son of Perdition, according to the Scriptures. And now I am returning to thee, I speak these Things openly, that their former Joy may be compleated: I have given them thy Word, and the World has hated them, because, like me, they are not of the World. I pray not that thou wouldst take them out of the World, but that thou wouldst preserve them from the Evil of it; and wouldst sanctifie them by thy Word, which is Truth it self. I have sent them into the World, as thou hast sent me; and for their Sakes, I sanctifie even my self, that they may be sanctify'd through the Truth.* Thirdly for all succeeding Christians: *' Neither do I pray for these alone, but likewise for all such as shall hereafter believe in me by Means of their Preaching: That there may be such a spiritual Union amongst them, as may resemble ours; so that the World may be convinc'd that thou hast sent me, that I have made them Partakers of thy Glory, and*

that

that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I pray that those thou hast given me may also be Possessors of the same Place with my self, that they may behold the ineffable Glory thou hast bestowed on me, which was the Effect of thy eternal Love before the Foundation of the World. O Holy Father, the World has not known thee, but I have known thee; and these have known that I came from thee: And I have proclaimed thy Name to them, and will continue to do so, that they may be Partakers of thy Love, and my Mediatorship.

Our Lord having finished this divine Prayer, immediately departed out of the City with his Apostles, over the Brook Kedron, in the Vale of Josaphat, towards Mount Olivet and Bethany as formerly; where he might prepare himself for his approaching Passion, and be taken like the Paschal Lamb, without Noise and Tumult. Upon their leaving the House, Judas it seems slipt away from the Company towards the High-Priest's Palace, where he had his wicked Instruments ready to execute his abominable Design. In the mean Time, our Lord in his Passage, with a mighty Concern declared to his Apostles, *That that very Night all of them should be offended, and fall away from him; that according to Zechary's Prophecie, 'The Shepherd should be smitten; and the whole Flock dispersed: But that after his Resurrection, he would go before them into their old Country Galilee.* Whereupon Peter with great Assurance made Answer, *That tho' all Mankind should fall away from him, he would do otherwise: But Jesus assured him a third Time, That in that Night he should deny him thrice, before the second Cock-crowing was past.* But Peter being now armed with a Sword, and transported with an unusual Zeal, declared with the utmost Vehemence, *That he would not deny him, tho' he should be obliged to die with him; and all the rest joined in the same solemn Promise.*

Matth. 26^a
30--35.
Mark 14^a
27--31.
Luke 22.
39.
John 13^a
1.

Having passed Kedron, they went to a Place called Gethsemane, a Place of Oil-Presses at the Foot of Mount Olivet, where was a Garden well known to Judas, to which our Lord often repaired with his Apostles, both for Retirement and Devotion. Here he was to enter upon the Ante-Scene of his approaching Tragedy; and to begin to recover that in a Garden of Sorrows, which the first Adam had lost in a Garden of Pleasures. Here he ordered eight of the Apostles to stay at the Entrance into the Garden, while he retired to his private Devotions with God; commanding them to join their Prayers, that they might not be delivered over to Temptation. Then entering the Garden, he took Peter,

Matth. 26^a
36--46.
Mark 14^a
32-42.
Luke 22^a
40--46.
John 13^a
1, 2^a

James and John, who had been Spectators of his glorious Transfiguration, now to be his Comforters in the Time of his most deplorable Afflictions; telling them, *That his Soul was unmeasurably oppressed, even to the Pangs of Death, therefore he desired that they would watch with him.* And now he felt the most terrible Conflict between the Flesh and the Spirit, had all the Powers of Hell and Darknes let loose upon him, and laboured under the most violent Agonies, that ever human Nature sustained. Having withdrawn himself about a Stone's cast from his three Apostles, he threw himself prostrate upon the Earth, and with the highest Marks of the most intense Grief, cried out, *Oh my Father! if it be possible, as all Things are possible with thee, let me escape this bitter Potion; but with a Spirit full of Submission and Charity, he seemed to correct these first Motions, adding, Nevertheless, not according to my Will, but thine.* When he had thus pray'd he return'd to his Disciples, probably to receive Comfort from them, as well as to afford them Assistance in this Hour of their Temptation, as well as his; but they being over-whelmed with Grief and Sorrow, were fallen asleep: *Jesus* awaked them, and with a Reproof full of Love said to *Peter*, *Dost thou sleep, Simon? What, could ye not watch with me one single Hour? Now watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation: The Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak:* Their Minds were well affected, but their Bodies were apt to betray them. Then returning, he pray'd a second time, crying, *Oh my Father, if I must not escape this Potion without drinking of it, thy Will be done.* And coming to his Disciples, and finding them so sleepy, that they knew not what to answer him, he returned a third Time, and prayed after the same Manner. And now his Prayers were more vehement, having a full Sense of God's Wrath against the Sins of the World; and his Agonies so violent and astonishing, that the Sweat that fell from his Body was like large Drops of Blood; and since the Disciples neglected their Office, an Angel was at last sent from Heaven to strengthen him, at a Time when Nature was brought to the utmost Passability, and was dissolving her self in a mortal Sweat. Then recovering himself, he returned a third Time to his Disciples, and finding them still sleeping, he said to them by way of Reproof and Irony, *That now they might sleep on and take their Rest; for the Time was come when their Master should be delivered into the Hands of Villains: They must now arise, for the Traytor was just at Hand.*

Jesus had scarcely said these Words, when Judas, who well knew this Place of Retirement, arrived with a Company of Soldiers and Officers, accompanied with some of the Chief Priests and Pharisees, and Elders of the People, all armed with Swords and Staves, and furnished with Lanterns and Torches, lest they should miss of him, tho' it was now a full Moon. Judas gave them a Sign, that the Person whom he kissed was the Man they were to apprehend; and thereupon went up to Jesus, saying, *Hail, Master*; and gave him a Kiss: But Jesus only made this gentle Reply, *Friend, why are you come hither? Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a Kiss?* Then stepping forwards, with an Air of Majesty, he demanded of the Soldiers, *Whom they sought?* They answered, *Jesus of Nazareth*; and upon his replying, *That He was the Man*, they ran back, seized with great Horror, and fell to the Ground: And his thus confounding them by his bare Word, shewed that none could take his Life from him, unless he laid it down of himself. These Men rising up, Jesus asked them again, *Whom they sought?* And they returning the same Answer, he told them, *since they sought him alone, he expected that they should suffer his Disciples to depart*; therein accomplishing that Sentence in his Prayer, *That he had lost none of them whom his Father had given him*; and taking care that they should escape that Storm, which none but himself could sustain. Then the rude Multitude began to lay Hands on him; which when the Disciples saw, they said, *Lord, shall we use the Sword?* and immediately Peter, to shew his promis'd Courage, drew out his, and in a great Fury struck at Malchus, a Servant to the High-Priest, designing to cleave his Head, tho' he happened only to cut off his right Ear. But Jesus rebuked his intemperate Zeal, and commanded Peter to put up his Sword, declaring, *That such as used the Sword illegally, should perish by the Sword: That if he had thought fit to decline the Potion appointed for him, and designed a Rescue, he could have prayed to his Father, and have had more than twelve Legions of Angels at his Command: But how then could the Scriptures be accomplished, which declared he must suffer.* Then miraculously healing the Man's Ear, he expostulated with the Multitude, perhaps to reduce them to some Remorse, and asked them, *Why they came against him with Swords and Staves, as tho' he were some Thief, or great Malefactor, when they had daily Opportunity of apprehending him publickly in the Temple?* But this, he said, *was their Hour, and the Power of Darkness.* The Apostles now seeing their Master bound, lost all their former Courage, forsook him,

Matth. 26.

47--56.

Mark 14.

43--52.

Luke 22.

47--53.

John 18:

3--11.

and betook themselves to Flight; only one young Man, whom many suppose to be *John*, followed him, with only a Linnen Garment about him; but the Soldiers laying hold on him, he left his Linnen Garment, and fled from them naked.

Matth. 26.

57, 59--68.

Mark 14.

53, 55--65.

Luke 22.

54, 63--65.

John 18.

12--14.

19--24.

Jesus being thus apprehended, the Multitude led him immediately to *Annas*, out of Respect to him, who was Father-in-Law to *Caiaphas* the High-Priest, and who had formerly had the same Office; but *Annas* sent him to *Caiaphas's* Palace, where he and the whole Body of the *Sanhedrim* were assembled, tho' thus late at Night. Here *Caiaphas* strictly examined him both concerning his Doctrine, and his Followers; endeavouring to find Heresie in one, and Sedition in the other. But *Jesus* would give no farther Satisfaction than by declaring, *That what he had taught and acted was in the view of the World, in the publick Synagogues and Temple, where all Men resorted; that therefore he had no Reason to ask him, but rather those who constantly heard him.* At these Words one of the Officers, more zealous than ordinary, struck him on the Face, asking him, *Why he gave such an Answer to the High-Priest?* But *Jesus* replied, *If he had answered amiss, he might testifie against him; if otherwise, he had no cause to strike him.* In the mean time the whole Council sought false Witnesses against *Jesus* to put him to Death; and tho' many were produced, yet they all notoriously disagreed. At length two appeared who agreed upon the same Subject, tho' they manifestly perverted our Lord's Meaning, declaring, *That they heard him say, 'That he would destroy the Temple of God, and rebuild it in three Days;* in the wording of which they also disagreed. This Testimony was likewise found insufficient; nevertheless *Caiaphas*, rising up in the midst of the Assembly, asked him, *Why he made no Reply to these Witnesses?* But finding that he would return no Answer to this Question neither, he put another to him, which if he answered in the negative, it would make him an Impostor; if in the affirmative, a Blasphemer according to their Notion: And that he might not fail of an Answer, he adjur'd him by the living God, *to declare whether he was the Messiah, the Son of God, or not.* *Jesus* in Reverence to that Name, made Answer, declaring, *That he was; and that they should find the Experience of it, when they should see him sitting at the right Hand of the Almighty, coming in the Clouds of Heaven.* Whereupon the High-Priest, as a Testimony of his Abhorrence, rent his Clothes, crying out, *He was a Blasphemer, and there needed no other Witness against him;* demanding their Opinion. They all joined with him,

him, pronouncing him Guilty of Death, according to their Law; and so left him that Night to the Mercy of the Servants and Soldiers, who entertain'd him with bitter Scoffs and Buffets, blinded his Eyes, and striking him with their Fists, bad him shew his *Messiahship, and prophesie who struck him*; adding many other vile Indignities, and abominable Blasphemies.

During these melancholy Transactions, *Peter*, whose Fears had driven him to fly from his Master in the Garden, having a little recover'd his Spirits, and hoping to pass undiscover'd in the Throng, ventur'd in among others, to see the Issue of this fatal Night, and by the Interest of his Fellow Disciple *John* who went with him, he was let in by a Maid-Servant into the High-Priest's Palace: And entering the Common-Hall, where the Servants and Officers were sat round a Fire they had lately kindled, he also sat down warming himself with the rest. Here the Maid, who had been his Porteress, fixing her Eyes upon him, knew him, and spoke aloud, *This Man was also with Jesus of Nazareth; asking him, if he was not one of his Disciples? Peter, startled at this Question, deny'd it before all, and answer'd her, Woman, I know him not, I am none of his Disciple, nor do I know what thou sayest*; and thereupon withdrew himself into the Porch, where he heard the Cock crow; a fair Intimation of his Fault, but his troubled Thoughts took no Notice of it. In the Porch another Maid charg'd him with being *Jesus's* Disciple, but he confidently deny'd it a second Time, and with the Addition of an Oath; so natural it is for one Sin to draw on another. About an Hour after, some other began to charge him with the same Matter, alleging, *That his Dialect discover'd him to be a Galilean*; but what still made the Matter more indisputable, the Man's Kinsman whose Ear he had cut off, declar'd, *That he saw him in the Garden with Jesus*. This last Assertion reduc'd *Peter* to the utmost Fright, which made him swear and curse, *That he knew not the Man, nor what they said*: And immediately the Cock crew a second Time. At the same Time *Jesus* being brought down by the Soldiers, gave *Peter* such a Glance, as brought to his Mind what he had foretold of his Denial; and being vehemently oppress'd with Shame and Grief, he went out and wept bitterly.

Matth. 26.
58, 69--75.
Mark 14.
54, 66--72.
Luke 22.
54--62.
John 18.
15--18.
25--27.

G O O D - F R I D A Y.

II. Early in the Morning, our Lord having been allow'd no Sleep, the *Sanhedrim* met again in a full Body at their Room

Luke 22.
66--71.

Room in the Temple, to which Place they ordered *Jesus* to be brought, enquiring of him a second Time, *whether he was really the Messiah or not*; designing to try whether he would stand by his former Assertion. *Jesus* well knowing the Hardness of their Hearts, told them, *That his Answer would never convince their Infidelity; because they were so obstinate, that they would neither pretend to confute him, nor dismiss him: But that hereafter they should find the Truth of what he had said, when he should sit at the right Hand of the All-powerful God.* Then they asked him, *Whether he was the Son of God?* And upon his answering in the affirmative, they declared, *They needed no farther Witness, for they had his Condemnation from his own Mouth.* And thereupon they resolved to deliver him up to the Roman Power. *Judas*, who had carefully attended and watched the Issue of the Matter, finding his Master delivered to a Pagan Power, and Things carryed beyond his Expectation, repented his being an Instrument in such an execrable Fact; and to give some Ease to his tormented Conscience, brought the Money he had received back to the Sanhedrim: Declaring openly, *That he had sinned, for he had betrayed innocent Blood.* Here was the deepest Repentance, the most publick Confession, and a most just Retitution; yet all too little for one who had done such Despite to the Spirit of Grace, and was now fallen into the Hands of the living God. The Priests, incurious of those Hell Torments he felt within him, because their own Fires burned not yet, dismissed him with a rough Answer, *That he might look to what he had done himself*; and with the Money he had thrown down, purchased a spot of Ground, called *the Potter's Field*, for the Interment of the Profelytes of the Gate; accomplishing thereby a Prediction of the Prophet *Zechary*. But *Judas* being delivered over to *Satan*, went and hanged himself; and the Judgment was made more signal by an Accident unusual at such Deaths, for being prodigiously swelled, he fell Headlong from the Tree, burst in sunder, and his Bowels fell out, in so wonderful a Manner, that it was noted by all that dwelt at *Jerusalem*. As the Wickedness he had committed was beyond all Precedent, so the Punishment he suffered was above all Example.

Our Lord being condemned to Death by the Sanhedrim, the chief Priests, Senators and Multitude immediately hurry'd him to the *Pratorium*, the Palace of the Roman Governor, *Pontius Pilate*; a Person, as was formerly observed, of a violent and furious Spirit, and of a cruel and covetous Disposition. But they refused to enter into the Hall of a Pagan

Matth 27.

3--10.

Acts 1.

15--19.

John 18.

28--38.

Matth. 27.

1, 2, 11, 14.

Mark 15.

1--5.

Luke 23.

3--4.

at this Time, lest they should be defil'd, and render'd unfit for the Solemnities of the *Chagigah*, which St. *John* calls the *Passover*, as being a very considerable Part of the Festival. Therefore *Pilate* came out to them at the Palace-Gate, and demanded of them, *What Accusation they had against Jesus?* They made Answer, *If he had not been a Malefactor, they would not have brought him thither.* The Governor told them, *If he was a Malefactor, they might take him and judge him according to their own Laws;* but they fearing the Mobile, and being willing to throw off the Odium of his Death from themselves, alledg'd, *That they had lost the Power of putting any to Death,* which some say was taken from them three Years before. And proceeding to the Particulars of his Accusation, They declar'd, *That he had perverted the Nation, That he had forbidden Men to pay Tribute to the Emperor, and had proclaim'd himself the Messiah, a King.* *Pilate* hearing the Name of a King, thought himself concern'd to examine that Point; and returning into his Judgment Hall, he there ask'd *Jesus, Whether he was the King of the Jews?* Wherefore *Jesus* desir'd to know, *Whether he ask'd that Question for his own Satisfaction, or whether that had been charg'd upon him as a Crime by the Jews?* *Pilate* told him, *That he was no Jew, nor acquainted with their Customs;* but that his own Country-Men, and the chief of his Nation had deliver'd him up; and therefore he expected to know of him what was his Crime? *Jesus* would not deny his Kingdom, but withal declar'd, *That it was not of this World;* for that if it had been so, his Subjects and Followers would have fought for him, and sav'd him from the Hands of the Jews. *Pilate*, surpriz'd to see a poor abandon'd Man assume Sovereignty, ask'd him in a deriding way, *Whether he was really a King?* Our Lord answer'd in the affirmative, adding, *That for that End he was born, and sent into the World, to bear Witness to the Truth;* and every Man that lov'd the Truth, heard his Voice. *Pilate* then ask'd him, *What he meant by Truth;* but having no Desire to engage any farther in Matters which, he suppos'd, related peculiarly to the Jewish Religion, he rose suddenly from the Bench, taking *Jesus* with him, and returning to the People abroad, profess'd to them, *That he found no Fault at all in the Man.* Here the chief Priests and Senators accus'd him again of many Crimes; but since they deserv'd no Answer, he was silent: And tho' *Pilate* urg'd him, to make him sensible of the numerous Accusations, yet still he held his Peace, to the great Wonder of the Governor; who, tho' he well

knew the *Jews* Malice, could not with all his Subtilty dive to the Bottom of this Matter.

Luke 23.
5--12.

The Rulers finding *Pilate* so ready to release him, began to be more fierce and vehement, representing him as a *turbulent Mover of the People*, spreading his *sedition Principles* throughout all *Galilee* and *Judæa*, even to *Jerusalem*. The Governor hearing the Name of *Galilee*, and understanding he was a *Galilean*, and consequently belonging to the Jurisdiction of *Herod*, without any Delay sent him to *Herod*, who was then at the Feast in *Jerusalem*; both to oblige an Enemy, and to be freed from this odious and puzzling Affair. Now *Jesus* saw the Monster who murder'd his Fore-runner, and *Herod* was extremely pleas'd, for he had often heard of his Fame, and now expected to have seen some Miracle wrought by him. But our Lord, who had often shewn his Miracles to poor indigent People, would not prostitute his Gifts, nor gratifie the Curiosity of a Tyrant polluted with Incest and Blood; nor would he vouchsafe him one Answer to all his Questions, tho' urg'd by all the Heat and Violence of the *Scribes* and Rulers, who follow'd him thither: Insomuch that *Herod*, instead of a rival King, look'd upon him as a most insignificant despicable Person, and his Soldiers and Guards array'd him in some cast-off Robe, as a Mock-King, derided him, and carry'd him again to *Pilate*. And from that Time *Herod* and *Pilate* were perfectly reconcil'd, who before were great Enemies.

Luke 23.
13--25.
Math. 7.
15--23.
Mark 15.
6--15.
John 18.
39, 40.
20.

Being return'd to *Pilate*, the Governor again call'd the Priests, Ruler and People to the Gate, and publickly declar'd, *That tho' they had brought this Man as a seditious Person, yet upon Examination, he could not find him guilty of any of those Crimes laid to his Charge; and that Herod, to whom he had sent him, had pass'd the very same Judgment*: But to comply a little with their Fury, because he knew they had prosecuted him only out of Envy and Malice, he propounded to *scourge him, and so dismiss him*. This being disapprov'd of, he invented another Contrivance to save him: The Governor was oblig'd by a certain Custom, every Passover to release a Criminal, whom the *Jews* should nominate; and all the People were very urgent with him to shew them the same Favour they had usually receiv'd. Now there was then in Prison a notorious Malefactor nam'd *Barabbas*, who had been seiz'd with other seditious Persons, because he had committed Murder in the Insurrection: Therefore *Pilate* justly imagining that if he only propounded *Jesus* and *Barabbas* to be releas'd, they would prefer an innocent Man before a Thief and a Murderer,

told

told them, *That he found no Crime worthy of Death in the Person they accus'd; but since they had a Custom to have a Criminal freed at their Feast, he propos'd to them to chuse one of the two, Barabbas or Jesus call'd Christ; And this he propos'd to the People in general, who were principally concern'd in this Custom, and whom he knew to be better affected to our Lord than the Rulers were. About the same Time there hapned a new Accident, which caus'd no little Concern in the Governor; for while he was sitting on the Tribunal, his Wife sent a Message to him, most earnestly warning him, Not to concern himself with that just Man then before him; for she had just then suffer'd many Afflictions in a Dream upon his Account.* Whereupon Pilate became more diligent in his Endeavours to release him: But the Priests and Rulers were still more instant in moving and persuading the People to require his Favour for *Barabbas*, and that *Jesus* might be put to Death: So that when *Pilate* ask'd them a second Time, *which of the two they would have releas'd*, they all cry'd out, *Away with this Man, and give us Barabbas!* And now those who six Days before expected a temporal Kingdom, cry'd *Hosanna*, and spread their Garments in the Way, were as loud in their Cries for the Destruction of their King. And when *Pilate* ask'd them, *What he should do with Jesus call'd Christ?* All cry'd, *crucifie him, crucifie him!* not only ignorantly demanding Justice, but impudently prescribing the Punishment, which was the cruellest that could be nam'd. Then *Pilate* ask'd them a third time, *What Crimes he had committed? for he could find none worthy of Death; therefore he would scourge him, and release him.* Whereupon they redoubled their Clamours, and in the most tumultuous Manner imaginable requir'd that he might be crucify'd; insomuch that their Voices prevail'd upon the Governor.

Pilate finding no Arguments effectual, immediately gave Order that *Jesus* should be scourg'd; a Punishment very terrible and dishonourable among the *Romans*, therefore not exercis'd on any but Slaves; and this was perform'd, no doubt, with extraordinary Severity, since the Soldiers added so many Insolencies and Indignities besides. For after they had miserably torn his Body, they took him into the Common Hall with the whole Cohort about him, and having strip'd him, they threw a loose Purple Coat about him for a Robe, put a Wreath of Thorns upon his Head for a Crown, and a Reed in his Hand for a Scepter. Then in Derision they saluted him, and bowing the Knee to him, ador'd him, crying, *All Health to the King of the Jews!* And

John 19.

1--7.

Matth. 27.

26--30.

Mark 15.

15--19.

at the same Time they spit upon his Face, and struck him on his Cheek with their Hands, and on his Crown with the Reed, that his Head might be more wounded with the Thorns. *Pilate* now conceiv'd that the *Jews* cou'd not behold him in this deplorable Condition without Remorse and Pity; and therefore went again out of his Palace, in a conspicuous Place, declaring to them, *That he had brought him again to them, that they might be sensible he found him Guilty of no Crime.* And immediately *Jesus* was brought forth, with all his mock Ornaments, Thorns, Coat and Reed, and his Head, Face and Body all embrew'd in Blood: Then *Pilate* cry'd out to the Multitude, **BEHOLD THE MAN!** As if he had said, See this rueful Spectacle of suffering Innocence, and be confounded. But as soon as they saw their once expected King in such miserable Circumstances, they more readily cry'd out as before, *Crucifie him, crucifie him!* *Pilate* said to them, *Do ye take him, and crucifie him, for I find no Fault in him:* They answer'd, *They had a particular Law, according to which he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.*

John 19.
8--15.

These last Words struck him, tho' a wicked Governor, with a reverential Dread, and added new Perplexities to his former; therefore with no little Astonishment he returned with *Jesus* into the *Prætorium*, and began a new Examination of him, demanding of him, *Whence was his Original!* But *Jesus* return'd him no Answer. Upon this *Pilate* was more urgent, and ask'd him, *Whether he was not sensible, that he had Power either to crucifie or release him?* To this *Jesus* calmly reply'd, *That he could have no Power to hurt him, were it not permitted from Heaven above; therefore they who deliver'd him up were Guilty of a greater Sin than he.* This Silence and these Answers did not slacken *Pilate's* Endeavours to release him. But the *Jews* at length found out an Expedient to work upon the Timorousness of the Judge, and cry'd out, *That if he did not punish a Man, who set himself up for a King, he was an Enemy to the Emperor.* This did not a little startle the Governor, raising in him a Fear quite contrary to the Fear of God; for he well knew the jealous temper of his Master *Tiberius*, who never spar'd the least seeming Rival, and had very lately us'd intolerable Severities to all *Sejanus's* Accomplices; and if the *Jews*, whom he had often oppress'd, and disgusted, should accuse him of protecting a Rebel to the Empire, it might easily have prov'd his Ruin. Therefore returning to the Hall, he brought forth *Jesus* in the same Habit to his publick Tribunal, in a paved place call'd *Gabbatha*; and tho' he intend-

ed to pass Sentence upon him, yet he let them understand, that he did it contrary to his Opinion and Inclination. Being seated, he said to the Jews, *Behold your King*; but they cry'd out, *Away with him, away with him, crucifie him!* And when he ask'd them by way of Irony, *Whether he should crucifie their King?* They made Answer, *That they had no King but Cæsar*; which was the first Time we find that they own'd the Roman Emperor for their Sovereign. Pilate finding that all his Attempts to save Jesus did only encrease the Tumult, and thinking he had sufficiently done his Part, call'd for Water, and washing his Hands before all the People, as a Token of the Purity of his Intentions, solemnly declar'd, *That he was innocent of the Blood of that just Man*; and that they must answer for it. Upon which the whole Body of the People most impiously cry'd out, *May his Blood fall upon us and all our Posterity!* An Imprecation as black as Hell. Hereupon Pilate releas'd to them Barabbas, and condemn'd Jesus to the Cross; a Death the most painful and ignominious of all others.

Our dear Lord being thus condemn'd, and abandon'd by all the World, the Soldiers and Officers, after new Indignities offer'd him, took the Purple Coat off his mangl'd Body, and put on his own Garments; and then laid an heavy Cross upon his Shoulders, who now like Isaac bore the Wood, with which he was to be sacrific'd himself. In this solemn Procession he pass'd through one of the principal Streets of the City, to the infinite Triumph of his Enemies, and the no less Discouragement of his Admirers; 'till being overburthen'd, they compell'd one Simon a Cyrenian, Father to Alexander and Rufus, to bear his Cross the rest of the Way. Among the vast Throngs and Multitudes that follow'd to this Execution, there were many People, especially Women, who could not behold this deplorable Object, without the highest Grief and Lamentations. Our Lord observing what Floods of Tears were shed upon his Account, lifting up his all bloody and disfigur'd Countenance, cry'd, *O Daughters of Jerusalem! weep not for me, but for your selves, and for your Children: For know that the fatal Time is approaching, when ye shall all say, Blessed are those barren Wombs that never bore Children, and those Breasts that never gave suck: Then shall they begin to call upon the Mountains to fall upon them, and the Hills to cover them from the Vengeance of Heaven: For if the Romans deal thus with a green Tree, what will they do with a dry and sapless Trunk?* Thus was the great Sacrifice convey'd out of the Holy City, as an accursed Thing; just as

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the scape Goat, loaden with the Iniquities of the People, and the Beasts for Sin-Offerings, were by Law carry'd out of the Camp. Passing the Gates, they brought him to a Rocky Hill, on the West Side of the City, call'd *Golgotha* and *Calvary*, a kind of a Charnel House for the City, and place of Execution. This Place is by many believ'd to be the same, where *Abraham* brought his Son *Isaac* to be offer'd. Here they first gave him a Mixture of Vinegar and Gall to drink, instead of the usual Composition of Wine and Myrrh, given to Malefactors to ease them in their Torments; but upon tasting of it, he refus'd to drink. Then stripping him of his Garments, they nail'd his Hands and his Feet, with his Body stretch'd out upon the Cross, and lifted him up, as the Brazen Serpent upon the Pole in the Wilderness. And to put him to the greater Shame, and to obscure his Innocence, they crucify'd two common Malefactors, one on each Side of him; accomplishing *Isaiab's* Propheſie, ' *He was number'd among the Transgressors.* On the Top of his Cross *Pilate* appointed this Inscription, **JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS**, in the three most universal Languages, *Hebrew, Greek and Latin*, that all Strangers might take Notice of his Crime. The chief Priests were much offended at this, and beg'd of *Pilate* to alter the Inscription, and instead of *King of the Jews*, to write, *he pretended himself King of the Jews*; but *Pilate* with some Anger made Answer, *That what he had witten, should stand good.*

Math. 27.

35--39.

44.

Mark 15.

24, 25.

29--32.

Luke 23.

34--37.

39--43.

John 19.

23--27.

It was near the sixth Hour, or Noon, when our Saviour was fix'd to the Cross, tho' by *St. Mark* call'd the third Hour, because the sixth was not yet fully began; and the first thing he utter'd was a gracious Prayer for his Enemies; saying, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Immediately those four Soldiers, who were his Executioners, went to divide the poor Spoil his Garments, cutting them into four Parts, each Soldier one; only his Coat was woven from the Top to the Bottom without any Seam, therefore rather than spoil it, they agreed to cast Lots for it, whose it should be; accomplishing thereby the Words of the Psalmist, ' *They parted my Garments among them, and cast Lots for my Vesture.* While our patient Lord hung thus languishing in the extreamest Torments, the Passengers and the Multitude added all they could to his Misery by their reviling Speeches and provoking Blasphemies, some nodding their Heads, and crying, *Ah, you that have Power to destroy the Temple, and rebuild it in three Days, save yourself; if you be the Son of God, come down from the Cross.*

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The Chief Priests and Rulers entertained him with the like Scoffs, saying, *He saved others, but cannot save himself; if he be really the King of Israel, the chosen of God, let him come down from the Cross, and we will believe him: ' He trusted ' in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him; since ' he has declar'd himself the Son of God.* The Soldiers who stood to guard him also derided him, and bad him, *Save himself if he was the King of the Jews.* Nay one of the crucify'd Malefactors urg'd him to *save himself and them, if he was the Messiah.* But the other Malefactor, now finding the glorious Benefit of our Saviour's Prayer for his Enemies, and being mov'd with a wonderful Impulse, seriously rebuk'd him in these Terms, *Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art condemn'd to the same Punishment, and that most justly? We, alas, receive the due Reward of our Crimes, but this Person has done nothing to deserve this Punishment.* Then looking upon Jesus with a noble Reliance, he cry'd, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.* A most superlative and stupendous Faith, to fly for Saccour to one in the same miserable Circumstances, whom all the World had abandon'd, and whom God himself had seem'd to have forsaken; and the Success was accordingly Triumphant: For our Lord immediately embrac'd him with the Arms of his Mercy, and solemnly assur'd him, *That that very Day he shou'd be with him in Heaven.* After our Lord had shewn himself thus triumphant upon the Cross, he proceeded, as it were, to make his Will: For seeing his beloved Disciple John, with his Virgin Mother, her Sister, *Mary Magdalene*, with other Women, who beheld him with unexpressible Grief, he first spoke to his Mother, saying, *Woman, behold thy Son,* meaning John; and he said to John, *behold thy Mother;* thus recommending both to each other: And from that Time John took her to his own House, where they dwelt as Mother and Son together.

During these melaucholy Transactions, the whole Frame of Nature began to be chang'd, and out of Order, for the Sun was so darken'd, that the Stars appear'd, and the Eclipse was prodigious in the Manner as well as Degree, because the Moon was not then in Conjunction, but in the Full. This miraculous Darknes was universal, in all probability, and was recorded by many Pagan Writers, as *Phelegon-Trallianus*, &c. and we are told by later Writers, that *Dionysius the Areopagite* being in *Ægypt*, and observing this strange Eclipse, cry'd out to his Friend *Apollophanes*, *That either God himself suffer'd, or sympathiz'd with the Sufferer.* The Darknes continu'd from about twelve a Clock 'till three,

Matth. 27.
45--50.
Mark 15.
33--37.
Luke 23.
44--46.
John 19.
28--30.

three, when all Things were full of Terror and Amazement, and Men's Hearts with Fear began to relent, and their former Insults to be turn'd into a profound Silence, and Expectation of the Issue. All this Time our blessed Lord continu'd meek and silent, languishing and consuming in the Flames of God's Wrath against Sinners; 'till finding his Soul unsufferably oppress'd with the Burthen, and all the Powers of Hell upon him, without one pitying Angel to assist, he in a loud and dismal Tone cry'd, *Eli! Eli! lama sabachthani?* i. e. *My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?* his Divinity at this time suspending from his Humanity those Comforts with which his Servants in their greatest Sufferings are usually refresh'd. Some of the Spectators hearing the Words *Eli, Eli*, out of Ignorance of the Tongue, and a fond Expectation of the Coming of *Elias*, thought he call'd for *Elias*, to help him in his Distress. Then being in the Agonies of a high Fever, to fulfil the Scriptures, he cry'd, *I thirst*; and one of the Company took a Sponge, and dipping it in Vinegar that stood by, upon the End of a Reed, or long Stalk of Hyssop, put it to his Mouth, that he might drink; others saying, *Let us see whether Elias will come and help him.* *Jesus* having tasted the Vinegar, and feeling the Pangs of Death upon him, cry'd, **ALL IS ACCOMPLISHED**; all the Prophecies and Types fulfill'd, and the great Sacrifice offer'd. Then with another strong Out-cry like the former, he said, *Father, into thy Hands I recommend my Soul*; and bowing down his Head, he expir'd. Thus did the glorious Sun of Righteousness set in a sad and clouded Sky, running speedily to shine in the other World.

Matth. 27.

51--56.

Mark 15.

38--41.

Luke 23.

47--49.

John. 19.

31--37.

Jesus dy'd about three a Clock, the Time of offering up the Evening Sacrifice, at the end of the sixth Day of the Week, as entering into his Sabbath of Rest. His Death was immediately accompany'd with a most terrible Earthquake, as tho' Nature was breathing her last, which rent the Rocks in sunder, and open'd the Graves of many Saints, who were ready to attend *Jesus* at his Resurrection. But what was still more surprizing, the Veil of the Temple, which separated the sacred *Mosaick* Mysteries from the Eyes of the People, was rent in two from Top to Bottom; shewing that God had forsaken his former Residence, and put a Period to all the Temple Ministrations. To which we may add from the *Jewish* Writers, that from this Time, the Lot did no more go up into the right Hand of the Priest; nor the Scarlet Ribbon on the Scape-Goat any more turn white; nor the Evening Lamp burn any longer; and that the Temple

ple Gates open'd of themselves. The Centurion and Soldiers that guarded *Jesus*, seeing so many Prodigies at his Death, in a great Consternation cry'd out, *Certainly this Man was the Son of God*; and all the People, especially the Women, were no less affected than they, returning in a great Amazement, and smiting upon their Breasts. Because the next Day was the Sabbath, and a Paschal Festival besides, the *Jews* desired *Pilate* that the Bodies of the Sufferers might not continue on the Cross that Day, but that their Legs might be broken to hasten their Deaths, and their Bodies taken down. This was immediately executed upon the two Thieves, but the Soldiers coming to *Jesus*, and finding him already dead, instead of breaking his Legs, one of them out of Wantonness pierc'd his Side with a Spear, out of which there issu'd a great Quantity of Blood and Water, poured out as the Sacrifice's was, at the Foot of the Altar, on which the Lamb of God was fix'd. This compleated the great Sacrifice, and as *St. John* observes, accomplish'd two Prophecies; the first, 'A Bone of him shall not be broken; the Second, 'They shall look on him whom they pierc'd.

Among the Disciples of our Lord, there was one nam'd *Joseph*, a Man of great Wealth and Honour, born in *Arimathæa* or *Ramah*, a City of *Judea*; who, tho' he was one of the Rulers of *Jerusalem*, yet being a secret Admirer of *Jesus*, he wou'd not consent to any of those Judgments against him. He stood in some Fear of the Council, but the Death of his Master filling him with more Courage, he went to *Pilate*, and beg'd leave of him to take down the Body of *Jesus* and bury it. The Governour was surpriz'd to hear he was so soon dead; but being assur'd of it by the Centurion, he commanded the Body to be deliver'd to *Joseph*, who taking it from the Cross, wrap'd it in fine Linnen Cloaths which he had bought for that Purpose. At the same Time, *Nicodemus* the Ruler, who came to *Jesus* by Night, being desirous to share with *Joseph* in paying these last and sad Offices to their Master, brought a Mixture of Aloes and Myrrh of about an hundred Weight; and they two wrap'd up the Body with the Perfumes and Spices, according to the ordinary Manner of the *Jews*. Near the Place of Crucifixion was a Garden belonging to *Joseph*, where he had lately hewn a Sepulchre out of a Rock for his own proper Interment; but Divinely ordain'd for our Lord's Body, near hand, so that all Things might the better serve for the Evidence of his ensuing Resurrection. Here they laid the Body of *Jesus*, covering it with a large Stone cut

cut out of the Rock, which fitting the Mouth of the Sepulchre, was not to be remov'd but by many Hands. *Mary Magdalene*, and the other Women who were present at the Death of *Jesus*, did also assist at his Burial, and took Notice where they laid him; and having consider'd on it, they went and prepar'd new Spices for the farther embalming him, as soon as the Sabbath-Day should be over: By which they testify'd their Love, but had but small Expectations of his Resurrection.

S A T U R D A Y.

Matth. 27.
62--66.

All this Day were the Apostles, Disciples and Followers of our Saviour under a dismal Cloud of Darknes, overwhelm'd with the most profound Sorrow and Sadness, confounded, dispirited, and sunk into the lowest Vales of Affliction, forgetting those Promises that might give them Hopes of better Days. In the mean Time the *Jews*, the Rulers, now triumphant in their Malice, that the Disciples might gain no Advantage, went to *Pilate* and told him, *That this Impostor having declar'd in his Life Time, that he would rise again within three Days, they desir'd that he wou'd command the Sepulchre to be kept under a strong Guard 'till the third Day, lest his Disciples should come by Night, and steal the Body away, and then persuade the People he was risen from the Dead, and so the last Error might prove more pernicious than the first.* Possibly they design'd to have shewn his Body to the People at that Time, to weaken and destroy all his Doctrine. *Pilate* told them, *They might have a Guard, and secure the Tomb as well as possibly they cou'd:* Hereupon they took a sufficient Number of Soldiers to watch by it, set a Seal upon the Stone, and as ancient Tradition says, bound it about with Labels of Iron, to secure it against all private Attempts. Which Care and Diligence of theirs serv'd to render our Lord's Resurrection clear and evident beyond Dispute.

E A S T E R - S U N D A Y.

Matth. 28.

1--8.

Mark 16.

1--8.

Luke 24.

1--11.

John 20.

1.

III. On the first Day of the Week, which may also be call'd the first of the new Creation, *Mary Magdalene*, and the other Women, who had prepar'd their Spices and Perfumes on *Friday* in the Evening, went very early in the Morning to perform their last Offices of Love and Duty, and arriv'd at *Jesus's* Sepulchre before Sun-rising. These Women knew nothing of the Guard and Seal set upon it, their

their main Care and Consultation by the Way; being how they should remove that large Stone at the Mouth of the Tomb. Not long before their Arrival, our Lord had made a full Conquest over Death, and broke forth from the Bowels of the Earth, with a terrible Commotion like that at his Death, being follow'd by the Resurrection of several of the Saints, who appear'd to many in the City. At the same Time an Angel from Heaven, whose resplendent Countenance was like Lightning, and his Rayment like the whitest Snow, having roll'd away the Stone, sat upon it; the Sight of whom, together with the Noise of the Earthquake, struck such a Terror into the Guards, that they became all like dead Men: So that when the Women came to the Place, they found neither Guards nor Stone, that could hinder their Entrance; but being enter'd they were extreamly astonish'd, when they found the Body remov'd. In the midst of their Concern their Fears were encreas'd by the glorious Appearance of two Angels in resplendent Apparel, which caus'd them to bow down their Faces to the Ground. The Angels said to them, *Why do ye seek the Living among the Dead? Fear nothing, we know ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucify'd: He is not here, but risen from the Grave: Remember what he told you in Galilee, 'That the Son of Man must be deliver'd into the Hands of 'Sinners, be crucify'd, and be rais'd again the third Day. Come view the Place where the Lord lay; and go quickly and tell his Disciples, particularly Peter, that he is risen from the Dead, and that he will go before them into Galilee, where they shall see him according to his Promise.* The Women then remembering our Lord's Words, left the Sepulchre, and ran with all Speed to find out the Apostles, their Minds being fill'd with great Fear, as well as Joy and Wonder; but the Apostles believ'd them not, looking upon all as the Product of a weak frightened Fancy.

Mary Magdalene found out Peter and John, and tho' she had heard of Jesus's Resurrection from the Angels, yet she still seem'd to doubt of it, and with great Eagerness told them, They had taken away the Lord from the Sepulchre, and they knew not where they had laid him. Hereupon the two Apostles ran both to the Sepulchre: John arriving first, and stooping down discover'd the burying Cloaths laying on the Ground; a Sign that the Body was taken by no Roboers. But Peter went directly into the Tomb, and saw besides the Shroud, the Napkin that was about his Head, lying decently wrap'd up by it self: And John following him saw the same Thing, both concluding that the Body was re-

John 20.

2--18.

Luke 24.

12.

Mark 16.

9--11.

mov'd, as *Mary* had told them; for as yet they did not sufficiently understand the Scriptures, nor our Lord's Declarations, concerning his Resurrection. And they both return'd back, amaz'd at these Things, and earnestly expecting the Issue. But *Mary*, more impatient than any other, would not depart from the Tomb, but in a melancholy weeping Manner look'd in again, where she discover'd two Angels in bright Apparel, sitting where the Body had lain, one at the Head and the other at the Feet, like the two Cherubims at each End of the Ark. The Angels ask'd her why she wept; she made Answer in a doleful Tone, *They had taken away her Lord, and she knew not where they had laid him.* Then turning her self about she saw *Jesus* himself, who ask'd her the same Question, and whom she sought. But she supposing him to be the Gardener, who could give her an Account of the Body, beg'd of him, *To let her know if he had remov'd him, that she herself might take care of him.* Whereupon *Jesus* call'd her by her Name; at which Word she immediately knew him, and in a Transport cry'd out, *Rabboni, my Master!* offering to embrace him, but he bad her *not to touch him then, since she had Time enough before his Ascension; but,* added he, *hasten to my Brethren the Apostles, and tell them that I am about to ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God.* *Mary* immediately went to the Disciples, and told them, *That she had seen the Lord;* but their Sorrows were so great, and their Faith so weak, that they did not believe it. In the mean Time the other Women were met by our Lord, who gave them this Salutation, *All Hail!* and they in an Ecstasie fell down at his Feet, imbrac'd them, and ador'd him: *Jesus* bad them *fear nothing, but appoint his Brethren to go into Galilee, where they should see him.*

Matth. 28.
9, 10.

Matth. 28.
11--15.

During these busie Transactions, some of the Guards in a great Fright fled into the City, and related all that occur'd to the chief Priests and Rulers, who immediately assembled themselves to consult upon this important Affair. And as their Malice was beyond all Example, so they were reduc'd to the most wretched Shift, and to the most unaccountable Falsity, that ever Rulers invented; namely, *That his Disciples stole him away by Night, while the Watch were asleep.* And that this Story might certainly succeed, they gave large Sums of Mony to the suppos'd Sleepers, to report and assert the Thing, tho' upon that Supposition it was impossible for them to know it: Promising withal, *That if their Neglect came to the Governor's Ear, they would secure them from Punishment.* The Soldiers readily took the Mony, and obey'd

obey'd their Orders; so that this Report was commonly spread among the *Jews* for many Years after.

The same Day two of the Disciples, which seem to be of the Number of the Seventy, took a Walk in the Afternoon to a Town call'd *Emmaus*, about seven Miles and an half North-West of *Jerusalem*, discoursing by the Way of all the late melancholy Accidents. In their Walk *Jesus* himself overtook them in the Disguise of a Traveller; and seeing them much dejected, chearfully ask'd them the Subject of their Discourse, which render'd them so sad and disconsolate. One of them, nam'd *Cleophas* or *Alpheus*, Father to two, if not three of the Apostles, made Answer, *Are you the only Stranger in Jerusalem, that are unacquainted with the Things that hapned so lately? Upon his asking What Things? they answer'd, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a Prophet wonderful in Words and Actions, before God and the whole People, whom the chief Priests and Governors have deliver'd to Death, and crucify'd. Alas, we trusted that he was the Person who should have redeem'd Israel! But what is still more astonishing, this very Day, which is the third since his Death, some Women of our Company having been early at the Sepulchre, and not finding his Body, surpriz'd us with an Account that they had seen a Vision of Angels, who assur'd them that he was alive: Which Relation was confirm'd by some of us, who went also to the Sepulchre, and found all as the Women had reported; but did not see him.* From hence *Jesus* took an Occasion to reprove their Unbelief, saying to them, *O Fools, whose Hearts are so slow in believing what the Prophets have foretold! Was not the Messiah to have suffer'd all these Things, before he enter'd into his Glory?* Then beginning at *Moses*, and going through all the Prophets, he explain'd to them all the Types and Prophecies concerning Himself and Sufferings. Arriving at *Emmaus*, by making a Shew of going farther, he gave them an Opportunity to shew their Hospitality, by desiring him to stay and eat with them, since the Day was so far spent, and towards Evening. He readily comply'd with their Request, and sitting at the Table with them, he took Bread, bless'd it, broke it, and deliver'd to them, as he had often done formerly: Upon which their Eyes were open'd, and they knew him; but he immediately vanish'd out of their Sight. Then in a great Astonishment they said to one another, *Were not our Hearts fired within us at his Discourse by the Way, and his Exposition of the Scriptures? And without any longer tarrying, they rose up, and hastned with great Joy and Speed to Jerusalem; where they found the Apostles gather'd together, who told*

Luke 24.

13--35.

Mark 16.

12, 13.

them, *That the Lord was certainly risen, and had appear'd to Peter: which Appearance is mention'd by St. Paul, 1 Cor. 15. 5.* Whereupon these two related what had hapned to them in their Journey, *and how Jesus was made known to them by breaking of Bread.* Nevertheless several still remain'd incredulous; probably arguing, and imagining from our Lord's frequent and sudden Disappearance, that it was only some Spirit in his Likeness.

John 20.

19--23.

Luke 24.

39-48.

Mark 16.

74.

The Apostles, with some others, being now assembled in a private Place for Fear of the *Jews*, and being sat down to Supper late in the Evening, with the Doors shut, *Jesus* himself came in, and stood in the midst of them, saying, *Peace be with you!* The Sight of him prov'd a great Terror and Astonishment to the Apostles, who suppos'd they had seen a Spirit or a Fantom. But *Jesus* to satisfy them, ask'd them, *Why they were so concern'd?* assuring them *it was he himself*, bidding them *look upon his Hands and Feet, handle him and observe, for a Spirit had not Flesh and Bones, as they saw he had.* Then he shewed them the Wounds in his Hands, and his Feet, and his Side. The Apostles were so transported with Joy and Wonder, that they still did not fully believe, 'till *Jesus* ask'd them, *Whether they had any thing to eat?* Upon which they brought him a Piece of broil'd Flesh, and also some Honey-comb, and he eat before them all; not for the Support of his Body, for that being spiritualiz'd by his Resurrection, needed not such Nourishment; but to confirm their Faith, and to give them sensible Proofs that he was risen from the Dead. Then, as *St. Mark* says, he upbraided their Unbelief and Hardness of Heart, for giving so little Credit to those who had seen him before: Declaring, *That what they now saw he had fore-told them, that all Things must be accomplish'd that had been written in the Law and the Prophets.* Then he enlarged their Intellects, that they might understand the Scriptures, shewing them, *That thus it was written, and thus it was necessary for Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third Day: And that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name, among all Nations, beginning first at Jerusalem.* And that they were *Witnesses of these Things.* Before he left them, he gave them this second Benediction. *Peace be with you;* and breathing upon them, he seem'd to renew their Apostolical and Ministerial Power, in these most solemn Words, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* And thus ended the first Day of the Week, which in Honour of the Resurrection, has ever since been

kept as the Sabbath among the *Christians*. This Day *Jesus* appear'd five Times, first to *Mary Magdalene*, secondly to the other Women, thirdly to the two Disciples, fourthly to *Peter*, and fifthly to the Apostles, and some others with them.

Thomas was not with the other Disciples when *Jesus* appear'd to them in the forementioned Manner; and upon his Return to them, when they told him, *That they had seen the Lord*, he would not believe it, unless he himself had the utmost Evidence of Sense; namely, *Except he saw in his Hands the very Holes made by the Nails, and thrust his Fingers into them, and also his Hand into his Side*. The Son of God, who made use of all his Infidelity to establish the Certainty of the Resurrection, would not forsake this Apostle in his Unbelief; and therefore on the *Sunday* following, as a second Establishment of that Day for the *Christian Sabbath*, he appear'd again to his Apostles, when they had met at the same Place, and shut the Doors, and standing in the midst of them, saluted them as formerly, *Peace be with you*. Then mercifully looking upon *Thomas*, whom neither the Scriptures, nor the Apostles could satisfy, he said, *Reach hither thy Fingers, and examine my Hands; and reach hither thy Hand, and thrust it into my Side, and be not faithless, but a Believer*. *Thomas* having received the Satisfaction, in a Transport cry'd out, *My Lord, and my God!* A short but absolute Confession of Faith. *Jesus* said to him, *Thomas, thou hast believed because thou hast had the Demonstration of Sense; blessed are those who believe without that Demonstration*. This was the second Time that our Lord appear'd to his Apostles when they were met in a Body.

IV. About a Day or two after our Lord's second Appearance to his Apostles, they all resolv'd to leave *Judaea*, and return into their own Province *Galilee*; going in all Probability in several Companies, lest their Numbers should awaken the Power and Jealousie of their Enemies; seven of the Apostles in a short Time arrived at the Banks of the Sea of *Galilee*; namely, *Peter, Thomas, James, John, Nathaniel* or *Bartholomew*, and two others not nam'd. Here *Peter* propos'd to go a Fishing, and the rest join'd with him, probably for a present Supply of Provisions; but entering a Vessel, they caught nothing all that Night; as it also happen'd to *Peter* at our Lord's first calling him from his Fishing-Trade. In the Morning, a Person unknown to them appear'd on the Shore, and as if he were some indigent

Traveller, ask'd them, *Whether they had any Meat.* Upon their answering *No*, he advis'd them to cast their Net on the right Side of the Vessel, that the Miracle might not seem the Effect of Chance, and they should not fail of Success; which being done, they immediately inclos'd in it such a vast Draught of Fish, that they were not able to draw it up. *John* amaz'd at the Strangeness of the Matter, cry'd out to *Peter*, *it was the Lord himself*; and the other, impatient of Delay, girt his Fisher's Coat about him, which he had laid aside, threw himself into the Sea, and swam to the Shore. The other Disciples remain'd in the Vessel, which was about an hundred Yards from Land; and with much Labour drew it ashore, dragging with them the Net full of Fishes. Upon their Landing, they were entertain'd with another Miracle, namely, a Fire ready made, and Fish laid upon it, with Bread, all immediately produc'd by the Divine Hand. Then *Jesus* order'd them to bring the Fish they had caught; and *Peter* went up and drew the Net to Land, which contain'd an hundred and fifty three large Fishes, without any Damage done to the Net. After this he invited them to dine with him; they came, but out of Fear and Reverence durst not ask him any curious Question, who he was, and the like, knowing him to be the Lord. Then taking the Bread and the Fish, he distributed to them, and eat himself with them, to give them a farther Assurance of the Truth of his human Nature, since his Return from the Grave.

John 21.
15--24.

Dinner being ended, our Lord more particularly address'd himself to *Peter*, and by way of Reflection upon his late Confidence and Failure, he ask'd him, *Whether he lov'd him more than the rest of the Apostles?* *Peter* answer'd in general, *That he knew that he lov'd him*; upon which *Jesus* committed to him the Care of *Feeding his Lambs*, teaching those of the younger weaker Capacities. He put the same Question to him twice more, and receiv'd the same Answer, not without some Concern from *Peter* the last Time; and he having made some Amends for his Sin of denying him thrice, by giving a Triple Testimony of his Love, *Jesus* incited him to shew his Love by *Feeding his Sheep*, his Flock in general. Then to shew him what Difficulties he should encounter, and what Fate should attend his Office, he told him, *That tho' when he was young, he girt himself, liv'd at his own Will, and went whither he pleas'd; yet when he was old, he should stretch forth his Hands, and another should gird and bind him, and lead him whither he had no Inclination:*

Intima-

Intimating, as the Evangelist tells us, by what Death he should glorifie God, that is, by Crucifixion; as it hapned in process of Time. And then rising up, he commanded him to follow him, mystically implying his imitating him, and his Conformity to his Death. *Peter* was ready to drink the bitter Cup; and seeing *John* also following, he desir'd to know of his Master, *What should be the Fate of him, he who had been so much the Object of his Love.* But *Jesus* a little check'd his unnecessary Curiosity, telling him, *If he design'd him to continue on Earth 'till his coming to take Vengeance upon the Jews, it was not material to him, whose Business was to follow his Master.* These Words seem'd to intimate to the Apostles that *John* should never die; but he himself confuted that Opinion in his Gospel. This was the third Time that *Jesus* appear'd to his Disciples meeting in a Body, after his Resurrection.

Not long after this, our Lord having appointed a solemn Meeting for the whole Multitude of his *Galilean* and other Disciples, and nam'd a certain Mountain in *Galilee*, appear'd there not only to the Eleven, but to above five hundred Brethren at once, as *St. Paul* tells us, *1 Cor. 15. 6.* This seems to be that Mountain which he had often us'd for his Solitude and private Devotions, a Place free from Houses, Highways or Passengers; our Lord designing no general Manifestation of himself to the *Jews*, or to the World, but only to a select Number of Persons, that some Contradiction might add the more Virtue to the *Christian* Faith. At his first Appearance, they fell down and ador'd him; but some doubted of the Reality 'till now. And now the Enclosure and Partition Wall being thrown down which kept the Apostles from Preaching to the *Gentiles*, and the *Jews* having lost their Privileges of being a peculiar People, our Lord thought fit to enlarge the Power and Commissions of the Apostles to the utmost Extent: Declaring to them, *That all Power was given to him in Heaven and Earth; therefore he commanded them to go through all the World, make Disciples of all Nations, and preach the Gospel to every Creature, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and teaching them to observe all Things that he had commanded them.* Adding farther, *That he that believ'd and was baptiz'd should be sav'd; but he that believ'd not should be damn'd.* And that for the Propagation of the Gospel at first, *these following Signs should attend Believers; namely, They should eject Devils in his Name, speak with new Tongues, take up Serpents, drink*

Matth. 23.

16--20.

Mark 16.

15--18.

Poison without Hurt, and by laying Hands on the Sick should recover them. Lastly, since the Apostles had need of Power and Strength to exercise the Ministry entrusted to them, he promis'd them his continual Protection; solemnly assuring them, *That he would be ever present with them, even to the End of the World.* To these we may add a Passage out of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who assures us, that our Saviour said these Words to his Apostles, *If any Israelite shall repent, and believe in God through my Name, his Sins shall be forgiven him. But after twelve Years, go ye into the World, lest any should say we have not heard.* After this our Lord appear'd to St. James in particular, as St. Paul tells us, *1 Cor. 15. 7.* perhaps to establish him in the Church of Jerusalem, but we have no Account of the Particulars.

Acts 1.
2--9.
Luke 24.
49--52.
Mark 16.
19.

Forty Days was the Time predestin'd for our Lord's Continuance upon Earth, after his Resurrection, for the Manifestation of himself, and for the preparing of his Apostles for their future Employment. These Days being almost expired, the Apostles according to Order, with some other select Friends, return'd to Jerusalem, and there assembled themselves privately. Our Lord coming amongst them the last Day, particularly commanded them, *That they should not depart from Jerusalem, 'till they had receiv'd the Promise of God, and were invested with Power from above.* For John indeed baptized them with Water, but they in a particular Manner should be baptiz'd by the Holy Ghost, and that within a few Days. The Apostles hearing him discourse of this extraordinary Effusion of the Spirit, and imagining it would be an Introduction to his glorious temporal Kingdom, which Notion they still retain'd, ask'd him, *Whether he would at that Time restore the Kingdom to Israel or not?* Jesus reply'd, *That it was not proper for them to pry into the Times and Seasons, which God had put into his own Power: But after the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, they should receive sufficient Power and Knowledge, and have the Honour of being his Witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judæa, in Samaria, and in the farthest Parts of the Earth.* And now the Time being come, when Jesus should receive the glorious Reward of all his Humility and Afflictions, and be far exalted above every Creature in Heaven and Earth, he led all the Company out of the City to that Part of Mount Olivet which was near Bethany; where lifting up his Hands, which shew'd the dear Marks of his Sufferings, he gave them his last Benediction. And while they were all in an adoring Posture, he was parted from them by Degrees and taken

up in a Cloud, and carry'd in the most triumphant Manner into the ineffable Glories of Heaven. And there he sits at the right Hand of his Father, being our eternal High-Priest, our continual Advocate and Intercessor, and the sole Head of the Church, which he Governs by his Pastors, enlightens by her Doctors, sanctifies by his Sacraments, protects by his Grace, and quickens by his Spirit.

Our Lord ascended on the 14th Day of our Month *May*, in the ninth Month of the 19th Year of the Emperor *Tiberius*, and in the 36th Year of his Age, when Men are generally in their full Strength and Vigour. If he was born on the 25th of *December*, the full Time of his Continuance on Earth was precisely 36 Years and five Months; almost a Year longer than his Fore-runner *John Baptist*.

The End of the first Book.





Ecclesiastical History.

BOOK II.

From the Ascension of our Blessed Saviour, to the Death of St. John, the last surviving Apostle.

Containing the Term of about 67 Years.

CHAP. I.

From the Ascension of our Blessed Saviour, to the Death of the first Martyr Stephen, and the first Dispersion of the Believers.

Containing the Term of near eleven Months.

I.  T was with no small Surprize and Astonishment, that the Apostles, and the other Disciples upon Mount *Olivet*, stood gazing upon our blessed Saviour, as he ascended towards his glorious Habitation, and his eternal Kingdom; and perhaps not without Expectation of the Return of their dear Lord and Master. While their Minds were transported, and their Eyes fix'd upon Heaven, two Angels in glorious Vestments descended and stood in the midst of them;

A. D.
33.
Tiber.
19
20.
Acts 1.
10-12.
Luke 24.
52.

them; two of our Lord's Train, whom he left behind to entertain them with a new Message, and divert them after this triumphant Sight; which was both joyful and sorrowful, as they thought upon their Master's Honour, or their own Loss. The Angels call'd them by the Name of *Galileans*, and ask'd them, *Why they stood so earnestly and intently looking towards Heaven?* And then assur'd them, *That the very same Person, Jesus, whom they had seen taken up into Heaven, should descend again to Judgment in the same manner as they saw him ascend;* that is, visibly, and with the same Body; when he shall appear in the Clouds, with great Majesty and Glory. Having heard this, they return'd to *Jerusalem* with great Joy; and they who lately were overwhelm'd with Sorrow at the Mention of their Master's Departure, began now to entertain it with great Satisfaction, being more and more sensible of his triumphant Advancement, and of his special Care and Love towards them.

Acts 1.

12--14.

Luke 24.

53.

The Apostles and the rest being return'd to the City, which was near a Mile from the Place, that they might prepare themselves for the Reception of that Holy Spirit they were shortly to receive, spent their Time in continual Acts of the most heavenly Devotion. And for the greater Conveniency, they assembled themselves *εις ὑπερώου*, in the Upper Room, which was dedicated by them to the Service of God, most probably not in the Temple, as some have conceiv'd from St. *Luke's* Gospel, but in the House of some Disciple, according to the Custom of the *Jews*, who frequently had their Oratories, or fix'd Places of Prayer, on the Tops of their Houses. Here were assembled about an hundred and twenty in Number, who in all Probability were the same who saw our Lord's Ascension; namely, the eleven Apostles, the seventy Disciples, and about thirty nine more, all of his own Kindred, Country or Acquaintance. Besides the Names of the Apostles, St. *Luke* mentions among the Women *Mary* the Virgin Mother of our Lord, which is the last Time that she is so much as nam'd in the Holy Scriptures.

Acts 1.

15--26.

In this Assembly, *Peter*, remembering that *Jesus* had appointed Twelve who in a special Manner were to be Witnesses of his Miracles, and Founders of his Church, stood up in the midst, and as President declar'd to the rest, *How according to the Psalmist's Prophecie, one of the Apostles should certainly betray his Master, which was accordingly accomplish'd in the Person of Judas; who being of the sacred College, had out of Avarice caus'd the Purchase of a Field, with the Reward of his Villany; and was so pursu'd by the Divine Ven-*

geance,

Seance, that he became an Example to the whole City of Jerusalem, who call'd the Field by the Name of the Field of Blood, to his perpetual Infamy. And that since the Psalmist had also foretold, 'That his Habitation should be desolate, and that another should take his Office, it was therefore necessary, that one of those who had been a constant Auditor and Attendant upon Jesus, even from the Baptism of John to the Day of Ascension, should be solemnly ordained into their Number, to be, together with the Eleven, a special Witness of Christ's Resurrection. The Assembly readily assented to his Proposal, and appointed two Candidates, one call'd Joseph surnam'd Barsabas and Justus, suppos'd to be Brother to James the Less, and the other call'd Matthias, one of the seventy Disciples. The Way of Election was by Lots, a Way frequently us'd both among Jews and Gentiles, for the Choice of Officers and Magistrates; and the rather us'd by the Apostles at present, because the Holy Ghost was not yet given, by whose immediate Directions they were chiefly guided afterwards. And that they might proceed with the greater Regularity and Success, they first solemnly made their Addresses to Heaven, *That the omniscient Being that govern'd the World, and perfectly knew the Hearts and Qualifications of all Men, would be pleas'd to shew which of those two he would appoint to take part of the Apostolick Charge, in the Room of Judas lately fallen.* The Lots being put into the Urn, the Name of Matthias was first drawn, and thereby the Apostolate devolv'd upon him, and the Vacancy in the holy College was fill'd up.

II. For ten Days after our Lord's Ascension, the Apostles and the other Disciples continu'd in the most solemn Devotion, but without any extraordinary Illumination, 'till the great Feast of Pentecost, which this Year began on Sunday the 24th of our Month May. Being all assembled on this Day, and employ'd in their holy Duties, there came a sudden Sound from Heaven into their Room, vast and impetuous, like the Rushings of a mighty Wind, representing the powerful Efficacy of the Spirit of God now descending. This was accompany'd with a fiery Vapour, or Exhalation, which being form'd by the divine Power into the Figure of a Man's Tongue divided at the Tip, sat upon the Head of each of them, to signify the miraculous Gifts attending this extraordinary Effusion. For they were immediately inspired after a wonderful Manner, and began to speak in such Tongues as they had never learnt, and to preach the Redemption of Mankind in those Languages, which their Auditors

Acts 2.
1-4

ditors in all Parts of the World might understand. As the Confusion of Languages became a Curse to the World, so the Gift of Tongues became a Blessing, and the first Means of its Restoration. And now the Disciples Minds were enlightned, their Thoughts elevated and enlarg'd, and their Understandings clear'd from all their gross Notions of a temporal Kingdom; so that now they understood all those divine Truths which their Master had before taught them, but which they could not then bear, being too great and sublime for their natural Capacities.

Acts 2.
5--21.

At this Time there were extraordinary Multitudes of devout *Jews* residing at *Jerusalem*, not only from *Judæa*, but from all parts of the World, besides Profelytes, who repair'd to that City, partly upon the Account of the Feast, and partly because of the universal Expectation of the *Messiah* at this Time. *St. Luke* names fifteen of the Nations from whence they came, *viz. Parthia, Media, Persia, Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia-Minor, Phrygia, Pamphilia, Ægypt, Libya, Cyrene, Rome, Crete, and Arabia*; all Part of the old Dispersion of the *Jews*. These and many others hearing an account of the miraculous Accident, immediately repaired in great Throngs to the Place where the Disciples were assembled; and they were extreamly astonish'd to find Men ignorant and illiterate, and educated in *Galilee*, to speak the Languages of all their several Countries in the utmost Perfection, and could not but reflect upon the Meaning of it, as portending something extraordinary. But others desirous to elude the Miracle, in a deriding and malicious Way, declar'd, *That the Disciples had drunk too plentifully of new Wine*, which caus'd them to talk wildly and confus'dly. Whereupon *Peter* with the Eleven arose up, and solemnly requiring their Attention, confuted their Calumny, but shewing it to be very groundless and unreasonable, since it was so early in the Morning, not above nine a Clock, and according to the Custom of that Festival Solemnity, they were not to eat nor drink so soon. Declaring also, *That all proceeded from the Effusion of the Holy Ghost, and was a Completion of the famous Prophecy of Joel, where God had promis'd, 'That in the latter Days, in the Days of the Messiah, He would pour out his Spirit upon all Mankind, that their Sons and Daughters, their Men Servants and Maid Servants should be endued with Prophetick Gifts; the young by Way of Vision, and the Old by Way of Dreams. That he would produce Wonders in the Heavens above, and Signs in the Earth below; Blood and Fire, and Vapours of Smoak: The Sun should be turn'd into Darknes and the Moon*

Moon into Blood, before the coming of the great and memorable Day of the Lord. But whoever should call upon the Name of the Lord should be saved.

Having clearly remov'd the Asperſion, and ſhewn theſe Acts 2. 22--36, to be the Days of the Meſſiah, from the Accompliſhment of the Prophecy, he proceeded to prove Jeſus of Nazareth to be the very Perſon, namely, *That he was a Man approv'd of God, as appear'd from the various Miracles and Wonders he had wrought in the miſt of them; of which they themſelves were Witneſſes: Whom being given them by the determinate Counſel and Fore-knowledge of God, they had taken, and by impious Hands crucified and ſlain. But that God had rais'd him up, and broken the Powers of Death, it being impoſſible for him to be detain'd by it. For that David, ſpeaking concerning him, declar'd, 'That he had always the Lord in his Preſence, and on his right Hand, that he ſhould not be mov'd: Therefore his Heart and Tongue rejoyc'd, and his Body ſhould reſt in Hope; becauſe he wou'd not leave his Soul in Hell, nor ſuffer his holy One to ſee Corruption: But had manifeſted to him the Ways of Life, and fill'd him with the Joy of his Countenance. Now that theſe Words were not ſpoken of himſelf, was apparent from the Death and Burial of that Patriarch, and the Continuance of his Monument to that Day. But being a Prophet, and knowing that God had promis'd him by an Oath, That out of the Fruit of his Loins according to the Fleſh, he would raiſe up the Meſſiah, to ſit on his Throne, he foretold the Reſurrection of Chriſt in thoſe Words, 'That his Soul was not left in Hell, nor did his Body ſee Corruption. This was the ſame Jeſus whom God had rais'd up, of whoſe Reſurrection all the Diſciples were Witneſſes: Wherefore being exalted by the right Hand of God, and having received the Promise of the Holy Ghoſt from his Father, he cauſ'd this extraordinary Effuſion, which the Company now ſaw and heard. But as for David, he was not yet aſcended into Heaven, but had declar'd, 'That the Lord had appointed his Lord to ſit at his right Hand, 'till he made his Foes his Footſtool. That therefore all the Houſe of Iſrael ought to look on this as an undoubted Verity, That God had made that very Jeſus, whom they had crucified, both Lord and Chriſt.*

This Diſcourſe in every Part of it, like ſo many Dag- Acts 2. 37--41. gers, pierc'd them to the Heart; ſo that thereupon they cry'd out to Peter, and the reſt of the Apoſtles, to know how they ſhould eſcape the divine Vengeance. Peter exhorted them immediately, to repent, and for the Remiſſion of their Sins to be all baptiz'd in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, whom they had not before acknowledg'd, and that then they alſo

also shou'd be Partakers of the Gifts and Benefits of the Holy Ghost. For that the Promises of the Gospel did belong to them, their Children, and their remotest Successors, even to as many as obey'd the Call of Heaven. And with many other Testimonies and Motives, he press'd them to withdraw and separate themselves from that perverse Generation. It is probable, that while *Peter* preach'd thus to the Jews of *Judæa* in the *Syriack* Tongue, the other Apostles spake at the same Time and to the same Purpose to the Foreigners in their Languages. The Success of the Preaching was extraordinary, for three thousand Souls were that Day converted to the Faith, and were immediately baptiz'd by the Hands of the Apostles. A quick and plentiful Harvest! the late Sufferings of our Lord, the present Miracle of Languages, the Authority of the Speakers, and above all, the Efficacy of the Holy Spirit, contributing to this numerous Conversion.

Acts 2.
42--47.

This was the first Establishment of the *Christian* Church, in which *Peter* was a prime Agent and Minister, agreeable to our Lord's Promise and Prediction. The Form of it appears from *St. Luke*, in four Particulars; first, in Admission by Baptism alone; secondly, in a stedfast Continuance in the Communion of the Apostles, and the Doctrine they taught; thirdly, in frequent Celebration of the Eucharist, which is here call'd *Breaking of Bread*; and fourthly, in publick and united Prayers: Affording a noble Example to the Church in all succeeding Ages. The Apostles wrought many Miracles in *Jerusalem*; and the Believers were fill'd with a reverential Fear, having their Minds so fix'd on Heaven, that they had all Things in common amongst them, sold their Possessions and Goods, and parted them according to every Man's Necessities. And their Practice was daily to frequent the Temple at the usual Hours of Prayer, which was still lawful, while it hindred not their Faith in Christ; and breaking Bread from House to House, they did eat together with the utmost Chearfulness and Sincerity, praising God, and by their Innocence and Simplicity obtaining the Favour of all People. Thus we find the Church of *Jerusalem* to be the most ancient, and first establish'd of all others, and to be the Mother of the rest; to which Church, as *St. Luke* tells us, the Lord added daily such as shou'd be saved.

Acts 3.
1--11.
Chap. 4.
22.

III. The Church of *Christ* being thus founded in its Purity and Simplicity, the next Occurrence we find is of *Peter* and *John*, who on some solemn publick Day went up together into the Temple to pray, about three a Clock in the Afternoon,

Afternoon, one of the usual Hours of Prayer, and Time of the Evening Sacrifice. At their Entrance into that Gate called the *Beautiful Gate*, which probably led into the *Court of the Gentiles*, they saw a poor impotent Cripple, who had been disabled for forty Years, even from his Birth, and had been daily brought thither to beg Relief of such as entered the Temple, hoping to find the most Charity, where there appeared the greatest Devotion. *Peter* and *John* seeing him beg something of them, pitied not so much his Poverty, as the miserable Condition that made him subject to it; and therefore having raised his Expectation of an Alms, by bidding him look intently on them; *Peter* told him, *That he had neither Silver nor Gold to give him, but such as he had he would freely bestow upon him*; and immediately commanded him *in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, to rise up and walk*. The Words were no sooner spoken, than the Cure was effected; his distorted Joints became streight, and his loosned Nerves were made strong; and he being lifted up by *Peter*, entered with them into the Temple, walking and leaping for Joy, and praising the Almighty. And those who saw it were filled with great Wonder and Amazement, all knowing it was the same Cripple that had been so constant a Beggar at the Temple Gate. The recovered Man in a sort of a Transport laid hold on the two Apostles, and all the People ran together, and in a tumultuous Manner gathered about them in those magnificent Cloysters about the *Court of the Gentiles*, called *Solomon's Porch*.

Peter now seeing such Multitudes about him, first asked them, *Why they were so amazed; and why they looked so earnestly upon them, as tho' they had restored the Man by their own Power and Holiness?* Then he declar'd, *That the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and their Fathers, had glorified his Son Jesus Christ, that holy and just Person, whom they had deny'd and delivered up to Pilate, preferring a Rebel and Murtherer before him, when the Judge was resolved to acquit him: That tho' they had put him to Death, yet God had raised him from the Grave, of which they the Apostles were Witnesses; and had made his Name so great, that by faith in that alone, they had restored that impotent Man to perfect Health and Soundness, in the Presence of them all. That all Things that God had foretold by the Mouth of his Prophets, concerning the Sufferings of the Messiah, were now accomplish'd; which indeed was so accomplished through the Ignorance of them and their Rulers, who knew not the Dignity of his Person. But that now it was high Time for them to repent and be converted, that their Sins might be expi'd, in these Times of Refreshment, and the Presence of the Lord,*

*Acts 3.
12--26.
Chap. 4.
4.*

and the Preaching of his Son Jesus Christ, whom the Heavens were to receive 'till the Time of the Restitution of all Things, which God had foretold by all his holy Prophets since the World began. For that Moses in particular had declared to their Fathers, 'That the Lord should raise up a Prophet 'among their Brethren, like unto Him; to whom they should 'hearken in all Things he should teach them; and that who- 'soever should refuse to hearken to him, should be destroyed 'from among the People. And moreover, that all the Prophets from Samuel, downwards, and all who followed after him, had foretold the present Times. That therefore since they were the Children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God had made to Abraham, when he told him, 'That in his 'Seed all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed; God had raised up his Son Jesus first to them, and in a special Manner sent him to bless them, in turning away all from their Iniquities. While Peter thus discoursed to the People in one Place, it is probable that John preached to them in another; and the Success was answerable. The Apostles sowed the Seed, and God immediately gave the Increase; there being by this Means no fewer than five thousand brought over to the Faith; tho' it is possible the whole Body of Believers might be included in that Number.

Acts 4.
1-12.

While they were preaching to the Multitude, the Priests and Sadducees, whose Malice and Envy against the Growth of the Christian Doctrine was greater than their Power, having insinuated to the Roman Captain, who commanded the Garrison in the Castle *Antonia*, on the North Side of the Temple, That the Apostles Preaching tended to Sedition, came suddenly upon them with Soldiers, and seizing them, cast them into Prison 'till the next Day, it being too late to examine them that Night. The next Morning the Grand *Sanbedrim* met, and summoned the two Apostles and the recovered Man before them; and the Scripture names *Annas*, *Caiaphas*, *John* and *Alexander* as some of the most zealous in this Matter. The Pretence of Sedition was waved, because Groundless, and the whole Examination was resolv'd into one single Question, *viz.* By what Power, and by whose Name they had restored the lame Man? Not that they were ignorant of it, but they hoped to make them disown it through Fear, and by that Means weaken the Faith of the new Converts. But Peter being now replenished with the Holy Ghost, according to our Lord's Promise to his Disciples in such Cases, with great Courage made this Defence, *Ye Rulers of the People, and Senators of Israel, If our Examination this Day be concerning the happy Cure of the impo-*

tent

rent Man, and by what Means it was effected; we do solemnly declare to you all, and to all the Progeny of Israel, That it is by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye have crucify'd, and whom God has raised from the Grave, that this Man now stands before you sound and recover'd. This same Jesus is the Stone that you Architects have utterly rejected, which is become the Head of the Corner; nor is there Salvation in any other; for there is no other Name under Heaven given to Men, whereby we must be saved.

The whole Sanhedrim hearing this noble and ready Answer, from Persons whom they knew to be without any Learning or liberal Education, were extremely surpriz'd and amaz'd; but could not contradict the Truth of their Assertion, because they knew them to be Disciples of Jesus, and because the restored Cripple was present, and ready to attest the Truth of the Miracle. Wherefore being in a great Dispute and Doubt how to deal with such powerful Evidence, they commanded them to withdraw; and after a solemn Debate, to prevent the spreading of the Doctrine of Christ, it was resolved to awe them into Silence, by strictly charging them, *Not to preach, nor teach in the Name of Jesus for the future.* But the two Apostles, not at all discouraged at their Threats, declared to them all, *That they had received a Command from God to preach to all Nations what they had heard and seen; and that this being the Case, they would appeal to themselves, whether they ought not to obey God, rather than Them.* The Magistrates not regarding this Answer, backed their Decree with more severe Threatnings, and so dismissed them without any Punishment; not that they would have dealt with them so mildly, but only because the Peoples Veneration restrained their Malice, and kept them from doing Injury to those who really deserved a Reward.

The two Apostles being thus dismissed, returned to their Brethren, and gave them a particular Account of all that passed, and what unjust Treatment they had met with from the Sanhedrim: Which when they had heard, they all with unanimous Hearts addressed themselves to God, and pray'd after this Manner, *O Lord, thou omnipotent God, who hast created Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, with all that are contained in them, who by the Mouth of thy Servant David hast said, 'Why do the Heathen rage, and the People form vain Designs? The Kings of the Earth stood up, and the 'Governors combined against the Lord, and against his Christ. Thus it is accomplished; for both Herod and Pilate, and the Gentiles and the People of Israel, have conspired together*

against thy Holy Son Jesus, whom thou hast consecrated, to bring about all that thy Hand and Counsel has appointed. And now, O Lord, behold their Rage and Threats, and enable thy Servants and Ministers to preach thy Word with all Courage and Boldness; and also give them Power to shew Signs, and work miraculous Cures in the Name of thy Son Jesus, for the Propagation of the Gospel. These Words were no sooner uttered, but God gave them a Sign that their Prayer was heard; for the House wherein they were met was shaken with a Wind from Heaven, as formerly, and they found themselves replenished with the Holy Ghost, and a new Spirit of Courage, inciting them not only to strengthen the Believers, but to instruct others in the Doctrine of *Christ's* Resurrection, notwithstanding all the Menaces of the *Jewish* Governors.

Acts 4.
32--37.
Chap. 5.
1--13.

Among the many good Effects that the Evangelical Preaching had upon the Hearts of such as were converted, this was none of the least, that they were filled with a fervent Love, and exuberant Charity one towards another. Many of the Believers were poor, but such was the exceeding Liberality of the Rich, that they freely communicated their Estates to them, selling them, and laying down the Price of them at the Apostles Feet, that they might distribute the Money in the Service of God, and according to the Necessities of the Brethren. Among many that did thus, the Scripture mentions *Joses*, a Levite of the Island *Cyprus*, one of the Seventy Disciples, who after this Manner dedicated all his Estate to God, and laid the Price of it at the Feet of the Apostles, who upon this surnamed him *Barnabas*, signifying the *Son of Consolation*; which Man afterwards became an Eminent Apostle. In Imitation of him, *Ananias* and his Wife *Sapphira*, two new Converts, sold their Estate, and turned it into Money. But tho' they were desirous of having the Reputation of pious and charitable Persons, yet they were unwilling to cast themselves wholly upon Providence, and therefore privately detained Part of what they had devoted to God, and bringing the rest, laid it at the Apostles Feet; hoping to deceive them, tho' immediately guided by the Spirit of God. But *Peter* at his first coming in, solemnly asked *Ananias*, *Why he suffered Satan to fill his Heart with so great a Wickedness, as to purloin Part of the Estate, and think to impose upon the Holy Ghost?* Urging, *That before the Estate was sold, it was wholly at his own Disposal; and that after, it was wholly in his own Power to have performed the Vow: So that what he had done was capable of no other Interpretation, than that he had not only*

only abused and injured Men, but defrauded God also. Upon pronouncing these Words, *Ananiás*, to the great Terror and Amazement of all present, was immediately arrested with a Stroke from Heaven, and fell down dead to the Ground; and was taken up, carried out and buried. *Sapphira* was not present at this sad Accident; but coming in about three Hours after, *Peter* asked her first, *Whether the Land was sold for the same Sum that was brought in*; and when she persisted in it, he severely reprov'd her for combining to tempt the Spirit of God, declaring, *That she should meet with the same sad Fate with her Husband*. And immediately she fell down dead at his Feet, was carried out by the same Bearers, and buried by her Husband; becoming Sharer with him in the Punishment, as she had been Co-partner with him in the Sin. A dreadful Example of defrauding the Almighty, filling all that heard it with Fear and Terror, so that none durst equal or join themselves with the Apostles; and became a seasonable Prevention of that Hypocrisie and Dissimulation, with which many might possibly think to have imposed upon the Church.

The Apostles having thus manifested the Power and Justice of *Christ*, proceeded daily to shew his Graciousness and Mercy in working many miraculous Cures in his Name, in healing the Diseas'd, and freeing the Possessed; inso-much, that the People brought forth their Sick into the Streets, and laid them on Beds and Couches, that at least *Peter's* Shadow, as he pass'd by, might come upon them; which it seems had miraculous Effects, accomplishing what our Lord had promised *John* 14. 12. *That they should do greater Works than his*. These miraculous Cures contributed extremely to the Propagation of the Gospel, and to the great Reputation of the Apostles, so that Multitudes of Men and Women were daily added to the Church. And great Numbers of People from many other neighbouring Cities and Towns, brought their Sick, Lame and Possessed to *Jerusalem*, and the Apostles restored them all, to the Astonishment both of City and Country. The usual Place that the Apostles and Believers had to meet and assemble in, was that Part of the Temple called *Solomon's* *Porch*, in part of which the Grand *Sanhedrim* at this Time sat; and yet being supported by an extraordinary Spirit, they were not afraid of being so near their Enemies.

The High-Priest, and some of the *Sanhedrim*, who were of the Sect of the *Sadducees*, seeing to their great Grief, not only that their Prohibition was disregarded by the Apostles, but also that *Christianity* daily increased by the Miracles and

Acts 5.
12--16.

Acts 5.
17--32.

Preaching of the Apostles, were highly incensed at them, and having apprehended them, threw them into the common Prison, which they had never done before. But God, whose Work they were about, to give a Demonstration that no human Power or Policy can put a stop to his Purposes, sent his Angel the Night following; who opening the Prison Doors, set them at Liberty, and ordered them to proceed in their Ministry, *and the next Day to preach in the Temple the Words of eternal Life.* The Apostles readily performed this Command, and entering the Temple early in the Morning, taught the People as formerly. The High-Priest and his Associates were ignorant of their Deliverance, therefore calling a full Council in the Morning of all the Senators of *Israel*, they sent their Officers to the Prison, to bring the Prisoners before them; But upon entering the Prison, tho' there appeared no Signs of an Escape, the Doors being shut, and the Keepers on their Guard, yet they found none of the Persons they sought for; which Miracle not only astonished the Officers, but also those of the *Sanhedrim* when they heard it, who became extremely Apprehensive of the Consequence of this strange Occurrence. They began to imagine that it would be in vain to oppose that Doctrine, for which God had so eminently appeared; yet hearing that the Apostles were Preaching in the Temple, they sent the Captain and their Officers to bring them before them, but without Violence or Noise, lest they should exasperate the People, and draw a Shower of Stones upon themselves. The Apostles being brought before the *Sanhedrim*, *Caia-phas* demanded of them, *How they durst presume to preach that Doctrine which they had lately been so strictly forbidden to preach? And severely chid them, for that instead of Silence and Obedience, they had filled the whole City with the Name of Jesus, intending to cause the People to revenge his Blood upon them.* Upon which *Peter* and the rest of the Apostles resolutely made Answer, *That tho' Obedience was due to them as Magistrates, yet God was to be obeyed in the first Place; the God of their Fathers who had raised up Jesus, whom they had slain and crucify'd, and had exalted him by his powerful Arm to be a King and a Saviour, and give both Repentance and Remission of Sins. And that not only They were Witnesses of those Truths, but also the Holy Ghost himself, whom God wou'd communicate to all such as obey'd him.*

Acts 5.
33-42.

These Words, tho' pious and prudent, so enrag'd the High-Priest and the rest of the Rulers, that they at first took a Resolution to put them to Death; and possibly had gone about it, had they not been prevented by one of the Council

cil nam'd *Gamaliel*, Son of that *Simeon* who took *Jesus* in his Arms, a *Pharisee*, famous for his Skill in the Law, and of great Reputation in the City, who having order'd the Apostles to withdraw for a short Space, prophetically advis'd the Council to be exceedingly cautious how they proceeded against those Men; giving it as a Reason that they had had several late Instances of the like Pretenders: Particularly one *Theudas* or *Judas*, who aspiring to Sovereignty, and boasting himself an extraordinary Person, drew four hundred Men to his Obedience; but that he was soon slain, and all his Associates broken, and reduc'd to nothing. That after him there arose *Judas* of *Galilee*, in the Time of the last Taxation, and drew great Numbers after him: but that he also perish'd, and had all his Followers dispers'd. That therefore they ought not rashly to crush this new Doctrine, but to wait and expect the Event; for that if it were only an human Invention it would fall of it self in Time, and be blasted by the Hand of Heaven; but that if it were from God, all their Attempts would be vain and impious, and themselves would be look'd upon as Contenders with Omnipotence. The Force of these Reasons, and the Mildness of the Speech, so far prevail'd with the Judges of the Apostles, that they chang'd their rash Sentence into a corporal Punishment; and having scourg'd them, dismiss'd them with a Repetition of the former Injunction, That they should not teach any more in the Name of *Jesus*. The Apostles departed rejoicing, not that they had escap'd Death, but that they were accounted worthy to suffer Shame and Torment for the Name of their dear Lord and Master. Nor did this Usage discourage them in their Ministry; but daily in the Temple, and in private Houses also they taught and preach'd the Gospel. And thus concluded the 33^d Year of the vulgar Æra of *Christ*, a Year the greatest and most memorable that ever did, or shall happen within the Compass of Time.

IV. The wonderful Resurrection and Ascension of our Blessed Saviour being divulg'd in all Parts, because it was always Customary for the Governors of Provinces to communicate to the *Roman* Emperors every strange and uncommon Accident hapning within their Charge, that nothing material might escape their Knowledge; *Pontius Pilate* acquainted his Master *Tiberius* with the Resurrection of *Jesus Christ*, which was now the common Discourse of all *Palestine*; giving him an Account also, That he had heard of many other Miracles of his, and how that rising again after he had been dead he was now by many believ'd to be a God. *Tiberius* having

A. D.

34.

Tiber.

20

21.

Eusebius.

Orosius.

&c.

receiv'd

receiv'd so authentick an Account, tho' plung'd in all Lewdness and Wickedness, referr'd this Matter to the Senate, with his favourable Suffrage, *That Christ might be enroll'd among the Gods*; but this Proposal was rejected by the Senate, upon Pretence that they had not first approv'd of the Matter; there being an old and inviolable Law among the *Romans*, that no one should be deify'd but by the express Suffrage and Decree of the Senate. However the Emperor was so far from attempting any Thing prejudicial to the Doctrine of *Christ*, that he persisted in his Judgment, and threatned all the Accusers of the *Christians* with Death; by which Means this Religion, now in its Infancy, had the greater Opportunity of spreading its self in the *Roman Empire*. This Relation, tho' doubted by some, is confirm'd not only by *Eusebius* and *Orosius*, but also by *Tertullian* and *Justin Martyr* in their Apologies,; the latter of whom, for the Proof of our Lord's Miracles, appeals to the *Acts* or the *Journal Books* of *Pilate* then extant. But as for that Letter of *Pilate's* to *Tiberius* which we have at present, it is acknowledg'd by all learned Men to be a mere Forgery.

Joseph.

About the same Time, in the 20th Year of the Reign of *Tiberius*, *Philip* the Tetrarch and Brother to *Herod* died, after he had reign'd himself about 37 Years, from the Death of his Father *Herod* the Great. *Josephus* observes, that during all the Time of his Government, contrary to the Temper of his Father and Brothers, he behav'd himself peaceably, and kept within his Dominions of *Trachonitis*: That whenever he walk'd, he had a few select Servants with him, and his usual Seat of Justice carried after him; that if any Person presented himself, and requir'd his Assistance, he might without Delay examine his Cause, punish the Guilty, and free the Innocent. He dy'd in the City *Julias*, and was buried in his own Sepulchre, with great Pomp and Solemnity; and because he left no Heirs of his Body, the Emperor *Tiberius* seiz'd on his Estate, and united his Dominions to the Government of *Syria*, then under *Flaccus Pomponius*; ordaining that all the Tributes collected in his Tetrarchy, should still be kept within the Limits of that Country. So that now we are to consider the Country of *Palestine* as under three distinct Kinds of Government; 1. The Provinces of *Judea* and *Samaria*, together with *Idumæa*, under the *Roman* Governor call'd Procurator, namely *Pontius Pilate*: 2. The Provinces of *Galilee* and *Peræa*, under the Tetrarch *Herod*: and 3. The Province of *Trachonitis*, including *Batanaea* and *Ituræa*, united to the Government of *Syria*, on which the other two were in some measure dependent.

V. About

V. About the Time of the Death of *Philip* the Te- Acts 6.
 tarch, the Numbers of Believers now daily encreasing at 1--6.
Jerusalem; [as it frequently happens among a Multitude,
 there arose a complaint of those *Jews* that were call'd *Helle-*
nists against the *Hebrew Jews*, because their Widows were
 neglected, and received less than others in the daily Distri-
 bution of the Church's Money. The Apostles were desir-
 ous to have the Poor well relieved; but being so much
 employ'd as they were in dispensing the Word, the Food
 of the Soul, they declar'd before the whole Multitude. *That*
they were not at Leisure to attend that other Service: But by
 their Advice, and the Suffrages of the Church, there were
 seven Men of eminent Report for Wisdom, and the En-
 dowments of the Holy Spirit, chosen to be Stewards of
 the Church's Stock; into which Office they were ordain'd
 by the solemn Prayers of the Apostles, and the Imposition
 of Hands; an ancient Symbolick Right of Investiture, and
 Consecration to any extraordinary Office. This was the
 first Institution of Deacons in the Christian Church, who
 were to *serve Tables*, that is, to wait upon the Necessities
 of the Poor, and to make daily Provision for their publick
Agapæ, or Love-Feasts, in which the Holy Eucharist was
 administer'd; so that their Office was not only Civil, but
 also Ecclesiastical. The Names of the Seven were *Stephen*,
Philip, *Prochorus*, *Nicanor*, *Timon*, *Parmenas*, and *Nico-*
las, all elected out of the Seventy, whom our Lord had cho-
 sen: Of these the two first were most eminent; the last
 was a Profelite of *Antioch*, and the same, as many believe,
 who afterwards gave Birth to the Heresie of the *Nicolai-*
tans. About the same Time, as Bishop *Pearson* and some
 other learned Men believe, *James* the Less, who for his
 eminent Virtues was surnam'd the *Just*, was chosen Bishop
 of *Jerusalem*, being prefer'd before all the rest, for his
 near Relation to our Lord; a Consideration that made *Pe-*
ter, and the two Sons of *Zebedee*, tho' peculiarly honour'd
 by *Christ*, not to contend for this high and honourable
 Place, and it may be also that they had some particular In-
 timation concerning it from their Master. Some others
 think he was chosen immediately after the great Effusion
 of the Holy Spirit at *Pentecost*, which is still uncertain;
 however it is generally agreed, that *Jerusalem* was the first
 Church and Diocese, and St. *James* the first Bishop in the
Christian State; as may be learn'd both from *Eusebius*, and
Clemens Alexandrinus. And *Jerusalem* being the Mother
 of all other Churches, it render'd *James* so honourable in
 the

the Opinion of many of the Ancients, that they gave him the Name of the Head and Bishop of the Apostles themselves; and St. Paul himself names him first of those three Apostles which he accounted Pillars of the Church, James, Cephas, and John, Gal. 2. 9. as being at least, by his Place, their Superior, and chief in Order in the Church of Jerusalem.

Acts 6.
7-14.

Upon the Election of the seven Deacons, the Christian Religion gain'd Ground more abundantly than ever, Converts multiply'd exceedingly, and great Numbers of the Priests themselves, the most pertinacious Asserters of the Mosaick Constitutions, and the most inveterate Enemies of the Christian Doctrine, laid aside their Prejudices, and embrac'd the Gospel. Stephen very much contributed to this happy Progress, being replenish'd with the most Divine Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit, Preaching the Gospel with a noble Courage and Resolution, and confirming it with many publick and unquestionable Miracles among the People. His Zeal and Diligence, together with his extraordinary Success, in a short Time awakened the Malice of the unbelieving Jews; who selected the most learned Men out of five of their chief Synagogues or Colleges to dispute with him: namely, the Libertines, the Cyreneans, the Alexandrians, the Cilicians, and Asians, all nam'd from the Persons who founded them, of whom the first were manumitted Servants, and the rest of foreign Countries. These disputing with him concerning the perpetual Nature of the Mosaick Institutions, and the Destruction of the Temple, soon found themselves baffled, and were not able to stand against that divine Wisdom and Spirit by which he deliver'd himself. Therefore in the Height of their Malice they suborn'd Men to testify, That they had heard him speak Blasphemy against Moses, and against God. And with their utmost Fury stirring up the People, the Senators and the Scribes, they seiz'd him, and brought him before the Grand Sanhedrim; where false Witnesses were set up, who swore, That Stephen had spoken Blasphemy against the Holy Temple and the Law; particularly that he said, That Jesus of Nazareth should destroy that Building, and change the Laws which their great Master Moses had deliver'd to them.

Acts 6.
15.
Chap. 7.
1-53.

This holy Man being brought before the Sanhedrim, his Face appear'd full of Majesty and Splendor, like that of an Angel; an Argument of a clear Conscience, and of the divine Assistance and Presence. Being permitted to speak for him-

himself, he in a grave and severe Oration apply'd himself to answer the Charge brought against him. And because the unconverted *Jews* fondly imagin'd that God was so delighted with the Temple Service, and the *Mosaick* Rites, that he would always continue them, and allow of no other Way of Worship, he shew'd them by a full Historical Deduction, That God was rightly worship'd before either the Tabernacle or the Temple was erected: *Particularly by their great Father and Founder Abraham, whom God call'd from his own native Country, and confirm'd his Covenant with him by Circumcision; and that without any other fixed Rite but this, the succeeding Patriarchs worship'd God for several Ages, 'till the Times of Moses. And that when God had commanded Moses to erect a Tabernacle, as a Place of publick Worship, where he would manifest himself, and receive the Adorations of his People; yet that was but transient and temporary, and in some Years was to give place to a standing Temple first design'd by David, and built by Solomon. And that this Temple, tho' of God's own Appointment, was not to be of a perpetual Duration, appear'd, he said, from his declaring ' Heaven to be his Throne, and Earth his Footstool, and ' that therefore he was not to be confin'd within any material ' Temple, nor tied to any particular Way of Worship.* Besides these Historical Deductions, he gave them to understand, *That their Law-giver Moses had foretold a Change, ' That the ' Lord should raise up a Prophet among them, who like Him ' should introduce a new Way of Worship, to whom they were ' to yield Obedience. Yet in the midst of those miraculous Times, their Ancestors were stubborn and rebellious against their Deliverer, and continu'd for many Ages provoking and idolatrous. Then he concluded his Speech by declaring, That they were like their Ancestors, a stiff-neck'd and wilful Generation, circumcis'd in Body, but not in Heart, always resisting the Methods of the Holy Ghost. That their Fore-fathers had persecuted and slain the Prophets who foretold the Coming of the Messiah, and that they their unhappy Posterity had actually betray'd and murder'd the Person; without Regard to the Law, which had solemnly been deliver'd to them by the Ministry of Angels, and which he came to fulfil.*

He was proceeding in the Application, when the Patience of his Auditors began to fail, and their Consciences being stung by the severe Truths he deliver'd, they fell into a most violent Heat, and express'd the utmost Signs of Rage and Fury. But he, regardless of what was done below, had his Eyes and Thoughts fix'd upon a higher and nobler Object, and was bless'd with a Prospect of the Glories of Heaven,

Acts 7.
54-60.

Heaven, and a sensible Appearance of the Divine Majesty, and the Holy *Jesus* cloath'd in the Robes of our glorify'd Nature, standing at the right Hand of his Father. The good Man was infinitely ravish'd with the Vision, and inspir'd with new Zeal and Courage; declaring before all, *That he saw the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right Hand of God*; as it were to protect and crown his suffering Servant. This farther enrag'd the *Jews*, who look'd upon him as a Blasphemer, and resolv'd upon his Death without any farther Process; and acting the Part of the *Zealots*, they rais'd a great Noise and Clamour, stopp'd their Ears that they might hear no Cries for Mercy, and unanimously rush'd upon him. Then in a popular Rage, and a tumultuous Manner, without Leave from the *Roman Governor*, they hurry'd him out of the City, in order to stone him, according to the ancient Law against Blasphemers. The Witnesses, according to Custom, strip'd themselves, and laid their Cloaths at the Feet of a zealous Youth call'd *Saul*, who in a particular Manner was consenting to his Death; and then began the Tragedy, which was soon seconded by the Multitude. All which Time the pious Martyr was upon his Knees, sending up his Prayers to Heaven, devoutly recommending his Soul to God, and loudly interceding for his Murtherers, *That God would not charge this Guilt upon them*; and then gave up the Ghost, or as the sacred Historian elegantly expresses it, *fell asleep*: So soft a Pillow is Death to a good Man, so willingly, so quietly does he leave the World, as a weary Labourer goes to his Rest at Night.

Acts 8.
E.

This was the glorious Death of the pious St. *Stephen*, who had the Honour to be the first Martyr in the *Christian Church*, tho' he was not the first who dy'd upon the Account of the Gospel. His Body was bury'd by devout Men, probably Profelytes, who made great Lamentations over it; and, as some report, it was not only by the Allowance, but also with the Assistance of *Gamaliel*, the President of the *Sanhedrim*. Chronologers are not agreed in what Year he suffer'd; but Bishop *Pearson*, upon the most probable Grounds, places it in the Year 34. And, if I may be allow'd to add my own Conjecture, it was in the Time of the Passover; which if so, he dy'd near eleven Months after our Blessed Saviour's Ascension.

C H A P. II.

From the Death of the first Martyr Stephen, to the first Call, and Preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

Containing the Term of about six Years.

I. **T**HE Church of God had been hitherto toss'd with gentle Storms, but now a more violent Tempest overtook it: For the unbelieving Jews were so gall'd at Stephen's Conquest over their chief Scholars, his severe Reflections, and his denouncing Ruin to the *Mosaick* Rites in their Temple, that they rais'd a terrible Persecution against the Church, hoping to extirpate that Religion which had threatned Destruction to theirs. The great Engineer in this Persecution was *Saul*, a young Person suppos'd to be about 30 Years of Age, born in a *Roman* City call'd *Tarsus* in *Cilicia*, above 300 Miles from *Jerusalem*; by which he obtain'd the Privileges of a free Citizen of *Rome*, and probably also the *Roman* Name of *Paul* given him at his Circumcision. His Parents were both Jews and of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, so that he was an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*; first enter'd in the Occupation of Tent-making, then educated in the Learning of his City, and afterwards remov'd to *Jerusalem*, where he became a Scholar to the great *Gamaliel*, and one of the most zealous of the Sect of the *Pharisees*. His active and fiery Genius, together with his passionate Concern for the Traditions of the Fathers, made him pursue his Designs with the Spirit of a Zealot, and the Rage of a Mad-Man. Having furnish'd himself with a Commission from the *Sanhedrim*, he immediately put it in Execution, broke open Houses, seiz'd upon any who look'd like a Disciple of the crucify'd *Jesus*; and without any Regard to Sex or Age, scourg'd and hal'd them to Prison; plucking the Husband from the Bosom of the Wife, and the Mother from the Embraces of her Children; compelling Men to blaspheme God, and breathing out nothing but Threatnings and Slaughter where-ever he came. Whence *Eusebius* calls it the first, and most grievous Persecution of the Church; tho' this was none of those which are call'd *General Persecutions*.

A. D.
34.
Tiber.
20.
21.
Acts 8.
Chap. 22.
3, 4, 19
Chap. 26.
9--11.
Chap. 18.
Philip 3.
5, 6.
Galat. 1.
13, 14

Acts 8.
1-4.

This Persecution was so severe, that it dispers'd in a great Measure the whole Body of the Church, and drove both the Members and Teachers of it into several Countries, and many Natives of *Jerusalem* from their own Houses into foreign Parts. Only the Apostles remain'd still in the City; for their Functions and Courages being both extraordinary, they continu'd firm to their Ministry there, under the special Protection of their Master, and would not depart 'till they should be call'd thence by God. The rest of the Disciples, of whom there were several thousands, were dispers'd abroad, some into the Regions of *Judea* and *Samaria*, publishing the glad Tidings of the Gospel wherever they came: Some went into *Celo-Syria* to *Damascus*, among whom was *Ananias*, a devout and religious Person, and one of the seventy, *Acts* 9. 10. Others travell'd into *Phœnicia*, and *Cyprus*, and *Antioch*, preaching the Gospel to the *Jews* in those Parts, *Acts* 11. 19. And others, it is probable, went as far as *Rome*, among whom were *Andronicus* and *Junia*, who were of Note among the Apostles, and Relations of the Persecutor *Saul*; and had embrac'd the Faith before him, as he himself testifies, *Rom.* 16. 7. Hitherto the Church was shut up and confin'd within the City Walls, but this Persecution enlarg'd the Bounds of *Christianity*; so that the Ways that the *Jews* intended for its Ruin, and the Dissolution of its Members, prov'd the most effectual Means for its Spreading and Propagation.

Acts 8.
5-13.

Among those who were dispersed, *Philip* the Deacon, the second in Order after *Stephen*, was driven to the City of *Samaria*, a noted Place about 30 Miles North-East of *Jerusalem*, and call'd *Sebaste* by *Herod* the Great; and tho' the Apostles Example seem'd to confine the Gospel to the *Jews* only, yet since our Saviour had nam'd *Samaria*, *Acts* 1. 8. and they were in some Sense *Jews*, as observing the Law, and expecting the *Messiah*, he thought it lawful to preach *Christ* to them. The Divine Wisdom gave Approbation to the Undertaking, and seconded his Preaching with many eminent Miracles, which drew the universal Attention of the Inhabitants, and fill'd the City with Joy and Wonder: For he cur'd many who were seiz'd with Palsies, and other Lamenesses; and out of others he cast impure Spirits, who at their coming forth made loud Acknowledgments of that irresistible Power by which he acted. In this City was one *Simon*, born at *Giton*, not far distant, who by Sorcery and Magick Arts had strangely gain'd the Veneration of the People; a Man crafty and ambitious, daring and insolent, whose diabolical Illusions had for a long Time so amaz'd

amaz'd the Eyes of the Vulgar, that they all believ'd him the great Power of God; and so he stil'd himself, as *Ireneus* assures us. But this Man seeing his Admirers in great Numbers baptiz'd, and brought off by the Preaching and Miracles of *Philip*, which so manifestly exceeded his infernal Arts, became himself a Convert, and was baptized by him; tho' probably his main Design was to insinuate himself with *Philip*, and to find out the Art by which he wrought his Miracles.

The News of so large a City's Conversion was in a short Time brought to the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, who being unwilling to neglect any Thing conducing to the Church's Good, tho' under great Persecution, sent *St. Peter* and *St. John* to confer the Gifts of the Holy Ghost upon the new Converts, which it was not in the Power of *Philip* to do, who was only a Deacon; this Office being reserv'd to the Apostles only. At their Arrival they pray'd for them, and laid their Hands upon them, probably ordaining some to be Governors of the Church, and Ministers of the Gospel; and immediately they receiv'd the miraculous Effects of the Holy Ghost. *Simon* the Magician observing that a Power of working Miracles and speaking with Tongues was convey'd by the Imposition of the Apostles Hands, out of a strange Avarice and Ambition, offer'd them Mony to empower him to do as they did. *Peter* perceiving his rotten and insincere Intentions, rejected his impious Proposal with Scorn and Detestation, and denounc'd an Execration against him and his Mony, for imagining that to be a Means of purchasing the Gifts of Heaven: Declaring, That his Heart and Intentions were corrupt: That he could have no Share nor Portion in so great a Privilege: That it more concern'd him to repent of so hainous an Impiety, and to beg of God to forgive his wicked Imagination; since at present he was infected with the most venomous Contagion, and was a Slave to Iniquity. *Simon* a little terrify'd at these Words, and possibly fearing to be made an Example of Dissimulation, as *Ananias* was, beg'd the Apostles Prayers, for the more effectual averting those Judgments denounc'd against him. But how slight his Repentance was will appear afterwards; for he more and more proceeded in his magical Arts, and his execrable Blasphemies, and became the Author of the first and grossest Heresies in the Church of God. Notwithstanding the Purity of the *Christian* Religion, and tho' the Church was yet in its Infancy, God was pleas'd to permit Heresie to arise in it, within less than two Years after the Death of his Son.

Acts 8.
14-24.

Acts 8.

25-40.

The two Apostles having thus confirm'd the Church of *Samaria*, preach'd the Gospel in many of the neighbouring Villages, and then return'd back to *Jerusalem*, to join their Counsel and Assistance to the rest of the Apostles. But *Philip* was employ'd in a more peculiar Affair, being appointed by an Angel from Heaven, immediately to repair towards the South into a desert Country, and the Way between *Jerusalem* and *Gaza*. He obey'd the Call with as much Readiness as *Abraham*, when he was commanded out of his own Country; and arriving at the Place, he discover'd a Chariot, with a foreign Nobleman in it, an Eunuch of great Authority, and chief Treasurer to *Candace* Queen of *Æthiopia* in *Africa*, who being a *Jewish* Profelyte, had been to pay his Adorations at *Jerusalem*, probably at the Feast of Tabernacles. *Philip* by the Impulse of the Spirit join'd himself to the Chariot, and found the Person devoutly employ'd, namely, reading a Portion out of the 53d Chapter of *Isaiab*, in Words to this Effect; ' *He was led as a Sheep to the Slaughter, and was silent as a Lamb before the Shearer: In his Humiliation his Right was taken from him; and who shall describe the Wickedness of that Generation, which took away his Life from the Earth?* *Philip* asking him whether he understood the Passage? He answer'd, *That he wanted an Interpreter*, and courteously invited him into his Chariot to explain it to him; particularly desiring to know of him, *Whether the Prophet spoke this of himself, or of some other Person?* Whereupon *Philip* began at that Passage of Scripture, and preach'd to him the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*, so fully and effectually, that coming near a Place of Water, the Eunuch desired to be baptiz'd into the *Christian* Religion. *Philip* inform'd him, *That if his Faith was sincere he might be baptiz'd*; and the other declaring, *That he believ'd Jesus Christ to be the Son of God*, the Chariot was order'd to stand still, and both went down to the Water, where the Eunuch was baptiz'd, according to his Request. This Act was accompany'd with an extraordinary and miraculous Accident, sufficiently evidencing *Philip* to have been sent by Heaven; for immediately he was transported by the Spirit of the Lord, and snatch'd quite away from the Presence of the Eunuch; who proceeded in his Journey with great Joy and Satisfaction, and preach'd the *Christian* Faith in his own Country: In which respect St. *Jerom* stiles him the Apostle of the *Æthiopians*; and the Ancients generally make that Prediction of *David* fulfilled in him, ' *Æthiopia shall stretch out her Hands unto God.* *Philip* was found about 30 Miles distant at *Azotus*; and

and passing through, he preach'd the Gospel in all the Cities, 'till he came to his own City *Cæsarea*.

II. *Saul* still continu'd to persecute the Church with a most ungovernable Zeal and Fury; and because the Believers were dispers'd, and the Gospel greatly propagated in other Provinces and Countries, he made it his Employment to persecute them in foreign Cities. And since the Power of the Grand *Sanhedrim*, as to religious and ecclesiastical Affairs, extended to all the *Jewish* Synagogues, even in the remotest Parts from *Judea*; *Saul* procur'd Letters of Commission from that Body to go into *Cælo-Syria*, to *Damascus*, a noble City, the Metropolis of that Province, about 160 Miles North-East of *Jerusalem*; that if he found any in the Synagogues, whether Man or Woman, who profess'd *Christ*, he might bring them bound, to be punish'd at *Jerusalem*. But God, who had separated him from his Mother's Womb for the Preaching of his Gospel, now put a Stop to his violent Designs: For as he was travelling with his cruel Associates upon the Road near to *Damascus*, at Mid-day, a most amazing Gleam of Light, far exceeding the Splendor and Glory of the Meridian Sun, was suddenly darted from Heaven upon them, which with the Fear threw them all prostrate upon the Ground. This was accompany'd with a remarkable Voice, crying in the *Hebrew*, or rather *Syriack* Tongue, SAUL, SAUL! WHY DOST THOU PERSECUTE ME? Whereupon *Saul* in a terrible Amazement cry'd, Lord! Who art thou? The Voice reply'd, I am *Jesus* of *Nazareth* whom thou persecutest; 'Tis hard for thee to kick against the Pricks: That is, all thy Attempts will prove successless, and like kicking against Spikes, will prove thy own Wounding and Torment. *Saul* convinc'd of his great Error, immediately submitted to the divine Vision, and in the most trembling and yielding Manner said, Lord, What wilt thou have me to do? Our Lord mercifully bad him, Arise from the Ground, and go to *Damascus*, where he should be inform'd of all the Parts of his Duty: For that he had appear'd to him purposely to constitute him a Minister and a Witness, both of what he had seen, and of what he had design'd to reveal to him: Delivering him from the People, and from the Gentiles, to which latter he was sending him, to open their Eyes, and to turn them from Darknes to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God, that they might obtain Remission of Sins, and an Inheritance among such as were sanctify'd by Faith in him. The Men who accompany'd him rising from

A. D.

35.

Tiber.

21

22.

Acts 9.

1--9.

Chap. 22.

5--11.

Chap. 26.

11--19.

the Earth, were extremely astonished, and stood speechless, having seen an extraordinary Light, and heard a Sound of Words, but neither saw *Christ*, as *Saul* did, nor understood distinctly any Thing he said. But *Saul* was so dazzled and overpowered by the Light, that he became entirely blind, and was led by his Companions into *Damascus*, where he remained not only without Sight, but also without Meat or Drink, for three Days together; humbling his Soul before God for his former Miscarriages, and his violent Persecution of the Church.

Acts 9.
10--19.
Chap. 22.
12-16.
Galat. 1.
11, 12.
16, 17.

There was at this Time at *Damascus* one *Ananias*, a very devout and religious Man, one of the Seventy, and tho' a *Christian*, yet of great Reputation among the *Jews*. To this Man our Lord appeared in a Vision, commanding him, *To go into a Street called Straight, and enquire at the House of Judas, for one Saul of Tarsus, who was now at Prayer, and had seen him in a Vision coming to him, to lay his Hands upon him, that he might receive his Sight.* *Ananias* was startled at the Name of the Man, and humbly alledged his bloody Practices at *Jerusalem*, and the Authority given him by the Sanhedrim to execute his cruel Designs. But our Lord to remove his Fears assured him, *That he was a chosen Vessel, a select Instrument to preach the Gospel both to Jews and Gentiles, and before the greatest Potentates upon Earth; acquainting him with what great Things he should both do and suffer for his Sake, what Chains and Imprisonments, what Racks and Scourges, what Hunger and Thirst, what Shipwrecks and Death he should undergo.* *Ananias*, satisfied with this Account from the Mouth of Truth it self, immediately repaired to the House, and laying his Hands upon *Saul*, he called him *Brother*, and declared to him, *That the Lord Jesus, the same who appeared to him in his Journey, had sent him to him, that he might recover his Sight, and be fill'd with the Gifts of the Holy Ghost: That therefore he must be baptized, for a Sign and Seal that his Sins were washed away by the Blood of Christ.* And immediately certain thick Films like Scales fell from his Eyes, and his Sight was restored; and being baptized, his Mind was enlightened by the Holy Ghost, and his Body was strengthened by Sustenance. He continued not long at *Damascus* after his Conversion, but having received immediate Revelations from Heaven, he conferr'd not with Flesh and Blood, neither with *Ananias*, nor with the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, but retired himself to *Arabia Petraea*, in the Country near *Damascus*, as appears from *Galat.* 1. where he remain'd about two Years, both preach-

ing

ing the Gospel, and receiving the full Knowledge of it himself; and afterwards testified that he did not derive his Mission and Authority from Men, but from *Jesus Christ*.

In the same Year that *Saul* was converted, *Vitellius*, Father to him of that Name that was afterwards Emperor, was by *Tiberius* made Governour of *Syria* and the East, in the Room of *Pomponius Flaccus*, which was the principal Preferment in the *Roman* Empire. At the Passover he went up to *Jerusalem*, where he had a Power superior to *Pilate*, probably induced by Curiosity to see that solemn Festival, or at least to dispatch Business with the more Ease and Expedition among such a Concourse of People. Being magnificently entertained in this City, in Requital, he remitted all the Imposts upon the Fruits bought and sold in the City; and likewise delivered all the Ornaments of the High-Priest, with the rest of the Sacerdotal Furniture and Vestments, to the Charge of the Priests themselves; all which were formerly kept in the Castle of *Antonia*, adjoining to the Temple, under the Power of the *Roman* Governours. Having thus gratified the Nation, before his Departure to *Antioch*, he made *Jonathan* the Son of *Annas* High-Priest, and depos'd *Caiaphas*, after he had continued in that Office about ten Years. And thus one of the unjust Judges of our Blessed Saviour was judged himself; and 'tis believed he shortly after dispatched himself with his own Hands.

III. The violent Storms that threatned the Church of God were very much allay'd by the happy Conversion of *Saul*, and the Believers had great Ease and Prosperity throughout all *Judea*, *Samaria*, and *Galilee*: But this Year in *Samaria* there hapned a Disturbance upon another Occasion, which proved the first Step to the Ruin of *Pilate*. It was caused by a great Impostor among the *Samaritans*, possibly *Simon Magus*, who persuaded the People that on their famous Mount *Gerizim*, he could shew them the Sacred Vessels which *Moses* had buryed with his own Hands. Upon which account the credulous Vulgar, all in Arms, met in Multitudes at a certain Village called *Tirathaba*, designing when their Numbers were compleated, to go in a solemn Manner and take Possession of these holy Reliques. But *Pilate* having learnt their Designs, with a considerable Body of Horse and Foot, quickly possessed himself of all the Passes, and setting furiously upon these deluded People, made a cruel Slaughter of some, took others Prisoners, and dispersed all the rest; and after that ordered the principal of the Prisoners to be put to Death without Mercy. Upon

A. D.
36.
Tiber.
22.
23.
Joseph.

this Fact, the Senate and Nobility of *Samaria* address'd themselves to *Vitellius* at *Antioch*, accusing *Pilate* of this Massacre; remonstrating, *That their Assembly was not to rebel against the Romans, but to secure themselves from the insupportable Tyrannies of Pilate.* *Vitellius* being sensible of his cruel Government, his Avarice and Extortions, by his own Authority commanded *Pilate* to repair to *Rome*, and answer before the Emperor what should be objected against him; sending his Friend *Marcellus* to supply his Office in *Judæa*; so that he may in some Sense be call'd the sixth Governor of the *Jews*. Thus *Pontius Pilate* lost his Government, after he had continu'd in it about ten Years; this being but the Beginning of his Miseries. But whether he was detain'd by contrary Winds, or some other Accident, he arriv'd not at *Rome* 'till the following Year, when *Tiberius* was dead.

Joseph.

During these Transactions, the long Heat between *Aretas* King of *Arabia Petraea*, and *Herod* the Tetrarch, broke out into a Flame; being first occasion'd by *Herod's* divorcing the other's Daughter, and taking *Herodias*, from whom Nature and Justice had excluded him. *Aretas* having gather'd together a sufficient Force, began a War against him; and coming to a set Battel, *Herod's* Army was intirely overthrow'n, and that by Means of the Treachery of some banish'd Persons of his Brother *Philip's*, who took up Arms under his Colours. And here *Josephus* informs us, That it was commonly believ'd, that the Loss of *Herod's* Army proceeded from the immediate Vengeance of Heaven, for his murdering the honest and pious *John Baptist*. *Herod* upon this Defeat, doubtful of better Success afterwards, or conscious of his own Guilt, betook himself to his Master *Tiberius*, certifying him by Letters of his Misfortunes, and probably not without several Aggravations against his Enemy. The Emperor was so displeas'd at the Success of *Aretas*, or his Audaciousness in making War within his Empire, that he immediately wrote angry Letters to *Vitellius* in *Syria*, charging him to undertake the War, and to bring the rebellious King Prisoner, or to send his Head to *Rome*. But *Aretas* was no ways discourag'd at these Preparations, for consulting with his Augurs, according to Report, they declar'd, *That the Armies should never enter his Dominions, since one of the Parties should die before the Time, either the Orderer, the Undertaker, or the Causer of the War; Meaning Tiberius, Vitellius, or Herod.*

In the Beginning of the next Year, *Saul* return'd from the inland Parts of *Arabia Petraea* to *Damascus*, which City tho' situated in *Cælo-Syria*, was now in Subjection to *Aretas*. Here he enter'd the *Jewish* Synagogues, and with great Freedom and Courage preach'd the Gospel, proving that *Jesus Christ* was the *Messiah*, and the Son of God; so that all the *Jews* in that City were greatly amaz'd and confounded, both at the strange Change in his Proceedings and Opinions, and the powerful Efficacy of his Arguings and Discourses. At the same Time *Aretas* was preparing against the coming down of *Vitellius* against him, who according to the Commands of his Master *Tiberius* had rais'd a considerable Army, designing to march with it through the Province of *Judæa*. But he was diverted from this Intention by the humble Supplications of the *Jewish* Nobility, who alledg'd, That it was contrary to their ancient Laws and Customs to have any Images or Pictures brought into their Country, such as were frequent in the Romans Arms and Banners. The Mildness of this General was easily prevail'd upon, who ordering his Army another Way, at the Passover, went up to *Jerusalem* with *Herod* and his Friends, where he offer'd Sacrifice, and remov'd *Jonathan* from the High-Priesthood, after he had been a Year in that Office, and plac'd his Brother *Theophilus* in his Room.

Acts 9.
20--22.

Joseph.

Vitellius was soon stop'd in his Expedition; for not long before, *Tiberius* in the 23^d Year of his Reign, and the 37th of *Christ*, began to lose his former Strength and Vigour; which occasion'd him to remove to several Places, settling at last in a Promontory of *Misenum*. Here, after many nice Considerations and Consultations with his principal Favourite *Macro*, he nominated *Caius Caligula*, the only surviving Son of his Nephew *Germanicus*, for his Successor, together with a young Grandson of his call'd *Tiberius*. His Tyrannies were so unbounded, that it was probably conjectur'd, That he nam'd the former, hoping that his Vices would efface the Memory of his own Wickedness, and with a Belief that he wou'd extinguish the *Roman* Nobility: For he had frequently said, That in *Caligula* he had brought up a Serpent for the People of Rome, and a Phaeton for the rest of the World. Tho' his Spirits sensibly declin'd, his Diffimulation was as strong as ever; and he carry'd on the Humour of his former Luxury and Debaucheries, despising all the Arts of Physick. But his Weakness was soon discover'd by *Charicles*, an eminent Physician, who under Pretence of kissing his Hand, felt the Defect in his Pulse; which was as soon perceiv'd by this subtle and

Dion.
Tacit.
Suet.

wary Prince, who shortly after dissembled such Faintings as that all judged him dead, and began to make their Court to the new Emperor. But recovering again to the great Surprize and almost Confusion of *Macro* and *Caligula*, they soon found Means to dispatch him, which was by smothering him with the Bed-Cloaths, or else by Poyson, as others are of Opinion. This hapned on the 16th Day of *March*, under the Consulships of *Proculus* and *Nigrinus*, he being 78 Years of Age, having reigned from the Death of *Augustus* 26 Years, 6 Months, and 26 Days.

A. D. 37.
CALIGULA,
the fourth
Roman
Emperor.

IV. The *Romans* found a short Breathing after the Death of *Tiberius*, and were so fond of his Successor *Caligula*, that they declared him sole Emperor, contrary to the express Will of the other, who made him Co-Heir with his Grandson. The Joy of which Preferment was not confined to *Rome* and *Italy*, but dilated it self through all the *Roman* Empire, even to the City of *Jerusalem*. Every where Sacrifices were offered upon that Occasion; so that at several Places above 160000 Cattle were sacrificed in three Months Time. And so great was the Superstition of the Citizens of *Rome*, that when the Emperor was sick, some offered themselves to combat wild Beasts for his Safety, and others devoted themselves to Death at his Recovery, and set up Bills of their Resolution in the Streets. He was then somewhat above 25 Years of Age, and began his Reign with all Clemency and Regularity, causing the famous Models and Institutions of *Augustus* to be revived, which had been neglected and disus'd by *Tiberius*. He likewise began to regulate and reform many Abuses in the State, and severely punish'd corrupt Governours; among whom he banish'd *Pontius Pilate* to *Vienna* in *Gaul*, as the Reward of all his former Wickedness. He took a strict View of the *Equites*, and put all such to publick Shame as were Guilty of any infamous Crime; and punished the *Spintrix* with Death, those abominable Inventors of unnatural Pollutions, whom his Predecessor so much encouraged. But in a short Time all his promising Qualities vanished, and he acquired such a prodigious Complication of Enormities, that he became one of the greatest Monsters that ever trod upon the Earth, exceeding *Tiberius* in the blackest of his Vices. He was so Proud, that he impiously assumed divine Honours, and had a Temple dedicated to his own Divinity; so prodigal, that he consumed above fifty Millions of our Money in a few Months Time; so Brutish, that he committed Incest with all his Sisters; and so Tyrannical, that he wished *That the*
Roman

Roman People had but one Neck, that he might dispatch them all at a Blow. In short, he was so superlatively wicked, that *Seneca* truly said of him, That Nature seem'd to have brought him forth, to shew what was possible to be produc'd from the greatest Viciousness, supported by the greatest Authority. So that for a few Years he prov'd a terrible Scourge to the Romans, and insulted over that proud City, which had so often insulted over the rest of the World.

This Person's Promotion to the Empire, prov'd also the Rise and Advancement of *Agrippa*, Grandson to *Herod* the Great, and therefore by *St. Luke* in the *Acts* call'd by the Name of *Herod*. He was Son to *Aristobulus*, whom his Father had caus'd to be slain, and Brother to the infamous *Herodias*; a Person of a generous and aspiring Temper, politick and insinuating, and highly zealous for *Judaism* and the *Mosaick* Rites. He was now about 47 Years of Age, and had run through all the various Changes of Fortune; having been several Times reduc'd to the extreamest Want and Poverty, ranging from City to City, and from Nation to Nation, 'till he gain'd the special Favour of *Tiberius* the Emperor, who in a short Time upon Suspicion threw him into Prison, where he continu'd as much in Danger of Execution, as formerly he had been of Starving. But shortly after *Tiberius's* Death, *Caligula*, with whom he had contracted a particular Friendship, sent for him from Prison to his Palace, array'd him in Robes, chang'd his Chain of Iron for one of Gold of the same Weight, put a Diadem upon his Head, and made him King of all his Uncle *Philip's* Dominions, with the Addition of the Tetrarchy of *Abilene* in *Syria*, which formerly belong'd to *Lisanius*. So that in three Years Time, from the Death of *Philip*, there was another Change in the Government of *Palestine*. At the same Time *Caligula* sent *Marullus* to be Governor of *Judea* and *Samaria*, in the Room of *Pontius Pilate*, he being the sixth Procurator since the Banishment of *Archelaus*; but *Agrippa* or *Herod* continu'd about a Year with the Emperor, before he went to his own Dominions.

In the Beginning of the following Year, *Saul* having preach'd many Months at *Damascus*, became so formidable to many of the *Jews* in that City, that they resolv'd upon his Death; and because their Power was less than their Malice, they apply'd themselves to the Governor of the Place under *Aretas*, and by their Insinuations and Suggestions obtain'd a special Guard to keep the Gates, and prevent his Escape. But the Disciples, having Notice of their Designs, were as careful to preserve him, as his Enemies were

Joseph.

A. D. 38.
 Calig.
 1
 2.
Acts 9.
 23--31.
Chap. 21.
 17--21.
Galat. 1.
 10 18, 19.

to destroy him; and finding no other Remedy, they let him down in a Basket from one of their Houses over the City Walls. And having thus escap'd, about three Years after his Conversion, he repair'd to *Jerusalem*, to visit *Peter*, and the Church there; but the Disciples knowing his former Temper and Principles, were afraid, and universally shun'd his Company; 'till *Barnabas*, an eminent Disciple, who knew all his Circumstances, brought him to the Apostles, *Peter*, and *James* the Bishop of the Place, acquainting them with his Miraculous Conversion, and his zealous Preaching at *Damascus*; which clear'd all their Doubts, and caus'd them to admit him to an intimate Communion with them. Here he continu'd with all Boldness, and his Sermons were so powerful, and his Disputations with the *Hellenists* so unanswerable, that like the *Jews* in *Damascus* they eagerly sought his Life. But being in the Temple at his Devotions, he fell into a Trance, and saw *Jesus* in a Vision, who order'd him to hasten out of *Jerusalem*; for that the *Jews* were not dispos'd to receive his Testimony. Whereupon he humbly alledg'd, That his former Zeal in imprisoning and scourging the Believers, and his joining in the Blood of the Martyr *Stephen*, had now made him a more unquestionable Evidence of the Truth and Power of the Gospel. But *Jesus* expressly commanded him to depart; for that he design'd to send him into the Country of the Gentiles. Upon which, having stay'd in *Jerusalem* only fifteen Days, he left the City; and being conducted by the Brethren as far as *Casarea*, he set sail for his own City *Tarsus* in *Cilicia*, and saw not *Jerusalem* till several Years after. And now all the Churches in *Judea*, *Samaria* and *Galilee* had Peace, daily encreasing and flourishing, to the Honour of *Jesus Christ* and his Gospel, and the great Comfort of all the Disciples.

Philo.
Joseph.

In the same Year that *Saul* repair'd to *Jerusalem*, King *Herod Agrippa* at *Rome* obtain'd Leave of *Caligula* to go into *Palestine* for the Settlement of his Kingdom, promising after that to return again. According to the Emperor's Advice, he took his Voyage first to *Ægypt*, and arriv'd at the Port of *Alexandria*, a celebrated City, the Metropolis of the whole Country, and the second of the *Roman* Empire for Extent, Trade or Inhabitants; being about 300 Miles almost West of *Jerusalem*. The *Alexandrians* having an inveterate Hatred against the *Jews*, thought themselves highly affronted at the Arrival of a King of that Nation; and by the Connivance, or rather Instigation of *Flaccus* their Governor, they expos'd and ridicul'd him in their Stages, in their Songs, in their Speeches, and in all Publick

lick Places. And that nothing might be wanting to compleat their Scurrility, they took a poor Mad-Man, who always walk'd naked in the Streets, and setting him al- ft in the most publick Manner, put a Paper Crown upon his Head, a Mat about his Body for a Robe, and a Reed in his Hand for a Sceptre; then being surrounded by young Men, with Poles on their Shoulders, instead of Guards, some came to him for Justice, others for Counsel, and all *Hail'd* him with the Title of *Marim*; which in the usual Language of the *Jews* signify'd *Lord*. And thus the King of the *Jews* was derided after the same Manner by others, as the *Jews* themselves five Years before had derided the true Majesty of their own King *Jesus Christ*.

Shortly after, these Scoffs and Jests increas'd to greater *Philo.* Violences; and the Vengeance of Heaven began to pursue the *Jews* in a Country where a Million of that Nation resided, as *Philo* testifies. For the *Alexandrians*, by the Encouragement of *Flaccus*, unanimously set up the Images of *Caligula*, who had lately proclaim'd himself a God, in their Synagogues and Oratories, and upon their Refusal, burnt and demolish'd them without Distinction. After which, the Governor by Edict declar'd the *Jews* Foreigners and Strangers, not giving them Liberty of pleading their Cause, but condemning them unheard. And proceeding in these Violences, the common People were allow'd to rise and plunder their Houses as they pleas'd, which not only occasion'd great Damages to all who were concern'd with them in Trade, but also caus'd infinite Murthers, and intolerable Cruelties. For some were burnt alive with slow Fires, many were crucify'd, and others hang'd: Old Men were drag'd along the Streets, and cruelly scourg'd; and young Women were shamefully expos'd: Many Men were ty'd to Wheels, and others drag'd with Cords by the Legs through the Market Place, the common People insulting over them, and not sparing their dead Bodies. In short, the *Jews* continu'd under the most barbarous Treatments for about two Months, till the Emperor was so far persuaded by *Agrippa*, who had been partly a Spectator of these Violences, that he sent *Bassus* a Centurion, who arrested *Flaccus*, and brought him to *Italy*; and notwithstanding all his Flatteries and pretended Zeal for the Emperor's Honour, he was first banish'd, and afterwards put to Death.

Agrippa having eas'd the *Jews* in *Alexandria*, and settled *Joseph.* himself in his Dominions, in the Beginning of the following Year, and second of *Caligula*, his impious Sister *Herodias* grew impatient at his Advancement, and was enrag'd

to see him start from a Dungeon to a Throne, and now to have the Power, as well as the Title and Ornaments, of a King. Her restless Ambition, and her incessant Intreaties at length prevail'd upon her Husband *Herod*, to go to *Rome* with magnificent Presents, and beg the same Dignity of *Cæsar*. *Agrippa* understanding both their Intentions and Preparations, as soon as he heard of his putting to Sea, immediately sent his Freed-Man *Fortunatus* to the Emperor with Presents, and Letters written against his Uncle *Herod*. *Caligula* was then at *Baia*, a pleasant Town in *Campania*, and upon *Herod's* Arrival, prevented him, by shewing the Letters he receiv'd from *Agrippa*, which accus'd *Herod* of formerly conspiring with *Sejanus* against *Tiberius*, and of his present favouring *Artabanus* King of *Parthia* against *Caligula*; for which Purpose he had prepar'd Arms sufficient for seventy thousand Men. The Emperor mov'd at this Account, demanded of *Herod*, *Whether he had made those warlike Preparations or not?* which the other granting, concerning the Number of the Arms, he according to his rash Method, without any farther Enquiry, depriv'd him of his Dominions, both of *Galilee* and *Peræa*, and of all his Riches, and moreover perpetually banish'd him to *Lyons* in *Gaul*; and this after a wicked Reign of about 43 Years. But understanding *Herodias* was Sister to *Agrippa*, he allow'd her her own proper Treasure; and supposing she would not willingly accompany her Husband in his Calamity, he told her, *That he pardon'd her for her Brother's Sake*. But she testifying her Readiness to be Partaker with her Husband's Miseries, *Caligula* took it as an Affront, and banish'd her likewise; giving all her Treasure as well as her Husband's Dominions to *Agrippa*. And thus was this Couple punish'd for their incestuous Marriage, and their other Crimes; about eight Years after *John Baptist* had been beheaded by this *Herod*, and six Years after our blessed Saviour had been derided by the same Person, in the Year 39. In the same Year *Pontius Pilate* at *Vienna*, not far from *Lyons*, being in extream Misery, and daily afflicted by *Caligula*, kill'd himself with his own Hands; and so became the Revenger of his Wickedness upon himself, as the Betrayer of our Lord had been before, as *Eusebius*, *Orosius*, and several others testifie.

A. D.

39.
Calig. $\frac{2}{3}$

V. During these Transactions, the Church had Peace and flourish'd exceedingly, the Gospel daily spreading among the *Jews* in all Parts. *Saul* diligently preach'd the Word in his own Country *Cilicia*, and also in *Syria*. *Peter* made a general

general Visitation of all the Saints in *Judea, Galilee, and Samaria*; and this Year, he is said by *Baronius* and some others to have founded a Bishoprick in *Antioch*, a great and noble City, the Metropolis of all *Syria*, and about 260 Miles almost North of *Jerusalem*. *Eusebius* tells us, he founded a Church in this City; and *St. Chrysostom* says that he had the Care and Presidency of it seven Years, for which Reason he is often call'd the first Bishop of the See, and the following Bishops his Successors. Yet it is much doubted by many whether he was the first Founder of this Bishoprick or not; and much more, whether it was in this Year that we are now upon. But to proceed to greater Certainties; about this Time, *Peter* in his Progress arriv'd at a little Town call'd *Lydda*, about 24 Miles North-West of *Jerusalem*, to visit the new Converts there. Here he found a certain Man nam'd *Æneas*, who being incurably seiz'd with the Palsie, had lain Bed-rid in that Condition for eight Years together. *Peter* being sensible what an Influence so great a Miracle would have, staid not to enquire after his Faith, but as if he had brought the Message from Heaven to him, said immediately, *Æneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole, arise, and make thy Bed, as a Testimony of thy perfect Recovery*; and he accordingly did so. The Knowledge of this Miracle, which soon spread it self by the unusual Appearance and Converse of *Æneas*, gain'd all the Inhabitants of *Lydda*, and of *Saron* a neighbouring Town, to the true Faith of the Gospel.

Peter continu'd not long as *Lydda*, before he was earnestly entreated by two Messengers to go over to *Joppa*, a noted Port about six Miles distant, upon the account of one *Tabitha*, whose Greek Name was *Dorcas*, signifying a *Roe*, a Christian Woman venerable for her Piety and diffusive Charity, who lately dy'd, to the great Lamentation of all good Men, and much more to the Loss of the Poor, that had been so often reliev'd by her. *Peter* ready to gratifie their Desires, and to assist in a common Cause, immediately accompany'd the Messengers; and arriving at the House, they carry'd him into an upper Chamber, where the Body of *Tabitha* was laid, ready wash'd, and dress'd up for its funeral Solemnities, according to the Custom of the *Jews*, and attended with many sorrowful Widows. They durst not present an open Petition to him to raise her from the Dead, but by their Tears and Lamentations, by their Commendations of her Charity, and their shewing the Coats and Garments wherewith she cloath'd them, they sufficiently testify'd their Desires. Whereupon this Apostle, knowing how

how beneficial such a Woman was to the Church, caus'd all the Company to retire, and praying with his Face towards the Body, he commanded her *To arise*, and immediately she open'd her Eyes, and seeing *Peter*, sat up. Then taking her by the Hand, and lifting her up, he presented her alive to the holy Brethren and Widows, to their surprizing Joy and Comfort. This great Miracle being wrought in the Presence of so many, was soon known throughout the whole Town; and many being convinc'd by it, believ'd in *Jesus Christ*. After this, *Peter* continu'd a considerable Time in *Joppa*, probably near a Year, lodging in the House of one *Simon* a Tanner.

A. D.

40.
Calig. $\frac{3}{4}$
Joseph.
Philo.

In the Beginning of the following Year, King *Herod Agrippa* took Possession of all the Dominions of his Uncle *Herod* the Tetrarch, namely, the two Provinces of *Galilee* and *Perea*, which *Caligula* had given him; so that his Power and Grandeur daily encreas'd beyond any since *Herod* the Great. About the same Time his Country-Men the *Jews* were reduc'd to extream Difficulties and vast Dangers, by the exorbitant Pride and Madness of the Emperor, who having erected Temples and Altars to his own Divinity, expected that all Nations should adore him as a God. And because the *Jews* were the chief Opposers of this monstrous Humour, and particularly had destroy'd an Altar of his in *Jamnia*, a City of *Judea*, he sent express Orders to *Petronius*, whom he had lately made Governor of *Syria* in the Room of *Vitellius*, to dedicate a large and costly Image to him, and set it up in the very Temple of *Jerusalem*. And that the Design might meet with no Obstacles, he commanded him to send for half of the Army from *Euphrates*, that lay there for the Defence of all the East, to accompany the Statue to *Jerusalem*, not only to make the Dedication more pompous, but also to cut in pieces any that durst make Resistance. Ordering farther, that the Image should be plac'd in the Sanctuary of the Temple, which after that should be call'd, THE TEMPLE OF ILLUSTRIOUS *CAIUS*, AND PROPITIOUS *JUPITER*. *Petronius* having appointed the best Artificers in *Sidon* for this Work, convocated the chief of the *Jews* both Priests and Magistrates to declare the Emperor's Commands to them, persuading them to rest satisfy'd with the Decrees of his Lord and Master, and cautioning them of the imminent Danger of their Disobedience, which would draw upon them the whole Power of the *Syrian* Forces. At the first naming of these Things,

Things, they were confounded and speechless, pouring out Floods of Tears, and tearing their Hair and Beards after a deplorable Manner. And those in *Jerusalem* and the adjacent Country, leaving their Houses, Towns and Castles desolate, with all the Marks of the most publick Mourning, repair'd to *Petronius* then in *Phenicia*; in such Multitudes, that some apprehended the Governor in no little Danger. They were distributed into six Classes, three on the one Side, old Men, young Men, and Boys; three on the other, old Women, Wives, and Virgins; who when they saw *Petronius* upon his Seat, all, as if by a general Word, or Sign, fell prostrate upon the Ground, filling the Air with their Sighs and Lamentations: Then with much Persuasion arising, they cast Dust upon their Heads, and with Hands behind them like condemn'd Persons, approach'd the Governor, using such moving Complaints, and shewing so little Value for their Lives, that *Petronius* and those who sat by him, were extremely affected, and would have gladly declin'd the Matter upon several Accounts, but were deterr'd by the insupportable Humour of the Emperor. After much Consultation *Petronius* wrote to *Caligula*, not directly in Favour of the *Jews*, but to acquaint him that the Dedication of the Image was deferr'd, partly for the Time it requir'd to bring it to the utmost Perfection, and partly for the gathering the Corn necessary in the Expedition.

About the same Time several Ambassadors from the *Jews* Philo. Joseph. waited upon the Emperor upon the Account of new Disturbances in *Alexandria*, among whom was the famous *Philo*, the most celebrated Scholar and Philosopher of that Nation. But neither their Presence, nor the Letters of *Petronius*, could prevail any thing upon the Temper of this Tyrant, but he pertinaciously insisted upon his Deityship, and gave the strictest Charge for the erecting his Image immediately after Harvest, to the exceeding Terror of the whole Race of the *Jews*. At length his great Favourite *Agrippa*, coming to *Rome*, resolv'd to undertake his Country's Cause, and became a zealous Intercessor in its Behalf, tho' it was not without the Hazard of his Dominions and Life also. He well knew the Emperor's extravagant Humour and Vanity, and therefore made his Approaches with all possible Artifice, of which he was a great Master; and partly by his profound Marks of Sorrow, partly by an ingenious and flattering Letter, and partly by a surprizing Entertainment made for him, he obtain'd as an extraordinary Favour from the Emperor, That the Statue should not be dedicated, and accordingly wrote to *Petronius*, *Not to make any Innovation*

Innovation in the Temple of the Jews. But lest the Favour shou'd be too entire, he mixt new Threatnings with it, writing, *That if any one shou'd dedicate any Temple or Altar to him in any part of Judæa, except in Jerusalem, it should not be oppos'd, but the Opposer should be immediately punish'd with Death.* A politick and deadly Contrivance to involve a Nation in Rebellion, and in a destructive War; since the *Jews* Enemies were so ready to perform that which would inevitably prove their Ruin. But the Time of their final Desolation was not yet come, and God thought fit to keep their Enemies from being active at this Time, and likewise to destroy another Design of this Tyrant, which was to have an Image made at *Rome*, and to be convey'd secretly into the Temple at *Jerusalem*. But these were fair Warnings from Heaven, sufficient to awaken any but this perverse and obstinate Nation; which Threatnings were seconded by another Accident that hapned this Year to the *Jews* about *Babylon*; namely, a terrible Massacre of 50000 of them at one Time. These Things hapned in the fourth Year of the Reign of *Caligula*, and about six Years after the Martyrdom of *St. Stephen*, according to the most approved Chronologers.

C H A P. III.

From the first Call, and Preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, to the Martyrdom of the first of the Apostles, viz. James the Son of Zebedee.

Containing the Term of about four Years.

A. D.
40.
Calig.
4.

I. THE Gospel had now been preach'd with great Success, not only in *Judæa* and the neighbouring Provinces, but in many remote Countries, wherever the *Jews* resided; and for about seven Years after the Ascension, They only had the merciful Offers of Salvation by *Jesus Christ*. The Apostles had receiv'd Commission to baptize all Nations, but notwithstanding the several Illuminations of the Holy Ghost, which never come all at once, they hitherto understood it only of the *Jews* of all Nations: But now God thought fit to open a Door to the
Gentiles,

Gentiles, and to make the *Jews* sensible that the Partition Wall was laid level, and that they were no longer a peculiar People. This was begun at *Cæsarea*, the most frequent Residence of the *Roman* Governors of *Judæa*, a City inhabited both by the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, where at this Time one *Cornelius* was quarter'd, a *Roman* Centurion, or Captain of a Company call'd the *Italian* Band, which with others kept Garrison in this City. This Person, tho' uncircumcis'd, and only a Profelyte of the Gate, yet arriv'd to the Knowledge of the true God, and serv'd him with singular Devotion and Reverence, both of himself and his Family; being eminent for his bountiful Alms, and his constant Prayers. To one who had made such good Improvement of his small Portion of Grace, God was pleas'd to communicate the highest Acts of his Favour, and to make him the first Fruits of the *Gentile* Conversion: For being at his Devotions at the ninth Hour, the Time of the Evening Sacrifice, an Angel was dispatch'd from Heaven to acquaint him, *That his Prayers and Alms were highly acceptable in the Sight of God; and as a Token of his Favour, he order'd him to send to Joppa for Simon Peter, who lodg'd at the House of one Simon a Tanner near the Sea Side, who shou'd discover God's Will to him, and by his Doctrine cause him and all his House to be saved.* *Cornelius* with a Mixture of Fear and Joy, immediately dispatch'd two of his Domestick Servants, and a devout Soldier who constantly attended him, to *Joppa*, a Place about 30 Miles almost South of *Cæsarea*, where *Peter* had continu'd near a Year.

On the same Day that the Messengers arriv'd, *Peter* had retir'd himself about Noon-Time to the House Top to pray, as the *Jews* frequently did; and being very hungry, he call'd for Meat: But while it was preparing, he fell into a Trance; and in a Vision saw Heaven open'd, and a large Thing like a Sheet knit at the four Corners was let down before him, containing all Sorts of Beasts, Birds and Reptiles, both Clean and Unclean; being accompany'd with a Voice, crying, *Rise, Peter, kill and eat.* *Peter*, tenacious as yet of the Rites and Institutions of the *Mosaick* Law, rejoin'd, *That he cou'd not do it, having never eaten any thing common or unclean.* To which the Voice reply'd, *That what God had cleans'd, he shou'd not account or call common;* intimating, That those Prohibitions concerning Meats, and the Differences between *Jews* and *Gentile* were remov'd, and that he ought not to make a Distinction where God had made none. This was done three several Times, and the Vessel was again taken up into Heaven. *Peter*,
tho'

Acts 10.
1-8.

Acts 10.
9-23.
Chap. 11.
12.

tho' again come to himself, was in great Doubt what this extraordinary Vision shou'd mean, till the three Messengers from *Cornelius* arriv'd at the Gate and knocked, enquiring, *Whether Simon, surnamed Peter, was lodged there?* Before they had receiv'd their Answer, the Spirit inwardly suggested to *Peter*, That three Men at the Door enquir'd for him, ordering him to go along with them without any Doubt or Scruple. *Peter* going down and receiving their Message, courteously invited them in, and lodg'd them all Night in the House; and the next day travell'd with them from *Joppa*, being accompany'd with six Brethren, as Witnesses of what happen'd in this surprizing Affair.

Acts 10.
24-43.

Cornelius, full of Expectation of *Peter's* Instructions from God, with great Impatience waited for his Coming; and because he would have his Friends and Relations Partakers of such happy News, had invited them to meet him at his House. *Peter* on the third Day arriv'd at *Cæsarea*, and as he enter'd the House, *Cornelius* was so affected with the Presence of such a Messenger of God, that exceeding the Bounds of meer civil Respect, he fell down at his Feet and ador'd him. Tho' such Forms were usual in those Eastern Countries, yet *Peter* knowing that the *Romans* paid such Veneration only to their Gods, and consequently that the design'd Honour was more than human, refus'd to accept it, and bad him stand up, and pay him no other Respect than as a Man. Then entering in, *Peter* first made his Apology to the Company, That tho' they cou'd not but know, that it was unlawful for a Jew to converse in the Duties of Religion with those of another Nation; yet since God had now taught him to make no Distinctions, he very readily attended their Pleasure, desiring to know the Occasion of their sending for him. *Cornelius* made Answer, That he did it by the express Command of God, who while he was exercis'd in the Duties of Fasting and Prayer, sent an Angel in bright Apparel, ordering him to send to him at *Joppa*, from whom he shou'd receive some special instruction; for which Reason they were all assembled to attend his Commands receiv'd from God. *Peter* was now sensible that the Partition was broken down, and that he was called in a special Manner to preach to the *Gentiles*; therefore he declar'd, That now he perceiv'd that God no longer made any Distinction of Persons and People, but that the Pious and Godly of all Nations should meet with Acceptance. That the Message he had to deliver to them from God was this, even the same Reconciliation by *Jesus Christ*, the Lord of all, which was formerly taught to the Children of *Israel*; and in a more conspicuous Manner publish'd through-
out

out all Judæa, beginning at Galilee, immediately after the Preaching of John Baptist: Namely, That God had anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and endued him with miraculous Gifts, which he constantly exercis'd in doing Good, and healing such as were under the Power of the Devil; an Argument that God was with him: That they had seen all that he had done among the Jews, whom tho' they had impiously crucified and slain, yet God had raised him again the third Day, and had openly shewn him to his Apostles and Followers, whom he had chosen to be his peculiar Witnesses, and for that Purpose had admitted them to eat and drink with him after his Resurrection, commanding them to preach the Gospel to all Mankind, and to testify, That he was the Person whom God had ordained to be the great Judge of all the World: That all the Prophets with one Consent bore Witness of him; That this Jesus is He in whose Name whosoever believ'd, should certainly receive Remission of Sins.

While Peter was thus preaching to them, the Holy Ghost, Acts 10. 44-48. who had purified their Hearts by Faith, fell upon all that heard him, causing them immediately to speak with Tongues, and to glorify the Almighty, without any Imposition of the Apostle's Hands, to the great Astonishment of the Believing Jews then present with Peter, who thought the Promise of the Holy Ghost belonged only to the House of Israel. When Peter saw the Gentiles thus baptized with the Holy Ghost, of which the Baptisin of Water was but a Type and an instrumental Conveyance, he thought it unreasonable to deny them this latter; and therefore immediately ordered them to be baptized with Water in the Name of the Lord, and so united them to Christ's Body the Church, as true Members of it. Cornelius and his Friends being thus Partakers of their Desires, were very unwilling to part with Peter, who had been the Means of their Conversion; therefore for their better Instruction and Confirmation they prevailed with him to tarry with them certain Days, where probably he made more Gentile Converts. And thus Peter began to enlarge the Foundation, becoming a Head Builder of God's Church; and by means of his Heavenly Keys to open a Door to the Gentiles, which was never to be shut again.

This remarkable Act of Peter's was soon noised among the Apostles and other Brethren in Judæa, who were highly Acts 11. 1-18. offended at his Preaching to the Gentiles, as being without either Warrant or Reason; and coming to Jerusalem shortly after with his six Companions, the Jewish Converts, who still retained their inveterate Prejudice against the Gentiles, accounting them Reprobates and unworthy of all spiritual

Mercies, utterly condemned him for conversing so freely with the *Gentiles*, and eating with them. But *Peter* sufficiently defended himself, by relating how God had now remov'd his Hatred against the *Gentiles*, by a particular Vision and Revelation from Heaven; by which he was convinced that all Creatures were lawful to be eaten by God's Permission, and all Men to be associated with, whom He had thought fit to cleanse by his Grace: How *Cornelius* had sent for him by God's immediate Order, and that the Spirit commanded him to go along with the Messengers: How God upon his Preaching poured out the Holy Ghost upon them, as he had done upon the Apostles on the Day of *Pentecost*, as the six Brethren who accompany'd him to *Cæsarea* were at present ready to testify. Upon which he told them, *That he then remember'd the Promise of Jesus, That their Baptism from John was with Water, but theirs should be with the Holy Ghost; and that since God was pleased to bestow on the Gentiles the same Marks of Conversion, as he did on his select Disciples, he justly thought it to be a withstanding God's Will to deny them Admission into his Church, and therefore baptiz'd them.* This Apology gave them full Satisfaction, so that with a silent Admiration they glorify'd the All-merciful God, for admitting the *Gentiles* to be Sharers in the Gospel Privileges, and granting them also a Possibility of being saved by Faith and Repentance.

Dion.
Suet.
Joseph.

About the same Time, the Emperor *Caligula*, having committed a thousand Extravagancies, and monstrous Cruelties, began to grow insupportable to the Empire, proving a real *Phaeton* to the World, according to the omenous Predictions of his Predecessor *Tiberius*; but as he began to set all Things on fire, so he was soon scorched and consumed in those Flames he had so furiously blown up. When neither his own Reason, his Subjects Humility, nor his Country's Laws could move him to Moderation, or divert him from his Tyrannies, many began to conspire against him, but ineffectually; 'till at length *Cassius Chereas*, an Officer of his Guards, resolv'd upon it, being prompted to it upon many Accounts. He undertook it in the Beginning of the following Year, and secretly imparted his Designs to several *Senators*, *Equites*, and others, who readily joining with him privately kept themselves in Arms, every Person promoting the Design with all possible Vigour and Resolution. *Chereas* having fixed on a convenient Hour for his fatal Attempt, ordered his Companions to attend him in a Vault, or private Gallery, where the Emperor usually passed unseen from his Palace to some Baths not far distant. To that Place he repair'd

pair'd with his Associates; and shortly after meeting with *Caligula*, and first paying some Respect to him, he gave him a mortal Wound, crying out, *Tyrant, think upon this!* and immediately the rest of the Conspirators rushed in, and dispatched him with thirty Wounds, he for some Time crying out, *That he was still alive.* His Death was accompany'd with that of his Wife *Casonia*, who was stab'd by a Centurion, and of his only Daughter, an Infant in the Cradle, who had her Brains dashed out against a Wall, that the Tyrant's whole Race might be extirpated; and the Senate ordered his Money to be melted down, that, if it were possible his Name and Feature might be forgotten in future Ages. His Death hapned in the Year 41, and the 24th Day of *January*, under the Consulships of Himself and *Saturinus*, he being in the 29th Year of his Age, having reign'd three Years, ten Months, and eight Days.

II. The Murther of *Caligula* being publish'd in the City, it caused a great Alteration and Confusion in all Parts; and since the Act was committed in such a secret Place, many imagining it some Artifice to discover the Peoples Affections, suspended their Belief of it, 'till the *German* Guards sufficiently manifested it by the Disturbances they raised, and the Murthers they committed in the Palace. The Senate was resolved to restore the *Roman* Liberty, and destroy the Monarchy, and accordingly seized on the *Capitol*; but the City was much divided, the Commons urging hotly the Election of a new Emperor, and the Nobility as violently promoting the Restauration of their ancient Privileges. The Soldiers join'd with the Commons, but while Affairs continued in this Confusion, neither knew whom to nominate for Emperor, 'till some of the Soldiers running about for Plunder in the Palace, discovered *Caligula's* Uncle *Claudius*, hid in a secret Hole for fear of his Life, and brought him into the Camp, where they proclaim'd him Emperor, when he expected nothing but Death at their Hands. The Senate immediately sent to him to advise him, *To resign his Pretensions, and not disturb the publick Peace:* But He equally confounded with Fear and Ignorance knew not what to stand by, 'till King *Agrippa*, with great Difficulty making way thro' the Multitudes, came to him and encouraged him to retain the Sovereignty; upon which, what with the Peoples Cries and the Soldiers Threats, the Senate were at last brought to a Compliance, and also acknowledg'd him Emperor. This was a Person the most unlikely of all others to arrive at this Dignity, for tho' he had taken some Pains in Learning;

A. D.
41.
CLAU-
DIUS,
the fifth
Roman
Emperor.
Tacitus.
Dion.

he was reserv'd by *Caligula* only for a Laughing-stock; and either upon the Account of his bodily Distempers, or the gross Stupidity of his Nature, or the unactive Cowardice of his Temper, was 'till this Time, altho' now in the 50th Year of his Age, judg'd incapable of any publick Office in the State. And his Government proved accordingly; for tho' he did some Things in the Beginning like a good and wise Prince, as disannulling all *Caligula's* cruel Edicts, and forbidding all to sacrifice to him; yet he so much gave himself up to a gluttonous, insensible, passive Life, that his Favourites impos'd upon him as they thought fit, and became intolerable Oppressors and Tyrants, inflicting innumerable Deaths and other Cruelties, selling Governments and Dignities, issuing out Pardons and Penalties without his Knowledge. He was so cowardly and fearful, that when a Rebel, called *Camillus*, commanded him by Letter to resign his Empire, he was ready to have done it; so short-sighted, that his Empress *Messalina* marry'd her self to another Man almost in his Presence; so stupid, that when News was brought him of her Execution, he shew'd not the least Token of Joy, Sorrow, or human Affection; and so forgetful, that he frequently asked and sent for such as he had executed the Day before. In short, as *Tacitus* says of him, he had neither Thought, Judgment, Will, nor Passion, but what was put into him by other Men.

*Joseph.
Dion.*

As the last Emperor caus'd the Rise and Advancement of *Herod-Agrippa*, so this compleated his Honour and Sovereignty; and not only confirm'd to him his former Dominions of *Trachonitis*, *Galilee*, and *Peræa* with *Abilene*, but also added *Samaria*, *Judea* with *Idumæa*, all that had been subject to his Grand-Father *Herod* the Great; so that the whole Country of *Palestine* again came into the Hands of one Prince. *Claudius* added to his Bounty many Commendations of *Agrippa*, and caus'd the Alliance that was pass'd between them to be engraven in Brass: He moreover bestow'd *Consular* Honours upon him, and gave *Pretorian* Dignity to a Brother of his nam'd *Herod*, on whom he also bestow'd the Kingdom of *Chalcis* at the Foot of Mount *Libanus*. Besides these Acts of Grace he published two Edicts, one in Favour of the *Jews* of *Alexandria*, wherein he command'd they should be no longer molested, but enjoy all the Privileges of the City; and the other in Favour of the *Jews* throughout the whole Empire, wherein they were allow'd to live according to their own Laws, and the Rites of their Ancestors, provided they did not abuse their Liberty in disturbing the Religions of other Nations. But in this same

Year,

Year, *Dion* assures us, that when they grew so numerous in *Rome*, that the City became uneasie, he forbid all their publick Assemblies, and put down their Colleges, and also their Taverns where they usually met.

Claudius shortly after his Edicts sent *Agrippa* to his King-*Joseph.* dom, commanding all his Presidents and Licutenants in the Provinces through which he was to pass, to give him a friendly and honourable Attendance. But he having happily dispatch'd his Affairs, return'd with all Expedition to *Jerusalem*, where he immediately offer'd his Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, omitting nothing prescrib'd by the Law. He caused divers *Nazarites* to be shaved, and hung up in the Temple that ponderous Chain of Gold which *Caligula* had given him, as an illustrious Monument of the Instability of human Affairs, and of the Power of God, who can raise Men in a Moment from the meanest Obscurity, to the most exalted Grandeur. He was a zealous Observer of the *Jewish* Law, carefully avoided all legal Impurities, and seldom pass'd a Day without sacrificing; for which Reason he had his principal Residence at *Jerusalem*, engaging the Good Will of the Inhabitants by remitting a Tribute, which they constantly paid out of every House. He much affected the Splendor and Magnificence of his Grand-Father, but not his extreme Severity and Cruelty: Tho' *Dion* attributes many of *Caligula's* bloody Edicts to his Councils, and *Josephus* cannot wholly excuse his Vanity and Prodigality. In the first Year of his Reign, he made two Changes in the High-Priesthood: He first remov'd *Theophilus* the Son of *Annas*, who had held that Dignity four Years, and bestow'd it on *Simon Cantharus*, the Son of *Simon* or *Boethus*, Father-in-Law to *Herod* the Great. And not long after, he depos'd *Simon*, and offer'd the Priesthood to *Jonathan* Brother to *Theophilus*, who had once before held it in the Year 35, succeeding *Caiaphas*; but he modestly declin'd the Honour, begging it might be bestow'd upon his Brother *Matthias*, which was granted. About the same Time certain rash young Men, the Inhabitants of *Dor*, a City on the Borders of *Phœnicia*, rais'd a Disturbance by placing the Emperor's Image in the *Jewish* Synagogue; which highly offended *Agrippa*, who judg'd it as an Act tending to the Ruin of the *Jewish* Religion. For which Cause, with all Expedition he repair'd to *Petronius* Governor of *Syria*, complaining of their insolent Behaviour to him, who was their Governor. *Petronius* was no less displeas'd than he, and therefore wrote sharp Letters to the Magistrates of *Dor*, commanding them

to bind and punish the guilty Persons; which happily ended the Disturbance.

Acts II.
13-24.

III. A Door being happily open'd for the Promulgation of the Gospel to the *Gentiles*, some Disciples born in *Cyprus* and *Cyrene*, who since the Death of *Stephen* had travell'd in many Countries, preaching the Gospel to the *Jews* only, now arriv'd at the great City of *Antioch*; and hearing of the Conversion of *Cornelius* and others, they also preach'd *Jesus* to the *Greeks* and *Gentiles* of that City: And God exceedingly prosper'd their Endeavours, and brought in numerous Converts daily. The Apostles who remain'd at *Jerusalem*, hearing of this happy Progress, sent *Barnabas* to *Antioch*, to assist and confirm the Disciples in that City; who coming and seeing with what good Success the Gospel had been preach'd among them, rejoyc'd extremly, exhorting them firnly to hold fast to the Faith in *Christ*: And being a pious Person, and of many excellent Gifts and Graces, by his Means great Numbers of others were also won over to the Gospel.

In the same Year, according to the most receiv'd Opinion, St. *Matthew* at *Jerusalem*, first of all others undertook to commit the chief Actions of our blessed Saviour to Writing, calling his Book by the Name of *Εὐαγγέλιον*, or *Gospel*, because it brought joyful and happy Tidings to Mankind, namely, Pardon and Redemption by the Blood of *Jesus*. It was written at the Request of the *Jewish* Converts; and as *Epiphanius* adds, at the Command of the Apostles, about eight Years after the Death of *Christ*, according to *Eusebius*; tho' *Nicephorus* supposes it fifteen, and *Irenaeus* seems to imply that it was written while *Peter* and *Paul* preach'd at *Rome*. Being primarily design'd for those of the Circumcision, he begins with the temporal and human Generation of *Jesus Christ*, in which the Promises made in a special Manner to *Abraham* and *David*, concerning the *Messiah*, were apparently fulfill'd, which were particular Inducements to the *Jews* to believe. In the rest of his Gospel he takes more than ordinary Notice of those Passages of our Saviour's Life which respected Mens Manners and the Corruptions of the *Jews*; therefore he relates the Sermon upon the Mount, *Christ's* Invectives against the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, more largely than the other Evangelists: But the whole is not so regular and methodical as the rest of the Gospels. That his own Country-men might receive the greater

greater Benefit from it, he wrote it in the *Hebrew Tongue*, or rather *Syriack*, the usual Language of *Palestine*, as all the Ancients do assert; whose positive Determinations we cannot reject, without stronger Reasons than we find brought by the modern Enquirers. The Original has been long lost, but the *Greek* Version remains, being made in the Time of the Apostles, but it is uncertain by whom it was done. Some believe it done by St. *John*, but *Athanasius* expressly attributes it to *James* Bishop of *Jerusalem*. However it imports not much, whether it was translated by an Apostle or some Disciple, since the Apostles approv'd of the Version, and the Church has ever receiv'd the *Greek* Copy for Authentick, and as such repos'd it in the sacred Canon.

About the Beginning of the following Year, *Saul* after three Years hard Labour, and many Difficulties encounter'd both in *Syria* and *Cilicia*, return'd to his own City *Tarsus*. Here he was met by *Barnabas*, who probably knowing he was design'd for a Minister to the Uncircumcision, gave him an Account of his Success in *Antioch* among the *Gentiles*, and desir'd his Assistance in that Place. Which being a large and populous City, the third in the Empire, and the Residence of the *Roman* Governor of the East, *Saul* readily attended him thither, and continu'd with him preaching the Gospel for a whole Year with extraordinary Success. About the Time of *Saul's* Arrival, the Governor was chang'd; *Petronius* was recall'd from his Government, and *Ubius Marsus* sent in his Room; a Person not so great a Friend to the *Jews*, at least not to their King *Agrippa*, as the other. For in the same Year *Agrippa* having turn'd his Care chiefly upon the City *Jerusalem*, to shew some Marks of his Magnificence, began to fortifie and enlarge the Walls of the New City, in such manner, that if finish'd it would have been an impregnable Fortrefs. But *Marsus*, jealous of the Greatness of this Prince, so represented the Danger of this Attempt to *Claudius* his Master, that he thought fit to lay his Commands upon him to desist from the Undertaking.

This same Year is remarkable for a great Famine that hapned in *Rome*, which is not the same with that mention'd in *Acts* II. this being particular, and that general. And this is the Year, viz. the second of *Claudius*, in which *Baronius*, and most of the *Roman* Writers, will have St. *Peter* to have gone to *Rome*, and founded the Bishoprick there, he himself continuing Bishop of the Place twenty five Years, 'till his Martyrdom. This is an Opinion in which they are very positive; but after the most diligent Search, we can

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42.

Claud.

2.

Acts II.

25, 26.

Joseph.

find no real Foundation for it; but on the contrary, to us it appears repugnant to the *Acts of the Apostles*, to the Epistles of St. *Paul*, to the most evident Circumstances in Chronology, and likewise to the Testimony of the Ancients, particularly *Origen* and *Lactantius*, who mention St. *Peter's* coming to *Rome* in the latter part of his Days, under the Reign of *Nero*. So that we must defer this Subject to some more probable Year of his Arrival at *Rome*.

A. D.
43.
Claud.
3.
Joseph.

IV. Tho' *Agrippa* was disappointed of his Designs in *Jerusalem*, yet he omitted no Opportunity of displaying his Grandeur, but in Imitation of the *Romans*, at immense Charges built a magnificent Theatre and Amphitheatre, together with large Baths and Porticos at *Berytus* in *Phœnicia*; all which he dedicated in the third Year of *Claudius*, with all imaginable Pomp and Splendor, as all Kinds of Musick and Feastings, Plays and Spectacles, with a formal Battel of 1400 Malefactors, like the *Roman* Gladiators. After which he repaired to *Tiberias*, his Uncle *Herod's* Seat by the Sea of *Galilee*, where he entertain'd no less than five Kings at one Time, namely, *Antiochus* King of *Comagena*, *Sampsigeran* King of the *Emesens*, *Cotys* King of the lesser *Armenia*, *Polemon* King of *Pontus*, and his Brother *Herod* King of *Chalcis*. To these also came the *Roman* Governor *Marsus*, whom he met out of the City to shew his Respect to the Empire; but such an Interview of Kings, riding all in the same Chariot with *Agrippa*, caus'd *Marsus* to suspect a dangerous Alliance; therefore without considering the Rules of Hospitality, he immediately gave a particular Order for each of them to depart into their own Country. Which Action caus'd *Agrippa* to hate him, and afterwards to use all his Endeavours, by Writings and other Means, to procure the Emperor to remove *Marsus* from his Government of *Syria*. At his Return to *Jerusalem*, he made a third Change of the Priesthood, taking it from *Matthias*, who had held it about two Years, and giving it to *Elianus* the Son of *Citheus*.

Acts 11.
26--29.

About the same Time, *Saul* and *Barnabas* having preach'd a Year at *Antioch*, where were above 200000 Souls, gain'd Ground daily; and the Believers became so numerous and considerable, that in this City they first obtain'd the honourable Name of CHRISTIANS, about ten Years after our Saviour's Ascension; which Name soon spread, and in a short Time prevail'd all over the World. They were formerly call'd *Nazarenes* and *Galileans* by the *Jews*, but among themselves, *Disciples*, *Believers*, *Saints*, *Brethren*, and

and those of the Church; but from hence forward the Name of *Nazarenes* or *Nazarites* was fix'd upon those Jewish Converts, who mix'd the Law and the Gospel, and compounded a Religion out of *Judaism* and *Christianity*. Some say the Name of *Christians* was given to the Believers by *Evodius*, newly made Bishop of *Antioch* in *St. Peter's* Room; and others observe that the Word *Χριστιανισμοῦ* us'd by *St. Luke* implies the thing to have been done by some publick Act, and Declaration of the whole Church, such being the use of the Word in the Imperial Edicts and Proclamations of those Times. In the same Year, certain Persons who at that Time had the Gift of Prophecie came from *Jerusalem* to this City; one of whom nam'd *Agabus*, by the Spirit of God foretold that there should be a great Famine through many Parts of the World, which occasion'd the *Christians* carefully to provide against it, it hapning in the following Year, and fourth of *Claudius*, when Contributions were made in many Provinces.

In the same Year that the Believers were call'd *Christians*, and third of *Claudius*, it is generally suppos'd that a second Gospel was publish'd, namely, that of *St. Mark*, about two Years after *St. Matthew's*; tho' as to the Time of Writing, both are uncertain, especially this latter. *St. Mark* was of the Tribe of *Levi*, and one of the Seventy; and most probably was not the same *Mark*, who is so often nam'd in the Acts of the Apostles, and *St. Paul's* Epistles. He is suppos'd to be a Kinsman of *St. Peter's*; however he was his constant Attendant and Companion in his Travels, supplying the Place of an Amanuensis and Interpreter. Having wrote his Gospel, which we are assur'd was done at the Intreaty of the Converts at *Rome*, *St. Peter* perus'd it, ratify'd it with his Authority, and commanded it to be publickly read in the religious Assemblies. It was frequently stil'd *St. Peter's* Gospel, not so much upon the Account of its being dictated by him, as because he principally compos'd it out of those Discourses which *St. Peter* usually deliver'd to the People. Whereas *St. Matthew* begins his Gospel at, and somewhat before, the Birth of our blessed Saviour; *St. Mark* begins his at the first Preaching of *John Baptist*; so that the whole consists of less than four Years Transactions, all deliver'd in a succinct and regular Method. And tho' in several Places he seems to epitomise *St. Matthew*, yet in some Passages he is more large and particular; and that he might not shew the least Partiality, he would not spare his dear Tutor and Master *Peter*,

Peter, in his Account of his Lapse and Denial, which he represents with greater Aggravations than the other Evangelists. As to the last Chapter of his Gospel, or part of it, said to be wanting in most *Greek* Copies, and by some rejected, as partly disagreeing with the other Gospels, *St. Jerom* has so well reconcil'd them, that he makes them fairly consistent with each other. It is generally said that this Gospel was written at *Rome*, when *St. Peter* was there; which if true, it was written much later than the Time we have assign'd; for which Reason, many believe it was written in *Latin*; but this is contrary to *St. Austin's* and *St. Jerom's* Opinion, and has no Pretence to support it, besides a single Note at the End of the *Syriack* Version of this Gospel, which Note is of very uncertain Antiquity and Authority.

A. D. 44. Claud. 4. *Acts* 11. 30. Chap. 12. 1, 2.

In the fourth Year of *Claudius*, the Famine foretold by *Agabas* growing severe, the *Christians* of *Antioch*, making a Collection for the Friends in *Judaea*, sent it by the Hands of *Barnabas* and *Saul*, who were made Stewards of the Church's Money. Before their Arrival, in the Beginning of the Year, the Church at *Jerusalem* began to suffer extreamly from the Acts of King *Herod-Agrippa*, who being zealous of the *Mosaick* Rites, and desirous to ingratiate himself with the *Jews*, rais'd a sharp Persecution against the *Christians*, who for near ten Years had met with no great Disturbance in *Jerusalem*. And that he might not fail in his popular Designs, he struck at the Apostles themselves, and began with one of the *Sons of Thunder*, *James* the Son of *Zebedee*, whose brave and active contending for the Truth had render'd him a fit Object for his Turn: Therefore without Delay he condemn'd *James* to Death. As he was led out to the Place of Martyrdom, *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, that the Officer that guarded him, or rather his Accuser, having been convinc'd by the extraordinary Courage and Constancy he shew'd at his Trial, repented of his Fact, fell down at this Apostle's Feet, and heartily desir'd Pardon for what he had done. The holy Martyr, after a little Surprize, and a Pause, rais'd him up, embrac'd and kiss'd him, crying, *Peace be to thee, my Son*: Upon which the other publickly profess'd himself a *Christian*, and so both were beheaded at the same Time. And thus fell *St. James*, surnam'd the Great, the Apostolick Protomartyr, the first of that Number that gain'd the Crown, chearfully taking that Cup, which he had long since told his Lord he was ready to drink; having fitted himself for it by his great Temperance and Austerities. This hapued just before the Passover, eleven Years after our Savi-

Saviour's Crucifixion, ten after St. *Stephen's* Martyrdom, and about four after the first Call of the *Gentiles*.

C H A P. IV.

From the Martyrdom of James, the first of the Apostles, to the End of the first Council in the Christian Church, namely, at Jerusalem.

Containing the Term of about five Years.

I. THE Death of the Apostle *James*, who was a Leader and Governor of the Church, was more pleasing to the *Jews*, than of a Multitude of private *Christians*; therefore *Herod-Agrippa*, that he might farther ingratiate himself with the Rulers, proceeded to apprehend *Peter* also, well knowing how acceptable such a Sacrifice would be. And having imprison'd him, he appointed four Quaternions or sixteen Soldiers to guard him, four at a Time, according to the Watches of the Night, designing immediately after the Feast of the Passover to bring him forth to the *Jews*, and have him executed. These Proceedings caus'd great Sorrow and Affliction to the *Christians* in *Jerusalem*, who incessantly sent up their fervent Prayers to Heaven for his Deliverance; which so prevail'd, that the Night before his intended Execution, God purposefully sent an Angel from Heaven, who coming to the Prison, found him fast asleep between two of his Keepers, free from bodily Fears, tho' in the utmost Danger, and in the Confines of Death. The Angel, all surrounded with Brightness and Light, gently struck him on the Side, rais'd him up, knock'd off his Chains, and bad him gird on his Garments, and follow him. *Peter* obey'd him, and having pass'd the first and second Guards, they came to a great Iron Gate leading into the City, which open'd to them of its own accord; and having gone through one Street, the Angel departed from him. *Peter* tho' observant of the Angel's Call, yet being scarcely awak'd, thought himself in some Trance, and his Deliverance only imaginary; but being left alone, and plac'd beyond Danger, he perceiv'd it

A. D.
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Claud.
4.
Acts 12.
3--17.

was

was real, and could not but thankfully acknowledge God's Goodness in his miraculous Escape from *Agrippa* and the *Jews*. And that he might comfort the *Christians*, whom he knew to be under great Afflictions for his Sufferings, he first went to the House of *Mary* the Mother of *John-Mark*, where many of them were at that Time met to pray for him. Knocking at the Door, the Maid call'd *Rhoda*, who came to let him in, perceiving it was his Voice, being overjoy'd, ran back to tell them, that *Peter* himself was at the Door. Which they at first look'd upon as a meer Effect of Fright and Fancy, but she still affirming it, they concluded it was his Angel, or some particular Messenger from him, or perhaps some Angel in his Shape. The Door being open, they were extremely surpriz'd with Joy and Wonder; but he briefly inform'd them of the Manner of his great Deliverance, charging them to acquaint *James* and the Brethren, and then withdrew himself to a Place of greater Secrecy and Security.

Acts 12.
18--23.
Joseph.

In the Morning there was no little Confusion among the Soldiers, by reason of *Peter's* Escape; and *Agrippa* finding himself disappointed in his chiefest Designs, in a great Rage commanded the Keepers to be put to Death, and departed from *Jerusalem* to *Casarea*. While he was here, he proclaim'd solemn Games, and festival Entertainments in Honour of the Emperor, which caus'd a great Confluence of the Nobility and Magistrates from all Parts of the Country; among these the Ambassadors from *Tyre* and *Sidon*, by the Mediation of *Blastus* the King's Chamberlain, beg'd Peace and Friendship, since their Country was supported by his, especially in this Time of Scarcity. *Agrippa*, tho' highly displeas'd at them; appointed them a Day of Audience, which was the second of the Solemnity; and early entering the publick Theatre, he sat upon his Throne, gloriously array'd with magnificent Robes of Silver Tissue, which encountering with the Beams of the rising Sun, reflected such Lustre upon the Eyes of the People, as begat an equal Wonder and Veneration in them. Upon his making an Oration to the Ambassadors, the People, prompted by some Flatterers, gave a Shout, and with loud Acclamations cry'd out, *It is the Voice of a God, and not of a Man!* adding also, some Tokens of Adoration. This impious Applause was receiv'd by *Agrippa*, without any kind of Dislike, or Sense of the Injury done to the supreme Being of the World; but a sudden Accident chang'd the Scene, for looking up, he espy'd an Owl sitting upon a Rope over his Head, which
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he immediately beheld as the fatal Messenger of his Death, as it had formerly been of his Prosperity. At the same Instant, an Angel from Heaven, probably the same that deliver'd *Peter*, struck him, because he gave not God the Glory; and he was suddenly seiz'd with an incurable Melancholy, and exquisite Torments in his Bowels. Then turning to those about him, he said, *Behold the Deity you admir'd, and your selves convinc'd of Flattery and Falshood; see me here by the Laws of Fate condemn'd to die, whom just now you stil'd Immortal.* Being remov'd into the Palace, his Pains still increas'd, and tho' the People mourn'd and wept, fasted and pray'd for his Life and Health, yet the divine Vengeance never left him, but his acute Torments dispatch'd him in five Days, being devour'd with Worms after a miserable manner.

Thus dy'd *Herod-Agrippa*, the first Prince that dipp'd his *Joseph.* Hands in the Blood of the Apostles, having reign'd, tho' not in full Power, between seven and eight Years. He left behind him one Son nam'd *Agrippa*, about seventeen Years of Age, and three Daughters, *Berenice* married to her Uncle *Herod*, *Mariamne* betroth'd to *Julias Archelaus*, and *Drusilla* betroth'd to *Epiphanes*, Son to the King of *Comagena*. Upon the News of *Agrippa's* Death, the Inhabitants of *Cæsarea* and *Sebaste* or *Samarina*, Cities built by *Herod* the Great, threw out great Reproaches against the dead Prince, and the common Soldiers unanimously dragging his and his Daughter's Statues out of the Palace, brought them into the Brothel Houses, and abus'd them after a scandalous Manner; and making Feasts and Banquets, they adorn'd themselves with Garlands, and made Offerings to *Charon* for Joy of the King's Death. At the same Time young *Agrippa* was with the Emperor at *Rome*, and wou'd undoubtedly have obtain'd all his Father's Kingdom, but *Claudius* was easily over-aw'd by his Freedmen and Favourites, who represented to him how dangerous it was to commit such a Kingdom to a Person less than eighteen Years of Age. Upon which he appointed a particular Friend call'd *Cuspius Fadus* to be President not only of *Judea* but also of all *Agrippa's* Dominions; so that all *Palestine* now became subject to *Roman* Governors, and in a manner distinct from *Syria*; for *Claudius*, in Memory of his deceas'd Friend, would not permit his Enemy *Marsus* to act any thing in his Dominions. And farther he command-ed *Fadus* to chastize the *Cæsareans* and *Sebastians* for their Injury to their dead King, and the Affront to his Daughters; and he design'd to have remov'd the *Roman* Soldiers into

into worse Quarters, but he was prevail'd upon to continue them there, who afterwards prov'd the Beginning of the most grievous Calamities to the *Jews*.

II. About the Time of *Agrippa's* Death, which ended the short Prosecution of the Church, *Saul* and *Barnabas* having dispos'd of their Contributions to the *Christians* in *Jerusalem* and *Judæa*, return'd back to the City of *Antioch*. In which City, as the Scripture observes, there were then certain Teachers, of the Number of the Seventy, endued with prophetick Gifts besides themselves; namely, *Simeon* who was call'd *Niger*, *Lucius* of *Cyrene*, whom some suppose to have been *St. Luke* the Evangelist, and *Manaen*, a Person of that Rank and Quality, that he had been educated with *Herod* the Tetrarch. While these five were engag'd in the Duties of Prayer and Fasting, and other pullick Exercises of their Religion, the Spirit of God, by some sensible *Afflatus*, or Revelation to the Persons present, commanded that *Barnabas* and *Saul* should be set apart for that peculiar Ministry to which God had design'd them. This Call was accordingly obey'd, and having fasted and pray'd, the rest solemnly laid their Hands upon these two, to denote their particular and special Designation to that Service; which was to be Ministers of the Uncircumcision, it being now a second Time confirm'd by the Mouth of Heaven. From this joint Commission *Barnabas* also obtain'd the Name of an Apostle; not only among the later Writers, but with *St. Paul* himself, *1 Cor.* 9. 5, 6. and *St. Luke*, *Acts* 14. 4. upon which Account *St. Jerom* calls him the fourteenth Apostle, and the *Greek* and *Latin* Churches ever honour'd him as such. But before their Departure, *Saul* was taken up into the third Heaven or Paradise; and that he might be every way fitted for his Apostolate; was admitted to the Knowledge and Sight of the ineffable Mysteries of Heaven, and the Glories of God, which Men can neither express nor comprehend. This was done; as we may reasonably imagine, to equalize him with the very chiefest Apostles in Knowledge and Revelation, that he might be encourag'd boldly to preach the Gospel to a *Pagan* and Idolatrous World, in hopes of the Enjoyment of that Glory of which he had so noble a Prospect. But lest he should be exalted above Measure with the great Abundance of his Revelations, and so be unfit to compassionate the Feeble and the Tempted, God permitted him to be tempted by some turbulent and unruly Lusts, through the Ministry of *Satan's* Agents, which he calls a *Thorn in the Flesh*, by which he

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was so humbled and afflicted, that he besought God thrice to remove it from him; but the divine Wisdom thought fit to continue it in such a Strength all his Life, that had not he given him a Sufficiency of Grace, and excited him to constant Mortification, he had become a Cast-away, as he insinuates himself in 1 Cor. 9. 27.

Not long before *Saul* and *Barnabas* were thus separated ^{Joseph.} for the Ministry, *Fadus* arriv'd in his Government of *Palestine*, being the seventh *Roman* Governor after the Banishment of *Archelaus*. At his first Entrance he found the *Jews* beyond *Jordan* up in Arms against the *Philadelphians*, about the Limits of a certain Town call'd *Mia*, well furnish'd with valiant Men. *Fadus* was highly displeas'd because the Matter was not referr'd to him, as it ought to have been; therefore apprehending three of the principal Ringleaders, he executed one call'd *Annibas*, and banish'd the other two. Shortly after he undertook to clear *Judea* of Thieves and Robbers, and made an Example of the chief of them call'd *Tholomæus*, who had committed great Ravages in *Idumæa* and *Arabia*. In the same Year, while the Famine rag'd in *Palestine*, *Helena* Queen of *Adiebena* on the Confines of *Assyria* and *Mesopotamia*, having been converted to the *Jewish* Religion by some Merchants, came to visit the Temple of *Jerusalem*, to worship the true God, and pay her Vows. Here she brought great Riches and large Presents, and finding many *Jews* in a starving Condition, she immediately sent Mony out of her own Purse to *Alexandria* in *Ægypt* to buy a large Quantity of Wheat, and likewise to the Island of *Cyprus* for Figs for the Relief of the Poor; all which was effected in a short Time, and her Bounty highly applauded. Also her Son *Izates*, who had likewise been converted to the same Religion, hearing of the Distresses of the *Jews* by Famine, generously sent Mony to the chief Magistrates at *Jerusalem* to distribute to the Neccessitous.

At the beginning of the following Year, *Cassius Longinus* was sent Governor of *Syria* in the Room of *Marsus*; and both he and *Fadus*, taking a considerable Force, enter'd the City *Jerusalem*, declaring to the *Priests* and Governors, *That it was the Emperor's Commands, That all the High-Priest's Robes and Ornaments shou'd be again lodg'd in the Castle Antonia, that they might be at the Romans Disposal, as before Vitellius's Time.* The Rulers durst not contradict this Command, but after many Entreaties, and upon depositing their Children for Hostages, they obtain'd Leave of *Fadus* and *Longinus* to send Ambassadors to the Emperor, to petition him to continue their Privileges, and to wait his

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Claud.
5.

^{Joseph.}

his Answer. Young *Agrippa* was then at *Rome*, and attending upon *Claudius*, which caus'd the Ambassadors to apply themselves first to him, who earnestly interceding with the Emperor for his Country Men, gain'd the Cause, and a Decree in their Favour. About the same Time, *Herod* King of *Chalcis*, by a Petition to *Claudius*, obtain'd full Power over the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and the sacred Treasury, and Authority of chusing the High-Priest; by which Authority he made *Josephus Cananus* High-Priest, and depos'd *Simon Cantharus*, who had formerly been depriv'd by King *Agrippa* in the Year 41, and probably had usurp'd that Dignity since his Death. In the same Year a Magician, or False-Messiah call'd *Theudas* (not the Person mention'd *Acts* 5. 36.) persuaded great Multitudes of the *Jews* to take all their Riches with them, and follow him to the River *Jordan*, promising them, that the River shou'd divide it self as in the Days of *Joshua* and *Elias*, and afford them a free Passage. But *Fadus* suspecting a Rebellion, sent a strong Body of Horse, who suddenly charging these deluded People, kill'd great Numbers, and took many Prisoners; among whom was *Theudas* himself, whose Head was stricken off, and afterwards sent to *Jerusalem*.

III. For twelve Years after our blessed Saviour's Ascension, all the Apostles, besides *St. Paul*, had in a manner confin'd themselves to *Jerusalem* and *Palestine*; but now the Time was come, that they were to disperse themselves, and preach the Gospel in all Parts of the World, according to their Lord's Command, as appears from *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Apollonius*, a Writer of the second Century. Many believe that before their Departure they compos'd that Creed, call'd *the Apostles Creed*, and those Canons call'd *the Apostles Canons*; but most learned Men are satisfy'd that they are both the Composures of later Times, tho' the former is acknowledg'd to be the Summary of the Apostles Doctrine. It is generally affirm'd by the Ancients, that the Apostles agreed among themselves, what Parts of the World they should take; and this according to some was done by way of Lot, tho' probably not without the Guidance and Direction of the Holy Ghost. According to this Division *St. Peter* went into *Pontus*, *Galatia*, and those other Provinces of the lesser *Asia*, at first confining his Labours to the *Jews* in those Parts; but whether he went to *Rome* before the Council of *Jerusalem*, and met the famous *Philo* there, as some are of Opinion, we cannot determine; only if he did so, it is almost unquestionable that he made

two Journies to that City. St. Andrew had those vast Northern Countries of *Scythia* and *Sogdiana* allotted to his Portion; tho' afterwards he is supposed to return towards *Greece*, and to have founded the Bishoprick of *Bizantium*. St. John's Portion was partly the same with Peter's, namely, the lesser *Asia*; tho' it is believed he did not immediately enter upon his Charge, but stay'd some Years in *Jerusalem*, till after the blessed Virgin's Death. St. Philip had the Upper *Asia* appointed him with, some Parts of *Scythia* and *Colchis*. The *Hither India*, commonly called *Arabia Felix*, was allotted to St. Bartholomew; into which Parts he carry'd the Gospel of St. Matthew. St. Matthew himself preach'd the Gospel in the *Asiatick Æthiopia* by *Chaldea*, *Persia*, and *Parthia*: But *Parthia* was more particularly allotted for St. Thomas, who also preach'd to the *Hircanians*, *Bactrians*, and *Indians*. St. James the Less being Bishop of *Jerusalem*, continued principally in that City, with so much amiable Goodness and Discretion, that his greatest Enemies had a Veneration for him. St. Simon had for his Portion, *Ægypt*, *Cyrene*, *Libya*, and *Mauritania*. St. Jude had *Syria* and *Mesopotamia*; and St. Matthias, *Cappadocia* and *Colchis*. Of all their Travels and Actions we have but a very short and uncertain Account; tho' afterwards we shall say something more of each.

In the mean Time the thirteenth Apostle *Saul*, having Acts 13,
4-11. been separated with *Barnabas* by the immediate Command of Heaven, departed with him from *Antioch* to *Seleucia*, a City of *Syria*, adjoining to the Sea, from whence they took Shipping for *Cyprus*, a famous Island not far distant in the *Mediterranean Sea*. In *Salamis*, one of the chief Cities of the Isle, they first began the Ministerial Office; and tho' they were sent principally to the *Gentiles*, yet usually they first preached the Gospel in the Synagogues of the *Jews*; *John-Mark*, who accompany'd them thither, attending their Motions, and doing many Offices in the Church, especially about the Poor. And passing through the Isle, they arrived at *Paphos*, a large City on the Western Parts, and the Seat of the *Roman Proconsul*, or Governour of the Isle, which was then *Sergius Paulus*, a Man of great Wisdom and Prudence, but unhappily seduced by the magical Illusions of a *Jewish Sorcerer*, named *Barjesus* or *Elymas*. Upon their Preaching there, the Governour, having been informed of something extraordinary, sent to the Apostles to hear their Doctrine himself: But *Elymas* fearing to lose so great an Admirer, industriously opposed his good Intentions; and used all Methods to divert him from the Belief of *Christ*.

Saul being in the Presence of the Governour, and inspired with a noble Zeal, fixed his Eyes upon *Elymas*, and solemnly declared him a *Child of the Devil*, a *Wretch full of Subtilty and Malice*, and an *Enemy to all Goodness*, in perverting the right Way of the Lord: For which Reason the Hand of Heaven was upon him, which should strike him blind, and deprive him of the Sight of the Sun for a Season. Upon denouncing these Words, the Magician was immediately struck blind, and could not go without leading, the Vengeance of God justly punishing that Man with the Loss of his bodily Eyes, who had so wilfully shut the Eyes of his Mind against the Light of the Gospel, and had endeavour'd to keep others in so much Blindness and Darkness.

Acts 13.
12, 13.

This was the first Miracle we find wrought among the *Gentiles*, which was so astonishing to the Governour, that he himself immediately became a Convert to the *Christian* Faith. Nor had it a less Effect upon the Magician, according to *Origen* and *St. Chrysostom*, who assure us, That his Punishment wrought such a Remorse in his Heart, that he repented and believed, and together with his Sight recover'd the Knowledge of *Christ*, and the Vision of the Sun of Righteousness. And from this Time, forwards, *Saul* was always called *Paul*, a Name possibly given him by the Household of *Sergius Paulus*, or perhaps at his Circumcision; so that tho' he was called *Saul* as long as he conversed with the *Jews*, *Syrians* and *Arabians*; yet afterwards, when he was in a special Manner sent to the *Gentiles*, the *Greeks*, and the *Romans*, he then had the Name of *Paul* given him, as being more agreeable to them. After this successful Victory over the Power of *Satan*, *Paul* continued a while at *Paphos*, and probably made several Converts in that City, which had been remarkable for the Worship of *Venus*, the tutelar Goddess of the Island, who had a famous Temple dedicated to her there, wherein she was served with the most wanton and immodest Rites and Solemnities. From this City *Paul* removed with all his Company, and leaving *Cyprus*, sailed to *Perga* in *Pamphilia*, a Country in the lesser *Asia*, North-West from *Cyprus*; in which City was a remarkable Temple dedicated to *Diana*. Here *John-Mark* being weary of his itinerant Course of Life, and the Hazards and Dangers attending it, took his Leave of the Apostles, and return'd to *Jerusalem*; which laid the Foundation of an unhappy Difference that broke out between *Paul* and *Barnabas* afterwards. Here it is most probable *Paul* first took *Titus* to be his Assistant instead of *Mark*, a young *Grecian* Convert of the Isle of *Crete*.

The

The two Apostles stay'd not long at *Perga*, nor in the adjoining Towns, but travelled 70 or 80 Miles Northwards to a City called *Antioch*, the Metropolis of *Pisidia*, another Province of the lesser *Asia*; from whence they knew it would be most proper to disperse the Knowledge of the Gospel into the neighbouring Regions. In this City, on the first Sabbath Day, they entered the Synagogue among the other *Jews*, where they were courteously invited by the Rulers of the Synagogue to make a Descant upon the Lessons out of the Law and the Prophets, just before read to the Assembly, according to the Custom. Whereupon *Paul* took that Opportunity to preach *Jesus Christ*, and solemnly requiring the *Jews* Attention, he first declared the many signal Mercies and Favours that God in former Ages had shewn to those of their Nation, particularly, by a miraculous Deliverance of them from the *Ægyptian Slavery*; by patiently bearing with their forty Years Murmuring in the *Wilderness*; by expelling seven Nations out of the Land of *Canaan*, that They might enjoy so rich and pleasant a Country; by giving them a Succession of Judges and Deliverers, for four hundred and fifty Years; and by giving them Kings, especially *David*, a Person according to his own Heart and Mind, to whom he gave the Promise, That the Messiah should be of his Posterity, which Promise he had lately fulfilled in the Person of *Jesus*. For tho' that great Person, who was indeed the Saviour of the World, had met with cruel and barbarous Usage from their Brethren the *Jews* at *Jerusalem*, being crucify'd and slain by them; yet this was no more than what the former Prophets had foretold should happen to the Messiah. And moreover, there were so many convincing Evidences to prove that Truth, that it could not reasonably be questioned; for not only *John Baptist*, who was sent before to make Way for his Coming, and to qualifie Men for the Reception of him by the Baptism of Repentance, did openly and plainly declare *Jesus* to be the Messiah, which he had learnt by immediate Revelation; but also God himself gave a Demonstration of it, in raising him from the Dead, according to the Prophecies delivered concerning him, and in shewing him after his Resurrection to Multitudes of Witnesses then alive. All which was exactly agreeable to the *Psalmist's* Words, where God had declared him 'his Son, and that he should not see Corruption; which was never accomplished in the Person of *David*. Wherefore since the Forgiveness of Sins, and Justification, which was not attainable by the Law of *Moses*, was now tendered to them by believing in *Jesus*, they ought to beware how they contemned such free Mercy and Grace,

A. D. 46.
 Claud.
 6.
Acts 13.
 14-41.

lest they brought upon themselves that propheticall Curse, which God had threatned to the Jews of old for their great Neglect and Contumacy.

Acts 13.

42--52.

This Discourse met with a double Effect; the Gentiles who were unacquainted with such kinds of Doctrine, desired better Information in the Truth of it the following Sabbath; and the Jews, who waited for Redemption in Israel, with the Profelytes of the Gate, believed and attended on Paul and Barnabas for farther Instruction; who earnestly exhorted them to persevere in the Faith, notwithstanding the greatest Discouragements. The next Sabbath almost the whole City flocked to the Synagogue to be their Auditors, which when the Jews saw, acted by a Spirit of Envy and Contempt, they proceeded to blaspheme, and to contradict the Apostles. Whereupon they, with no little Courage and Boldness, declared, *That tho' they were commissioned to preach to the Jews first, yet since they had shewn themselves such obstinate Infidels, and rendered themselves unworthy of eternal Life, they were ordered to preach to the Gentiles, which they now resolved to do; that so Christ might prove a Light to the Gentiles, and his Salvation extend to the utmost Limits of the World.* This extensive Promise was highly pleasing to the Gentiles, who magnify'd the Word of God, and as many of them as were prepared and disposed for eternal Life, heartily closed with it and embraced it. The Apostles not only preached in the City but also in the neighbouring Country with great Success, which still farther exasperated the Jews, who to carry on their Revenge, engag'd some of the devout and honourable Women, with some of the principal Men of the City, who being led by a blind Zeal, persecuted them, and forc'd them from the Place. Whereat Paul and Barnabas, shaking off the Dush of their Feet, as a Testimony against their Ingratitude and Infidelity, departed from thence; leaving many Converts behind them, who were filled with a spiritual Joy, and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 14.

1--20.

The two Apostles took their Journey Eastward, above a hundred Miles, to *Iconium*, the Metropolis of *Lycania*, another Province of the lesser *Asia*, where they again entered the Jewish Synagogues, notwithstanding the ill Treatment they had received from the Jews in all Places. According to their usual Course they began their Preaching there, which was attended with such Success, that great Numbers both of Jews and of Gentiles were converted to the Faith; and this encouraged them to continue a long Time in that City, instructing and teaching the Believers more fully, and

and confirming their Doctrine by Signs and Miracles. But tho' they had gained a considerable Part of the City, yet there remained many unbelieving *Jews*, who according to their usual Malice, excited the *Gentiles* against them, and by Calumnies rendered them ill-affected to the *Christians*; and being armed by the City Magistrate's Authority, they resolved to have the Apostles apprehended and stoned. But they two having warning of their Designs, timely withdrew themselves, and fled to the next Cities of the same Province, *Lystra* and *Derbe*; and there continuing, preached the Gospel to the Inhabitants of those Cities, and to the People of the adjoining Parts. At *Lystra* they saw an impotent Cripple, lame from his Birth, who had never walk'd; and *Paul*, perceiving by his attentive Behaviour at his Preaching that he had Faith to be saved, thought fit to add the Cure of his Body to that of his Soul; and that the Miracle might be more conspicuous, he spake out aloud in the midst of the Assembly, *Stand upright on thy Feet!* and immediately the Cure was effected, and he both walk'd and leap'd. This Miracle amazed all the *Lystrians*, who being sensible of a divine Power in the Work, cry'd out in the *Lycaonian* Tongue, *That the Gods were come down to them in human Shape!* taking *Barnabas* for *Jupiter*, and *Paul* for *Mercury*; the first for his venerable Gravity, and the other for his powerful Elocution. And according to the idolatrous Worship in those Times, they proceeded to offer Sacrifice to them; and the Priest of *Jupiter* brought Oxen and Garlands for that purpose. But as soon as the Apostles perceived it, in Abhorrence of this superstitious Attempt, they rent their Clothes, and running in among the People, declared, *That they were mistaken in the Object of their Worship; for that notwithstanding their Miracles, they were no more than Men, and of like Passions with themselves; and that the chief End of their Preaching was to turn them from the idolatrous Worship of Creatures, to that of the living God, who had created Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and all Things contained in them; whom they had long defrauded of his due Honour, tho' he gave them convincing Arguments of his Being and Providence, doing them good, giving them Rain and fruitful Seasons, and so filling them with Food and Gladness.* The Apostles having with much Difficulty restrained their Superstition and Sacrifices, the Peoples Minds in a short Time turned to the other Extream; and by the Instigations of some *Jews* who had seen the Apostles at *Antioch* and *Iconium*, they took *Paul* and ston'd him, and then drew him out of the City, supposing him dead. Thus *Paul* met

with the same Punishment he had brought upon St. *Stephen*, tho' not so fatally; for as the Disciples were attending upon his Corps, he suddenly revived, and returning first into the City, departed the next Day with *Barnabas* to *Derbe*. This hapned in the sixth Year of *Claudius*, in which Year *Fadus* after two Years was removed from his Government of *Palestine*, and *Tiberius Alexander* sent in his Room, being the eighth *Roman* Governour after the Banishment of *Arche-laus*.

A. D.

47.
Claud.

7.

Acts 14.

21--27.

The two Apostles having preached and converted many at *Derbe*, proceeded no farther in their Progress, but returned back again to *Lystra*, *Iconium*, and *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, confirming the new Converts in those Places in the Belief and Profession of *Christianity*, earnestly persuading them to persevere, and to remember, *That they were to meet with many Difficulties, and Afflictions in the Way to the Kingdom of Heaven.* And that all Things might succeed, and the Gospel flourish, with Fasting and Prayer, they ordained Presbyters and Pastors in every Church, and having recommended them to the special Protection of God, took their Leaves of them. From hence they passed through *Pisidia*, and thence came to *Pamphilia*; and having preach'd to the People at *Perga*, they travelled down to *Attalia*, a Port and the Metropolis of the Province. And thus having at this Time finished the whole Circuit of their Ministry, they returned by Shipping to *Antioch* in *Syria*, from whence they had set out about three Years before, when they were by the divine Command separated for this particular Service of converting the *Gentiles*. And being returned thither, and having assembled the Church in that City together, they declared what God had wrought by their Hands, how he had co-operated in their Ministry, and how he had opened a large Door of Faith to the *Gentiles*, so that great Multitudes of them were come in, and believed in *Jesus Christ*.

VI.

In the same Year that *Paul* and *Barnabas* finish'd their Circuit, and returned to *Antioch*, which was the 7th of *Claudius*, and just 800 Years after the Building of the City of *Rome*, the Emperor ordered the Celebration of the famous *Secular Games*, as it were solemnizing the Birthday of the City: Which Games were the most solemn and magnificent of all others among the *Romans*, and were not regularly exhibited but once in a hundred Years, tho' there were but sixty four Years after the last under *Augustus*. To these, as at former times, all Persons were solemnly invit-

Tacit.
Dion.

ed by an Herald, *to be Spectators of such Shews as they never saw before, nor ever should again*, being attended with all imaginable Pomp and Splendor, with all Kinds of martial and cruel Exercises, and no less Variety of religious Rites, and *Pagan Superstitions*; a sufficient Instance of the Prevalency of Idolatry in these Times. About the same Time, the Empress *Messalina*, who before by her impious Practices had caus'd infinite Mischiefs in the State, now began to appear more publick in her Lewdness, and triumphant in her adulterous Designs. After she had sacrific'd many of her Gallants, who were too deficiently serviceable to her unbounded Desires, she fell passionately in Love with *C. Cilius*, the most beautiful Youth in *Rome*, whom she oblig'd, tho' unwilling, to divorce his Lady, that she might be free from all Rivals. And in the following Year they proceeded to a notorious Expedient, impudent beyond all Example, and almost all Belief; which was openly and publickly to marry each other almost in the Emperor's Presence, relying upon his stupid Blindness, and the transcendent Power she had over him. But *Claudius* shortly after being inform'd, or rather rous'd by his Favourites *Narcissus* and *Pallas*, assum'd so much Resolution, as to cause the Deaths of all her Confederates, and also of her self. But after such a careless and insensible Manner, that he rather seem'd to be a Stock than a Man, much less a Prince and an Emperor.

A. D.
48.
Claud.
8.

In the same Year *Claudius*, or his Friends, made a Removal in the Government of *Palestine*, recalling *Tiberius Alexander*, after two Years Continuance, and sending *Ventidius Cumanus* in his Room, who was the ninth Roman Governor after the Banishment of *Archelaus*. *Herod King of Chalcis*, according to the Power given him, also made a Change in the High-Priesthood, removing *Josephus Canneus*, and constituting *Ananias the Son of Nebedeus*, who was the 12th High-Priest after the Birth of our Saviour. Shortly after *Herod* dy'd; and tho' he left three Sons behind him, the Emperor out of his great Love to young *Agrippa*, gave his Dominions to him. About the same Time, the Feast of the Passoever drawing near, *Cumanus*, according to the Example of former Governors, appointed Soldiers to guard the Porticos of the Temple, to prevent Tumults and Disorders, at the Time of such a great Conflux of People. On the fourth Day of the Feast, one of the Roman Soldiers by his horrid obscene Behaviour and Discourse, highly provok'd all the Spectators, many of whom being rash young Men, and prone to Sedition, began with

reviling Terms, and then proceeded to Stones; while others tumultuously repaired to *Cumanus*, requiring Justice against the Soldier. The Governor suspecting the Numbers and Fury of the *Jews*, immediately sent a considerable Force to seize all the Gates of the Temple; which caus'd all the People to fly, which they did with such Precipitation and Confusion, that great Numbers were trodden to Death, and above twenty thousand slain in the Sedition: So that the Festival was in all Places turn'd into Lamentations and Mourning. This Calamity was shortly after succeeded by another; for near *Bethoron*, about twelve Miles from *Jerusalem*, one *Stephanus*, Servant to the Emperor, being robb'd of several rich Goods, *Cumanus* sent Forces to pillage the neighbouring Villages, and bring the Inhabitants bound, for not pursuing and apprehending the Robbers. In one of the Villages, a certain Soldier finding a Book of the Holy Scriptures, cut it in pieces, and burnt it; which so enrag'd the whole Body of the *Jews*, that in vast Throgs and Multitudes they repair'd to *Cumanus* then at *Casarea*, requiring that the Soldier who had so highly affronted God and their Law, might not escape Punishment. *Cumanus*, perceiving that the *Jews* would not be pleas'd without some Satisfaction, by the Advice of his Friends, commanded the Soldier to be beheaded in their Presence; which ended the Disturbance.

In this Year, it is most generally suppos'd that the Mother of our Lord, the ever blessed Virgin, dy'd; tho' some think it was three Years before. But in this there is very little Certainty, no more than there is about the Place, or the Manner of her Death. As to the Place, some believe it *Jerusalem*, as it seems most probable, and others *Asia Minor* with *St. John*; as to the Manner, some think she dy'd a natural Death, and others that she suffer'd Martyrdom, grounding it upon *Luke 2. 35.* where it is said, *A Sword should pierce through her Soul.* But those of the *Romish Church* have a particular and formal Account, That the Apostles were miraculously transported from divers Parts of the World to *Jerusalem* to be present at her Death, which was altogether without Pain; and that on the third Day after her Burial, she arose from the Dead, and ascended into Heaven in the Presence of the Apostles, *Dionysius the Arcopagite*, *Timotheus*, and *Hierotheus*: In Memory of which they keep the 15th Day of *August* with great Pomp and Solemnity; but we cannot find any kind of Foundation in Antiquity for this, or any Story like it. There are some Letters that are attributed to the blessed Virgin, as
there

there is one to our Lord himself; but they are generally look'd upon as spurious, especially those of the Virgin's.

V. The two Apostles *Paul* and *Barnabas*, after their three Years Circuit, continu'd at *Antioch* and the neighbouring Places about a Year longer; during which Space *Christianity* daily encreas'd, and the Church of God flourish'd exceedingly. But at length it began to be greatly disturb'd, by means of certain *Jewish* Converts from *Judea*, who being unsound in the Faith, and led by their formal Zeal and Prejudices, taught the *Gentile* Converts, *That unless they observ'd Circumcision, and the Mosaick Institutions, they could never be saved.* The Broaching of this Doctrine caus'd great Uneasiness and Disputes among the Brethren; and *Epiphanius* tells us, that the noted Heretick *Cerintus* was the Ringleader of the Faction. *Paul* and *Barnabas* us'd all Methods to put a Stop to this growing Evil, which they found so prevailing by Reason of the strong Impressions the *Jews* had receiv'd in their Education, and their profound Veneration for their Law-giver *Moses*; and after many Conferences and Disputations, it was judg'd most requisite for them two, with some others, to go up to *Jerusalem*, there to consult the Apostles and Presbyters concerning this important Affair; which was not done without some Revelation from Heaven, as appears from *Gal. 2. 2.* And taking *Titus*, and some select Persons with them, in the Beginning of the following Year, being conducted part of their Way by the chief of the Church, they pass'd through *Phoenicia* and *Samaria*: In both which Provinces they were careful to relate what great Things the Lord had wrought by their Hands, in the Conversion of the *Gentiles*, to the great Joy and Comfort of all the Brethren in those Parts.

Paul arriving at *Jerusalem*, among the Apostles of the Circumcision, refus'd to circumcise *Titus*, because of several false Brethren, who watch'd all Opportunities to scandalize the Liberty of the Gospel; and he was unwilling to give Way to such by any Condescension, lest he should have injur'd the Faith. For tho' he afterwards allow'd of the Circumcision of *Timothy*, and us'd some of the *Mosaick* Ceremonies himself, for avoiding any Offence to the weak, and to win others, yet he would not comply in the least Degree with those treacherous Designers, who endeavour'd to find Matter to disgrace the Gospel. *Paul* and *Barnabas* first address'd themselves to the Apostles *James*, *Peter* and *John*, the Pillars and principal Persons in that Place; by whom they were kindly entertain'd, and admitted to the

Acts 14.
48.
Chap. 15.
1-3.

A. D.
49.
Claud.
9:

Galat. 2.
1-10.
Acts 15.
4, 5.

Right

Right Hand of Fellowship, as *St. Paul* himself expresses it. And perceiving by the Account that *Paul* gave them, that the Gospel of the Uncircumcision was committed to him, as that of the Circumcision was to *Peter*, they ratify'd it by Compact and Agreement, that *Peter* should preach to the *Jews*, and *Paul* to the *Gentiles*, not forgetting the Poor of either. And whereas the Necessity of Circumcision and the *Mosaick Law* was also zealously asserted in *Jerusalem* as well as *Antioch* by many of the believing *Pharisees*, the Apostles thought fit to appoint a particular and solemn Assembly of themselves and Presbyters to determine this Matter. And this is the first, and also the purest Council in the *Christian Church*.

Acts 15.
6--21.

When the Council was assembled, after many Debates and various Arguments, *Peter* at length stood up, and acquainted all the rest, *That God having made Choice of him among all the Apostles, to be the first that should preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, the same God, who was best able to judge of the Hearts of Men, had born Witness to them of his merciful Acceptance, by bestowing his Holy Spirit upon them as well as the Jews; having put no Difference between the one and the other, but equally purifying their Hearts by Faith. That therefore it was a tempting and a provoking of God, to lay a Yoke upon the Necks of the Disciples, which neither they themselves, nor their Fathers were able to bear: There being sufficient Ground to believe, that the Jews were to expect Salvation by the Grace of Jesus Christ, as well as the Gentiles. Peter having ended his Speech, after some Silence Paul and Barnabas gave an Account to the Assembly what Wonders and Miracles God had enabled them to work, in the converting of the Gentiles; a plain Evidence, that tho' uncircumcis'd, they were now accepted by God as well as the Jews with all their legal Rites and Privileges. After they had finish'd their Narration, James the Bishop of the Place stood up, and desiring the Attention of the rest, declar'd, *That Peter had demonstrated, That it was God's Pleasure to visit the Gentiles, and out of them to take a People to bear his Name: All which was agreeable to what the Prophet Amos had foretold; namely, 'That God would return and rebuild the House of David, which was fallen down, and repair all the Ruins and Breaches thereof; that the rest of 'Mankind, and all the Gentiles that were call'd in his Name, 'might seek after the Lord. And this had been declar'd by God, who knew all Things from the Beginning of the World.* After this he proceeded to determine the whole Matter, and to give Sentence, *That the Jewish Rites ought not to be impos'd**

impos'd upon the believing Gentiles. But that the zealous *Jews* might have no Offence, and the *Gentiles* no Burthen neither, he propounded that the latter should be requir'd the Observance of these four Things: First, to *abstain from Meats offer'd to Idols*, because it might seem a Participation in the Idolatry: Secondly, *from Fornication*, which the *Gentiles* accounted little or no Crime: Thirdly, *from Things strangled*, which were exceeding odious to the *Jews*: And fourthly, *from Blood*, which was suppos'd to have been forbidden to affright Men from Cruelty and Bloodshed. That these Things ought to be forborn, because of the *Jews*, who could not but have an Abhorrence for them, *since they heard the Writings of Moses, that prohibited them, read in their Synagogues every Sabbath Day.*

The Determination of *James*, which was deliver'd with some Authority, was readily allow'd by the Council; and by the Consent of the whole Church, it was resolv'd, That *Judas*, and *Silas* or *Silvanus*, two eminent Men of their own Number, should go over with *Paul* and *Barnabas* to *Antioch*, that by the Testimony of their own Commissioners, and the Letters and Decrees of the Council, the false Teachers might be silenc'd, and the believing *Gentiles* confirm'd in the Truth. By these four they wrote Letters to the believing *Gentiles* in many Parts, after this Manner. *The Apostles, and Presbyters, and Brethren of Jerusalem, wish Happiness to the Brethren that are of the Gentiles in Antioch, in Syria, and Cilicia. Forasmuch as we are inform'd, that certain Persons who went from this Place, have disturb'd you with their Discourses, ensnaring your Souls, by declaring, That you are oblig'd to be circumcis'd, and to keep the Law; to whom we gave no such Instructions: It seem'd good therefore to us to send some select Persons to you, with our dear Brothers Barnabas and Paul, Men who have hazarded their Lives for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Upon which Account we have sent Judas and Silas, who will tell you our Minds by Word of Mouth. For it seem'd good to be Holy Ghost, as well as to us, to lay upon you no greater Burthen than these at present necessary Things. THAT YE ABSTAIN FROM MEATS OFFER'D TO IDOLS, AND FROM BLOOD, AND FROM THINGS STRANGLED, AND FROM FORNICATION: Which you will do well, if you observe. Farewel.* And thus concluded the Council of *Jerusalem* in the Year 49, and 9th of *Claudius*, about five Years after the Death of *James* the Son of *Zebedee*,
and

and 14 after the Conversion of *Paul*, as appears from *Gal.* 2. 1. tho' some Chronologers by Mistake add the three Years mention'd Chap. 1. 18. which wou'd make the whole 17 Years.

C H A P. V.

*From the End of the Council of Jerusalem, to
St. Paul's last Journey to that City, when
he first became a Prisoner.*

Containing the Term of about nine Years.

A. D.
49.
Claud.
9.
Acts 15.
30--35.
Galat. 2.
11--19.

I. **T**HE Apostles *Paul* and *Barnabas* being dismiss'd by the Council of *Jerusalem*, and taking *Judas* and *Silas* with them, carry'd the decretal Epistle to *Antioch*, and presented it to the whole Body of the Church, which was receiv'd by all with great Joy and Satisfaction. Here *Judas* and *Silas*, being Men of eminent Gifts in teaching and interpreting the Scriptures, also employed themselves in confirming and establishing the Believers in the Truth of Christianity. After a short Continuance in the City, these two were with all Kindness and Civility dismiss'd by the Church, in order to return to *Jerusalem*; but *Silas*, for some Reasons, was not willing to depart so soon, but chose to tarry with *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who continu'd in this great City, teaching and propagating the *Christian* Faith, with many others. Not long after *Peter* also came to *Antioch*, who having been a principal Person in deciding the Controversies in the late Council, consonant to the Gospel Liberty there confirm'd, convers'd freely for a Time with the *Gentile* Converts, eating with them, and living like them, and not as did the *Jews*, who still observ'd the Distinction of Meats prescrib'd by the Law. But in the Beginning of the following Year, when certain *Jewish Christians* came to this City from *James* at *Jerusalem*, who were tenacious of the Ceremonial Law, *Peter* out of Fear of Offence, began to separate himself from the *Gentile* Converts, refusing to eat with them, as if God had never taught him to call no Man common or unclean; which Practice of his confirm'd the *Jews* in their darling Opinions, and fill'd the *Gentiles* with new Doubts and Scruples: So that what was lately establish'd, was in danger of being destroy'd; for many of the

A. D.
50.
Claud.
10.

Jews,

Jews, and even *Barnabas*, was carry'd away with the Stream of his Dissimulation, and follow'd his Example. But *Paul* perceiving this, and knowing that *Peter* did not walk uprightly, according to the Truth of the Gospel, bravely withstood him to the Face, and reprov'd him before the whole Church; declaring, *That his Hypocrisie did great Injury to the Gentiles, by inducing them to live in Jewish Observations, when he himself, tho' a Jew, thought himself at Liberty to live as the Gentiles did: That he desir'd to be justify'd by Faith, and not by the Works of the Law, and yet impos'd that Yoke upon others; which was an Offence against Christ, and a rebuilding of that which had been once destroy'd.* *Peter* bore this sharp and impartial Reproof with Patience and Humility, and no doubt amended his Carriage upon it. *Porphyry*, one of the great Enemies of the *Christians*, took an Occasion from this Management to accuse *St. Peter* of Falshood, and *St. Paul* of Insolence: But *St. Austin* answers, That the Liberty of the latter, and the Humility of the former were both highly commendable; and that as one teaches us not to fear the reproving boldly any that hinder the Gospel, so the other teaches them to accept such Advice with Humility. This is the last Time that we read of *St. Peter* in the Holy Scriptures.

About the same Time *Paul*, who desir'd not only to plant Churches but also to water them, propounded to *Barnabas* to go and visit the Cities they had converted, and confirm and establish them in the Truth they had received. *Barnabas* freely consented to such a pious Proposal, but was very earnest to take along with them his Kinsman *John-Mark*. But *Paul* oppos'd his Desire, because he had formerly found him defective in the Ministry; having either through Fear or an unsound Faith, deserted them at *Perga* in *Pamphilia*. *Barnabas*, whose natural Love to his Sister's Son caus'd him to oversee former Faults, and to hope for a better Management, was angry at this Refusal; and being both resolute in their Opinions, it not only occasion'd a sharp Contention between them, but also an intire Separation from each other. Thus were these two excellent Man by a small Punctilio parted, after a joint Labour of several Years Ministry: The Holy Spirit intending by this Account to shew us that the best *Christians* are still subject to the same Passions and Infirmities with other Men; and that therefore none ought to be too much elevated with an Opinion of their own Piety, or to despise others whom they imagine to be their Inferiors. God however turn'd all to the best; for tho' they differ'd about *John-Mark*, yet neither forsook

Acts 15.
36--39.

his

his Office or Ministry, and tho' they were separated as to their Persons, yet not as to their Faith and Doctrine; and being thus parted, the Gospel was preach'd by them in more Places. *Barnabas* with his Kinsman, sail'd to his native Country *Cyprus*, where he preach'd to the *Jews*, who were very numerous in that Island: From whence he is said to have gone and preach'd at *Rome*, and after that in *Liguria*, where he founded the Bishoprick of *Milan*. *Baronius* is unwilling to acknowledge the former, but seems very positive in the latter; yet we have but very little Certainty of either.

Acts 15.

40, 41.

Chap. 16.

1-5.

2 Tim. 3.

14, 15.

In the mean Time, *Paul* chose *Silas* for his Companion, and enter'd upon his Journey, being recommended by the Prayers of the Faithful to the Protection and Favour of God. He first visited the neighbouring Churches of *Syria*, then those of his own Country *Cilicia*, confirming them in the Faith with his Instructions and Exhortations. From hence he departed to *Derbe* and *Lystra* in *Lycaonia*, Cities he had converted three Years before, where he met with a young Man call'd *Timothy*, whose Father was a *Grecian*, but his Mother *Eunice* a *Jewish* Convert, by whom he had been brought up under all the Advantages of a pious and religious Education, and particularly in an extraordinary Skill in the Holy Scriptures: Which Accomplishments drew *Paul's* Affection to him; and knowing that so promising a Person wou'd be highly serviceable to him, he determin'd to take him for his Companion, and a special Instrument in the Ministry of the Gospel. *Timothy* was a *Gentile* born, and tho' *Paul* wou'd not permit *Titus* to be circumcis'd when perverse Men declar'd it necessary, yet here he thought it convenient for the *Jews* Sake to circumcise *Timothy*; being willing in lawful and indifferent Matters, such as Circumcision was at present, to accommodate himself to Mens Humours, and Apprehensions, for the saving of their Souls. In all the Places he pass'd through, he left the *Christians* a Copy of the Decrees made by the Apostles and Presbyters of *Jerusalem*, to confirm them in the right Use of their *Christian* Liberty; by which means the Churches were establish'd in the Faith, and daily increas'd in their Numbers.

A. D.

51.

Claud.

11.

Acts 16.

6-15.

Galat. 4.

14, 15.

From hence with his Companions *Paul* pass'd through *Phrygia* and *Galatia*, both Provinces of the lesser *Asia*; in which latter Country he was entertain'd with as great Kindness and Veneration, as if he had been an Angel immediately sent from Heaven. And passing from thence into *Myfia*, they were forbidden by the Impulse of the Holy Spirit to go either into *Bithynia*, or *Asia Propria*, the Country

try

try about *Ephesus*; therefore they went down to *Troas*, a Port upon the *Ægean* Sea. Here *Paul* had a Vision by Night from God, and saw a Man in a *Macedonian* Habit standing by him, and beseeching him to come over into their Country and assist them; a Vision and a Call different from all others he had found before. Hereupon he immediately resolv'd to pass from *Asia* into *Europe*, where he had never been before, concluding that God had call'd him to preach the Gospel in *Macedonia*, and the famous Country of *Greece*. And here it seems *Paul* was join'd by *Luke*, a *Christian* Convert of *Antioch*, admirably accomplish'd in all Parts of Learning and human Sciences, particularly Physick, if not Painting, who from this Time became *Paul's* inseparable Companion and Attendant, afterwards one of the four Evangelists. *Paul* being thus accompany'd with *Silas*, *Luke*, and *Timothy*, sail'd North-Westward from *Troas*, and touching upon *Samothrace*, an Isle not far from *Thrace*; the next Day they landed at *Neapolis*, a Port in *Macedonia*; from whence they travell'd a few Miles to *Philippi*, a City famous for the Defeat of *Brutus* and *Cassius*, the Metropolis of that Part of *Macedonia*, and a *Roman* Colony. In this City they tarry'd a considerable Space, and *Paul*, according to his Custom, preach'd in a *Proseucha*, or Oratory of the *Jews*, which stood by a River Side at some Distance from the City, and was much frequented by the devouter Women of their Religion, who met there to pray, and to hear the Law. To these *Paul* deliver'd the Word of God, and by the Influence of God's Spirit converted, among others, a certain Woman nam'd *Lydia*, a Purple Seller, born at *Thyatira*; who being baptiz'd with all her Family, was so importunate with *Paul* and his Companions to lodge at her House, if they judg'd her sincere in her Conversion, that they cou'd not deny her Civility.

So long as they remain'd in the City they continu'd their daily Course of worshipping God in the same Oratory, whether they were often follow'd by a *Pythonesse*, a Maid Servant, actuated by a Spirit of Divination, who openly cry'd out, *That these Men were the Servants of the most High God, who came to shew the Way of Salvation to the World*; so easily can Heaven extort a Confession from the Mouth of Hell. But *Paul*, detesting the Testimony of *Satan*, commanded the Demon in the Name of *Jesus Christ* to come out of her. The evil Spirit obey'd, but immediately rais'd a Storm against the Apostles; for the Masters of this Maid, who formerly receiv'd great Advantages from her infernal Arts, finding the Loss of their Gain, in a great Rage drag'd

Paul

Acts 16.
16--40.

Paul and Silas into the Forum before the Magistrates and Governor of the Colony, declaring, That these Men, who were Jews, had introduc'd many Innovations prejudicial to the State, and a Religion unlawful for the Romans to observe. The Magistrates being jealous of all Disturbances, were very ready to punish such as were accus'd by a Multitude, and therefore commanded their Clothes to be torn off, and them to be severely scourg'd as seditious Persons; after that they committed them to close Prison, giving a strict Charge to the Jaylor to keep them safely; who thereupon unmercifully thrust them into the Inner Dungeon, and made their Feet fast in the Stocks. These Sufferings were so far from abating their spiritual Joy, that at Midnight they both pray'd and sung Psalms to the Almighty, so that all the Prisoners heard them; and God soon manifested the Effect and Power of their zealous Devotion, by causing a great Earthquake, which shook the Foundations of the Prison, open'd all the Doors, and miraculously loos'd every Man's Chains. The Jaylor awaking with this amazing Accident, concluded that the Prisoners were all fled, and to prevent the Sentence of publick Justice, was ready to execute himself by his own Sword; which *Paul* perceiving, cry'd out to him to hold his Hand, *For that they were all there.* The Jaylor being touch'd with the divine Power, came trembling in with a Light, and with no less Commotion in his Conscience demanded, *What he must do to be saved?* They, without resenting the Severity he had us'd towards them, readily reply'd, *That if he believ'd in Jesus Christ, he might be sav'd, and all his Family.* The Jaylor, after a competent Instruction, receiv'd the Faith, and was baptiz'd with all his House; and as a Testimony of his Sorrow for his former Usage, he wash'd their Wounds, and joyfully entertain'd them in his House with the utmost Kindness and Civility. Early in the Morning the Magistrates sent Officers privately to release them, and the Jaylor deliver'd the Message, bidding them *Depart in Peace*; but the Apostles refus'd, declaring, *That they were not only innocent Persons, but also Romans; that since they had been illegally scourg'd, they expected a Delivery as publick as the Injury, and an open Vindication of their Innocency, and that they themselves who had sent them thither, should fetch them thence.* The Magistrates were extremely affrighted at this, and being sensible of their Error, and the Strictness of the Roman Laws, repair'd to the Prison, and with all Submission desir'd them to leave the City. These holy Men, satisfy'd with this small Recompence, went to the House of *Lydia*; and having comforted the

Brethren

Brethren with the Proof of their Deliverance, they left the City, having there laid the Foundation of a very eminent Church, as appears from *Paul's* Epistle to the *Christians* of this City *Philippi*.

Paul and his Companions having left *Philippi*, they travell'd Westward through *Amphipolis* and *Apollonia*, and went to *Theſſalonica*, the Metropolis of all *Macedonia*, about 120 Miles from *Philippi*. Here being a Synagogue of the *Jews*, *Paul*, according to his Custom, went in, and first preach'd the Gospel to them, and for three Sabbath Days successively plainly shew'd Them, *That according to the Scriptures the Messiah promis'd to the Jews ought to suffer and rise again, and that Jesus was the very Person*. Some of the *Jews* were perswaded to believe and embrace the Faith, and associated themselves with *Paul* and *Silas*, as likewise did great Numbers of *Grecians* who were Profelytes of the Gate, and many Women of the better Rank and Quality. Here *Paul* instructed them, not only concerning Faith in *Christ*, but also concerning the future Apostacy of *Anti-Christ*, and his Revelation; and here also he receiv'd Relief from the believing *Philippians*, being as little Burthensom as possible to those of this City. But after some Time, several of the unbelieving *Jews* in this Place, according to their usual Perverseness, join'd with certain mean and lewd Persons, and assaulted the House of *Jason*, a considerable Man, where they lodg'd, intending to drag them out to the People, and possibly to stone them. But missing of them, they hal'd *Jason* and other Believers, after a tumultuous Manner to the Magistrates, crying out, *That Jason had harbour'd those that would overturn the World, and had set up one Jesus for King, in Opposition to Cæsar the Emperor*. These Suggestions were sufficient to oblige the Magistrates to take Security from *Jason*; but the Brethren privately sent away the Apostles by Night to *Berea*, a City about 50 Miles South of *Theſſalonica*. Here going into the Synagogue, they found the *Jews* of a more noble and unbiass'd Temper, ready to entertain the *Christian* Doctrine, but yet not willing to take it meerly upon the Apostle's Word, 'till they had first compar'd his Preaching, with what the Scriptures said of the *Messiah* and his Doctrine. The Success was answerable, and great Numbers both of Men and of Women of the superior Rank were converted. But in a short Time they were pursu'd by the Malice of the *Jews* of *Theſſalonica*, who coming to *Berea* rais'd great Disturbances; which occasion'd the Believers to send *Paul* towards the

Acts 17^a
1--15.
2 Theſ. 2^a
2--5.
Phil. 4.
16.

A. D.
52.
Claud.
12.

Sea Side, as if they designed to put him on Shipboard, and then to conduct him another Way, near 240 Miles Southwards, as far as the great City *Athens*. But *Silas* and *Timothy*, not being so much known or hated as *Paul*, continu'd some Time longer, to confirm the new Believers.

Athens was once the Metropolis of all *Greece*, and one of the most renowned Cities in the World for Arts and Arms; and tho' now much declining, yet was still the principal Academy in the *Roman* Empire for all kinds of polite Learning. The Inhabitants of it were very religious and superstitious, and so careful that no Deity should want due Honour from them, that they had an Altar inscribed *TO THE UNKNOWN GOD*; which many believe was the Name which the *Pagans* generally gave to the God of the *Jews*. While *Paul* remain'd at *Athens*, expecting *Silas* and *Timothy*, by taking a particular View of the Place, he could not but take Notice of the exceeding Progress of Idolatry, for *Petronius* says, ' It was easier to find Gods ' than Men at *Athens*; and he was deeply concerned to see so much Zeal and Devotion misplaced, and earnestly desired it might be fixed upon a proper Object. Wherefore he used his utmost Endeavours for the *Athenians* Conversion, and not only on the Sabbath Days disputed with the *Jews* and Profelytes in the Synagogues, but took all Opportunities, where-ever he met with a convenient Auditory, to instruct them in the Coming of the *Messiah*, and the Resurrection; which he often found in the main *Forum*, whither the *Athenians* and Foreigners daily repaired to hear and tell News, which was the great Business of their Lives. His Doctrine was new and strange to the *Athenians*; and tho' they did not persecute him as the *Jews* did, yet he was entertained with Scoffs and Contempt by the Philosophers of the *Stoick* and *Epicurean* Sects, and by others of a more serious Temper, as a Discoverer of new Gods hitherto unknown; which tho' they were not unwilling to receive, yet because the *Areopagus*, the supreme Court of the City, was to canonize all Gods that were to be allowed publick Worship, they brought him before those Judges to give an Account of his Doctrine. Being brought before this grave Assembly, *Paul* with an Air of Majesty and Courtesie, declared to the whole Audience, *That he could not but observe how unhappily they were over-run with Superstition, finding an Altar among them inscribed to the unknown God; therefore in Compassion to their misguided Zeal, he would declare to them the Deity which they ignorantly worshipped;*

which

Acts 17.

16--34.

which was no other than the great God, the Creator of all Things, the Supreme Governour of the World, who was incapable of being confined within any Temple or human Fabrick. That no Image could be made to represent him, who neither needed Gifts nor Sacrifices, being himself the Fountain from whence Life, Breath, and all other Blessings spring: That from one common Original he produced the whole Race of Mankind, wisely fixing and determining the Times and Bounds of their Habitation; and all this, that Men might be more strongly obliged to seek after him, and sincerely serve him; a Thing the more easily attainable, because he was so very near every one. That it was entirely from him that they had either Life, Motion, or Existence; which was acknowledged by one of their own Poets, Aratus by Name, in that Sentence of his, *WE ALSO ARE HIS OFF-SPRING*. That therefore if they were the Off-spring of God, it was highly irrational to suppose that their Creator could be the Work of their Hands, as an Image of Gold, Silver, or Stone was. That the divine Patience had long born with Mens blind Idolatries, but that now God expected a general Repentance and Reformation from the World; especially having by the Publication of the Gospel evidenced a future Judgment, and particularly appointed the Holy Jesus to be the Judge of the World, and having given sufficient Assurance of the Truth of it by his Resurrection from the dead. These last Words concerning the Resurrection were derided by some of the Philosophers; but others more gravely answered, *That they would hear him again upon the same Subject*. His solemn Discourse, however contemn'd by some, had a happy Effect upon several, and those of the highest Rank amongst them; particularly *Dionysius*, one of the Senators and Judges of this Court, and *Damaris*, whom some think to be his Wife. It is generally believed that *Dionysius* was afterwards by *St. Paul* constituted the first Bishop of *Athens*.

About the Time of *Paul's* Arrival at *Athens*, the Emperor *Claudius* by his own Edi& banished all the *Jews* from *Rome*, by Reason of their being continually in an Uproar and Tumult upon the Account of *Jesus Christ*, whom *Suetonius* calls *Chrestus*: And many are of Opinion, that under the Name of the *Jews* the *Christians* were also expelled, among whom *St. Peter* has been improbably suppos'd to be one. Before *Paul's* Departure from this City, *Timothy* according to Order came to him from *Macedonia*, and brought him an Account, That the new *Christians* at *Thessalonica* were under Persecution from their Fellow-Citizens ever since he left them. Which was so great a Concern to *Paul*, that

he design'd to return to them again, and by his own Presence to confirm them in the Faith, that none of them might be deterr'd or discourag'd by Persecutions, which he had formerly told them should be the constant Attendants of their Profession. But being hinder'd by the Malice of the Enemies of the Gospel, he sent *Timothy* to them to supply his Office, and to establish them and comfort them in their Afflictions; and departed himself 50 or 60 Miles South-

Acts 19. Westward to *Corinth*, a City situated upon the narrow Isthmus of *Peloponnesus*, then the Metropolis of all *Greece*, and the Residence of the Proconsul of *Achaia*. Being arriv'd at this rich and populous City, he met with *Aquila* and his Wife *Priscilla*, lately banish'd from *Rome* by the Decree against the *Jews*; and they being of the same Trade of Tent-making with himself, he join'd and wrought together with them, that he might not be burthensome to that Place where no Church was yet establish'd. On the Sabbath Days he taught in the *Jewish* Synagogue, and by his convincing Arguments brought many *Jews* and *Grecians* to the Faith: *Stephanus* and his Family were the First-Fruits of his Conversion, and baptiz'd by him with *Crispus* and *Gaius*, to be Ministers in that Office to the rest that should believe; for he himself was not sent to baptize, but to preach. While he was thus busy'd in this City in Preaching the Gospel, in which he sustain'd many Labours and Troubles, *Timothy* arriv'd from *Theffalonica*, bringing *Silas* along with him, and gave him an Account of the stedfast Firmness and Perseverance of that Church, which extreamly pleas'd the Apostle, and was as a comforting Cordial to him in his Afflictions. This caus'd him to take some fresh Resolutions of going to visit them in Person; but in the mean Time he thought it convenient to write to them, which he did shortly after; and this was the first of all his Epistles, and the third, if not the second, or first of the Books and Writings of the New Testament. Tho' our vulgar Postscripts assert, it was written from *Athens*, yet the manifest Circumstances of the History prove it to be from *Corinth*. ' It was written in the ' Name of *Paul*, and *Silas* or *Silvanus*, and *Timothy*, and ' manifests an extraordinary Tenderness and Affection for ' the *Christians* of *Theffalonica*, highly applauding their Courage and Zeal for their Faith in *Christ*, and exhorting them ' to a noble Constancy, and Perseverance amidst their ' Afflictions. After which he commended their Charity to ' the Believers of *Macedonia*, adding many Instructions concerning a good Life and Conversation, urging them to ' the strict Practice of Holiness; particularly to use Marriage

riage chafly and piously, to avoid Laziness, and be diligent in their Callings; not to be immoderate in their Grief for the Dead, as tho' there was no Resurrection or Hope of another Life; with many other pious Instructions and Exhortations. In this Epistle he also caution'd them about the Coming of *Anti-Christ*.

Paul, who by the Obstinacy of the *Jews*, was almost discourag'd from preaching to them, yet finding himself replenish'd with a fresh Zeal for them at the coming of *Silas* and *Timothy*, thereupon boldly testified again to them, *That Jesus was the Messiah*: But they opposing his most serious Assertions, and blaspheming both *Christ* and him, he took his Leave of them, as incorrigible Infidels; and shaking his Garment to denote their utter Rejection from Grace and Mercy, he solemnly declar'd, *That their Blood should fall upon their own Heads, for he was clear and innocent; and that from thence forward he would preach to the Gentiles*. And accordingly he left his Lodgings with *Aquila* the *Jew*, and made his abode with one *Justus*, a Profelyte of the Gate, whose House join'd to the Synagogue, being desirous that the *Jews* might see his Success among the *Gentiles*, and through Emulation be provok'd to believe. Nor did his pious Design want some Effect; for *Crispus* himself, the chief Ruler of the Synagogue, believ'd in *Jesus*, as did likewise all his House, and were baptiz'd into the *Christian* Faith. But his Preaching had far greater Success among the *Gentiles* than among the *Jews*; for by the Assistance of *Silas* and *Timothy*, great Numbers of the *Corinthians* were converted to the Faith and baptiz'd; so that in no long time a very considerable Church was founded in this City, tho' extremely over-run with Impiety and Idolatry, having a Temple of *Venus* so large, that above a thousand young Women were its constant Votaries and Attendants. The more the Gospel prosper'd in *Macedonia* by *Paul's* Labours, the more his Enemies increas'd, who consulting and practising all Methods to destroy him, he was often reduc'd to very great Straits and Wants of bodily Necessaries, as he himself assures us, and liv'd in continual Fear and Terrors of Mind. But lest these afflicting Circumstances should deter him from the Work he had undertaken, *Jesus Christ* was pleas'd to appear to him in a Vision by Night to comfort him, bidding him *Fear nothing, but speak with all Freedom, for he was with him to protect and defend him, so that no Man should set on him to hurt him; for that he had a numerous People in that City*. This Assurance caus'd him to tarry in the Place a full Year and six Months, preaching the

Acts 18.

5--11.

2 Cor. 11.

9.

1 Cor. 2.

3.

Word of God among them and in the neighbouring Parts ; in which Space, besides the Doctrine he taught, he established several Ordinances among them concerning Church Order, and Matters of Decency ; as that Women in their public Prayers should have their Heads cover'd with a Veil ; that Men should wear short Hair and Women long ; with several others of the like Nature.

II. During the Travels and Labours of *St. Paul*, the rest of the Apostles were busily employ'd in preaching and propagating the Gospel in many other Parts of the World ; but, what is to be lamented, we have but a very short, and uncertain Account of their Actions. In this Year, the twelfth of *Claudius*, *Baronius* and some others place the Death of one of them, namely *St. Philip*, who after a happy Progress and making numerous Converts in the Upper *Asia*, part of *Scythia* and *Colchis*, suffered Martyrdom in *Hierapolis*, a noted City of *Phrygia* in the Lesser *Asia*. The Occasion and Particulars of his Death we have from no better Authorities than *Metaphrastes* and *Nicephorus*, who tell us, that the Inhabitants of *Hierapolis*, among their many trifling Deities, at this Time paid their Adorations to a Serpent or Dragon of prodigious Bulk ; which highly mov'd the Pity and Indignation of this Apostle, who by his Prayers to Heaven procured the Death or Disappearance of the Serpent, and by his Preaching, the Conversion of many of the City. This so exasperated the Magistrates, that throwing him into Prison, they caused him first to be severely scourg'd, and then to be hanged by the Neck against a Pillar, tho' others say he was crucify'd ; his Body being taken down and bury'd by the Apostle *Bartholomew*, who coming that Way escaped with great Difficulty. If he dy'd this Year, it is most probable he dy'd the second of the Apostles, it being eight Years after the Death of *St. James* the Son of *Zebedee* : The *Greeks* and Eastern Churches keep his Feast on *November* the 14th, but *Bede's* and the other Martyrologies order its Celebration on *May* 1, with *St. James* the less. He was one of the Apostles who left no Writings behind him, the greater Part of them, as *Eusebius* observes, being so busily employ'd in their Functions, wanted Leisure to write : Tho' *Epiphanius* tells us, that the *Gnosticks* used to produce a Gospel forged under *St. Philip's* Name, which they abused to the Patronage of their horrible Principles and Practices.

Joseph.

About this Time, the *Jews*, who were continually pursued by the Vengeance of Heaven, met with new Troubles

bles and Disturbances, occasion'd by Dissentions between the *Galileans* and *Samaritans*, of whom the latter murder'd great Numbers of the former as they travell'd through their Country to the Passover. Whereupon the Magistrates of *Galilee* appeal'd to *Cumanus* the Governour, requiring Justice at his Hands; but he being brib'd by the *Samaritans* took little Notice of their Complaint. Which so exasperated the *Galileans*, that joining with the ordinary sort of the *Jews*, and being headed by a noted Robber call'd *Eleazar*, they made great Devastations in *Samaria*; but *Cumanus* with his standing Troops assisted the *Samaritans*, and made a dreadful Slaughter, killing and taking great Numbers of Prisoners. *Quadratus* Governour of *Syria* was likewise call'd in to their Assistance; who coming to *Cesarea*, crucified all those whom *Cumanus* had made Prisoners; but coming to *Lydda*, and understanding that the *Samaritans* were the Aggressors, and that *Cumanus* was corrupted, he first commanded eighteen of the chief of the *Samaritans* to be beheaded, and then order'd *Ananias* the High-Priest, *Cumanus* the Governour, and *Celer* a Tribune to go immediately to *Rome*, and answer before the Emperor to all Accusations that should be brought against them. Here they had a Day appointed them; and *Cumanus* and the *Samaritans* had unquestionably prevail'd upon the Weakness of *Claudius*, had not young *Agrippa*, by the Assistance of the Empress *Agrippina*, oblig'd him to do Justice: which he did by the Execution of *Celer* and several of the *Samaritans*, and by the final Banishment of *Cumanus*. After which *Claudius* made some Alterations in the Government of *Palestine*, and prefer'd *Agrippa* from *Chalcis* to a larger Kingdom, making him King of all those Dominions formerly belonging to *Philip* the Tetrarch, adding also *Abilene* which belong'd to *Lysanias*. But in the Room of *Cumanus* he sent *Felix*, Brother to his Favourite *Pallas*, to be Governour of *Judæa*, *Samaria* and *Galilee*; a Person sufficiently noted for all Sorts of Vices and Corruptions. This *Felix* was the tenth *Roman* Governour of the *Jews* after the Banishment of *Archelaus*.

About the Time of these Changes, *Gallio*, elder Brother to the famous *Seneca*, was sent from *Corinth* to be Proconsul of *Achaia*; a Person of celebrated Virtues and Probity. The *Jews*, who implacably hated *Paul*, thought this Governour a fit Judge of their Quarrel against him, and therefore having seiz'd upon him, in a tumultuous Manner they carry'd him before *Gallio's* Tribunal, accusing him of introducing a new Way of Worship, contrary to the *Jewish* Law and the

A. D.
53.
Claud.
13.

Acts 18.
12--17.

the Roman Government. The Apostle was ready to have pleaded his own Cause, but the Proconsul told them, *That had it been a Matter of Right or Wrong, that had fallen under the Cognizance of the Civil Judicature, it would have been proper and reasonable for him to have heard and determin'd the Case; but since the Controversie was only concerning the Punctilio's and Niceties of their Religion, he would be no Judge in such Matters.* But the Jews being still clamorous, he commanded his Officers to drive them out of the Court; and some of the Towns-Men seiz'd upon *Softhenes*, the chief Ruler of the Synagogue, and the Head of *Paul's* Accusers, and publickly beat him before the Tribunal, the Proconsul not at all concerning himself with it. Thus did the Apostles Enemies in vain attempt to injure him, God having warranted his Security, and promis'd, *That no Man should be able to hurt him.* *Paul* staid in *Corinth* a considerable Time after this Tumult was over, and before his Departure thence, he wrote his second Epistle to the *Christians* of *Thessalonica*, to supply the Want of his coming to them, which in his former he had resolv'd on, and for which, he had in a manner engag'd his Promise. This was also written in the Name 'of *Paul*, and *Silas* or *Silvanus*, and *Timothy*; and because some took Occasion 'from what he had said of the Day of Judgment in his 'first Letter, or rather from an Epistle forg'd in his Name, 'to cause Men to believe that the Day of the Lord was at 'Hand, he warn'd them not to be seduc'd by those false 'Teachers, assuring them, That tho' the Mystery of Iniquity was then working, the Day of Judgment should not 'happen, 'till the *Man of Sin* was come and destroy'd. He 'also endeavour'd to confirm their Minds in the Faith, 'and to animate them courageously to endure Persecution 'from the unbelieving *Jews*, a lost and undone Race of 'Men, whom the divine Vengeance was ready to overtake, giving them Assurance that he continually pray'd for 'them; ordering farther, that all idle, disorderly and busie 'Bodies should be reprov'd, and avoided as Drones and Incumbrances. In Conclusion, upon Suspicion that a Letter was counterfeited in his Name, that they might not 'be deceiv'd, he inform'd them, that he had sign'd this with 'his own Hand; which was the chief Token in every 'Epistle.

Paul having continued about two Years in *Europe*, of which a Year and an half was in *Corinth*, where he planted a considerable Church, resolv'd to return into *Asia*, particularly *Syria*. And taking along with him *Aquila* and *Priscilla*,

Priscilla, at *Cenchrea*, the Port and Harbour of *Corinth*, He ^{Acts 18.}
 or *Aquila* (for Criticks are not agreed upon the Person) ^{18--28.}
 shav'd his Head, in Performance of a *Nazarite* Vow he
 had formerly made, the Time whereof was now expired.
 Having sail'd above 100 Leagues Eastward, he landed at
 the famous City *Ephesus* in *Asia Propria*, the Metropolis of
 those Parts, where he preach'd for a short Time in a Sy-
 nagogue of the *Jews*, arguing with them concerning the
Messiah. He was much desir'd to stay in this City, but be-
 ing fully determin'd to be at *Jerusalem* at the Passover, ei-
 ther to consult with Friends, or to make more Converts,
 he left *Aquila* and *Priscilla* at *Ephesus*, promising to return
 again to them if God permitted. And sailing thence above
 200 Leagues South-Eastward, he landed at *Cesarea*, and
 from thence went up to *Jerusalem*, which was his fourth
 Journey to that City after his Conversion. Having visit-
 ed the Church, and kept the Feast, he went down to *Antioch*
 in *Syria*; and after some little Stay, he travers'd the Pro- ^{I Cor. 16.}
 vinces of *Galatia* and *Phrygia*, confirming the Disciples, ^{1, 2.}
 and enjoining them to make Contributions to the Poor
 every Lord's Day. While *Paul* was taking this large Cir-
 cuit, Providence took Care of the Churches of *Ephesus* and
Corinth by the Means of one *Apollos* a *Jew* of *Alexandria*,
 eminent for his flowing Eloquence, and his admirable Know-
 ledge of the Old Testament, who coming to *Ephesus*, tho'
 he was only instructed in the Rudiments of the *Christian* Re-
 ligion, and the Baptism of *John*, taught the Word of God
 with great Boldness, and a most powerful Zeal. And ha-
 ving been fully instructed in the Faith by *Aquila* and *Pri-*
scilla, he resolv'd to pass over into *Achaia*, being particu-
 larly recommended by Letters from the Believers of *Ephesus*
 to those of *Corinth*. In this City he prov'd highly service-
 able to the Church, and water'd what *Paul* had before plant- ^{I Cor. 3.}
 ed, confirming the Disciples, and powerfully convincing ^{6.}
 the *Jews*, That *Jesus* was the true and only *Messiah* prom-
 is'd in the Holy Scriptures.

While *Apollos* was thus happily employ'd in *Corinth*, *Paul* ^{Acts 19.}
 having visit- ed the Churches in *Galatia* and *Phrygia*, return'd ^{1--8.}
 to *Ephesus*, according to his Promise, bringing several Com-
 panions along with him. Here meeting with twelve *Chri-*
stian Disciples, he enquir'd of them, *Whether since their*
Conversion they had receiv'd the miraculous Gifts of the Holy
Ghost? They intimated, *That the Doctrine which they had*
receiv'd had nothing in it of that Nature; nor had they ever
heard that any such extraordinary Spirit had of late been be-
stow'd upon the Church. Whereupon he farther enquir'd
 In

In what Name they had been baptiz'd; since the Christian Baptism had ever been administer'd in the Name of the Holy Ghost. They answer'd, That they had receiv'd no more than John's Baptism; which tho' it oblig'd Men to Repentance, yet it did not speak explicitly of the Holy Ghost, or its Gifts and Powers. Upon this the Apostle let them know, That tho' John's Baptism did openly oblige to nothing but Repentance, yet it did implicitly acknowledge the whole Doctrine concerning Christ, and the Holy Ghost. This Answer gave them such Satisfaction, that they receiv'd from him the compleat Christian Baptism, which was in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. To which the Apostle added Confirmation, and laying his Hands upon them, they immediately receiv'd the Holy Ghost, in the Gift of Tongues, Propheſie, and other miraculous Powers which were conferr'd upon them. After this Paul enter'd into the Jewish Synagogue of this City, where for three Months he earnestly contended and disputed with the Jews; endeavouring to convince them of the Truth of those Things that concern'd the Christian Religion.

While this great Apostle of the Uncircumcision was thus diligently pursuing his Ministry, the other of the Circumcision, St. Peter, after his Departure from Antioch, preach'd the Gospel to the Jews in several Provinces of the lesser Asia; and travelling Eastward, arriv'd at the ancient City Babylon in Chaldaea, above 700 Miles East of Jerusalem, where great Numbers of the Jews resided, having a famous Academy, and several Schools. In this City it is probable that Silas or Silvanus came to him, leaving Paul at Ephesus; and having the Evangelist Mark with him, from this Place, and in this Year 54, as Mr. Dodwell fairly conjectures, he wrote his first Epistle, which is call'd a Catholick, or general Epistle. ' It is especially directed to
 ' the elect Strangers, dispers'd through Pontus, Galatia,
 ' Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; that is to say, to all the
 ' converted Jews dispers'd in those several Provinces; and
 ' this was sent to them by Silvanus. In this Epistle, after
 ' a solemn Thanksgiving to God for their Call to Christiani-
 ' nity, whereby they had a lively Hope of an eternal Inhe-
 ' ritage in Heaven, he advis'd them to the Practice of se-
 ' veral Virtues, as a Means to make their Calling and Ele-
 ' ction sure; namely, That they should live in a constant
 ' Worship and Fear of God, and imitate their Master Je-
 ' sus Christ in Holiness and Purity: That they should love
 ' each other fervently and unfeignedly, as Brethren not on-
 ' ly by Nature but Grace: That they should be diligent
 ' Hearers

‘ Hearers of the Gospel, and grow up to Perfection by it.
 ‘ That they should lead exemplary Lives among the *Gentiles*, abstaining from the carnal Lusts so commonly practis’d
 ‘ among them, and carrying themselves modestly and innocently, that they might convince their Enemies that their
 ‘ Calumnies were unreasonable. That they should behave themselves well under their respective Relations, submitting
 ‘ themselves to their Governors, whether supreme or subordinate; that Servants should obey their Masters,
 ‘ Wives be subject to their Husbands, and Husbands honour their Wives. That they should live in Unity, sympathize
 ‘ with each other in their Afflictions, be compassionate and courteous. That they should endure Persecution
 ‘ patiently, blessing God for making them like their Master in his Sufferings. Lastly, he exhorted the Pastors and
 ‘ Ministers of those Churches to take a special Care of their Flocks, to teach them diligently, and to govern them
 ‘ gently, not seeking for Gain, but to save their Souls. The whole is written with a Fervor and Zeal becoming so
 ‘ great an Apostle; and some have thought it was written in the *Hebrew* Tongue, but without sufficient Ground. As
 ‘ for *Babylon*, from whence it is dated, some believe it to be *Babylon* in *Ægypt*, others that it means *Rome*, and others
 ‘ *Jerusalem*; but the Opinion we have follow’d seems to us to have far greater Probability.

In this Year, the Emperor *Claudius* began to feel the fatal Effects of his Folly and Misgovernment. After he had been freed from a dangerous and infamous Wife, he became Captive to his own Niece *Agrippina*, a Woman of a vast Spirit, and unbounded Ambition, who being marry’d to him, soon procur’d her own Son *Nero* to be preferr’d before the Emperor’s Son *Britannicus*; and she was so zealous for his succeeding in the Empire, that when it was told her from some Oracle or Augur, *That her Son should be Emperor, but would be the Cause of her Death*, she answer’d, *Let him, so he but reigns*. She procur’d the Deaths of several Ladies of the highest Quality, who had been her Rivals for her Marriage with the Emperor, and made many Changes in the greatest Offices; but in a few Years the exorbitant Power she assum’d became not only distastful to the Nobility, but also very troublesome to *Claudius* himself; who, notwithstanding his strange Insensibility, began heartily to repent of his Marriage with her, and the Adoption of her Son *Nero*. Which *Agrippina* soon discover’d by his unusual Favours to his Son *Britannicus*, and by what he accidentally declar’d when he was heated with Wine,

Wine, That he had ever been unfortunate in his Wives, but that none of them had escap'd unpunish'd. Whereupon *Agrippina* soon took a Resolution to procure her Husband's Death by Poyson, but was very doubtful what kind to use; for she thought a strong Poyson might make her Villany too apparent, and a slow one wou'd give the Emperor Opportunity of discovering so much of her Practices, as to prevent her Son's Succession; at length she fix'd upon some singular Potion, that wou'd distract his Senses, and not too suddenly end his Life. For this she wanted not her Assistants, who infus'd the Poyson into some Mushrooms, a Dish that *Claudius* lov'd beyond Measure; but that only indisposing him, *Agrippina* suddenly sent for *Zenophon* her Physician, who upon pretence of making him Vomit, according to his usual Custom after his gluttonous Debauches, thrust a poison'd Feather down his Throat, which shortly after ended his Life. Whereupon *Agrippina*, as one overwhelm'd by the Extremity of Grief, embrac'd *Britannicus* in her Arms, calling him, *the dear Image of his Father's Face*; and by many Artifices detain'd him and his Sisters *Antonia* and *Octavia* in the Chamber, placing a strong Guard at every Door and Passage, and often publishing, That the Emperor was still in an hopeful Condition, till she found a proper Minute for her Son's Advancement. *Claudius* dy'd in the Year 54, on the 13th Day of *October*, under the Consulships of *Marcellus* and *Ariola*, being in the 64th Year of his Age, and having reigned 13 Years, 8 Months, and 19 Days.

A. D.

54.

NERO,

the sixth

Roman

Emperor.

III. On the same Day that the Emperor *Claudius* dy'd, the Palace Gates were suddenly set open, and young *Nero* accompany'd with *Burrhus*, Præfect of the *Prætorian* Guards, went out to the Cohort then attending, who at the Command of *Burrhus*, receiv'd him with loud Acclamations, tho' not without some Enquiries after *Britannicus*, and carry'd him in a Chariot to the rest of the Troops; where, after a Promise of a Donative, he was saluted Emperor, and shortly after confirm'd by the Senate, and acknowledg'd by the Provinces. *Nero*, tho' but 17 Years of Age, began his Reign with the general Joy and Satisfaction of the City, which conceiv'd great Hopes from his outward Endeavours to serve the Publick. For first he promis'd to govern according to the wise Rules and Institutions of the great *Augustus*, and began both in Words and Actions to shew himself just, liberal and merciful; conferring Favours, and dividing Mony to the Citizens, moderating Impositions and Tributes,

Tributes, assigning Pensions to decay'd Senators, and using all Men with such Courtesie and Humanity, as that there seem'd no Reason to fear the succeeding Miseries. He shew'd such Clemency and Pity in the Execution of Justice and Punishments, that when he was to sign a Warrant for a condemn'd Person, he with a Sigh said, *Wou'd to Heaven that I knew not how to write!* And likewise such Modesty to the Senate, that when they applauded him for the Justness and Regularity of his Administration, he made Answer, *Pray defer your Thanks till I deserve them.* So that it seem'd as if Heaven had sent the Romans such a Prince as they desir'd; and his first five Years Government was so excellent in general, that the famous Emperor *Trajan* afterwards said, *That for that Space all Government came short of his.* But a great part of this is to be attributed to the wise Conduct of *Burrbus* and *Seneca*, who were the young Emperor's Guides and Governours, in equal Authority, and equal Sharers in divers Faculties; *Burrbus* in military Discipline, and Gravity of Manners; *Seneca* in Precepts of Eloquence, and courteous Demeanors. Yet in this Space *Nero* fell into divers Kinds of Extravagancies and Impieties; and how abominably lewd and scandalous, how unnaturally cruel and barbarous, and how prodigious a Monster he prov'd in a few Years, we shall have a proper Occasion to say something of hereafter.

In the first Year of his Reign, he made *Aristobulus* the Son of *Herod* of *Cbalcis*, King of the lesser *Armenia*; and added to *Agrippa's* Kingdom four Cities with their Territories, *Abila* and *Julias* beyond *Jordan*, and *Tiberias* and *Tarichea* in *Galilee*: So that the Dominions of *Felix* were somewhat abridg'd. At this Time *Judea* began to be overrun with Robbers, Enchanters and Deceivers of the Vulgar, who daily became Sacrifices to this Governor; particularly *Eleazar*, who had commanded a considerable Troop for many Years, who was sent bound to *Rome* himself, and had all his Associates crucify'd. Tho' *Felix* seem'd thus careful of the Publick, yet he was a wicked Governor, and was Guilty of many Impieties, and corrupt Practices. In the beginning of his Government he was captivated with the Beauty of *Agrippa's* Sister *Drusilla*; and tho' she was marry'd to *Azizus*, King of the *Emessenians*, by the Assistance of a Magician call'd *Simon*, he persuaded her to quit her Husband and marry him, and likewise to renounce her Religion, which was that of the *Jews*. Not long after *Felix* turn'd his Hatred against *Jonathan*, one of the Chief Priests, who having by his Interest procur'd him

A. D.

55.

Nero

1.

2.

Joseph.

this

this Government of the Emperor, took the Freedom to reprove him for his frequent Mismanagements; which prov'd so uneasie to him, that he resolv'd upon his Death, and to effect his Design, by a great Sum of Mony, he corrupted one of this Priest's Confidants call'd *Dora*, engaging him to bring in a convenient Number of Assassins to murther *Jonathan*. Several of these resorted to *Jerusalem*, under the Colour of Devotion, with short Swords hid under their Garments, who mixing with this Priest's Family, first accosted him civilly, and then slew him: And because this Murther was unpunish'd, many invited by this Licentiousness, repair'd to the City at publick Times, hiding their Swords after the same Manner, and being in Throngs, freely kill'd such as were Enemies to them, or to their Friends that hired them; and this not only in the Streets and publick Places, but also in the Temple it self, where Men justly expected the greatest Security.

A. D.
56.
Nero
 $\frac{2}{3}$

Thus was *Jerusalem* infested with Robbers and Murtherers: And as touching Magicians and Deceivers, they, according to our Saviour's Predictions, entic'd and drew great Multitudes into the Desarts, promising to shew them Signs and Miracles wrought by the Power of the Almighty; but such as were persuaded after them sufficiently suffer'd for their Folly, being pursu'd by some Troops from *Felix*, and cut in Pieces. But a certain *Egyptian Jew*, a false Prophet, occasion'd far greater Mischiefs to the *Jews*: For being a Magician, he came into *Judaea*, and calling himself a Prophet, gather'd together almost 30000 *Jews*, of whom *St. Luke* names 4000 as Murtherers, *Acts* 21. 38. These Men following him as the expected *Messiah*, came from the Desarts to *Mount Olivet*, where he promis'd them, *That they shou'd shortly see the Walls of Jerusalem fall to the Ground, from whence they shou'd drive the Roman Forces, and fix the Seat of his Empire there.* But *Felix* being inform'd of his Progress and Designs, met him at the Foot of the Mountain with his Legions, and a great Number of other *Jews*; and engaging with him, many were kill'd, others taken Prisoners, and the rest dispers'd into the Country; but the *Egyptian* escap'd in the Battle, with some Followers, who were never heard of after. These being thus suppress'd, another Party, as it often happens in sick Bodies, began to arise: For some Magicians and Robbers being gather'd together, exhorted the People to shake off the *Roman Yoke*, and threatned present Death to such as suffer'd so shameful a Servitude; so that they constrain'd many to Disobedience, who were willing to submit. These Men being dispers'd

all

all over the Country robb'd and pillag'd the Houses of the Rich, killing many, and firing Villages; so that all *Judaea* was in extream Fear of them. After which there hapned a great Sedition and Disturbance in *Casarea* between the *Jews* and *Syrians* in that Place, which ended to the great Damage of the former, and to the enriching of *Felix*, who never fail'd to make sufficient Advantages of all such Tumults: So that every Day the *Jews* felt the Beginnings of God's Vengeance, and the Fore-runners of their final Ruin.

IV. During these Troubles in *Judaea*, *Paul* diligently pursu'd his Ministry in the great City *Ephesus*; and after he had preach'd three Months in the Synagogues of the *Jews*, and found most of them obstinate in their Infidelity, he withdrew himself from their Assemblies, and repair'd to a publick School of one *Tyrannus*, a *Christian* Convert, with the rest of the Disciples. In this Place he continu'd two whole Years, and converted so many from all Parts of the World, who coming to this City upon the Account of Commerce and its renowned Temple, had Opportunity of hearing the Gospel, that partly by Persons sent on Purpose, and partly by accidental Conversation, all that dwelt in the Proconsular *Asia* heard the Word of God, both *Jews* and *Greeks*. *Paul* tarry'd longer in this City than in any other Place, meeting here with uncommon Difficulties in the Conquest of Philosophers, Magicians and other Superstitious Persons; which caus'd him to use more than ordinary Labour, as well as Time. Upon which account he preach'd not only in Publick, but in private Houses, concealing nothing that cou'd be useful to his Auditors, warning all Men, and instructing every one Night and Day with Tears, continually affording them an Example of Humility and Patience. God was pleas'd to join his Power to these Endeavours of the Apostle, working extraordinary Miracles by his Hands, and putting such a wonderful Virtue into his Body, that if Napkins or Handkerchiefs were but touch'd by him, and apply'd to the Sick and Possessed, they immediately cur'd them. Yet all these Miracles had but small Effect upon the obstinate *Jews*, till a new Accident awaken'd their Thoughts; which was occasion'd by seven Brothers, the Sons of one *Sceva* a *Jewish* Priest, who travel'd from Town to Town, as several other *Jews* did, to cast out Devils, and cure Diseases by their Exorcisms for Money. Before our Saviour's Coming, the *Jews* us'd the Name of the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, to work these Effects; while our Saviour liv'd, they did it in his Name, and after his

Acts 19.

9--20.

Chap. 20.

18--21.

his Death it still continu'd to be effected by some that were not Believers, as several of the Fathers testifie. But *Christ* wou'd not always suffer his Name to be abus'd through Vanity and Interest, and therefore made the Devil an Instrument to punish the Profanation of it: For when these Brothers exorcis'd a certain Demoniack, commanding him to come out in the Name of *Jesus*, whom *Paul* preached; the Devil reply'd, *Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?* and setting upon them, tore off their Cloaths, wounded their Bodies, and scarce suffer'd them to depart with Life. This Accident being divulg'd in *Ephesus*, among both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, fill'd them with such a reverential Fear, that none dared to speak of the Name of *Jesus*, but with profound Respect. This also brought many over to the Faith, causing them to confess their Sins, and forsake their wicked Arts, and burning so many Magical Books as amounted to 1500 Pounds of our Mony, they became sincere *Christians*. Thus did the Gospel spread and prevail, and this was that great Door which *St. Paul* says was open'd to him at *Ephesus*; yet it was not without much Opposition, and great Persecution from the *Jews* and some others, who daily laid wait for him, and sought to cast him to the wild Beasts. He hazarded his Life to save others, and dy'd daily, that they might live for ever.

I Cor. 16.
9.
Chap. 15.
30, 31.

A D.

57.
Nero
3
4.
Acts 19.
21, 22.
I Cor. 16.
5, 6.

Paul having continu'd above two Years in *Ephesus*, took up some Resolutions to return into *Macedonia* and *Achaia*, and winter at *Corinth*, and so pass to *Jerusalem*, where he design'd to celebrate the Feast of *Pentecost*: After which Circuit he intended for *Rome*, to visit the Church there, which he had desired to do many Years, and beg'd of God to direct his Way to them. But this Journey being deferr'd for some Time, he sent *Timothy* and *Erastus* into *Macedonia*, appointing the former to visit the Church of *Corinth* before his Return, and prepare their Alms for *Jerusalem*. Not long after *Timothy's* Departure, *Apollos*, *Stephanus*, *Fortunatus* and *Achaicus* came from *Corinth* to *Paul*, bringing him an Account of the State of that Church from some Persons of the Family of *Chloe*, and also a Letter from the Church it self, desiring a Resolution of several Points concerning Marriage and Chastity; and some other Subjects. By the Account from these Persons, he understood the distracted and bad Condition of that Church; That the *Corinthians* were unhappily divided into many Parties and Factions upon the Account of their Teachers, some adhering to *Paul*, others to *Cephas* or *Peter*, (who, as *Clemens* in his Epistle says, was at *Corinth* when *Apollos* was there) and

and others to *Apollos*, and others to *Christ*, separating from, and contemning each other, as not so well, or edifyingly instructed: That many Disorders were committed at their Love-Feasts, and the Holy Sacrament corruptly and irreverently celebrated: That the *Christians* injur'd and defrauded each other, and went to Law at the Heathen Tribunals, and, that a *Christian* of their City had marry'd his Mother-in-Law, and that some deny'd the Resurrection. In Answer therefore to this Account and their Letter, *Paul* compos'd his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, ' wherein he sharply reprov'd them for their Affectation, teaching them that they ought not to say, They were of this or that Person, but of *Jesus Christ*: That Ministers ought not to boast, or ascribe the Conversion of the People to their own Eloquence and Abilities; for that God did not convert the World by this human Wisdom, but by the Preaching of the Foolishness of the Cross. He inform'd them that they ought to excommunicate the incestuous Person, lest his Example should infect others: He blam'd their litigious Law-Suits, advising them to refer their Differences to some prudent Persons of the Church: To bring them to the right Use of the Sacrament, he propounded the Institution, exhorting them to fit themselves for it by examining their Lives. He answered their Questions concerning Marriage, Celibacy, and Meats offer'd to Idols; adding several Things concerning the Veils that Women were to wear, of the different Gifts of the Holy Ghost, of the Excellency of Charity, of the Gift of Tongues, of Prayer in a known Tongue, of the Truth of the Gospel, and the Certainty of the Resurrection. This Epistle was written in the Name of himself, and of *Sosthenes*; and was sent to *Corinth* by *Stephanus*, *Fortunatus*, and *Achaicus*; *Apollos*, tho' desired, being not willing to go along with them. Some are of Opinion that St. *Paul* wrote a former Epistle to the *Corinthians*, which they ground upon the Words of Chap. 5. 9. *I wrote unto you in an Epistle*, &c. but these Words may very well be referred to the foregoing part of this Epistle. What Effect this Epistle had, the next informs us; it brought them to a serious Remorse for their Faults, and a careful Vigilance of doing their Duty for the Future; and none more than the incestuous Person, who fell into such Sorrow, that *Paul* fear'd he should be swallowed up with it.

Not long after *Paul* writ an Epistle to the *Galatians*, upon this following Occasion: He had preached twice in the Province of *Galatia*, first in the Year 51, and next in the Year 54, finding the Inhabitants very ready and compliant

Auditors. And as they embrac'd the Faith readily, so God approv'd their Sincerity by bestowing on them the Holy Spirit; and running well, they made a considerable Progress in the Ways of Truth, and gave good Proofs of their Constancy, by suffering many Things for the Gospel. But after *Paul's* Departure, they deviated from the Truth, and began to entertain another Gospel: For certain *Jews* who had embrac'd the Faith, coming to *Galatia*, taught them, That Faith in *Christ* was not sufficient to save them, but that they must also be circumcised; pretending the Commands and Practices of the three great Apostles, *Peter*, *James* and *John*: And whereas the *Galatians* alledg'd, that they had receiv'd no such Doctrin from *Paul*; they told them, That he was not to be compar'd with those Lights of the Church, who had receiv'd their Doctrin from the Mouth of *Christ* himself, and were inspired with extraordinary Knowledge; whereas *Paul* was no Apostle, but taught by them, or some others. These false Teachers pretended a great Zeal for the Salvation of the *Galatians*, tho' indeed they chiefly aim'd at their own Interest, and to bring them under the *Mosaick* Institutions; and the *Galatians* being a dull and ignorant People, could not see through their fair Pretences, but suffer'd themselves to be carry'd away with their Doctrin. *Paul* having heard of this their Apostacy from the Truth and Purity of the Gospel, thought it necessary to write this Epistle to them. In which he manifested a Zeal proportionable to the Cause he undertook, charging them with Madnes and Folly, to be led away with such extravagant Errors, that overturn'd the Foundation of the Gospel; and proving that he had his Doctrin and Apostleship from *Jesus Christ* himself, and that he found it necessary to reprove *Peter* at *Antioch* for his Diffimulation, and too great Condescension to such *Judaizers*. After which he produc'd several Arguments from Scripture to convince them of their Error; demonstrating, that the Slavery of the Law brought a Curse with it, destroy'd their *Christian* Liberty, and that no Man could be justify'd by it in the Sight of God: That the Law was not given for Justification, but to be subservient to it; not to leave Men under a Curse, but to shew them the Curse, and drive them from it; the Way in which Men were to seek for Justification, but not the Means to obtain it. Among his Reproofs and Arguments he mingled several Exhortations to that Church, full of Paternal and Apostolick Charity; and because he always took as much Care of their Manners as their Faith, towards the latter end he

gave

‘ gave them many excellent Directions and Rules to moderate, and govern their Conversation. He wrote this Epistle all with his own Hand, contrary to his ordinary Custom of dictating.

A little before *Paul's* Departure from this City, an Accident hapned that involv'd him in great Trouble and Danger. *Ephesus* above all the Cities in the East was celebrated for the famous Temple of *Diana*, a most magnificent Structure, which for Beauty, Riches and Capaciousness, was reckon'd one of the seven Wonders of the World; in which was a fam'd Image of this Goddess, so admirably wrought, that it was generally believ'd to have been form'd by *Jupiter*, and drop'd down from Heaven; for which Reason not only *Ephesus*, but the whole World had a mighty Veneration for it. Of this Temple and Image, either through Superstition or Curiosity, it was very usual both for the Citizens and Travellers to have Silver Shrines and Models: For the making of which great Numbers of Silver-Smiths were employ'd and maintain'd, among whom *Demetrius* was a leading Man, who foreseeing that if the *Christian* Religion encreas'd, their gainful Employment would be ruin'd, immediately call'd together the Men of his Profession; and represented to them, *That this Paul had not only perverted the City, but the whole Province, and persuaded the People that the Images they made and worship'd were no real Gods; by which Means their Trade and Livelihood was in danger of being lost, and what was worse, the Honour and Reputation of the great Goddess Diana, whom all Asia and the World ador'd.* Being fired with this Discourse, they all cry'd out, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians!* and the whole City was immediately in a Tumult and Uproar, who seizing upon *Gaius* and *Aristarchus* two of *Paul's* Companions, hurry'd them into the publick Theatre, probably to cast them to the wild Beasts. *Paul* hearing of their Danger, not regarding his own Life, would have ventur'd himself among them, had not the *Christians*, and even some of the *Afiarchæ*, Managers of the Theatrical Games, dissuaded him from it. Great was the Noise and Confusion of the Multitude, the major Part not so much as knowing the Reason of the Concourse. In which Distraction *Alexander* a *Jew*, being thrust forward by his Countrymen, endeavour'd to make an Apology to the People, intending, no doubt, to clear himself, by casting the whole Blame upon *Paul* and the *Christians*. But the Multitude perceiving him to be a *Jew*, and thereupon suspecting he was one of *Paul's* Associates, began to raise a loud Out-cry for near two Hours together,

together, wherein nothing could be heard but *Great is Diana of the Ephesians!* The Noise being a little abated, the Town-Clerk or Recorder, a discreet and prudent Man, came forth, and calmly told them, *That it was sufficiently known to all the World what a mighty Veneration the City of Ephesus had for the great Goddess Diana, and the famous Image which fell from Heaven, so that there needed not that Disturbance to vindicate its Reputation: That they had seized on Persons who were neither guilty of Sacrilege nor Blasphemy against their Goddess; that if Demetrius and his Company had any just Charge against them, the Courts were sitting, and they might prefer their Indictment; or if their Controversy were about any other Matter, it might be determined by such a proper Judicature as the Law appointed: that therefore they ought to be pacify'd, having done more already than they could answer, and being in great Danger of being punished for that Day's riotous Assembly.* With which prudent Discourse he appeased and sent home the Multitudes; but *Paul*, tho' he fell not into their Hands, yet was in so great Danger, that he speaks of it as of a miraculous Deliverance. ' We had ' the Sentence of Death in our selves, that we should not ' trust to our selves, but in God who raised the Dead, who ' delivered us from so great a Death, *2 Cor. I. 9, 10.*

Acts 20.

1--2.

2 Cor. 2.

12, 13.

Chap. 7.

5, 6.

Shortly after the Disturbance was over, *Paul* having continued near three Years at *Ephesus*, and founded a very great and considerable Church, called the *Christians* together, and with all the Marks of mutual Love, took his Leave of them, having first constituted *Timothy* Bishop and Governor of the Church, as several of the Ancients testify. He travelled about 200 Miles Northwards to *Troas* before he took Shipping, expecting and desiring to meet *Titus* there; but missing him, he pursued his Voyage into *Macedonia*. In this Country he gave many Exhortations to a sound Faith and holy Life; and as he tells us himself, preached the Gospel round about unto *Illyricum*, some Parts of *Macedonia* bordering on that Province. He met with many Troubles and Dangers in this Journey, without were Fightings and Contentions, within were Fears and Suspicions; but God who comforts those who are cast down, comforted him by the Arrival of *Titus*, who gave him an Account of the good Effects his Epistle had at *Corinth*, how great a Reformation it had wrought, and how all the *Christians* separated themselves from the Company of the incestuous Person, and had delivered him to *Satan*; at which he was so much humbled, that he earnestly desired the Apostle's Absolution. *Titus* also assured him, that the Alms of the *Corinthians* for the *Jews* were

were ready; which he signify'd to the *Macedonians* to provoke them to a liberal Contribution, as he did theirs to the *Corinthians*. But notwithstanding the good Effects of his first Epistle, yet still several vain-glorious Teachers persisted in their Contumacy, vilifying the Apostle's Authority, and misinterpreting his Words and Actions; particularly they charged him with Levity in deferring his intended Coming to them, with Severity and Usurpation in his Dealings with the incestuous Person, and with Contempt and Carnality in overthrowing the *Mosaick Law*; and that tho' he was imperious in Writing, his Person was abject and contemptible. Having received a full Account from *Titus*, he thought it necessary to write a second Epistle to the *Corinthians*, which he sent by *Titus* and two other Brethren, this being the fifth Epistle that he writ. It was written from *Philippi* in *Macedonia*, in the Name of *Paul* and *Timothy*, and directed
 ' to the Church of God in *Corinth*, and to all the Saints in
 ' *Achaia*; in it he excused his not coming directly to *Co-*
 ' *rinth*, for fear of occasioning their Sorrow, commended
 ' their Zeal against the incestuous Person, and allowed them
 ' to be reconciled to him. After which he justify'd his Con-
 ' duct, vindicated the Dignity and Ministry of the Gospel,
 ' and proved the Excellency of it above that of the Law;
 ' farther exhorting them to a liberal Contribution by the
 ' Example of the *Macedonians*, finding their Alms to come
 ' short of what he expected. He disclaim'd the false Teach-
 ' ers, who seduced them, and endeavoured to estrange them
 ' from him, threatening them with his Apostolick Authority;
 ' and that he might secure them against their wicked
 ' Insinuations, he was oblig'd against his Inclination to glo-
 ' ry in his Revelations, his extraordinary Labours and Suf-
 ' ferings for the Gospel; in Delivery of which he us'd much
 ' Eloquence, which was natural to his Pen. In a Word,
 ' he spoke to them with Authority, and testify'd that he was
 ' as firm and bold as ever.

Paul having passed over *Macedonia* came into *Greece*, Acts 20.
 that is, into *Achaia*, and continued there for the Space of 3.
 three Months, residing principally at the Metropolis of it,
Corinth. Here having gotten together a Contribution for
 the poor Saints at *Jerusalem*, just before his Departure he
 wrote his famous Epistle to the *Romans*, the largest and the
 sixth Epistle he wrote, tho' either for the Dignity of the City
 of *Rome*, or the Profoundness of its Subject and Matter,
 first plac'd in the sacred Canon. The Apostle had heard of
 some Disagreements both of Judgment and Affection among
 the *Christians* at *Rome*, who were partly believing *Jews*, and
 partly

partly believing *Gentiles*. The former claim'd the Preference upon the Account of their great Privileges and Revelations, and the *Messiah's* coming from their Nation, and mingled the Law and Gospel together in point of Justification, zealously contending for the Necessity of Circumcision: The latter maintain'd, that the *Jews* for the most part had rejected their *Messiah*, and continu'd Unbelievers, boasting of their own Philosophy and the Light of Nature; and because they were exempted from the Observation of the *Mosaick Rites*, they us'd their Christian Liberty not without some Offence. 'Whereupon the Apostle deliver'd his Judgment with that Wisdom, as to beat down all Opinion of Merit in both Parties, uniting them both in *Jesus Christ* as the chief Corner Stone, and shewing that God's calling either *Jew* or *Gentile*, was an Act of pure Mercy. He first humbled the *Gentiles*, by shewing them the Blindness and Impiety of their Philosophers; and then the *Jews*, by declaring that they themselves did what they condemn'd in the *Pagans*; proving also by the Example of *Abraham*, That a Man was justified by Faith only, but such a Faith as was actuated by Love; and that no Man was justify'd by Works, as the *Jews* affirm'd. Then he manifested the Effects of original Sin, and the Power it had even in the Regenerate; and explain'd the profound Question concerning Election and Reprobation, in his Discourse of the Calling of the *Gentiles*, and the Rejection of the *Jews*. To these Doctrines of Faith he added several Chapters concerning Moral and *Christian* Duties, chiefly the 5th, 6th, 12th and 13th Chapters; in which he produc'd many admirable Instructions, and Instances of Evangelical Obedience. He had not been at *Rome* when he wrote this Epistle, but being an Apostle of the *Gentiles*, he look'd upon them as part of his Charge, tho' that Church was planted by some other Person. It was written by *Tertius* his Amanuensis, and carry'd to *Rome* by *Phæbe*, a Diaconess of the Church of *Cenchrea*.

Paul having continu'd three Months in *Greece*, at last resolv'd to go into *Syria*, to carry the Alms which he had gather'd in *Macedonia* and *Greece*, to the poor *Christians* in *Judea*. His first Design was to take the shortest cut by Sea, but having Information that the *Jews* design'd to intercept him by the Way, he determin'd to go about through *Macedonia*. He was accompany'd by *Sopater* of *Berea*, *Aristarchus* and *Secundus* of *Thessalonica*, *Tychicus* and *Trophimus* of *Asia*, *Gaius* of *Derbe*, and *Timothy*, as far as *Philippi*; from whence he sent them to *Troas*, ordering them to stay there

'till

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58.

Nero

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Acts 20.

9-13.

'till he came to them. At *Philippi* he continu'd with the Evangelist *Luke* and some others, 'till after the Passover, and celebrated the Feast with the *Philippians*, a very pious and charitable People; this being the third Time of his visiting that Church. Setting sail from thence, in five Days he landed at *Troas*, and there he tarry'd seven Days. While he remain'd in this Town, the *Christians* met, according to their Custom, on the first Day of the Week, to celebrate the Lord's Supper, and the other Parts of divine Worship. Here *Paul* preach'd to them; and because he was to leave them the next Day, he lengthned out his Sermon 'till Midnight, neither Preacher nor Hearers being tired; only a young Man nam'd *Eutychus* disturb'd their Devotion, who sitting in a Window, and falling into a deep Sleep, fell down from the third Loft, and was taken up dead. But God made use of this Accident to magnifie his Power, and his Apostle's Ministry; for *Paul* going down, and falling upon him in Imitation of the Prophets *Elijah* and *Elisha*, immediately brought him to Life, bidding the Company not be concern'd since he was alive. Tho' *Paul* manifestly rais'd him from the Dead, yet through Humility he seem'd to conceal the Miracle; and after that proceeded in the divine Offices, and the Celebration of the Sacrament, adding farther Exhortations 'till break of Day, when all departed to their Houses, greatly rejoicing for the young Man's Restauration.

The next Day *Paul* departed from *Troas*, and went on Foot to *Affos*, a few Miles South of it, probably that he might give some Instructions to the *Christians* dwelling in the Way. At *Affos* he met with *Luke* and his other Company, whom he had sent before to meet him there by Sea, and taking Ship they all sail'd to *Mitylene*, a City in the Isle of *Lesbos*. The next Day they sail'd thence, and stood over against the Isle *Chios*, and the Day following arriv'd at *Samos*, another Isle in the *Ægean* Sea, and landed at *Trogyllium*, a Promontory of *Ionia*, near *Samos*; and the next Day he went to *Miletus*, a City and Port of *Caria*, above 30 Miles South of *Ephesus*. *Paul* being desirous to be at *Jerusalem* before *Pentecost*, that he might celebrate the Feast, would not go up to *Ephesus*, lest that Journey should detain him too long, but sent for the Presbyters and Governors of the Church, thinking it necessary to give them a particular Charge of the Flock upon which he had worthily spent so much Time, and which he knew not whether he could see again. At their Arrival he put them in mind, *With what Integrity and Affection, with what Humility and*

Fidelity, and with how great Danger and Trouble he had been conversant amongst them, and had preach'd the Gospel to them, ever since his coming into those Parts: That he had not fail'd to acquaint them both publickly and privately, with whatsoever might be profitable to their Souls, urging both Jews and Gentiles to Repentance and Reformation, and an hearty Entertainment of the Faith of Christ: That now he was determin'd to go up to Jerusalem, where he knew not what particular Sufferings would befall him, only he had been inform'd by the Holy Spirit, in every Place, that great Afflictions and Imprisonment attended him: But that all this did not move him, who valued not his own Life, so he might but successfully propagate the holy Gospel, and triumphantly finish his Course: That he knew that henceforth they should see his Face no more, but he had this particular Comfort, that they themselves could testify that he was clear from the Blood of all Men, and that no Soul had perish'd through his Negligence. He told them, that now he was to bid them finally adieu, the whole Care of that Flock of God was devolv'd upon them; wherefore he adjur'd them to be infinitely tender and careful of themselves, and of that Flock, over which the Holy Ghost himself had made them Overseers, and for which Christ had paid no less a Purchase than his own Blood. For that after his Departure, there should arise Seducers, who like devouring Wolves, should enter upon their Flock, and make a Prey both of their Estates and Souls; of whom many should spring from themselves, whom they had least Reason to suspect: That therefore they should be vigilant, remembering with what Tears and Sorrow, he had for three Years successively warn'd them of these Things. He concluded his Discourse with a solemn Recommendation of them to God's special Grace and Protection, wishing them all the Benefits of the Gospel, Perfection of Knowledge here, and an heavenly Inheritance hereafter, and cautioning them against Avarice, and making a Prey of their Flocks, which he himself had avoided, who had chosen rather to work with his own Hands, than be too Burthensome to them; that so ought they also to act so as they might support themselves and others, being mindful of that excellent Saying of the blessed Jesus, 'It is more blessed to give, than to receive. After this farewell Sermon, the Apostle kneel'd down, and concluded all with a solemn Prayer: Which done, they all melted into Tears, and with the liveliest Expressions of Sorrow attended him to the Ship; tho' that which made the deepest Impression upon their Minds was, that he had told them, That they should see his Face no more.

Having sail'd from *Miletus*, *Paul* and his Companions came with a straight Course to *Coos*, and the next Day to *Rhodes*, two Isles in the *Ægean* Sea, and from thence to *Patara*, a Port and Metropolis of *Lycia*, where they chang'd their Ship, and enter'd a Vessel bound for *Tyre* in *Phœnicia*; and leaving *Cyprus* on the left Hand, they landed at *Tyre* after five Days sail. Here meeting with some *Christians*, *Paul* was advis'd by those among them who had the Gift of Propheſie, that he ſhould not go up to *Jeruſalem*: But he could not yield to their Propoſals; and having ſtaid with them a Week, he proceeded in his Journey, the *Christians* with their Wives and Children accompanying him to the Ship, where before his Entrance, he embrac'd them and pray'd with them on the Shore, as he had done at *Miletus*. From *Tyre* they ſail'd a few Leagues to *Ptolemais*, a City of *Phœnicia* near *Galilee*, where only ſaluting the Brethren, they came the next Day to *Cæſarea*. Here they lodg'd in the Houſe of *Philip* the Evangelist, one of the ſeven Deacons that were firſt ſet apart by the Apoſtles, who had four Virgin Daughters, all endu'd with the Gift of Propheſie. During their ſhort Stay here, *Agabus* a *Chriſtian* Prophet came down thither from *Judæa*, who taking *Paul's* Girdle bound his own Hands and Feet with it, ſolemnly ſhewing them, *That by that external Symbol, the Holy Ghoſt did ſignifie and declare, That Paul ſhould be thus treated by the Jews at Jeruſalem, and be by them deliver'd over to the Hands of the Gentiles.* Whereupon they all earneſtly beſought him, *That he would divert his Course to ſome other Place*; but the Apoſtle having an invincible Courage ask'd them, *What they meant by thoſe compassionate Diſſuaſives to add more Affliction to his Sorrow? That he was now ready not only to ſuffer Imprisonment at Jeruſalem, but alſo Death it ſelf for the Sake of Chriſt and his Religion.* Finding his Reſolution fix'd and immovable, they importun'd him no farther, but left the Event to the divine Will and Pleaſure. And all Things being in Readineſs, *Paul* and his Company ſet forwards for *Jeruſalem*, and arriving at the City, they were kindly and joyfully entertain'd by the *Christians* there, lodging at the Houſe of one *Mnaſon* of *Cyprus*, an old Diſciple, and one of the ſeventy. This was *St. Paul's* laſt Journey to *Jeruſalem* that we are certain of, and the fifth from his Converſion: His firſt was in the Year 38, his ſecond in 44, his third in 49, his fourth in 54, and this his laſt in the Year 58, about 23 Years after his Converſion, and nine from the Council of *Jeruſalem*.

C H A P. VI.

From St. Paul's last Journey to Jerusalem, to the Beginning of the first General Persecution of the Church under the Emperor Nero.

Containing the Term of about six Years.

A. D.
58.
Nero
 $\frac{4}{5}$
Acts 21.
23-26.

I. PAUL and his Company being arriv'd at Jerusalem, with the Collection for the indigent Christians, the second Day repair'd with them to the House of the Apostle James the Bishop, where the rest of the Presbyters and Governors of the Church were met together. After mutual Salutations, Paul gave them a particular Account, with what Success God had bless'd him in propagating Christianity among the Gentiles, for which they all glorify'd the Almighty; but withal inform'd him, *That he was now come to a Place, where there were many thousands of Jewish Converts, who still retain'd a mighty Zeal and Veneration for the Law of Moses, and who had been assur'd, That he taught the Jews, whom he had converted in every Place, to renounce Circumcision, and the Ceremonies of the Law: That as soon as the Multitude heard of his Arrival, they would certainly gather together to watch his Behaviour in that Matter; and therefore to prevent future Disturbances, they thought it advisable, that since there was at that Time four Men, who were to accomplish a particular Vow, he should join himself to them, perform the usual Rites and Ceremonies with them, and provide such Sacrifice as the Law requir'd in that Case, and that in Discharge of their Vow they might shave their Heads: By which it might appear, That the Reports spread concerning him were wholly Groundless, and that himself did still observe the Rites and Orders of the Mosaical Institution. But as for the Gentile Converts, they requir'd no such Observances at their Hands, nor expected any Thing more from them in these indifferent Matters, than what had been before determin'd by the Apostolical Synod in that Place, namely, an abstaining from Meats offer'd to Idols, from Things strangled, from Blood, and from Fornication. Paul, who in such Cases was willing to become all Things to all Men, consented to their Counsel, and taking those Persons along with him to the Temple, let the Priests know, that the Time of a Vow they had made*

made being now expired, and having purify'd themselves as that Case required, they were come to make their Offerings according to the Law.

It was now the Feast of *Pentecost*, and the seven Days Acts 21. for these Sacrifices beginning to be accomplish'd, some *Jews* 27--40. from *Asia*, who had been Opposers of *Paul*, now finding him in the Temple, and the *Court of the Women*, began to raise a Tumult and an Uproar, and laying hold of him, call'd out to the rest of the *Jews* for their Assistance, crying out, *That this was the Man that in all Places had vented pernicious Doctrines against the Prerogative of the Jewish Nation, destructive to the Institutions of the Law, and to the Purity of that Place, which he had prophan'd by bringing un-circumcis'd Grecians into it: Positively concluding, That because they had seen Trophimus a Gentile Convert of Ephesus with him in the City, therefore he had brought him also into the Temple.* Hereupon the whole City was immediately in an Uproar, and seizing upon him, they barbarously treated him, and drag'd him out of the Temple, the Gates being immediately shut against him. Nor had they fail'd there to have put a Period to all his Troubles, had not *Claudius Lysias*, Commander of the *Roman Garrison* in the *Castle Antonia*, fearing a Sedition, come in with a considerable Force to his Rescue and Deliverance; and concluding him to be more than an ordinary Malefactor, commanded a double Chain to be put upon him, tho' as yet he was altogether ignorant either of his Person, or of his Crime; wherein he could receive no Satisfaction from the clamorous Multitude, who call'd for nothing but his Death, following the Cry with such Crouds and Numbers, that the Soldiers were oblig'd to take him into their Arms to secure him from the present Rage and Violence of the People. As they were going up into the Castle, *Paul* ask'd the Governor, whether he might have the Liberty to speak to him? Who, finding him to speak *Greek*, enquir'd of him, *Whether he was not that Egyptian Rebel, whom Fælix had not long since defeated, who headed a great Party, of whom four thousand were Assassinated?* The Apostle reply'd, *That he was a Jew of Tarsus, a Freeman of a rich and honourable City; and therefore beg'd of him, That he might have leave to speak to the People.* Which being granted him, *Paul* standing upon the Stairs near the Door of the Castle, and making Signs for Silence, began to address himself to the People in the *Hebrew*, or rather *Syriack* Tongue; which when they heard, they became more calm and quiet, while in a formal Oration he gave them a particular Account of
his

his Birth, of his Education in his Youth, of his extraordinary Zeal for the Rites and Customs of their Religion, and with what a passionate Earnestness he had persecuted all the *Christians* he could find, of which the High-Prest, and the *Sanhedrim*, were sufficient Witnesses. Next he gave them an entire and punctual Relation of the miraculous Manner of his Conversion; and how afterwards, *tho' he extremely desir'd to have continu'd at Jerusalem, yet he receiv'd a Vision, and an immediate Command from God himself to depart that City, and to go and preach Salvation to the Gentiles.*

Acts 32.

22--29.

The People patiently gave him Audience in the former Part of his Discourse; but when he proceeded to defend his Practice in preaching to the *Gentiles*, they could contain themselves no longer, but unanimously cry'd out to have him put to Death, *it not being fit that such a Villain shou'd live upon the Earth.* And the more to express their Fury, they threw off their Cloaths, and cast Dust into the Air, as if they immediately design'd to have ston'd him. To avoid which Violence and Tumult, *Lysias* the Captain, greatly at a Loss, commanded him to be brought within the Castle, and that he should be examin'd by Scourging, 'till he confess'd what he had done, that had so much enrag'd the *Jews* against him. While the Lictors were binding him with Thongs in order to the Punishment, *Paul*, who ever took the Benefit of Laws, demanded of the Centurion that stood to see it executed, *Whether they could justify the Scourging a free Citizen of Rome, and that before any Sentence legally pass'd upon him?* The Centurion immediately intimated this to the Governor of the Castle, advising him to be very cautious in his Proceedings against the Prisoner, for that he was a *Roman*. Whereupon *Lysias* himself came, and ask'd him, *Whether he was really a free Denizon of Rome?* and being answer'd in the affirmative, he reply'd, *That it was a great Privilege, a Privilege which he himself had purchas'd with a very large Sum of Money.* To whom *Paul* answer'd, *That it was his Birth-right, and the Privilege of the City where he was born and educated.* Hereupon they gave over the Design of Scourging him, the Commander himself not being a little startled, that he had bound and chain'd a Citizen of *Rome*. But however from this very Time *Paul* became a Prisoner to the *Roman* Power, for above four Years successively.

Acts 22.

30.

Chap. 23.

1--10.

Lysias being still desirous to know the Certainty and Nature of the Apostle's Crime, took another Method, namely, to have him examin'd by the *Jewish Sanhedrim*, which he order'd the next Day to meet for that purpose, and present-
ed

ted *Paul* before them, *Ananias* being High-Priest, and President of that Assembly. *Paul* being plac'd in the midst of the Council, began to apologize for himself; declaring, *That to that very Day, he had ever liv'd in all good Conscience before God and Man.* These Words being offensive to the High-Priest, as if he had reproach'd the Justice of the Court, he commanded the Officers that stood by, to strike him in the Face. *Paul*, tho' ready to turn the other Cheek, and to suffer all Things for the Gospel, yet considering the illegal Practice of this Magistrate, severely reply'd by a prophetick Spirit, *That God shou'd strike him, Hypocrite as he was, who under a Pretence of judging according to Law, had commanded him to be punish'd contrary to Law.* Whereupon some Persons present reprov'd him, for reviling God's High-Priest; to which he calmly return'd, *That he did not know, or own Ananias to be an High-Priest of God's Appointment:* However being a Person in Authority, he confess'd it unlawful to revile him, *God having commanded, 'Not to speak evil of the Ruler of the People.* The Rulers proceeding in his Examination, were acted by so much Prejudice, that the Apostle, who always retain'd the Innocency of the Dove, was constrain'd to make use of the Wisdom of the Serpent for his own Preservation; for perceiving the Council to be divided among themselves, and to consist partly of *Pharisees*, and partly of *Sadducees*, he cry'd out, *That he was a Pharisee, and the Son of a Pharisee, and that the main Reason of his Trial was his Believing and Asserting a future Resurrection.* This prov'd a Ball of Contention, and immediately divided the Council, the *Pharisees* being zealous Patrons of the Resurrection, and the *Sadducees* violent Opposers of it. The Doctors of the Law, who were *Pharisees*, thereupon stood up to acquit him, affirming, *That he had done nothing amiss, that possibly he might have receiv'd some Revelation by the Holy Spirit, or an Angel; and if so, their opposing his Doctrine wou'd be a Fighting against God.* At length the Contention grew so violent, that *Lysias* was constrain'd to take the Apostle from among them by Force, and bring him into the Castle, lest he should have been torn in pieces in the Tumult; for this Cominander thought himself oblig'd to secure a Roman Citizen from Danger, tho' he was willing to gratifie the *Jews* in punishing him, if he was justly condemn'd.

At Night, to comfort him after all his Fears and Troubles, *God* was pleas'd to appear to him in a Vision, encouraging him to Constancy and Resolution; assuring him, *That as he had born Witness to his Cause at Jerusalem, so he shou'd certainly live to do the same at Rome it self.* The next Morning

*Acts 23.
11-35.*

Morning the *Jews*, who were restless and implacable in their Malice; finding these dilatory Proceedings did only cross their Designs, resolv'd upon a more expeditious Dispatch. To which End above forty of them enter'd into a wicked Conspiracy, which they ratify'd by Oath and Execration, never to eat or drink till they had taken away his Life; and having acquainted the *Sanhedrim* with their Design, they beg'd of them to importune the Governor of the Castle, that the next Day he might be brought down again before them, upon a Pretence of a more strict Examination; and that they themselves would lie in Ambush by the Way, and not fail to dispatch him. But the divine Providence brought this Design to the Knowledge of *Paul's* Nephew, who desirous of his Uncle's Security, immediately went into the Castle and discover'd it to Him: *Paul* would not make the Information himself, lest *Lysias* should suspect some secret Design, but sent his Nephew to the Captain, to give him a full Relation of it; who gave such credible Proofs and Circumstances of it, that *Lysias* believ'd him, and dismiss'd him with a Charge of Secresie. Thus the great Apostle, tho' he had infallible Security of his Protection from Heaven, yet thought it necessary to use all proper Means for his own Preservation. *Lysias* to prevent all future Mischiefs, immediately commanded two Parties of Foot, 200 in each, and 70 Horsemen, to be ready by nine a Clock that Night; who carefully conducted *Paul* first to *Antipatris*, and then to *Cæsarea*, where *Felix* the Governor had his Residence; writing a Letter to his Excellency, to signifie, That *Paul* was a Freeman of Rome, whom the *Jews* had violently persecuted, and conspired against his Life; tho' he could find nothing in him that deserv'd Death or Imprisonment: Therefore to prevent Violence, he had sent him to his Excellency, ordering his Accusers to appear against him at *Cæsarea*. *Felix* receiv'd the Letter with much Civility, and finding that *Paul* belong'd to the Province of *Cilicia*, he promis'd him to allow him a fair Hearing as soon as his Accusers should come down, commanding him in the mean Time to be secur'd in the Place call'd *Herod's* Hall.

Acts 14.
i--22.

About five Days after, *Ananias* the High-Priest, with some others of the *Sanhedrim*, being disappointed of their Designs at *Jerusalem*, came down to *Cæsarea*, accompany'd with an Orator, or Advocate nam'd *Tertullus*, hoping to engage *Felix* to joyn with them in this Matter. *Paul* being brought forth to his Trial, *Tertullus* stood up for his Accuser; and in a flattering Speech first celebrated the worthy Actions of *Felix*, under whom, since they had enjoy'd
such

Such a happy Tranquility, and such noble Benefits, which they accepted with the profoundest Gratitude, they could not now doubt of his Clemency, and Readiness to hear them a few Words. Then he accus'd Paul of being a pestilent Mover of Sedition, an Heretical Ringleader of the Nazarenes, and an impious Profaner of their Holy Temple: That they would have sav'd him the Trouble of his Hearing, by judging him according to their own Law, had not Lyfias the Commander violently taken him from them, and sent both him and them down thither. To all which the Jews present readily gave their Vote and Testimony. Paul having leave from Felix to make his Defence, and having declar'd how much he was satisfied that he was to plead before one, who for several Years had been Governor of that Nation, calmly and distinctly answer'd to the several Parts of the Charge. And first for Sedition he shew'd, That it was now but twelve Days since he enter'd Jerusalem, where he was neither found disputing in the Temple, nor exciting the People either in the Synagogues, or in any other Place of the City. Secondly for Heresie, he ingenuously confess'd, That he worship'd God after the Way that they accounted Heresie, but very unjustly, since he acknowledg'd the same Scriptures for the Rule of Faith and Manners, and believ'd the general Resurrection of the Dead as they did: In Expectation of which, he was careful to live with an unblamable Conscience towards God and Man. Thirdly for prophaning the Temple, he shew'd, That his Coming to Jerusalem was to bring charitable Contributions to his distressed Brethren; that he was indeed in the Temple, but not as some Asiatick Jews suggested, either with Multitude or Tumult, but only purifying himself according to the Mosaick Law: And that if they or any other could affirm the contrary, they ought now to do it in open Court. And farther, he appeal'd to those of the Sanhedrim then present, whether he had not been acquitted by their own Court in Jerusalem, where nothing had been laid to his Charge but by the Sadducean Party, who condemn'd him for asserting the Doctrine of the Resurrection.

Felix gave them the Hearing on both Sides, and was better inform'd of the Nature of the Christian Religion by Paul's Discourse; but refus'd final Determination, till Lyfias himself came down, of whom he would be more fully inform'd of the Controversie; commanding in the mean time that Paul should be under the Guard of a Centurion or Captain, but yet in so free a Custody, that none of his Friends should be hinder'd from visiting him. Not long after Felix being with his infamous Wife Drusilla, Sister to Agrippa,

*Acts 24.
22--26.*

Agrippa, and once a *Jewess*, summon'd *Paul* again to appear before him: and as if he had desir'd a farther Knowledge of the *Christian* Doctrine, desir'd him to speak more largely concerning the Faith in *Christ*. *Paul* not seeking the Favour of any Potentate, freely discours'd and insisted on those Virtues in which this Governor was extremely defective, particularly Justice and Temperance, adding with all some Discourse concerning the Judgment to come, wherein Men shou'd be eternally rewarded or punish'd. *Felix* was so rous'd by the Force of the Apostle's Reasonings, that he fell a trembling, and caus'd him to break off abruptly, promising to hear more of those Points at a convenient Season. Upon which Pretence he often sent for him, not that he desir'd to profit by his Discourse, but in hopes that *Paul* wou'd have given him Mony for his Deliverance. But because neither the Apostle out of the Alms, nor any of the *Christians* sought to redeem him, he was kept two Years in Prison to gratifie the *Jews*, whom *Felix* had before incens'd by his frequent Oppressions and Tyrannies.

Joseph. *Ananias* the High-Priest, not long after his Accusation, was depos'd by *Agrippa*, and *Ishmael* the Son of *Phabeus* put in his Room; and afterwards *Ananias* came to a miserable End, according as *St. Paul* had solemnly denounc'd the Vengeance of Heaven against him.

A. D. II. *Rome* and the Empire had for a few Years been well and happily govern'd, principally by the Means and Directions of *Seneca* and *Burrhus*; but now *Nero* encreasing in Years and Extravagancies, the City began to feel the ill Effects of wicked Princes. In the second Year of his Reign this Emperor had basely poison'd his Predecessor's and Father-in-law's Son *Britannicus*; which he perform'd with the Dexterity and seeming Carelesness of an abler Politician. After which, contemning his Mother *Agrippina's* Authority, he divested himself of his Majesty and Quality, and in the Habit of a Slave, with many lewd Companions, nightly committed all kinds of impious and scandalous Actions: So that the City became infested with infinite Violences and Tumults, occasion'd not only from him and his Associates, but from his Example and the Encouragement he gave to Others. Then taking *Poppæa Sabina* from the Bed of her Husband *Otho*, because his Mother was still some Restraint to his Enormities, in the fifth Year of his Reign he resolv'd upon her Death; beginning with Poisons, which three Times prov'd ineffectual, by Reason of her Antidotes and Preservatives. Whereupon he invented a Ship

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so artfully contrived that it should suddenly split in two, and let her perish in the Water; then dissembling a Reconciliation, he caused her to sail to the Coasts of *Calabria*, under Colour of some publick Solemnities, in which he himself was Assistant. Finding this Plot also ineffectual, she herself escaping, when many of her Company perished, he now resolved to put her to Death openly; and for that Reason caused a Report to be spread, *That she had conspired against his Life*, and a Dagger was dropt at his Feet by one who pretended a Command from *Agrippina* to dispatch him. Under which false Pretext he commanded certain Tribunes to murder her; upon whose unsheathing their Swords, *Agrippina* pointing to her Belly, cry'd, *Strike me here; for this Part has deserv'd it, since it has conceived and brought forth such a Monster as Nero*, and immediately expired with the Wounds she received: And we are told that *Nero* came immediately after to view his dead Mother, and stood gazing upon her naked Body, praising and dispraising her several Parts and Limbs, adding withal, *That he did not think she had been so Beautiful*. Thus impiously did *Nero* treat his own Mother, tho' she had given him not only Birth but Dominion also, and for his Advancement had sacrificed both her Conscience and Honour; the Horrour of which Fact became afterwards a Scourge to his Mind, he often confessing, *That he was frequently disturb'd by the Apprehensions of his Mother's Ghost, and tormented by the infernal Furies*.

As *Rome* was a Sufferer from its Prince, so *Judaea* was much more from its Governor *Felix*, whose Management, together with the Degeneracy and Corruptions of the Inhabitants, caused frequent Ravages, Seditions and Bloodsheds. But in the following Year *Felix* was removed, after he had been Governor above seven Years; and tho' he endeavoured to oblige the *Jews* by leaving *Paul* in Prison, yet they accused him of many Crimes before the Emperor, and he escaped Punishment only by the Intercession of his Brother *Pallas*, who at this Time was again in Favour with *Nero*. *Portius Festus* succeeded in his Place, who was the eleventh Procurator of *Judaea* after the Banishment of *Archelaus*, and the fifth after the Death of King *Herod-Agrippa*, a Person of a much better Character than his Predecessor. Three Days after his Arrival at *Casarea*, *Festus* went up to *Jerusalem*; where the High-Priest and *Sanhedrim* hoping to find new Favours from their new Governor, brought fresh Accusations against the Apostle *Paul*, petitioning him to permit him to be brought and try'd at *Jerusalem*, designing to

Joseph.

A. D.

60.

Nero

6.

7.

Acts 24.

27.

Chap. 25.

2-2.

assassinate him by the Way. *Festus* told them, *That he himself was returning shortly to Cæsarea, and that if they had any Thing against the Prisoner, he would then give a fair Hearing to any Accusation they should bring.* And accordingly after ten Days Stay, *Festus* being returned to *Cæsarea*, and sitting in open Judicature, the *Jews* gathering round about *Paul*, renewed their Charge with the utmost Violence, and laid many heavy Accusations against him, to the same Effect as they had done before *Felix*. But *Paul* defended himself so well, by manifesting, *That he had neither offended against the Jewish Laws, nor against the Temple, nor against the Emperor*; that their Charge soon fell for want of sufficient Proof. However *Festus* being willing to gratifie the *Jews* in the Entrance upon his Government, ask'd him, *Whether he would go up and be try'd before him at Jerusalem?* But the Apostle well understanding the Consequences of that Proposal, courageously declared, *That he now stood at the Emperor's Judgment-Seat, where he ought to have had a final Trial: That he did not at all decline Death, if he deserved it; but that since he had injured none of the Jews, and they had proved nothing against him, he ought not to be delivered over to their Malice: That therefore, as he was a Roman, he appealed to the Emperor himself.* *Festus* being a little surprized at this, conferred first with the *Jewish* Rulers concerning the Matter, and after that told *Paul*, *That since he had appeal'd to the Emperor, he should go to him.*

Acts 25.

13-27.

Not many Days after, King *Agrippa*, with his Sister *Bernice*, and a numerous Train, came to *Cæsarea*, to make a Visit and Compliment to the new Governor, and to continue with him for some Time. After a considerable Stay, *Festus* entertained him with a Discourse concerning *Paul's* Case, acquainting him with his being left a Prisoner by *Felix*, and that the chief of the *Jews* had vehemently accused him, and earnestly petitioned for Justice against him: But that he had told them, *That he could not do it by the Roman Laws, without first hearing the Cause, and bringing the Accusers and Accused Face to Face.* *That this therefore he had done, and that upon hearing of both Parties, contrary to Expectation, he had found that their Accusation related only to Matters of their own Superstition, and to one Jesus, who being dead, Paul affirmed to be alive: And that being himself unacquainted with such Controversies, he had referr'd the Prisoner to the Jewish Sanhedrim; but that he declining their Judgment had appealed to Cæsar: Whereupon he had kept him, till he could conveniently send him to the Emperor at Rome.* This Account excited the Curiosity of *Agrippa*, who

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was very desirous to see and hear this Person, and accordingly the next Day, the King and his Sister, accompany'd with *Festus*, and other Persons of Quality, came into the Court with a pompous and magnificent Retinue, where *Paul* was brought forth before them. *Festus* acquainted the King and the illustrious Assembly, *How much he had been solicited by the Jews both at Cæsarea and Jerusalem, concerning the Prisoner at the Bar, that as a notorious Malefactor he might be put to Death; but that having found him guilty of no capital Crime, and the Prisoner having appealed to the Emperor, he was resolved to send him to Rome; but yet was willing to have his Case again discuss'd before so skilful a Person as Agrippa, that he might be furnished with some material Instructions to send along with him; since it was very preposterous to send a Prisoner to the Emperor, without signifying his Crimes.*

Hereupon *Agrippa* told the Apostle, *That now he had Liberty to make his own Defence.* To whom, after Silence made, he particularly address'd his Speech; first protesting, without Compliment, *That he thought himself happy, that he was to plead before a Prince so exactly vers'd in all the Rites and Customs, the Questions and Controversies of the Jewish Law. That as to his own Case, all the Jews his Accusers well knew the Course and Manner of his Life, and how he had been educated under the Institutions of the Pharisees, the strictest Sect of their Religion: That he had been particularly arraigned for asserting that which had been the constant Belief of all their Fathers, and in Hopes of which their twelve Tribes had been Day and Night instant in their Devotions; and which was also a Thing not incredible in it self, and sufficiently revealed in the Scriptures, viz. the Resurrection of the Dead.* Next he gave him an Account of the Effects of his Education, and with what an implacable Zeal he had formerly persecuted *Christianity*; and how by an amazing Light, and a wonderful Voice from Heaven, he was stopped in his Proceedings, and commanded to diffuse the Ray's of God's Bounty to the Illumination of the Pagan World. *That therefore since he could not disobey that heavenly Vision, he had preached Repentance and Reformation, first to the Jews of Damascus and Jerusalem, and after that to the Gentiles. That it was for this Cause alone, that the Jews apprehended him in the Temple, and designed to have murdered him; but that being supported by a divine Power, he still continued in that Testimony, asserting nothing but what was agreeable to Moses and the Prophets, who had plainly foretold, That the Messiah should be put to Death, and*

Acts 26.
1-32.

rise again, and by his Doctrine enlighten both the Jewish and the Gentile World. While Paul thus confidently and warmly apply'd his Discourse to Agrippa, Festus, unskilful in these Matters, cry'd out to the Apostle, That he was transported besides himself; that too much Learning had turned his Brain. But the other calmly reply'd, That his Words were not the Effect of Madness, but of Truth and Soberness; for which he appealed to the King, who could not be unacquainted with the Life of Jesus, all Things being transacted in such an open and publick Manner; that he was confident that his Majesty believed the Prophets, and therefore could not be ignorant that those Prophecies were accomplish'd in Christ. His Discourse had so great an Influence upon Agrippa, That he openly declared, That he had almost persuaded him to embrace the Christian Faith. To which Paul returned, That he heartily pray'd, that he and the whole Auditory were not only in some Measure, but altogether, tho' not Prisoners, yet as much Christians as himself. This done, the King and the Governor, and the rest of the Council withdrew a while, to confer privately about this Matter. And finding by the Accusations against him, that by the Roman Laws he was not Guilty of any capital Crime, nor of any that deserved Imprisonment; Agrippa told Festus, That he might have been released, if he had not prolonged his Trial by appealing to the Emperor at Rome.

Acts 27.
1--26.

It being upon this Appeal now finally resolved that Paul should be sent to Rome, in order thereto, He and some other Prisoners of Note were committed to the Charge of Julius, a Centurion or Captain of a Company belonging to the Legion of Augustus; being accompany'd in his Voyage by the Evangelist Luke, Aristarchus a Macedonian, Trophimus, and some others. In the Month of September, they went on board a Ship of Adramyttium, a Port of Mycia, which probably being a trading Ship, was to sail along by the Coasts of the lesser Asia. Having sail'd about 25 Leagues Northward, they cast Anchor at Sidon, where Julius civilly gave the Apostle leave to go on Shore to visit his Friends, and refresh himself. Putting out from thence, they were obliged to sail under the Island Cyprus, because the Winds were contrary; and when they coasted by the Provinces Cilicia and Pamphilia, after 180 Leagues sail from Sidon, they landed at Myra, a Port in Lycia, where this Ship finished its Voyage. Here having left their Vessel, then went a board a Ship of Alexandria, bound for Italy, carrying to the Number of 276 Persons. The Winds were still contrary, and sailing Westward, it was several Days before they got

got 70 Leagues over against *Cnidus*, a City and Promontory of *Caria*; from whence they turned Southward, and after 30 Leagues sail, stood over against *Salmone*, a Promontory of *Crete*; and at last coasting the Isle, came to a Place called *The Fair Havens*, near the City *Lafia* or *Thalassa*. This Port was inconvenient to Winter in; but Sailing grew now very dangerous in those Seas, the Fast of the *Jews* Expiation being over, at which Time this Sea was generally very tempestuous; *Paul* therefore urged them to stay there that Winter, and told them by the Spirit, *That if they proceeded in the Voyage, the Ship and Goods would not only be in Danger, but their Lives also.* Nevertheless the Captain gave less Credit to *Paul*, than to the Master and Owner of the Ship, who encouraged them to go on to *Phenice*, another Haven of *Crete* more convenient, about 50 Leagues Westward; especially since the Company of the Ship in general desired it, and a gentle Gale then blowing favoured their Design. And thereupon loosing from thence they still coasted along the Isle; but shortly after there arose a violent North-East Wind, which so furiously bore upon them, that the Seamen could not govern the Ship, but were compelled to leave it to the Mercy of the Winds and Waves, which carry'd it to a certain Islet call'd *Clauda*, on the South-West of *Crete*; where with much Difficulty they saved the Boat, and with no less Labour undergirt the Ship to secure it from splitting. And being still more violently tossed by the Storm, the next Day they lightned the Ship by parting with the Merchants Goods, and two Days after threw also the Tackle and Furniture of the Vessel overboard: And being deprived of the Sight of the Sun, Moon and Stars for many Days together, and being entertained with a continued Scene of Horror and Amazement, they utterly despair'd of escaping. After a long Abstinence, the Apostle put them in mind *how ill advised they had been in not taking his Counsel; yet he desired them to be of good Courage, for that God whom he had served and worshiped, had the last Night purposely sent an Angel from Heaven, to let him know, that notwithstanding the present Danger, he should be brought safe before the Emperor; that they should be shipwrecked indeed, and cast upon an Island, but that for his Sake God had promised to spare all the Lives in the Ship, so that not one should be lost, and that he doubted not but that what had been foretold him would infallibly come to pass.*

In the fourteenth Night, having been driven along the *Adriatick*, or rather *Mediterranean* Sea, above 230 Leagues West from *Crete*, the Seamen sounded, and finding but

twenty Fathom of Water, they concluded they were near some Land: And sounding a second Time, and finding but fifteen Fathom, they durst not venture any farther, but let down four Anchors at the Stern, and earnestly wished for Day. In the mean Time the Seamen, who best understood the Danger, under Colour of casting Anchor, were letting down the Skiff, designing to trust themselves to that and escape to Land: Which *Paul* perceiving, told the Captain and the Soldiers; *That unless they staid to assist in the Ship, the rest could not be safe*; for tho' God had promised certainly to save their Lives, yet it was to be with their concurrent Diligence in managing the Ship. Whereupon the Soldiers for their own Safety ran and cut the Ropes of the Skiff, and let it fall off into the Sea. And while the Day was approaching, *Paul*, with the utmost Care and Tendernefs, besought the Company to eat and refresh themselves, that they might the better grapple with the Difficulties they were to encounter, having in all the Time of Danger kept no ordinary and regular Meals; assuring them, *That not a Hair of their Head should be lost*. Then taking Bread himself, he blessed God for it, and began to eat, the rest following his Example with great Chearfulness; so great a Comfort and Blessing was this poor despised Prisoner to the whole Company. Having well refreshed themselves, to lighten the Ship, they threw all the Provision that was left into the Sea. In the Morning they discovered Land, not knowing what Country it was; but discerning a Creek with a kind of a Haven, they resolved, if it were possible, to thrust the Ship in there, or at least to bring it as near Land as the Store would permit. Whereupon the Mariners weighed Anchor, loos'd the Rudder Bands, hoisted up the main Sail to the Wind, and made directly for Shore. In their Passage they unexpectedly fell into a Place where two Seas met, where the Vessel ran a-ground; so that the Head of the Ship being fixed and immoveable, the Stern was soon broke in pieces with the Torrent and Violence of the Waves. Awakned with the Danger they were in, the Soldiers cry'd out to kill the Prisoners, to prevent their Escape; but their Captain having some Sense of *Paul's* Worth, prevented their Design, and commanded that such as could swim should throw themselves first into the Sea, that they might be more helpful to others. And the Issue was, that part by Swimming, part on Planks, and part on broken Pieces of the Ship, they got all safe to Shore.

Acts 28.

1-10.

The Country upon which they were cast was an Island, as *Paul* had foretold, called *Melita*, now *Malta*, between

Sicily

Sicily and *Africk*; the Inhabitants of which were *Carthaginians*, but subject to the *Romans*, who receiv'd them with great Civility and Kindness, making them Fires to dry their wet Clothes, and cherish their Bodies benumm'd with Cold. While *Paul* was busied in throwing a Bundle of Sticks upon the Fire, a Viper, dislodg'd by the Heat, came out of the Wood, and fastned on his Hand. Which being espy'd by the *Barbarians*, they by the Light of Nature concluded, That he was some notorious Malefactor or Murtherer, whom the divine Vengeance, tho' it had sav'd him from the Sea, yet had reserv'd for a more publick and solemn Execution. But when they saw him shake that venomous Creature into the Fire, without any succeeding swelling, or any other Hurt, they chang'd their Sentiments to the other Extream, and cry'd out, *That he was a God*. And thus was God pleas'd by a new Miracle to confirm the Apostle's Authority, and to make way for the Propagation of the Gospel in the Isle. The Shipwreck of *Paul* and his Companions being made known to *Publius* the *Roman* Governor, he, out of Compassion to their Misfortunes, entertain'd them three Days, and lodg'd them with all Civility. *Paul* gratefully acknowledg'd the Hospitality of this great Man, and requited his Kindness with the miraculous Cure of his Father, who lay sick of a Fever and a bloody Flux at that Time, which he did by Prayers and laying on his Hands. This he did also to many other of the Inhabitants, who by this Miracle were encourag'd to bring their Diseas'd to him: Whereby great Honours were heap'd upon him, and for which afterwards both he and his Company were furnish'd with Provisions and Conveniencies for the rest of their Voyage. Nay *Publius* himself is said by some Writers to have been hereby converted to the Faith, and by *St. Paul* to have been constituted Bishop of the Island; and that it was this *Publius* that succeeded *Dionysius* the *Areopagite* in the See of *Athens*, and was afterwards crown'd with Martyrdom.

In this Year 60, it is believ'd by several that the Apostle and Evangelist *St. Matthew*, after an abstemious Life, and innumerable Labours in the Countries of *Æthiopia*, *Persia* and *Parthia*, suffer'd Martyrdom in the City of *Naddaber* in the *Asiatick Æthiopia*, being slain with an Halbert. But the Time of his Death is very uncertain, and so likewise is the Place and Manner of it; some reporting that he was martyr'd in *Parthia*, and others that he died a natural Death. His Feast in the *Greek Church* is kept on the 16th of *November*, but the *Latin Church* celebrates it on the 21st of *September*, Se-

A. D.
61.
Nero
7
8.

veral Books besides his Gospel, are attributed to him, as the History of the Infancy of *Christ*, much us'd by the *Valentini-ans*, his *Æthiopick* Liturgy, with some others cited by *Metaphrastes*, but they are rejected as false and spurious. We have somewhat more Certainty of the Death of the second Evangelist, St. *Mark*, in the following Year, an. 8th of *Nero*, being attested by *Eusebius* and St. *Jerom*. This Evangelist having parted from *Peter*, probably about the Year 54, went to *Alexandria* in *Ægypt*, in which City and the Neighbouring Places he converted Multitudes of both Sexes to *Christianity*. From whence he travell'd Westward to the Countries of *Marmarica*, *Libya*, and other barbarous Parts of *Africa*; whereby his Preaching and Miracles he not only made Way for the Gospel, but rooted it in the Minds of those People, and confirm'd them in the Profession of it. After this, returning to *Alexandria*, to establish that Church by providing Pastors and Governors; in the Time of *Easter*, while he was employ'd in the Divine Worship, the great Enemy of God and Man rais'd the Promoters of Idolatry into a Tumult against him. It being the Time that their great Solemnities of *Serapis* were to be celebrated, the prophane *Ægyptians*, to vindicate their Grand Idol, violently broke in upon *Mark*, and drag'd him on the Ground thro' the Streets into Prison; where in the Night he had the Comfort of a Divine Vision. The Rage of the People being yet unsatisfied, they came again the next Morning, and dragging him again after the same Manner, his Flesh was miserably torn, and he expir'd in their Hands. Nor did their Fury end here, for, according to *Metaphrastes*, they also burnt his dead Body, whose Soul had burnt with a fervent Zeal for the Glory of God, and the Salvation of Mankind. As for the *Σεραπίδων* of *Ægypt* of whom *Philo* writes, that they were *Christians* of St. *Mark's* Conversion, as *Eusebius* and *Baronius* imagine, we can see no Reason to believe. After his Death the Presbyters of the Church made Choice of *Anianus* to be Bishop in his Room, a Man most eminent for his Piety, and all other Qualifications, who held this Bishoprick 22 Years, from the 8th of *Nero* to the 4th of *Domitian*.

Acts 28.
11-16.

III. The Apostle *Paul* having made many Converts, and planted a Church in the Isle *Melita*; at the end of three Months Stay, being generously furnish'd by the Inhabitants, he and his Company left the Place, and set sail for *Rome* in a Ship of *Alexandria*, nam'd the *CASTOR* and *POLLUX*, which had winter'd in the Isle. In their Passage Northwards,

wards, after 40 Leagues sail, they put in at *Syracuse*, a famous City of *Sicily*, and tarry'd there three Days; after which they sail'd 54 Leagues farther to *Rhegium*, a Port and City of *Calabria* in *Italy*, from whence by the South Wind they sail'd 80 Leagues farther, and in two Days arriv'd at *Puteoli*, a Port of *Campania*, in *Italy*, near *Naples*, where the Ships of *Alexandria* usually landed. Here *Paul* meeting with some *Christians*, at their Request, tarry'd with them a Week, and then proceeded on his Journey to *Rome* by Land, which was near 100 Miles. The *Christians* at *Rome* hearing that the Apostle was coming to that City, went out to meet him, tho' a Prisoner, some as far as *Appii-forum*, 51 Miles from *Rome*, and others as far as the Place call'd *The Three Taverns*, 33 Miles; and when *Paul* saw them, he bless'd God, and took Courage, believing that Christianity was not so much hated at *Rome* as he fear'd; since they had so much Liberty, as that they durst come thus publickly to own him. Arriving at *Rome*, *Julius* the Captain deliver'd his Prisoners to the *Prætorian Præfect*, the Head Commander of the Emperor's Guards, who was then *Burrhus*, a Man of a good Disposition and Reputation. It is uncertain how he treated the other Prisoners, but he was very obliging to the Apostle, permitting him to dwell in his own hired House or Lodgings, with a Chain and a single Soldier to secure him, more from the *Jews*, as it's believ'd, than from any Escape. In these Lodgings all were freely admitted to him; and he continu'd in this manner of Living for two Years, teaching and preaching without any Obstruction.

Rome was now the Metropolis not only of the *Roman* Empire, but of the whole World, for People and Extent, and for Riches and Magnificence; but the Inhabitants were extremely corrupted in their Morals, by a long Security and bad Princes, and more particularly by the Impieties and Enormities of the present Emperor *Nero*. This caus'd *Paul* to be more diligent in his Ministry, but according to his Custom he first offer'd Salvation to the *Jews*; and three Acts 28. Days after his Arrival he sent for the Heads of their Con- 17-29. sistory there, whom he acquainted with the Cause and Manner of his coming, *That tho' he had been Guilty of no Violation of the Law of their Religion, yet he had been deliver'd by the Jews into the Hands of the Roman Governors, who would more than once have acquitted him as innocent of any capital Offence, but that by the Perverseness of the other, he was constrain'd, in his own Vindication, without designing to charge his own Nation, to make his Appeal to the Emperor:*

That

That now being come, he desir'd some Conference with them, to let them understand, That it was for his constant asserting the Resurrection, the Hope of all true Israelites, that he was bound with that Chain which they saw. The Jews reply'd, That they had receiv'd no Advice concerning him, nor had any of the Nation that came from Judæa brought any Charge against him: Only for the Religion which he had espous'd, they desir'd to be a little better inform'd concerning That, it being in all Places decry'd both by Jew and Gentile. Accordingly the Apostle appointed a set Day, upon which great Numbers of the Jews came to his Lodgings, where he open'd to them at large these two Points; First, That the promis'd Kingdom of the Messiah was a spiritual, and not an earthly Kingdom; Secondly, That Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah: Both which he prov'd by Testimonies out of the Law of Moses, and out of the Prophets; continuing his Discourse from Morning till Night. The Effect of it was, that some were convinc'd by the Force of his Arguings, but others persisted in their Infidelity; so that they parted in some Difference and Disagreement among themselves. At their Departure the Apostle, to rouse the Unbelievers, told them, That God had accomplish'd in them that propheticall Curse in Isaiah, namely, 'That they should hear with their 'Ears and not understand, and see with their Eyes and not 'perceive: For that their Hearts were grown stupid, their 'Ears deafned, and their Eyes clos'd; lest their Eyes should 'direct them, their Ears inform them, their Hearts instruct 'them, and convert them, and God should heal them. Concluding all with this solemn Declaration, Be it known unto you all, That the Salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will undoubtedly hearken to it. Upon their Departure, the Jews had great Disputing among themselves about the Apostle's Discourse, some opposing, others as zealously defending the Truth of it.

*Phil. i.
12-17.*

During the two Years that the Apostle was a Prisoner at Rome, he receiv'd all that came to him, either out of Curiosity or Kindness, and preach'd the Gospel of *Jesus Christ* with all Confidence, without any Opposition or Discouragement; insomuch, that his Imprisonment very much promoted the Propagation of the Gospel, and made him famous even in the Emperor's Court, where he converted several to *Christianity*. Many also of the Brethren taking Courage from his Success, grew bolder to preach the Word without Fear; tho' some did it with a pernicious Design of making him more severely persecuted, exciting *Nero's* Fury at the Progress and Fame of *Christianity*. Some report, That while

while *Paul* continu'd at *Rome*, he had a Correspondence with the famous *Seneca* by Letters; but those Letters which now bear their Names, are rejected as spurious by all the learned World. And now the Apostle's Companion *Luke* being at Leisure, set about the third Gospel, which he compos'd by the particular Assistance of *St. Paul*; and it is generally believ'd that this is what the Apostle primarily intends when he so often speaks of *his Gospel*. The Evangelist dedicated it to one *Theophilus*, with the Title of *Most Excellent*; who probably was some Magistrate of *Antioch*, converted and baptiz'd by him. The Occasion of it was partly to prevent those false and fabulous Relations, which even then began to be obruded upon the World, and partly to supply what seem'd wanting in the two former Evangelists; tho' it is not certain whether he had seen *St. Matthew's* Gospel when he wrote this. It begins at the Angel *Gabriel's* foretelling *John Baptist's* Birth, and ends with the Ascension of our blessed Saviour; so that it is an History including, according to a precise Reckoning, 38 Years wanting one Month; four Years more than the vulgar Account; The whole containing much more variety, and written in purer *Greek* than the former Gospels; tho' not wholly free from *Hebraisms* or *Syriacisms*. He mainly insists upon what relates to *Christ's* sacerdotal Office, and tho' recording other Parts of the Evangelical Story, yet it is ever with a peculiar Respect to his Priesthood; a Thing properly aim'd at by him who was a *Gentile*, and assisted by an Apostle of the Uncircumcision, because it shew'd the *Christian* Priesthood to be more excellent than the *Jewish*. Therefore in our Saviour's Genealogy, he design'd not so much to shew him to be the Seed of *Abraham*, in whom the *Jews* trusted; as the Seed of the Woman, in whom *Gentiles* were also to expect Salvation; and in other Parts of his Gospel, he is very particular in those Discourses or Parables of our Saviour which relate to the Rejection of the *Jews*, and the Call of the *Gentiles*. As to those Passages concerning our Saviour's weeping over *Jerusalem*, and concerning his sweating Drops of Blood, which were wanting in some Copies, they are abundantly supply'd in others more ancient; and 'tis believ'd that they were scrupulously omitted by some who were afraid of ascribing to *Jesus Christ* any Marks of human Weakness. Some are of Opinion that this Gospel was written eight Years before, at *Corinth* when *St. Paul* was there; but the Time that we have fix'd seems much more probable, *viz.* in the Year 61, which was 28 after our Lord's Ascension.

Joseph.

In this Year, *Judea* being grievously infested with Robbers and Murtherers, the Governor *Festus* prov'd very serviceable to the Nation in quelling and suppressing them; especially those, who with their short Swords hid under their Garments, committed intolerable Outrages even in *Jerusalem* it self. And as the People were ready to follow after all false *Messiahs* and Impostors, so great Numbers were led into the Desert after a Magician, who promis'd them a Deliverance from all their Troubles; but *Festus*, by a strong Party of Horse and Foot, at once destroy'd both the Deceiver and the Deceived. About the same Time, *Agrippa* now residing at *Jerusalem*, erected a stately Building within the Palace, which formerly belong'd to the *Asmoneans*, being situated on a high Place with a pleasant Prospect, from whence the King with Delight could behold not only the City, but also what was done within the spacious Courts of the Temple. The chief Men of the City were highly disgusted at this Building, since the Law had forbidden any Man to behold the Sacrifices and Oblations; therefore to prevent such Prophanation, they erected an high Wall upon the Top of the Western Cloysters, which not only hinder'd the Prospect of the King's House, but of that Building also where the *Roman* Soldiers on publick Days kept Guard. *Agrippa* was highly offended at this, and *Festus* still more, who commanded the Wall to be pull'd down; but they beg'd Leave of him first to send their Ambassadors to the Emperor, alledging, *It was Death to them to pull down any Part of the Temple.* And sending ten of their Nobility, with *Ismael* the High-Priest. and *Chelcias* the Treasurer, *Nero* by the Intercession of *Poppaea*, not only pardon'd what they had done, but also order'd that their Building shou'd continue. But *Ismael* and *Chelcias* were detain'd as Hostages; and *Agrippa*, who had the Power of disposing of the Priesthood, remov'd *Ismael*, after he had continu'd in that Office near four Years, and plac'd *Joseph*, surnam'd *Cabis*, the Son of *Simon* a former High-Priest, in his Room, who was the 14th High-Priest after the Birth of our Saviour. But in a very short Time *Agrippa* commanded him to lead a private Life, and advanc'd in his stead *Ananus* the Son of *Annas*, who was one of the five Brothers who all enjoy'd this Dignity.

A. D.

62.

Nero

8.

9.

About the same time the Apostle *James*, tho' particularly Bishop of *Jerusalem*, yet having by his apostolical Function an unlimited Commission, thought it suitable to his Office to take Care of all the Converted among the twelve Tribes of *Israel* dispers'd in all Countries; and accordingly

he wrote an Epistle to them, which in the sacred Canon is plac'd first of those call'd *Catholick Epistles*. We are assur'd, That not only in the most ancient *Latin Copies*, but also in some of the *Greek Copies*, he has the Title of an Apostle given him in the Inscription, tho' in ours it is otherwise. The Occasion of his Writing it, as *St. Austin* says, ' was to suppress and confute a dangerous Error then growing up in the Church, That a bare naked Faith was sufficient to secure Men's Salvation, tho' good Works were neglected; as also another Doctrine of as bad a Source, That God was the Author of Sin; and likewise to comfort the *Christians* against the frequent Troubles and Persecutions rais'd against them by the worldly Powers, and to awaken them out of their stupid Security, when Judgments were at the Door: To compass which Ends he fill'd his Epistle with many excellent Exhortations, to bear Afflictions, to hear the Word of God, to mortifie their Lusts, to bridle their Tongue and avoid Swearing; to get right Apprehensions of the Nature of God, and to adorn their *Christian* Profession with a good Conversation, with Meekness, Peace and Charity; lastly, teaching them how to behave themselves in Times of approaching Miseries. He likewise intimated something concerning the *Jewish* Custom of Anointing the Sick, and of the Confession of Faults, which *Christians* ought to make to each other. The whole is wrote with abundance of Simplicity and Substance, full of engaging, solid and natural Thoughts, worthy of an apostolical Pen. This is one of the Epistles that have been a little doubted; but tho' *Eusebias* and *St. Jerom* have observ'd, that some Persons question'd the Authority of it, yet 'tis certain that in their Time it was in the Canon of the new Testament, as they themselves own; and it is also found in all the ancient Canons of the *Greek* and *Latin* Churches, and quoted by the Fathers of the second and third Century.

Not long after, the Governor *Festus* dying in his Province, *Nero* sent *Albinus* in his Room; who was the twelfth Governor of *Judæa* after the Banishment of *Archelaus*, and the sixth after the Death of King *Herod-Agrippa*. Before his Arrival, in this Interval, the unbelieving *Jews*, who having been disappointed in their Designs against *Paul*, had turn'd their Fury against *James*, now found an Opportunity to effect their Purposes; which they did by means of the High-Priest *Ananus*, a bold and daring *Sadducee*, who call'd a Council of the chief Men of the *Jews*, who were Enemies to *Christianity*. *James* and several others were brought

before

before this Council; but the People had so great a Veneration for the Justice and Sanctity of *James*, that they durst not attempt him by a formal Accusation, and therefore the *Pharisees* assaulted him another Way, and by subtle Insinuations thought to insnare him. Wherefore complaining to him, *That the People were miserably deceiv'd, and led away with some Errors concerning Jesus being the Messiah; they earnestly desired him that he wou'd recover them from their Errors by his Word; which they were all ready to believe, because they had such an Opinion of his Virtue and Sincerity, that they wou'd immediately yield to his Judgment.* It was now the Time of the Passover, and the Multitude was come together to the Feast; wherefore setting him upon some of the Battlements of the Temple where all might hear him, they said, *Tell us, O just Man, in whom we all put our Confidence, what we are to believe concerning Jesus, who was crucify'd?* To whom the Apostle made Answer with an audible Voice, *Jesus the Son of Man, after whom you enquire, now sits at the right Hand of the divine Majesty, as the Son of God, and shall come again in the Clouds of Heaven.* The People below hearing it, glorify'd the blessed *Jesus*, and openly proclaim'd *Hosanna to the Son of David!* The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* now perceiving their Mistake, and that instead of weakning they had confirm'd the People in their Opinion, in a great Rage resolv'd to dispatch him immediately, that his sad Fate might terrifie others from believing him. Whereupon suddenly crying out, *That Justus himself was seduc'd, and become an Impostor,* they threw him down from the Place where he stood. Tho' much bruis'd, he was not kill'd by the Fall, but recover'd so much Strength, as to get upon his Knees, and pray to Heaven for their Pardon, *for they knew not what they did.* This did not satisfie their Malice, but inrag'd at their Disappointment, they fell afresh upon the poor Remainers of his Life; and while he was yet at Prayer, and a *Rechabite* stood by entreating them *to spare a just and righteous Man who was praying for them,* they began to load him with a Shower of Stones, 'till one more mercifully cruel than the rest, with a Fuller's Club beat out his Brains. His Death prov'd to the infinite Regret of all good Men, and of all sober and just Persons among the *Jews* themselves; he being a Man of that divine Temper, that he was the Love and Wonder of his Age, and upon the Account of his strict and pious Life, was universally stil'd *James the Just.* His Temperance was admirable, abstaining both from Flesh and Wine; and he was so frequent in his Devotions, that his Knees became

became hard and brawny as a Camel's; and *Josephus* himself confesses that his Death hastned the Ruin of his Nation. His Feast by the *Latin* Church is celebrated on *May* the 1st with *St. Philip's*, but by the *Greek* Church on the 23^d of *October*.

The Bishopricks of *Jerusalem* being void, according to *Eusebius*, the providing for that Place was so far thought the Concernment of the *Christian* Church, that the Apostles and Disciples of our Lord are said to have come from all Parts to advise, and consult about a fit Successor in his Room. None was thought a fit Candidate for the Place but one of our Saviour's own Relations; and accordingly with one Consent they devolv'd the Honour upon *Simeon* or *Simon*, *St. James's* own Brother, about 75 Years of Age, and one of the Seventy Disciples, whom they all judg'd most worthy of the Dignity. At the Time of *St. James's* Martyrdom, we are told by some, that *Ananus* the High-Priest apprehended the Apostle *Matthias* in *Galilee*, and had him brought before him; and making a long Speech to him, after he found him contrary to his Exhortations asserting *Jesus of Nazareth* to be the *Messiah*, he condemn'd him to be stoned, and the Sentence was immediately executed. But of this, or of any other Account of *St. Matthias's* Death, we have but slender Authorities. He was one of those Apostles who left no Writings behind him; tho' a Gospel and some few other Things have been ascrib'd to him. The *Greeks* celebrate his Feast on the 9th of *August*, and the *Latins* on the 24th of *February*. As for *Ananus*, his Actions and Proceedings against *St. James* were so very displeasing to all good Men in the City, that they not only complain'd of him to King *Agrippa*, but also several of them went to meet with their new Governor *Albinus* in his Way to *Alexandria*, remonstrating that he had not only acted unjustly, but also exceeded his Authority. Upon which *Albinus* wrote an angry Letter to *Ananus*, threatening him with Punishment; and for the same Cause *Agrippa* dispossest him of his High-Priesthood, after he had held it three Months, and establish'd *Jesus* the Son of *Damnus* in his Room, who was the 16th High-Priest after our Saviour's Nativity.

Not long after the Settlement of *Albinus* in his Govern-
ment, being at *Jerusalem* at the Feast of Tabernacles, when that City for a while enjoy'd both Peace and Plenty, four Years before the *Jewish* Wars, and seven Years and six Months before the Siege of the City, there hapned the first great Presage of its Ruin. And this was from an ordinary Countryman, one *Jesus* the Son of *Ananus*, who coming

to the Feast, began suddenly to cry out, *A Voice from the East, a Voice from the West, a Voice from the four Winds; a Voice against Jerusalem and the Temple, a Voice against new marry'd Persons, a Voice against all this People!* And thus crying Night and Day about the Streets, some of the Nobility growing uneasie, caus'd him to be very severely scourg'd; which he endur'd without any Intreaties or Complaints, but continu'd repeating the same Words. The Magistrates then fearing it some divine Impulse, led him to *Albinus*, where being beaten 'till his Bones appear'd, he never shed one Tear, but framing a weeping Voice, at every Stroak he cry'd, *Woe, woe to Jerusalem!* *Albinus* then ask'd him, *Who, and what he was, and why he made that Outcry?* but he made no Answer, but still continu'd to bewail *Jerusalem*; till the Governor thinking him mad, suffer'd him to depart. He cry'd thus mostly on the Feast Days, for above seven Years together, without being hoarse or weary, 'till the Siege began. And leaving for some Days, he once more cry'd, *Woe to the City, Temple and People*, adding also a *Woe to himself*; and immediately after was kill'd with a Stone shot out of an Engine. Shortly after the Feast of Tabernacles, *Agrippa* gave the High-Priesthood to *Jesus* the Son of *Gamaliel*, and the other *Jesus* parting with it unwillingly, it caus'd great Mischiefs and Disturbances in the City. And great Numbers of Robbers and Assassins taking the Advantage of troublesom Times, from that Time the *Jewish* State grew worse and worse, and the Seeds of their future Destruction were now sown. *Albinus* also prov'd an intolerable Governor, not only taking away private Mens Goods under Pretence of Justice, but also burthening the Nation with extraordinary Tributes; and then being brib'd by all Kinds of Villains, he became the Encourager of infinite Ravages and Disorders.

Tacit.
Suet.

IV. During these Troubles in *Judea*, the Emperor *Nero* more and more proceeded in his Enormities and Cruelties, the Cares of *Burrhus* and *Seneca* now nothing availing. In this Year, and the ninth of his Reign, *Burrhus* dy'd, not without Suspicion of Poison from *Nero's* Agents, which so weakned the Interest and Authority of *Seneca*, that seeing himself despis'd, he prudently desir'd Permission to withdraw himself, offering also to deliver up his large Estate, which had created him so much Envy; but *Nero* having learn'd, and practis'd the Art of Diffimulation, under Colour of Respect, deny'd his Petition; but *Seneca* from that Time alter'd his Course of Life, admitted of few Visits,

sits, and always appear'd with a very small Retinue. For *Nero* now began to display his sanguinary Temper without Mercy or Discretion, and unjustly put many eminent Persons to Death, among the rest *Rubellius-Plantus* and *Pallas*, the former for being of the *Julian* Family, and the latter for being rich, a Crime for which many suffer'd; then proceeding in his Cruelties, he divorc'd and banish'd his Wife and Predecessor's Daughter *Octavia*, upon the Account of his Concubine *Poppæa*, whom he now marry'd; and when the People murmur'd at this Injury, he afterwards caus'd her to be put to Death. In the midst of these uncomfortable Times in *Rome*, the Apostle *Paul*, still under Confinement, proceeded in his Ministry with indefatigable Diligence, and no less Success, tho' not without many Crosses, and Afflictions from obstinate and designing Brethren. The *Christians* of *Philippi* in *Macedonia*, where he had been three Times, who before had been very bountiful to him, gave him special Signs of their Care of him during his Imprisonment at *Rome*; for they sent to him *Epaphroditus* their Bishop, with a large Supply of Money, and to assist his Person in their stead, in effecting of which he was expos'd to so many Dangers, that he fell into a Disease that endanger'd his Life, and detain'd him a long Time at *Rome*. The *Philippians* heard of his Sickness, and were much troubled: for which Reason, the Apostle sent him to *Philippi*, as soon as he was recover'd, and with him an Epistle to the *Philippians*, which is that which now bears that Name. It is written in the Name of *Paul* and *Timothy*, and particularly directed to the Bishops, or rather Presbyters, and Deacons of the Church; ' manifesting a special Love and Tenderness for them, and Joy for their Bounty to him, not ' so much for his own Sake, who had learnt to endure ' the extreamest Want, as for theirs, who shou'd receive so ' great a Reward from God. He writ to them as a Father, exhorting them to walk as Children of the Light, ' and to shine as Stars among the *Gentiles* with whom they ' were mix'd; warning them of *Judaizing* Teachers, who ' were Enemies to the Cross of *Christ*; and advising them ' to live in continual Obedience to *Christ*; to avoid Disputations, to delight in Prayer, to be constant in Afflictions, to be full of Joy and Peace. He besought them also to live in perfect Union; and since Union cou'd not ' be preserv'd without Humility, which caus'd Men to prefer others before themselves, he propounded the Example ' of the blessed *Jesus*, who so far humbled himself as to become obedient to Death, even the Death of the cross;

Philipp. 4.

15, 16,

18.

Chap. 2.

25--28.

‘ Particularly recommending this Union to *Evodias* and
 ‘ *Syntiche*, two pious Women of that Church, and his Fel-
 ‘ low Labourers in the Gospel, who notwithstanding had
 ‘ some Difference with the Brethren; desiring one of the
 ‘ chief Pastors, whom he called his Yoke-Fellow, to com-
 ‘ pose the Dissentions. He likewise told them, That he
 ‘ designed to tend *Timothy* to them, and afterwards hoped
 ‘ to see them himself; for tho’ he longed to die and to be
 ‘ with *Christ*, yet he knew that God would continue him in
 ‘ Life, for their Comfort, and the Encrease of their Faith.
 This was the seventh Epistle that the Apostle wrote; having
 writ nothing for above five Years before.

Shortly after the Apostle turned his Thoughts towards
 the *Christians* at *Ephesus*, among whom he had laboured
 more, and continued longer, than in any other City, name-
 ly, three Years, from 54 to 57. He had been informed that
 the Believers of that Church continued in the Faith, and in
 Charity; but fearing that they might suffer themselves to be
 surprized at length, either with the Fables of heretical Teachers,
 or by the Discourses of those converted *Jews*, who
 would oblige the *Christians* to observe their Law, he wrote
 an Epistle to them to encourage them to continue firm in
 the Doctrine which he had taught them. It is written only in
 his own Name, and directed not only to those of *Ephesus*,
 but also to other Believers; so that it is generally believed,
 that it was a circular Letter directed to the Church of *E-*
phesus, for all the Churches of the Proconsular *Asia*: And
 probably for this Reason the Heretick *Marcion* afterwards
 intituled it, *The Epistle to the Laodiceans*. ‘ In this Epistle he
 ‘ first commends the Faith and Charity of the *Ephesians*; but
 ‘ his main Design was to instruct them fully in the great
 ‘ Mysteries of the Gospel, their Redemption and Justifica-
 ‘ tion by the Death of *Jesus Christ*, their gratuitous Electi-
 ‘ on, the Calling of the *Gentiles*, the Union of the *Jews*
 ‘ and *Gentiles* in one Body, of which *Jesus Christ* was the
 ‘ Head, and the glorious Exaltation of that Head above all
 ‘ Creatures both Spiritual and Temporal. This is the Subject
 ‘ of the three first Chapters, where the Stile is somewhat
 ‘ hard and obscure, by reason of the Sublimity of the Mat-
 ‘ ter there handled, his Tongue being not able to express
 ‘ fully the Depth and Greatness of his Thoughts. It is be-
 ‘ lieved, that here he opposed not only the *Judaizing Chri-*
 ‘ *stians* of that Church, but also the Scholars of *Simon Ma-*
 ‘ *gus*, and other Hereticks, who now began to assume to
 ‘ themselves the Name of *Gnosticks*, who held that Angels
 ‘ were Mediators between God and Man, instead of *Jesus*
 ‘ *Christ*,

‘ *Christ*, and that Persons ought to have Recourse to them
 ‘ for Reconciliation. And since these Hereticks did no less
 ‘ oppose an holy Life, than they did the Truth, therefore
 ‘ the Apostle filled the four last Chapters of this Epistle
 ‘ with most excellent moral Precepts for the ordering of a
 ‘ *Christian* Life in all Conditions. This Epistle was sent
 by *Tychicus*, to whom the Apostle gave the Character of
Dear Brother, a faithful Minister of Jesus Christ, and his
Companion in the Service of the Gospel, that he might take
 Care of the *Ephesian* Church in the Absence of *Timothy* their
 Bishop.

Among other of the Apostle’s Converts at *Rome* was *Onesimus*, who of a Slave, Renegado and Thief, became a
 faithful Servant of *Christ*; and was thought worthy to be
 called by *Paul*, *His dear and faithful Brother; his Son, his*
Bowels, himself. He was a Native of *Colosse*, a City of
Phrygia, near the Metropolis *Laodicea*, and a Servant of
Philemon, an eminent *Christian* there, and an intimate Friend
 of the Apostle’s. *Onesimus*, always a bad Servant, at length
 robbed his Master, and fled to *Rome*, where by *Paul*’s En-
 deavours he was converted, instructed and baptized; after
 which he became remarkably pious, and extremely serviceable
 to the Apostle in his Imprisonment, so that he was ve-
 ry desirous to have kept him with him, but because he had
 not his Master *Philemon*’s Consent, he sent him to *Colosse*,
 writing a short Epistle to him at the same Time, ‘ desiring
 ‘ him to pardon him, and notwithstanding his former Faults,
 ‘ to use him as a Brother; promising also, that if he had
 ‘ wronged him, or owed him any thing, he would repay it.
 ‘ And that this Epistle might the more easily obtain what
 ‘ he desired of *Philemon*, in the Title he saluted his Wife *Ap-*
 ‘ *phia*, and his Partner *Archippus* the Pastor of the Church;
 ‘ letting him know that he hoped to be freed, and be with
 ‘ him in a short Time. This Epistle was sent by *Onesimus*
 and *Tychicus*; and at the same Time he sent another
 Epistle to all the *Christians* in the same City *Colosse*; a City
 where this Apostle had never preach’d, but the Gospel which
 had spread it self in all the World, had taken Root amongst
 them, and brought forth much Fruit. *Epaphras* had been
 their chief Instructor, who also had given *Paul* an Account
 of their Conversion, and mutual Love in the Spirit, being
 then a Prisoner with him at *Rome*; and *Paul* being satisfi-
 fy’d of this, always remembered them in his Prayers, desir-
 ing of God that they might be filled with all spiritual Wis-
 dom, and walk worthy of their Vocation. But the Enemy
 had sowed among the good Corn the Tares of Philosophy,
 and

Philem.
 10, 12, 17.
Colos. 4. 9.

Colos. 1. 6.
Chap. 4.
 7, 8.
Chap. 2.
 1, 2.
Chap. 4.
 12.
Philem.
 23.

and a false Humility; for the Seducers of those Times endeavour'd to persuade the *Colossians*, that they ought not to go to God by *Jesus Christ*, being so far exalted above them, but by Angels, whom they asserted to be their Mediators in such a Sense as only agreed to the Son of God: Which Error seems to have been deriv'd from the *Platonists*; but because they who then held it added some *Jewish* Observations, they are rather to be reckon'd among the Scholars of *Simon Magus*, or of some *Jews* who sought to mix the Law and the Gospel together. *Paul* perhaps had heard this partly from *Epaphras*, and partly by a Letter he receiv'd from the Church of *Laodicea*; and therefore having a common Concern for all the Churches of *Christ*, both as a Minister, and an Apostle of the *Gentiles*, he had a great Desire to comfort their Minds, and unite them in perfect Charity, by an Epistle, the Design of which was in some Measure the same with that to the *Ephesians*. ' In it he most magnificently sets forth the *Messiah*, and all the Benefits flowing ' from him, as being the Image of his Father, the Redeemer ' of all Mankind, and Reconciler of all Things to God, ' the Head of the Church, which gave Life and Vigour to ' all its Members. He commended the Doctrine preach'd ' to them by *Epaphras*, exhorting them not to suffer them- ' selves to be beguil'd of their Reward in Obeying, by being ' led away with the Reasonings of human Philosophy, by superstitious Practices of making Differences of Meats and ' Drinks, and by worshipping of Angels. In the three last ' Chapters, he gave them an Abstract of many chief and principal Duties of the *Christian* Life, especially such as respect- ' ed the Relations of Parents, Wives, Masters and Servants.

A. D.
63.
Nero
 $\frac{9}{10}$.

After the Apostle *Paul* had been above four Years a Prisoner to the *Roman* Power, of which two were spent at the City of *Rome*, he was then freed from all Confinement, being found not guilty of the Breach of any *Roman* Law. About which Time the Evangelist *Luke* wrote his second History call'd *The Acts of the Apostles*, which he dedicated to the same *Theophilus*, to whom he had dedicated his Gospel; the one containing the Miracles of *Jesus Christ*, and the other those of the Holy Ghost. In the first he wrote such Things as he had from the Relation of others; in the second, those of which he had been in part an Eye-Witness. It is entituled *Acts, Πράξεις, of the Apostles*, because it contains the History of what the Apostles did at *Jerusalem* and *Judea*, for about a dozen Years after the Ascension of our Saviour. After which, he continues his History with the Travels, Actions and Sermons of *St. Paul*, till the End of his

his two Years Confinement at *Rome*. So that it is an History of thirty Years Transactions; the former Part principally containing the Acts of the two Apostles of the Circumcision, *Peter* and *John*, with the Preaching of the Gospel to the *Jews*; and the latter, those of the two Apostles of the Uncircumcision, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, with the Planting and Progress of the Gospel among the *Gentiles*. He says nothing of the Travels and Progress of the other Apostles, because he had not been a Witness of them, and could not learn them from his Master *St. Paul*. It is writ both with Eloquence and Art; and the Narrative has no less Sublimity, than Simplicity. And *St. Jerom* says, That all the Words of that Work, compos'd by one who was a Physician by Profession, were as so many Cures for a languishing Soul.

The Apostle *Paul* being now releas'd from his Bonds, remembering that he was an Apostle of the *Gentiles*, and had a larger Diocess than *Rome*, left the City to travel into other Parts of the World, having made a plentiful Harvest in that vast Place. About the Time of his Departure, or immediately after, being in *Italy*, upon the Return of *Timothy*, he wrote his famous and most elaborate Epistle to the *Hebrews*, that is, to the converted *Jews*, dwelling in *Jerusalem* and *Judæa*, the *Jews* of other Countries being call'd *Hellenists*; and many think that he design'd it for a Treatise, and not an Epistle; for tho' it be one of the longest of his Pieces, he yet excus'd its Brevity, Chap. 13. 22. These *Hebrew* Converts now dwelt in an accur'd Land, surrounded with many Troubles and Calamities, heavy Persecutions both from *Jews* and *Gentiles* pressing in upon them on every Side, besides a specious Train of plausible Insinuations to reduce them to their antient *Mosaick* Institutions, to which many had turn'd of late, apostatizing from the Purity of the *Christian* Faith. Wherefore partly to warn and instruct them, and partly to encourage and support them, he wrote this celebrated Epistle; but he neither prefix'd his Name nor Title to it, as well because these Believers themselves had entertain'd a Prejudice against him, as because he was not properly their Apostle; *Clemens Alex.* adds, because of the Reverence he bore to *Jesus Christ* himself, who was the Apostle of the *Hebrews*. ' His Design in this
' Epistle, as in those to the *Romans* and *Galatians*; was prin-
' cipally to prove, That Justification was not by the Law,
' but by Faith in *Jesus Christ*, who had communicated his
' Spirit to them; and this he does by shewing the Insuffici-
' ency of the Legal Sacrifices for that End, as he had done

' in the Epistle to the *Romans* of the Moral Law and
 ' Works performed without the Grace of *Christ*, and in
 ' that to the *Galatians* of the Ceremonies and Circumcisi-
 ' on. To make this Truth plain, he represented to them
 ' the Dignity of the Son of God, as far above all Angels
 ' and created Beings; and as to his Office of *Messiah*, he
 ' proved him to be a greater Lawgiver than *Moses*, a great-
 ' er Priest than *Aaron*, and a greater King and Priest than
 ' *Melchisedeck*. He demonstrated, That the Ceremonies,
 ' the Sacrifices, and the Observations of the Law, could
 ' have no Virtue in themselves, but only as they were Types
 ' and Figures of a better Sacrifice *Jesus Christ*; and that
 ' they were accomplished in his Person, and by his Mini-
 ' stry, and consequently were finally and totally abolished.
 ' He shewed by the Examples of the Patriarchs and Prophets,
 ' That Justification was by Faith alone; and in the whole
 ' Epistle he mingled many excellent Precepts for the Regu-
 ' lation of their Lives; exhorting them in the midst of their
 ' Sufferings to repose an immoveable Trust in *Jesus Christ*,
 ' and arming them against Apostacy from that excellent Re-
 ' ligion, wherein they had so happily engaged themselves.
 This Epistle is full of excellent Allegories, and of noble
 Thoughts expressed in a sublime Manner; and in a Word,
 it is the most accurate, and methodical of all his Epistles,
 the most equal in all its Parts, and where he treats of the
 same Matter in the profoundest Way, and with the largest
 Extent. This is the 11th Epistle that *St. Paul* wrote, which
 many think was originally in the *Hebrew* or *Syriack* Tongue,
 and shortly after translated into *Greek* by some other Hand;
 and others think that *St. Paul* dictated the Matter to *St.*
Luke, by whom it was formed into an elegant Style. In-
 deed the Want of the Inscription has given Occasion to
 some particular Men to dispute the Author of it, and also
 its being Canonical; some attributing it to *St. Luke* or *Cle-*
mens, others to *Barnabas*: But *St. Jerom* assures us that all
 the Eastern Churches and *Greek* Fathers received it as *St.*
Paul's, and the *Latins* have followed them; and *Theodoret*
 reproves the *Arians* for rejecting this Epistle, contrary to the
 Authority of the Church. In short, the Epistle it self, as
 well as the Churches Authority, shews it to be *St. Paul's*;
 and all the Disputes about it began in the third Century, and
 vanished in the fifth.

Rome 15.

26, 23.

The Apostle having left *Rome* and *Italy*, according to his
 Promise in his Epistle to the *Romans*, sailed Westward and
 preached the Gospel in *Spain*, as we learn from *St. Clemens*,
Theodoret and others; and many are of Opinion that he
 went

went as far as *Britain*, which indeed is very uncertain. After he had preach'd about eight or nine Months in these Western Parts, he return'd again Eastward, and leaving both *Sicily* and *Greece*, arriv'd at *Crete*, probably about the latter End of the Year 63. After he had preach'd a while, and establish'd some Churches, in the Beginning of the following Year, he constituted *Titus* Bishop of the Island, to manage the Government and Administration of it, as all the Ancients assure us. *St. Paul* also tells *Titus* in his Epistle, Chap. 1. 5. *That for that Cause he had left him in Crete, namely to set in Order the Things that were wanting, and to ordain Presbyters in every City, as he had appointed him.* By Presbyters or Elders, both *St. Chrysostom* and *Theodoret* say he means Bishops; the former adding, That the Apostle was not willing that the Administration of so large an Isle should be left to one Person, but that every City might have its proper Governor to inspect and take Care of it, that the Burthen might be lighter, and the People attended with greater Diligence. After this Settlement *Paul* leaving the Isle, is suppos'd to go with *Timothy* into *Judea*, to visit the *Christians* in those Parts, according as he design'd *Heb.* 13. 23. but of this we have no great Certainty.

A. D.
64.
Nero

10
11.

V. In the Beginning of this Year, and the 10th of *Nero*, or in the latter End of the last, the Apostle *Peter* in all Probability came and settled at *Rome*; and that he did settle there, we have the Authority of most of the Ancients; That it was in the latter Part of his Life, and in *Nero's* Reign, we are assur'd from *Origen* and *Lactantius*: That it was not before the Year 63, is highly probable from *St. Paul's* Silence in his Epistles from *Rome*, and that it was not after the Year 64, is apparent from *Lactantius*, who says he came before *Nero's* Persecution, which began in that Year, and was one main Occasion of it. This Apostle, besides the Eastern Parts formerly mention'd, is said to have preach'd in *Africk*, *Sicily*, *Italy*, and also in *Britain*, making great Numbers of Converts in all Places. Arriving at *Rome*, he found the Peoples Minds strangely bewitch'd, and hardned against *Christianity* by the infernal Arts of *Simon Magus*, whom he had formerly defeated at *Samaria*; who after infinite Mischief's in other Places, at *Rome* had so insinuated himself into the Peoples Favour, that according to *Justin Martyr*, they erected him a Statue with this Inscription, *Simoni Deo Sancto, To Simon the Holy God.* But the Credit of this Inscription seems much weakned, tho' we cannot say overthrow'n, by another found in the last

Age in the same Place, very like this, *viz. Semoni fango Deo fidio, &c.* However it is certain, that this *Simon* by Means of his Sorceries obtain'd a great Veneration from the *Romans*, and no small Favour from the Emperor *Nero*, who was a profess'd Patron of Magicians, and all such as maintain'd secret Ways of Commerce with the infernal Powers. His great Progress provok'd the Indignation of *Peter*, who finding him still pretending himself some great Person, yea and the *Messiah*, could not but zealously oppose his presumptuous Arrogancy. But *Simon*, more incens'd by the Opposition, made some bold Challenges to the Apostle; in which being continually worsted, he at length offer'd to give the People such an evident Demonstration of his Power, as was beyond Contradiction; for he would, he said, immediately ascend up into Heaven, as the Son of God: Whereupon he rais'd himself up into the Air by the Help of two invisible Devils, as in a Chariot of Fire like *Elijah*, and by his Magical Power seem'd to be posting to Heaven. The Apostle seeing this Delusion, betook himself to Prayers, and obtain'd of God that for the Honour of his Son, the Impostor should be discover'd. Whereupon his two Spirits were taken from him, and being deserted, he fell Headlong to the Ground, and was so bruis'd and wounded, that he dy'd shortly after. This Story, related at large by *Hegesippus* the younger, is by most thought fabulous; but it is generally acknowledg'd by good Writers, that *Simon Magus* did really receive an entire Defeat from this Apostle at *Rome*.

And here it may not be improper to take some Notice of the *Dogmata* and Heresies first broach'd by *Simon*, and then vented and propagated by his Disciples and Followers; who tho' passing under different Titles, yet all center'd afterwards in the Name of *Gnosticks*. One of their Opinions was, That God did not create the World, but that it was made by Angels, and that therefore divine Honours were due to them, and they were to be ador'd as subordinate Mediators between God and Man: An Opinion from which the Church was not freed for several Ages. Another Principle was, That Men might freely and indifferently eat what had been offer'd to Idols, yea and sacrifice to the Idol it self, it being lawful confidently to abjure the Faith in Time of Persecution. Besides these, *Simon* and his Followers made the Gate yet wider, maintaining an universal Licence to sin, That Men might act as they were inclin'd, That Women might be common, That there would be no Resurrection of the Body, tho' the Soul was Immortal,

That

That to press the Observance of good Works was inconsistent with the Gospel Liberty; That if Men believ'd *Simon* and his Concubine *Hellen*, they had no Reason to regard Law or Prophets, but should be sav'd by Grace without any Works. As the Consequence of their Principles, *Irenæus* tells us, they liv'd in all Lust and Impurity, and wallow'd in the most horrible and unheard-of Bestialities. By these, and such like Principles and Practices, of which many more might be enumerated, they corrupted the Faith of *Christians*, distracted the Peace of *Christ's* Church, and stain'd and defil'd the Honour and Purity of the best Religion in the World.

The Defeat of *Simon*, and the Success of *Peter* was highly displeasing to *Nero*, who now more and more abounded in his Enormities and Vices. After he had imbrued his Hands in the Blood of his Brother, his Mother, and his Wife, and many of the Nobility, he so wretchedly debas'd himself as to become a common Player, a Charioteer, and a publick Singer; and this Year fell into prodigious Impieties, and unheard-of Pollutions: And as nothing is so monstrous as Lust when it is unconfin'd, so it brought him into the most extravagant Follies, and unnatural Inconsistencies, that could enter into human Minds. After he had exhausted his Invention in his lewd Feasts and Banquets, having attir'd himself in the Habit of a Woman and a Bride, he was wedded to one of his abominable Companions call'd *Pythagoras*, and again to his Freed Man *Doriphorus*; after which he became an Husband to a Boy call'd *Sporus*, who being emasculated, was cloath'd with all the Ornaments of an Empress, and accompany'd by the Emperor in the most publick Places; Which occasion'd several to say, *That the World had been happy had Nero's Father been marry'd only to such a Spouse.* His unbounded Lust, and exorbitant Luxury daily encreas'd the Rage of his fierce and bloody Mind, and he became cruel even to a Proverb, destroying such Numbers, that he rather appear'd a Devil Incarnate, than a Man; likewise boasting of his Actions, and saying, *That none of his Predecessors knew their own Power.* He often said, *That he had rather be hated than lov'd, because Men lov'd him according to their own Humours, but hated him according to His*; and when a Person in his Presence said as a Proverb, *When I am dead let the World be burnt*; Nay, reply'd he, *let it be while I am alive.* And not long after this, being offended at the Narrowness of the Streets and Irregularity of the Buildings, or ambitious of founding a new City, he caus'd *Rome* to be set on Fire in several Places;

Tacit.
Dion.
Suet.

getting

getting himself upon *Mecenas's* Tower, beholding the miserable Desolation with infinite Pleasure and Delight, and in a Player's Habit sung, *The Destruction of Troy*. The Fire continu'd above six Days, consuming innumerable Rows of stately and glorious Buildings and Temples, with Riches, Goods and Merchandise of inestimable Value; destroying great Numbers of People, and laying near three Quarters of this vast City in Ashes. This Fire began on the 19th of *July*, and the Year 64, and almost immediately preceded, and was one wicked Occasion of, the first General Persecution of the Church, which hapned 31 Years after our blessed Saviour's Ascension.

C H A P. VII.

From the beginning of the first General Persecution of the Church, to the Destruction of Jerusalem, and the Dissolution of the Jewish Oeconomy.

Containing the Term of about six Years.

The FIRST GENERAL PERSECUTION.

A. D.
64.
Nero
 $\frac{10}{11}$.
Tacit.

I. Immediately after the Emperor *Nero* had committed the execrable Fact of burning the most glorious City in the Universe, he seem'd to have some Remorse, and began to fear the Rage and Resentments of an injur'd People. Therefore he not only us'd the utmost Expedition in re-edifying the City, but likewise all other Methods that human Policy could suggest: Large Gifts were bestow'd on the meaner Sort; the Books of the *Sybil's* were consulted to appease the incensed Gods: Processions and publick Prayers were made to *Vulcan*, *Ceres* and *Proserpine*; the young Ladies, to propitiate *Juno*, made Sacrifices at the Capitol; and the marry'd Women celebrated solemn Vigils to the Honour of other Deities. Yet all these Gifts, Largeesses, Ceremonies and Sacrifices, were not sufficient to secure the Emperor's Reputation, or remove the Suspicion of his being the Author of this strange Tragedy. Wherefore to divert the Suspicion from himself, being excited by an infernal Malice, he turn'd all the Odium upon the innocent

cent *Christians*, who he knew were hated in the utmost Degree by the looser Sort, and proceeded against them as the Incendiaries, and the Actors in this Calamity. *Lactantius* adds, That *St. Peter* being now at *Rome*, by his many Miracles and his numerous Converts excited *Nero's* Fury against the *Christians*; who finding that great Multitudes, not only in *Rome*, but in all other Places, were daily falling from Idolatry, and were turning to this new Religion, and being transported by his brutal Tyranny to all Sorts of Cruelty, he set himself first of all to destroy this Religion, and to persecute the Servants of God. So that this is properly call'd, The first general Persecution of the Church; not but that the Church had often met with Persecution from particular Nations and People; but, as *Tertullian* expresses it, *Nero* was the first who drew the Imperial Sword against the *Christians*, then greatly flourishing in *Rome*. *Tiberius* seem'd a Favourer of the Sect, *Caligula* did not disturb them, and *Claudius*, tho' he banish'd several from *Rome*, yet it was under the particular Denomination of *Jews*.

As for the Particulars of this Persecution, *Tacitus* tells us, That at first several were seiz'd who made Profession of this new Religion; and by their Confession infinite Numbers of others were detected and executed, whom the common Hatred, and not the Burning of the City, had made criminal. He adds, That they were treated with all the Instances of Scorn and Cruelty; some of them were wrapt up in the Skins of wild Beasts, and worry'd and devour'd by Dogs; others were crucify'd; others burnt alive, being clad in Paper Coats, dipt in Pitch, Wax and such combustible Matter; that when Day-Light fail'd, they might serve for Torches and Illuminations in the Night. *Nero* exhibited these Spectacles in his own Gardens, impiously joining to them the Diversions of the Cirque, and appearing himself publickly in the Habit of a Charioteer, sitting in his Chariot; which yet the People entertain'd with more Pity, than Pleasure, knowing that they were not done for the publick Benefit, but meerly to gratifie his own private Rage and Malice. Thus barbarously were the *Christians* treated at *Rome*; among whom in the ancient Martyrologies we find the Names of *Tecla*, *Torques*, *Torquatus*, *Marcellus*, and several others. We are inform'd by *Sul. Severus* and *Orosius*, that not long after the Persecution began in *Rome*, the Emperor issu'd out Edicts against the *Christians* through most if not all the Provinces of the Empire; but in this *Mr. Dodwel* is singular, believing that the Persecution was confin'd

confin'd to *Rome*. However we find the Names of some Martyrs in *Milan* and other Places; and an Inscription was found at *Clunia* in *Spain*, dedicated to *Nero* in Memory of his having clear'd the Province of such as had introduc'd a new Superstition among Mankind. How long this Persecution lasted it is hard to determine; but in all Probability it was abated at *Rome* in a very short Time, tho' in some of the Provinces it might continue longer; and the Christians were in less Safety than formerly throughout the rest of *Nero's* Reign. And here we may not improperly take notice out of *Tacitus* of some Calamities that beset *Rome* and *Italy* shortly after. *Campania* was destroy'd by Whirlwinds, which beat down Villages, tore up Woods and Corn, and spread its Fury almost to the Gates of *Rome*; whilst the City was expos'd to a most dreadful Pestilence, which rag'd without any Sign of a corrupted Air: Houses were fill'd with dead Bodies, and the Streets with Funerals; neither Age nor Sex escap'd, both Slaves and Freemen promiscuously perish'd: Parents and Children while they lamented each others Loss, often themselves made up the Funeral Pile: Knights and Senators, tho' they indifferently perish'd, were less lamented, having as it were by a common Fate escap'd the Cruelties of their Emperor.

The Preaching and Success of the Apostle *Peter* was one great Occasion of this Persecution, therefore his Life was especially aim'd at; but by what Means he escap'd in the Heat of it, we have no Account. It is probably conjectur'd by some, that part of that Storm which he avoided, in this Year, fell upon his Brother *Andrew* in the Province of *Achaia*; tho' the Year must be acknowledg'd to be much more uncertain than the Place. This Apostle having preach'd the Gospel, and wrought many Miracles in the wild Northern Countries of *Scythia* and *Sogdiana*, and afterwards in some of the Provinces of the lesser *Asia*, at length came into *Greece*, *Epirus* and *Achaia*, where he still added more Converts to the *Christian* Faith. In the City of *Patrae* in *Achaia*, he confirm'd all those Truths he had preach'd by the Effusion of his Blood, being condemn'd to be crucify'd by *Aegeas*, the Proconsul of that Province; which Sentence was shortly after executed on *November* the 30th. All the particular Circumstances of his Death are very largely describ'd in a Letter, attributed to the Priests and Deacons of *Achaia*, his Disciples, of which *Dr. Cave* has given us an Extract; but the Authority of that Piece is not to be rely'd on, having been condemn'd by the Ancients,

as being compos'd by Hereticks. The Year of his Martyrdom is very uncertain, some placing it in the Persecution under *Domitian*, about 30 Years after this Persecution, and others in this; which to us seems the most probable. The modern *Greeks* attribute to him the Founding of the Church of *Bizantium*, since call'd *Constantinople*, and the Ordaining of *Stachys*, whom *St. Paul* calls *his beloved Stachys*, first Bishop of the Place; which is expressly asserted by *Nicephorus-Callistus* and *Nicephorus* Patriarch of *Constantinople*: But this not being mention'd by the Ancients, many doubt of the Truth of it. The Church has always rejected the Acts said to be written by this Apostle, as spurious, and also a Gospel attributed to him.

In the midst of these Times of Persecution, the Apostle *Paul* continu'd the Course of his Ministry with indefatigable Toil, wading through all Difficulties without Fear of the greatest Dangers. Having been some short Time in *Judæa*, according to Bishop *Pearson*, he pass'd from thence into the Proconsular *Asia*, where *Timothy* met him at *Ephesus*; a City which he formerly thought he shou'd never have seen again. Then journeying about 80 Miles Eastward, he made a Visit to the *Colossians*, whom he had never seen before; taking Lodgings with *Philemon* and his Wife *Apphia*, with his Fellow-Soldier *Archippus*. After a considerable Stay, he return'd back to *Ephesus*, and shortly after took a Voyage over into *Macedonia*. Before which Voyage, he undertook to settle the Church of *Ephesus*, and first excommunicated *Hymenæus* and *Philetus*, for denying the Resurrection of the Dead, and other Articles of Faith. After that he order'd *Timothy* to have his Residence at this great City, and to take the Charge of all the Proconsular *Asia*. But whether this was the precise Time of *Timothy's* being constituted Bishop of this Place, or whether it was when the Apostle took his Leave of the *Ephesians*, as we hinted in the Year 57, we leave to the Determination of the Learned.

II. Towards the latter End of the same Year that *Rome* was burnt, *Gessius Florus* was sent into *Palestine* in the Room of *Albinus*, being prefer'd by the Empress *Poppæa's* Interest. He was the thirteenth Governor or Procurator of *Judæa* after the Banishment of *Archelaus*, and the seventh after the Death of King *Herod-Agrippa*. About the Time of his Arrival, the *Levites*, who sung Hymns in the Temple, petition'd King *Agrippa*, to allow them the Use of the Linnen Robe, which solely pertain'd to the *Priests*; alledging, That such a Favour wou'd perpetuate the Memory of his Reign.

Where-

Whereupon the King by the Advice of his Council, permitted them to lay aside their former Habit, and assume that of the Priests, appointing other Singers in their Room. Which Innovation being so contrary to the *Jewish* Laws and Ordinances, it was not to be expected, as *Josephus* intimates, but Vengeance wou'd shortly follow. About the same Time the magnificent Buildings of the Temple were all finish'd, 80 Years after their being begun by *Herod* the Great; and the People perceiving that by this above 18000 Workmen wou'd want both Employment and Bread, and fearing the Holy Treasury shou'd become a Prey to the *Romans*, apply'd themselves to *Agrippa* to repair the Eastern Portico's; a stupendous Pile, and the Work of King *Solomon*, hanging over a deep and narrow Valley, and supported by a Wall of four hundred Cubits high, consisting all of vast white Marble Stones of twenty Cubits in length, and six in Thickness. But the King finding it an undertaking of extraordinary Difficulty and Expence, deny'd their Request, but permitted them to employ themselves in paving the City with broad white Stone. After this he took away the High-Priesthood from *Jesus* the Son of *Gamaliel*, and gave it to *Matthias* the Son of *Theophilus*; who was the 18th High-Priest after our Saviour's Nativity, and the last of the Sacerdotal Order.

A D. *Florus* being establish'd in his Government, in a short
 65. Time shew'd himself so rapacious and tyrannical, that in
 Nero Comparison with him, his wicked Predecessor *Albinus* might
 11 have been thought a Benefactor. For the other acted all
 12. Things secretly, and with Signs of Shame, but *Florus* openly,
 and publickly glorying in his greatest Violences; in which he behaved himself more like a common Executioner, than a Governor, omitting no Rapines nor Oppressions that might afflict the People. He was inflexible to all Entreaties, and insatiable in his Profits; equally grasping at small and great, and wasting and pillaging whole Cities as well as Provinces; and at length he proceeded so far as to proclaim through the whole Country by the Voice of a Cryer, That it should be lawful for any Man to rob and plunder, provided they brought him a Share of the Booty: Insomuch, that great numbers were constrain'd to abandon their Habitations, and flee to foreign Countries, judging they might live better among the greatest *Barbarians*. These Afflictions and Calamities were remarkable Fore-runners of the Destruction of a most impious and obstinate Generation; but in this Year there hapned still more astonishing Pre-
 fages, and such as shew'd the more immediate Hand of
 Heaven.

Heaven. In the Passover, which fell this Year on the eighth of *April*, about three Hours after Midnight, in the *Priest's Court* between the Temple and the Altar, there shin'd such an extraordinary Light as equal'd the brightest Day; and so continu'd for the Space of half an Hour. At the same Festival, a Cow led to be sacrific'd at the Altar, brought forth a Lamb in the middle of the Temple; and the great Eastern Gate of the Temple, of Massy Brass, which every Night took at least twenty Men to shut it, being also secur'd with Iron Locks and Bars let into the Solid Stone, about six a Clock at Night was seen to open of its own accord; which being related to the Governors, they could scarcely shut it again. In the 21st of *May* following, before Sun set, there appear'd an amazing Sight of warlike Chariots in the Air all over the Country, and Battalions of armed Soldiers passing through the Clouds, and investing the City. At the Feast of *Pentecost*, the 28th of the same Month, the Priests going into the Inner Temple call'd the *Holy Place*, according to Custom, at first felt the Place to move and tremble, and afterwards heard a Voice more than Human, crying, *LET US DEPART HENCE!* *St. Chrysostom* says, that it was the Voice of Angels, who now left the Place, having staid till then, in Hopes of the *Jews* Repentance. Besides these, a wonderful Comet, in Form of a flaming Sword, for a Year together was seen to hang over *Jerusalem*; threatening Vengeance to that miserable City. All these and the like Prodigies were foretold by our blessed Saviour, but could not open the Eyes of these deluded obstinate People, who generally interpreted all to their own Advantage, and supported themselves with the Expectation of their *Messiah*; whom *Josephus*, *Tacitus* and *Suetonius* mention under the Name of a Person coming from the East, who should command the Universe, which they all ignorantly apply'd to the Emperor *Vespasian*.

As the Miseries and Calamities of *Judæa* increas'd, so *Tacit.* did those of the City of *Rome*, especially by the Discovery of a great Conspiracy form'd against the Emperor, which open'd a Passage to new Mischiefs and Cruelties: For upon this Occasion *Nero* put great Numbers to Death of all Ranks, Noble and Ignoble, Guilty and Innocent. Among whom, besides *Piso* the Head of the Conspiracy, dy'd *Lucretian* the famous Poet, who hated *Nero* for his forbidding him to publish his Verses, vainly comparing his own to them. The great *Seneca* follow'd, who tho' he was no ways Guilty, yet was commanded to die, which Command he chearfully obey'd, desiring only to dispose of some Legacies;

cies; which being refus'd, he told his weeping Friends, *That since he had been hinder'd from giving them what they had merited, he left them the Example of his Life, the Memory and Imitation of which would gain them immortal Honour among all good Men.* He was oblig'd to seek for Death several Ways, for he had so macerated himself with Abstinence, that he could not bleed, and Poison would have no Effect upon him; but at length entering a Bath, he was stifled by the Fumes, having according to his usual Elegancy, discours'd even to the last, of many excellent Precepts of Morality. After him follow'd the polite and impure *Petronius*, one who had been a great Assistant to *Nero* in his extravagant Pleasures, and noted for his exquisite Art of heightning and refining a voluptuous Life. His Death seem'd as luxurious as his Life, in which he proceeded with the least imaginable Trouble and Concern, opening his Veins, and closing them as he thought fit; discoursing with his Friends, not of serious Matters, or of a future State, but of light and pleasant Subjects, all the Time attending to soft and tender Verses, and delicate amorous Songs. Besides these and innumerable others, dy'd the Empress *Poppæa* her self, who being with Child and indispos'd, *Nero* kill'd her with a kick with his Foot, for upbraiding him as he return'd late from driving his Chariot in publick. So that *Nero* daily became more and more insupportable to the City and Government.

In the mean Time, the Apostle *Paul* proceeded daily in his Ministry; and having pass'd over from *Asia* into *Macedonia*, visited *Philippi* a fourth Time, according to his Promise in his Epistle to that Church. Here he staid a considerable Space; and from hence, in all Probability, he wrote his first Epistle to *Timothy*, having promis'd to see him in a short Time; but lest he should be prevented, he gave him Instructions how to behave himself in his Office at *Ephesus* by Letter. ' In which he laid down the Duties and Qualifications of a Bishop, as well in Respect of his Ministry, ' as of his private Conversation, instructing him in the Office of a true Christian Pastor. Upon which Account *St. Austin* says, ' That all Persons separated for the Service ' of the Church, ought to have the two Epistles to *Timothy*, ' and that to *Titus*, always before their Eyes, as containing the Virtues of the ministerial Life and Office. One ' of the Apostle's Exhortations was to Reading, by which, ' as he intimated what he himself did in the first Place, so ' he shew'd, that the greatest supernatural Gifts did not excuse a Pastor from spending some Time in reading the ' Holy

‘ Holy Scriptures. He recommended it also to him to drink
 ‘ a little Wine for the Weakness of his Stomach, and fre-
 ‘ quent Indispositions; using human Means to preserve the
 Health of so necessary a Person, and not that Power which
 God had given him to heal Diseases without Medicines,
 which was intended principally for the Conversion of In-
 fidels. The Apostle having a Design to remove out of
 Macedonia, and winter in *Nicopolis* in *Epirus*, wrote a Let-
 ter to *Titus* then in *Crete* to meet him there, sending *Artimas*
 and *Tichicus* to supply his Place in governing that Church
 in his Absence; for *Paul* had some special Service for him
 to do in *Macedonia*, and the next Year sent him into *Dal-* ^{2 Tim. 4}
matia. ‘ In this Epistle to *Titus*, as he had done in that to ^{10.}
 ‘ *Timothy*, he set down the Qualifications that a Bishop
 ‘ ought to have, admonishing him to rebuke those sharply
 ‘ who were naturally hard and obstinate, as the *Cretians*
 ‘ were; and not to suffer them to be led away with the
 ‘ Delusions of *Judaizing* Teachers. He also laid down
 ‘ Precepts for all Conditions of Men, not neglecting
 ‘ Servants, because *Jesus Christ* had poured out his Grace
 ‘ upon all Men. He order’d him to take Care of *Zenas*
 ‘ and *Apollos*, to conduct them safe in their Journey, and
 ‘ let them want nothing. *Apollos* has been spoken of for-
 merly; *Zenas* was a Jew well skill’d in their Law, and a
 Christian Teacher; He is said to have written an History of
Titus, but ’tis a forg’d Piece.

The Apostle having winter’d at *Nicopolis* in *Epirus*, con-
 tinu’d his Journey South-Eastward, and went a third Time
 to *Corinth*, where he appointed *Eraustus* to continue; and
 cross’d the Sea to *Asia* and *Ephesus*, as he promis’d *Timothy*
 in his Epistle. He left *Timothy* at *Ephesus*, who shed many
 Tears at his Parting; and from thence he went to *Miletum*,
 not far distant, where he left *Trophimus* sick. After that he
 travell’d Northwards to *Troas*, and lodg’d with *Carpus* one
 of his Scholars, where he left his Cloak, some Books and
 Parchment Rolls, perhaps the holy Scriptures. About this
 Time, in all Probability, he suffer’d at *Antioch* in *Pisidia*,
Iconium and *Lystra*, those Persecutions which he mentions
 in general in the second Epistle to *Timothy*, Chap. 3. 11.
 and thanks God for his Deliverance from them. The Fa-
 thers relate, That about this Time God reveal’d to him that
 his Death was approaching; and *Athanasius* says, That it
 was particularly made known to him by God that he should
 suffer Martyrdom at *Rome*, and that thereupon, instead of
 avoiding it, he hastned with Joy towards the Place: But he
 VOL. I. A a arriv’d

A. D.
 66.
 Nero
 12
 13.
 2 Tim. 1.
 20.
 Chap. 1.
 4.
 Chap. 4.
 13.

arriv'd not at *Rome* till the Beginning of the following Year. A considerable Time before that Journey, about *April 66*, *Vologesus* King of *Parthia* being vanquish'd, and his Brother *Tiridates* King of *Armenia* being brought to *Rome*, *Nero* shut up the Temple of *Janus* in Token of an universal Peace, which had stood open from the second Year after our Saviour's Nativity. And having with great Pomp restored *Tiridates*, *Nero* left *Rome* with a vast Retinue; and pass'd into *Greece* and *Achaia*, where he continu'd above a Year in the Exercise of all Kinds of Games and Extravagancies. He left *Helius* Governor of the City, a Freed Man, and one of his wicked Instruments, and bloody Executioners, to whom he gave full Power and Authority, to the great Affliction of the Inhabitants.

Tacit.
Joseph.

III. The universal Peace continu'd but a very short Time, before a most desperate War broke out in *Palestine*, which prov'd the Ruin and Destruction of the *Jews*: For now being ripened for Vengeance, and having fill'd up the Measure of their Iniquity, the fatal Time approach'd, when they were to pay for the Blood of all the Prophets and holy Men, especially for that of the blessed *Jesus*, which they had solemnly imprecated upon themselves, and their whole Progeny. Besides their own perverse and seditious Tempers, the Tyranny and Oppression of *Florus* was the main Occasion of their Rebellion, and their taking up Arms against the *Romans*. For he having most unjustly and inhumanly treated the *Jews*, and committed several Outrages and Slaughters both in *Casarea* and *Jerusalem*, they at length, without considering the Consequences, notwithstanding all the powerful Dissuasions of *Agrippa*, broke out into an open War. And this began in the Month of *May*, in the 12th Year of *Nero's* Empire, the 17th of *Agrippa's* Reign, and the 2d of *Florus's* Government.

The War began by some of the inferior Sort, who surpriz'd a strong Castle call'd *Massada*, near the Dead Sea, and put all the *Roman* Garrison to the Sword. At *Jerusalem* also *Eleazar* the Son of the former High-Priest *Ananias*, Commander of the Guards of the Temple, a bold and intrepid Youth, dissuaded the Priests from offering any Sacrifices but those of the *Jews*, especially excluding such as were offer'd for the Emperor or the *Romans*. Which rash and unprecedented Act caus'd great Affliction to the Governors of the City, who being more peaceable and prudent, us'd all Methods to prevent such Practices, well knowing

knowing it was an Indication of an open Rebellion; but perceiving the Numbers of the Seditious to encrease, they dispatch'd Messengers both to *Florus* and *Agrippa*, desiring that they would send Forces to suppress the Tumult in the Beginning. The former desiring nothing so much as a Revolt to cover his numerous Corruptions, neglected the Message; but the latter immediately sent 3000 Horse, who together with the Rulers and Priests, and the rest of those who desir'd Peace, possess'd themselves of the Upper City against the Seditious, who were intire Masters of the Temple and the Lower City. Continual Skirmishes pass'd between both Parties for seven Days together; but upon the Feast of their carrying Wood into the Temple, many Robbers and Assassins out of the Country were receiv'd into the Temple, who with the rest boldly encounter'd *Agrippa's* Forces, and forcing them from the upper Part of the City, drove them into *Herod's* Palace, and burnt down those Buildings where the publick Papers and Records were kept, together with the Palace of the *Asmonæans*, which was then *Agrippa's* Court, and the Palace of *Ananias*. This caus'd the Nobility and Priests to fly into Vaults and secret Places, from whence *Ananias* was taken and slain miserably, according to *St. Paul's* Prediction eight Years before, *Acts* 23. 3. The next Day being the 15th of *August*, they took the Castle of *Antonia*, after two Days Siege, kill'd all the *Roman* Soldiers, and set the Castle on Fire. And then being join'd by *Manabem* Son to the famous *Judas of Galilee*, who brought a strong Party of Rebels into the City, they set upon the King's Palace, where *Agrippa's* Soldiers were retir'd, took it and burnt it; the Soldiers with the *Romans* flying to the Towers call'd *Hippico*, *Phaselus* and *Mariamne*. *Manabem* for his Tyrannical Practices was soon after slain in the Temple by *Eleazar*, and many of his Party expell'd the City. Shortly after, *Agrippa's* Soldiers and the *Romans* in the three Towers yielded upon Composition, delivering up all their Arms; but the Seditious, contrary to Oaths and Treaties, put all the *Romans* to the Sword, except *Metellus*.

On the same Day at *Cæsarea*, by the Instigation of *Florus*, all the *Jews* that inhabited that City were cruelly massacred by the *Gentiles*, to the Number of 20000; which so enrag'd the *Jews* throughout the whole Country, that they began to waste and destroy all the Villages of the *Syrians* and the neighbouring Cities, as *Philadelphia*, *Gerasa*, *Ptolemais*, *Pella*, *Scythopolis*, *Gadara*, *Hippo*, *Gaulanitis*, *Sebaste*, *Ascalon*, *Anthedon*, and *Gaza*. Upon these Outrages, the

Syrians made terrible Massacres of the *Jews* among them, which they destroy'd partly out of old Resentments, and partly for Security; by which means all *Syria* was in a deplorable Condition, and every City expos'd to the Miseries of two Armies which plac'd their Safety in the greatest Effusion of Blood; the Days being spent in Slaughters, and the Nights in Fears worse than Death it self. Only the Inhabitants of *Antioch*, *Apamea* and *Sidon*, out of Policy or Mercy spared the *Jews* dwelling among them; but in *Alexandria* in *Ægypt*, upon a Sedition rais'd there, 50000 *Jews* were slain in one Day, by two *Roman* Legions let in upon them. About the same Time, the *Jews* in *Judæa* invested the strong Castle of *Macherus* in *Perea*; and the *Roman* Garrison finding themselves weak and ill provided, in a short Time yielded it up, upon Condition of departing without Molestation.

The general Revolt of the *Jews* caus'd *Cestius Gallus*, Governor of *Syria*, to use all possible Diligence and Expedition, and coming down with a powerful Army from *Antioch* and *Ptolemais*, he invaded *Judæa* and *Galilee*, burning both *Zabulon* and *Joppa*, in the latter of which he kill'd 8400 *Jews*. About the Feast of Tabernacles, having burnt *Lydda*, he march'd directly to *Jerusalem* it self; and near *Bethoron*, about six Miles from the City, he was met by great Numbers of *Jews* who came to the Feast, who set upon the *Romans* with that impetuous Fury, that the whole Army was in Danger; but fresh Troops coming in to *Cestius*, he not only repell'd the *Jews*, and forc'd them into *Jerusalem*, but on the fourth of *October* also broke into the City with his Forces. In a short Time he became Master of the lower Part of the City, as also *Bezetha* and *Canopolis*; and proceeded against the stronger Parts, the Temple and the Upper City, which he might easily have taken, had he vigorously continu'd his Attacks, the better Sort favouring the *Romans*, and the Seditious only withstanding them.

Enseb. And now the *Christians* and Believers began to be sensible of that Caution which our Lord had given them, *That when they should see Jerusalem compass'd with Armies, and the Abomination of Desolation (the Roman Army) standing in the Holy Place, they should then flee into the Mountains, betake themselves to some obscure Place of Refuge; And having been lately commanded by a particular Revelation, communicated to some pious and good Men among them, to leave Jerusalem and flie to Pella, which Epiphanius says was done by the Ministry of an Angel, they universally withdrew themselves with their Bishop Simeon, and seasonably*

ably retreated thither, as to a little *Zoar* from the Flame of *Sodom*, and so none of them perish'd in the common Ruin. This *Pella* was a little City beyond *Jordan* in *Decapolis* and *Trachonitis*, about 100 Miles North-East of *Jerusalem*, belonging to *Agrippa's* Dominions, inhabited by *Gentiles*; and probably God was pleas'd to direct the *Christians* hither, that they might be out of the Reach of the *Besom of Destruction*, that was to sweep away the *Jews* where-ever it came. Nor was it a less remarkable Instance of the Care and Tenderneſs of the divine Providence over them, that when *Cestius* had besieg'd *Jerusalem* and the Temple, on a sudden he should unexpectedly break up the Siege, when he had so great a Prospect of succeeding; giving the *Christians* warning of their Danger, and an Opportunity of escaping, and at the same time reserving the *Jews* to more terrible Chastisement.

Cestius having retreated from *Jerusalem* without any apparent Reason, the *Jews* took fresh Courage and pursu'd him in the Way towards *Cesarea*, with so much Success, that the *Romans* not only lost above 6000 Men, but the greatest Part of their Baggage and Ammunition, their Engines and Slings, and other Arms, which the *Jews* us'd in their own Defence in the last Siege. At length the *Romans* with great Difficulty escap'd to *Antipatris*, and so to *Cesarea*, making a very dishonourable and disadvantageous Retreat, upon the eighth of *November*. The *Jews*, elevated with their Victory, upon their Return to *Jerusalem*, created *Joseph Gorion* and *Ananus*, once High-Priest, Governors of the City, and sent many Commanders into every Province and Government; and among the rest they sent *Josephus* a Priest, and the famous Writer of the *Jewish Wars* and Antiquities, into *Galilee*; where after he had wall'd and fortify'd many Towns, and gather'd together above 60000 Men, he waited for the coming down of the *Romans*. Yet notwithstanding all his Care and Diligence, there were many Commotions and frequent Seditions rais'd against him, by the subtle Designs of *John* the Son of a certain *Levite*, and by the Malice of some of the Rulers in *Jerusalem* who envy'd him the Government of *Galilee*. But *Josephus* frustrated all their Endeavours, Arts and Councils, and avoided them by his extraordinary Policy and Management, compelling *John* to flee with his Forces to *Jerusalem*, out of *Giscala* a Town of *Galilee* which he had fortify'd. At *Jerusalem*, *Ananus* the chief Governor of the City diligently prepar'd all Things necessary for a War, repair'd the Walls, and order'd the making of all Kinds of Arms, and warlike Instruments.

He in vain endeavour'd to reconcile the Faction of the *Zealots*, and also to apprehend *Simon Giora*, who was both a Tyrant and a Robber, by sending some Troops against him; but he and his Party fled to others of the same Employ that kept *Massada*, from whence they with their Robberies and Murthers miserably infested all the Country of *Judea* and *Idumaea*. In the mean Time, *Cestius* sent Messengers to *Nero* in *Achaia*, giving him an Account of the ill Posture of Affairs in *Judea*, much blaming the Conduct of *Florus*. The Emperor now wanting his General *Corbulo*, whom he had lately put to Death, and deliberating whom to send thither, he at length design'd the famous *Vespasian*, as the only Person capable of such a Charge; and not fearing him by reason of the Meanness of his Birth and Name, tho' he had much disobliged him, he made him Governor of *Judea* in the Room of *Florus*, and at the same Time sent *Mutianus* into *Syria* in the Room of *Cestius Gallus*. *Vespasian* was the fourteenth Governor of *Judea* after the Banishment of *Archelaus*, and the eighth after the Death of *Herod-Agrippa*, entering upon that Office in the latter End of the Year 66, and the beginning of the 13th of the Emperor *Nero*.

A. D. *Vespasian* with all Expedition pass'd over into *Asia*, and
67. so to *Syria* and *Antioch*; where he gather'd together all the
Nero Roman Forces and Auxiliaries in those Parts; and coming
13 down to *Ptolemais* in *Phœnicia*, he immediately recover'd
14. *Sephoris* that favour'd the *Romans*. Here he was join'd by
his excellent Son *Titus* from *Alexandria*, who brought from
thence the fifth and tenth Legions, with other Auxiliaries;
which together with his own Troops compos'd an Army
of 60000 Men, besides their Baggage and Attendants. With
this powerful Force *Vespasian* march'd to the Borders of
the Province of *Galilee*, and there encamp'd, designing by
the Sight of his Army to terrifie the Enemy, and give them
Time to repent and yield; but finding all possible Resi-
stance, he set down before *Gadara*, in a short Time storm'd
the Fortifications, burnt down the Town, and put all the
Jews to the Sword. Then advancing to *Jotopata*, a Place
of great Strength, he invested it on the 21st of *May*, where
he was valiantly oppos'd by the renowned *Josephus*, who
with his Skill and Courage defended it beyond all Expe-
ctation: But after forty Days close Siege, *Vespasian* took
the Place by Storm, to the Destruction of 40000 *Jews*.
Josephus himself flying into a Cave or Vault, was at length
taken Prisoner, and order'd to be sent to the Emperor;
but desiring to speak a word with *Vespasian*, by a Prophe-
tick

tick Spirit he foretold, *That he should free him from his Captivity, but should first be Emperor himself.* After some Refreshment of the Legions, and *Agrippa's* Entertainment of this great Commander at *Cæsarea Philippi*, *Vespasian* proceeded to the Sieges of *Tiberias* and *Tarichæa*, on the Sea of *Galilee*, of which the former yielded, and was spared at the Request of *Agrippa*; but the latter was taken by Force and destroy'd, where great Numbers were cut in Pieces, besides 30000 which were sold for Slaves. These Cities being recover'd or destroy'd, almost all *Galilee* became subject to the *Romans*, except *Gamala*, *Gisgala*, and the Mountain *Ituburium* or *Tabor*. But *Vespasian* proceeding with extraordinary Valour and Conduct, took and destroy'd *Gamala* after a Month's Siege, on the 23d of *October*; and shortly after the Mountain *Ituburium* was also taken by the *Romans*; both with terrible Slaughters of the *Jews*. *Gisgala* was left to the Management of *Titus*, who offer'd fair Terms to the Governor *John*, who seem'd ready to embrace them, till he found an Opportunity to flee with his seditious Party to *Jerusalem*. *Titus* spar'd the City, when he took it; put a Garrison into it, and repair'd to *Cæsarea*; where he was met by his Father *Vespasian*, who having won *Famnia* and *Azotus*, ended the Campaign in *December*, with the total Reduction of all that strong and populous Province *Galilee*.

IV. During these busie Transactions, the Apostle *Paul* being assur'd of his approaching Martyrdom, return'd a second Time to *Rome*; where meeting and joining with *Peter*, they both us'd their utmost Endeavours to instruct the *Jews* in their Synagogues, and to convert the *Gentiles* in all publick Places and Assemblies. They continually labour'd to instil in the Minds of all Men the true and pure Knowledge of God, the Rules of Virtue and *Christian* Morality, and to win Persons from their excessive Dancings, Drunkenness, and other sensual Pleasures, that were the Companions of Incontinence, to which all the *Romans*, both Prince and People, were extreemly addicted. Besides these Reformatiions, *Lactantius* assures us, that both these Apostles at *Rome* foretold, ' That in a short Time God would send a Prince who should entirely conquer the *Jews*, and level their great City with the Ground; That the besieg'd should suffer the extreamest Miseries that attend Famines and Want, and at length fall into their Enemies Hands, when they should see their Wives inhumanly treated, their Daughters violated and prostituted,

‘ their Sons torn asunder, and their Infants dash’d in Pieces;
 ‘ and in short, all Things wasted with Fire and Sword,
 ‘ and themselves for ever banish’d from their beloved
 ‘ Land; and all this because of their Contempt and Abuse
 ‘ of the Son of God.

Tho’ Nero was still in Greece, and absent from Rome, yet the Actions of the two Apostles in a short Time began to be censur’d by the Magistrates, especially by the wicked Governor *Helius*, who like a second Nero rag’d against them and their Doctrine. It is reported, that their greatest Prejudice against *Peter* was his defeating *Simon Magus*, and that against *Paul*, his converting one of the Emperor’s Concubines. These two being sought for, and in apparent Danger, St. *Ambrose* tells us, That the *Christians* in Rome, by daily Prayers and Importunities, solicited *Peter* to make an Escape, and to reserve himself for the farther Benefit of the Church. This he at first rejected, as too much reflecting upon his Courage and Constancy, till their Tears and Entreaties prevailing, he made his Escape by Night; but as he pass’d the City Gate, he was met by one in the Shape of his dear Master *Jesus*: Who being ask’d by *Peter* whether he was going, made Answer, *To Rome to be crucify’d a second Time*; which he taking for a Reproof of his Cowardice in flying from his Persecutors, return’d again into the City with great Courage, and was immediately put into the *Mamertine* Prison with the other Apostle *Paul*. Here they were kept eight or nine Months in close Imprisonment, where they spent their Time in the most solemn Acts of Devotion; and as Occasion offer’d, preach’d the Gospel to their Guards and Fellow-Prisoners, among whom it is reported, they converted *Processus* and *Martinian*, the Captains of their Guards, and forty seven others. In a short Time *Paul* was call’d to answer before *Helius*; and tho’ all Men out of Fear abandon’d him, yet the Lord stood by him and strengthened him, to make his Preaching more conspicuous and effectual to the *Gentiles*, and deliver’d him out of the Mouth of that Lion, not from his Bonds, but ‘ from every evil Work, to preserve him to his heavenly Kingdom. *Alexander* the Copper-Smith, who not long before had been excommunicated by the Apostle, now turn’d all his Malice against him, and did him much Injury, for which he pray’d that the Lord would reward him. Also the Disciples of *Asia*, of whom were *Phygellus* and *Hermogenes*, who attended him to Rome, forsook him there, fearing to run any hazard with him: Only *Onesiphorus*, his former Convert, who had been very serviceable to him at

Ephesus,

2 Tim. 4.
 16--18.
 14, 15.
 Chap. 1.
 15--18.

Ephesus, coming to *Rome*, sought him out, and admittred to him in Prison, not being asham'd of his Chains; for which he zealously pray'd for the Prosperity of him and his Family.

During the Time of the Apostles Confinement, *St. Peter* wrote his second general Epistle, not directed to any particular Church, but to all that obtained precious Faith through the Righteousness of God, and our Saviour *Jesus Christ*. Yet since he told them, Chap. 3. 1. ' That this was the ' second Epistle he wrote to them; it follows, that that, as well as the first, was directed to the converted *Jews*, dispersed through the Provinces of *Asia*; and also that it was writ not long before his Death, as it is intimated Chap. 1. 14. ' In this Epistle he labour'd by earnest Exhortations to ' engage the *Christians* to persevere in the Apostles Do- ' ctine, and to testifie the Soundness and Sincerity of their ' Faith by their Works, forewarning them of the false Teach- ' ers already risen, foretelling their sad and terrible Destru- ' ction, and describing them by their odious Marks, that ' they might avoid them. After which he vindicated the ' Doctrine of *Christ's* Coming, which the Hereticks then ' deny'd to encourage Men the more securely to entertain ' their lewd Courses; declaring, that tho' *Christ* delay'd his ' Coming, that he might not surprize Men in their Sins, yet ' he wou'd certainly come to execute Judgment upon those ' Scoffers and Seducers. He set forth the Destruction of *Jeru- ' salem* in such a manner as our Saviour had done before, ' namely as the Destruction of the whole World, speaking ' of the Heavens passing away, the Elements melting, and ' the Earth being burnt up; and after that of a new Hea- ' ven and a new Earth, a new State of the Church under ' the Gospel among the *Gentiles*, after the old World of ' the *Jewish* State shou'd be dissolv'd. He also recommend- ' ed *St. Paul's* Epistles; adding withal, That there were ' some Places in them hard to be understood, which the ' Unlearned and Unstable wrested to their own Damna- ' tion. This Epistle, tho' now generally receiv'd for Ca- ' nonical, was by many in the first Ages doubted of, and ac- ' counted supposititious, as differing in Stile from the former: ' But this is no sufficient Reason against so many others as ' have been produc'd for its being genuine, as the Inscription ' bearing his Name, its Consent with the former, the Descrip- ' tion in Chap. 1. 16, 17, 18. with several other Marks, ' which do equally overthrow *Grotius's* Opinion, that *Simon* ' or *Simeon* Bishop of *Jerusalem* was the Author of it.

About the same Time *Paul* wrote his fourteenth and last Epistle, which was his second to *Timothy*, who was at that Time in some part of *Asia*, but not at *Ephesus*. It is evident from his own Words, that it was written near his Death, which he intimates to be an involuntary Death, or Martyrdom; for which Reason *St. Chrysostom* says, That this Epistle was, as it were, his last Will and Testament. In it he not only desir'd *Timothy* to come to him before Winter, but he again exhorted him to discharge all the Duties of a Bishop and Pastor suitable to those excellent Graces he had receiv'd, and with a generous Contempt of the World, since the Spirit of *Christianity* was not a Spirit of Fear, but of Love and Courage, and of a sound Mind: Adding, that whosoever wou'd live godly Lives in *Christ Jesus*, must suffer Persecution, according to his Example. He advis'd him not to forget the Doctrines he had taught him, nor to be disturb'd or surpriz'd at the Apostacy of some from the Faith and the Truth, but to preach the more zealously against such Opposers as cou'd not bear sound Doctrine, but heap'd to themselves Teachers agreeable to their own unstable itching Humour. The Reason why he desir'd *Timothy's* Coming was because he had none of his old Companions and Disciples with him, but *Luke*; *Demas* had forsaken him, and was gone to *Thessalonica* for his secular Interest; *Crescens* was gone to *Galatia*, *Titus* to *Dalmatia*, and *Tychicus* he had sent to *Ephesus*. There were doubtless many *Christians* at *Rome* of eminent Piety and Courage, among whom he nam'd *Enbrulus*, *Pudens* and *Linus*, who minister'd to him in his Bonds; but he particularly desir'd to have some of his Scholars about him to assist him in his Ministry, and to comfort the faithful under Persecution. What is spoken of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, the *Ægyptian Magicians* who withstood *Moses*, is not taken from a Book which some pretend to have been written by these two Persons, but from some ancient Tradition, or Writings among the *Jews*.

A. D.
68.
Nero
14.

In the Beginning of the succeeding Year, *Nero* by reason of Disturbances at Home, at the Request of *Helius*, left *Greece*, tho' in the Midst of Winter; but before his Arrival at *Rome*, the Time was accomplish'd that the two great Apostles *Peter* and *Paul* shou'd glorifie God by their Martyrdoms; and the former as a *Jew* and a Foreigner was condemn'd to be crucify'd, and the latter as a *Roman* to be beheaded. *Peter* being scourg'd according to the *Roman* Custom, was led to the Top of the *Vatican* Mount near *Tyber*, where he entreated and obtain'd the Favour of the

Officers,

Officers, that he might not be crucified in the ordinary Way, but might suffer with his Head downwards, declaring, *That he was far unworthy to suffer in the same Posture, wherein his Lord and Master had suffer'd before him: Happy Man!* as *St. Chrysoſtom* glosſes, to be ſet in the readieſt Poſture of travelling from Earth to Heaven. The other Apoſtle was beheaded three Miles out of the City in a Place call'd *Aqua Salvia*, on the ſame Day, and 22^d of *February*, according to *Biſhop Pearson's* Calculation; in the Abſence of *Nero*, as appears from *Clement's* Epistle, which ſays, that he ſuffer'd ' by the Command of the Governors, who durſt ' not in his Preſence have executed ſuch Authority. Thus dy'd the two moſt eminent Apoſtles of *Jeſus Chriſt*, after they had with indefatigable Labours reap'd a moſt glorious Harveſt of infinite Numbers of Souls, and triumphantly propagated Salvation to the moſt conſiderable Parts of the World. A Biſhoprick was founded in *Rome* by *St. Peter*, who was now ſucceeded by *Linus*, the ſame mention'd 2 *Tim.* 4. 21. But many of the Ancients mention both theſe Apoſtles as equally concern'd in the Founding the Biſhoprick, and do expreſly aſſert *Linus* to have been the firſt Biſhop of *Rome*. We are told, that *St. Peter's* Wife ſuffer'd Martyrdom before his Death by his Encouragement, and that he left behind him a Daughter nam'd *Petronilla*; but we have no Certainty of it. Several Writings have been falſly attributed to him, as his Acts, Goſpel, Revelation, Preaching, and of the Judgment, as alſo of the Doctrines of *St. Peter*, and a Liturgy. As the like has been done to *St. Paul*, namely, an Epistle to the *Laodiceans*, a third Epistle to the *Theſſalonians*, and to the *Corinthians*, a ſecond to the *Ephesians*, his Letter to *Seneca*, his Acts, his Revelation, his Voyage with *Thecla*, and his Sermons.

Shortly after the Death of theſe two Apoſtles, *Nero* having return'd to *Rome* in a Kind of a Triumph, ſurrounded with Muſicians and Players, the inbred Diſtempers of the *Roman* Empire, contracted by the Miſgovernment of four ſucceeding Princes, began to break out and diſcover themſelves in their furious Effects. The *Romans* had with Decency born with the Diſſimulation of *Tiberius*, the Brutality of *Caligula*, and the Stupidity of *Claudius*, but the Fury of *Nero* having exhausted all human Patience, all Men preſs'd to a Revolution; and *Vindex*, Commander of the Legions in *Gaul*, began the Revolt, publicly proteſting againſt the Government of *Nero*, and proclaiming *Sergius Galba* Emperor, then Governor of Part of *Spain*. *Galba* joining in the Enterprize, and taking the Empire upon him, it ſhortly after

*Dion.
Suet.*

after caus'd the Revolt not only of the Armies in *Spain*, but also of the Legions in *Germany*, and other Places, all unanimously declaring against the present Emperor. These Proceedings drove *Nero* to the utmost Rage and Despair, and caus'd him to enter upon the most black and barbarous Designs imaginable, resolving to massacre all the Governors of Provinces, and Commanders of Armies, to destroy all exil'd Persons, to murder all the *Gauls* in *Rome*, and give up their Nation to the Plunder of his Army, to poison the whole Senate at an Entertainment, to burn the City, and to turn out Wild-Beasts among the People to prevent their extinguishing the Flames. But he soon found himself unable to effect any such Attempts, for all Mankind fell from him and forsook him, which made him become as servile, as before he had been tyrannical; and he who a few Days before had been the great Monarch of the World, was now reduc'd to a State more abandon'd and deplorable than the vilest Slave. And what was still more terrible, the Senate being assembled, pronounc'd him a mortal Enemy to the State, and solemnly condemn'd him to dye *More Majorum*, which was to have his Head made fast in a Pillory, and to be scourg'd to Death. *Nero* having with the utmost Confusion and Distraction retir'd in Disguise to a Country House belonging to his Freed Man *Phaon*, there heard of his Doom and the dreadful Punishment design'd him; which caus'd him to snatch up a couple of Daggers, and after a thousand inglorious Sighs and Tears, and often complaining, *What an Artist the World wou'd lose*, by the Assistance of others he dispatch'd himself, his Eyes staring in his Head after an unheard-of Manner. Thus dy'd *Nero* the sixth Emperor of *Rome*, and the first that embriu'd his Hands in the Blood of the *Christians*, who by his execrable Actions brought upon himself the severest Misfortunes that cou'd befall a Prince, and upon the State the greatest Calamities that cou'd arise from unjust Tyranny in his Life, and from intestine Conuulsions after his Death. He was the last of the Family of the *Cæsars*, who reign'd in *Rome*, tho' the following Emperors had the Titles of *Cæsar*. He dy'd in the Year 68, on the 9th Day of *June*, under the Consulships of *S. Italicus* and *G. Trachalus*, being in the 32d Year of his Age, and having reign'd 13 Years, seven Months, and 27 Days.

A. D.
68.

GALBA,
the seventh
Roman
Emperor.

V. *Nero* was succeeded by *Galba*, who had assum'd the Imperial Power in *Spain* two Months and seven Days before, a noted and experienc'd Person, now 72 Years of Age;

Age; being the first who receiv'd the Empire from the Hands of the Soldiers, the Senate consenting, having himself no Affinity or Alliance with the Family of the *Cæsars*, either by Blood or Adoption. Upon hearing of *Nero's* Death, after he had conquer'd and suppress'd many Difficulties and Disturbances, he repair'd to *Rome*, where he soon became distastful to the People by his many Instances of Severity and Avarice. However he at first gave no little Satisfaction by rescinding the odious Acts of *Nero*, and by executing many of the wicked Instruments of his Cruelty, and *Helius* in particular; tho' he spar'd some of the most notorious Offenders for the Sake of Money. He was so remarkably covetous, as sometimes to sigh and weep when his Table was better furnish'd than ordinary; a Vice incident to his Age, but more dangerous to his Circumstances, especially in Respect to the Looseness of the *Prætorian* Soldiers. For when a large Donative had been promis'd them in his Absence, as it was usual when they swore to a new Emperor, he utterly refus'd to allow it, declaring, *That he chose, but never wou'd purchase his Soldiers*; a Saying highly offensive to the Soldiers of these corrupt Times, who cou'd bear no rigorous Discipline like the ancient *Romans*, especially from a Prince who suffer'd himself to be bought and sold every Hour. But what made this Prince most generally hated and abhor'd, was his giving up himself to the Management of three Favourites, *Vinius*, *Laco*, and *Icelus*; who having their Lodgings with him in his Palace, and being always in his Presence, were commonly stil'd his *Pædagogues*. These three, whose Vices and Humours were as different as possible, abus'd his Authority with so much Insolence, that they made him appear, by the Inequality of his Conduct, both odious and despicable; so that sometimes he shew'd himself rigorous, at other Times remiss, condemning illustrious Persons unheard, and pardoning others without Reason, as he was guided by these Men. In short, there was nothing but, by their Mediation, he permitted either to be purchas'd for Money, or granted for Favour; as Taxes, Exemptions, Punishments for Innocents, Impunity for Criminals, and other Pieces of the highest Injustice. So that considering the Hatred of the Soldiers, and the great Instability of the Times, it was not to be expected that this Emperor shou'd continue long upon the Throne.

In the latter End of this Year, or the Beginning of the following, *St. Clement* an eminent Disciple of *St. Peter's*, and afterwards Bishop of *Rome*, wrote his celebrated Epistle to the *Corinthians*. This Person, by some call'd an Apostle and by others an Apostolical Man, is mention'd by
St.

St. Paul, *Phil.* 4. 3. who mentions him not only as his Fellow Labourer in the Work of the Gospel, but as one *whose Name was written in the Book of Life*; and his Epistle, next to the Holy Scriptures, is accounted one of the most eminent Records of Antiquity, and accordingly was for some Ages read in the *Christian* Congregations. It was written in the Name of the whole Church of *Rome* to that of *Corinth*, upon occasion of some Divisions concerning their Teachers, their vain Conceit of their spiritual Gifts, and their Mistakes about the Resurrection, all which began to break out again, tho' St. Paul by his Epistles and Sermons had in a great Measure suppress'd them. ' In this, he first
' put them in Mind of the Happiness of that Peace they
' had formerly enjoy'd, representing to them the Danger
' of their present Divisions, shewing the deplorable Consequences by many Examples, and how highly displeasing
' they were to God; moreover advising them to a Re-union and a Repentance, in practising Obedience to their
' lawful Pastors, Humility, and Charity, in Imitation of
' the Humility of *Jesus Christ*, and the Mercy of God,
' through the Hope of a Resurrection, which he much insisted upon. From thence he took an Occasion to recommend to the Faithful the Practice of many *Christian* Virtues, and the Observation of a regular Discipline; declaring, That it was very ill done to rise up against the Pastors and Bishops, who were constituted by the Apostles, or elected by the Faithful after their Death. He display'd
' the Hainousness of their Crime who were the first Promoters of this Division, earnestly soliciting them to return to their Duty and Obedience towards their Ministers, and to re-unite themselves to the rest of the Believers. The whole is written with great Simplicity and Energy, with soft Words and hard Arguments, with the tenderest Concern for the Church of *Christ*, and with a happy Mixture of Zeal and Charity. As to the Time of its being written, there have been several Opinions; but we have plac'd it here, because, as it is evident it was written after the Deaths of St. Peter and St. Paul, so it is very probable it was before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, since it speaks of the Temple Service as then in Being.

Tacit.
&c.

In the Beginning of the Year 69, the Emperor *Galba*, finding the *Roman* Provinces in Disorder, and his own Affairs in a dangerous Posture, resolv'd to adopt some Person, who in his Life-time might protect and support him, and after his Decease succeed him in the Empire. Upon declaring his Determination, his three Favourites were very

ry busie in recommending Persons to him; and *Otho*, having gain'd the chief Favourite *Vinius*, together with the *Urban* and *Prætorian* Cohorts, assur'd himself of Success. But *Galba*, resolving to consider the publick Good, and disliking *Otho's* loose Life, as too much resembling that of his Master *Nero*, he rejected him, and made Choice of a young Man call'd *Piso*, one of promising Abilities, who on the 10th of *January* was coldly acknowledg'd both by the Army and Senate. But that which was justly thought the best Means to secure *Galba's* Life and Empire, immediately after prov'd the Occasion of his Confusion and utter Ruin. For *Otho* finding all his Hopes blasted, immediately apply'd himself to the Soldiers who were all in his Interest; and by his plausible Speeches, and great Promises, procur'd them to proclaim him Emperor in Opposition to *Galba*; to which they unanimously agreed, and with their drawn Swords carry'd him to their Camp out of the City Gates. This News being brought to *Galba*, he was both disheartned and confounded; for some were of Opinion that he ought to put himself in Arms and appear in publick, and others that he shou'd secure himself in the Capitol, and attend the Result of the Disorder. He still continu'd wavering and doubtful; 'till at length being deluded by a false Report of *Otho's* being slain, he rod armed out of his Palace with his Guard and many Followers into the grand *Forum*. And at the same Instant, on the other Side, there enter'd a strong Body of Horse from the Camp, who tho' they came with a full Resolution of dispatching the Emperor, yet upon their near Approach, for a while stood amaz'd, and in a dubious Posture, apprehending the Consequence of their fatal Commission. This brought *Galba* to the greatest Confusion, not knowing whether to return to the Palace, or to retire to the Capitol; and being so irresolute, he was suddenly abandon'd by the chief of his Followers, which occasion'd the Soldiers sent by *Otho* to rush in amongst the People, dispersing and trampling them under foot; and approaching *Galba*, he stretch'd out his Neck, according to *Plutarch*, bidding them, *Strike it off, if it were for the Good of the Commonwealth and the Roman People*. This was accordingly done, upon the 15th Day of *January* 69, in the 73d Year of his Age, after a short Reign of seven Months and seven Days; his Death being succeeded by those of his three Favourites, and his adopted Son *Piso*.

A. D.

69.

O T H O,
the eighth
 Roman
Otho Emperor.

On the same Day that *Galba* was thus murder'd in the *Forum*, the Senate and People of *Rome* all acknowledg'd

Otho for his Successor, a Person of an ancient Family, now thirty eight Years of Age; the first Emperor who was advanc'd to this Honour by means of the *Prætorian* Soldiers, which gave them occasion frequently to assume the Authority of creating Emperors afterwards; a pernicious Precedent for the *Roman* Empire, and for the Emperors themselves, as Time and Experience manifested. *Otho*, contrary to the Expectation of many, deferr'd his Pleasures, dissembled his riotous and luxurious Life; and order'd all Things agreeable to the Honour of the Empire; which together with the just Punishment of *Tigellinus*, *Nero's* chief Instrument of Impurity, and his generous Restauration of many Exiles, gain'd him the highest Love and Affection of the People of *Rome*. During these Affairs in the City, the Legions in the Lower *Germany*, having been purchased by the large Gifts and specious Promises of their Commander *Vitellius*, proceeded to create him Emperor, without attending the Will and Pleasure of the Senate, about thirteen Days before *Galba's* Death. The sudden News of which threw both *Otho* and the City into a great Consternation, all knowing that the Contest could no ways be decided but by the Sword, and by the Blood of many thousands of *Romans*, their Pretensions being plausible on both Sides. The Cares and Fears of the City were much augmented by the great Preparations of *Otho*, and the Disabilities of the Nobility and Gentry in martial Affairs: The chief of the Senate were grown old and impotent, wanting both the Power and Vigour of Soldiers; the Nobility slothful, cover'd with the Rust of a long Peace, and forgetting the Fatigues of a Camp; and the *Equites* dissolv'd in Ease and Luxury, and ignorant in military Service, which the more they endeavour'd to conceal, the more they betray'd their Fears. And indeed all the World now began to be in a Commotion and Perturbation, as well as the Province of *Judæa*; agreeably to our Saviour's Predictions, that there should be Wars and Rumours of Wars in all Nations, before the terrible Destruction of *Jerusalem*.

In a short Time, *Otho* receiv'd Advice that *Vitellius's* Forces were upon their March towards *Italy*, under the Conduct of two Commanders nam'd *Valens* and *Cacinna*; whereupon he departed from *Rome* with a fair Army, leaving the Government of the City to *Flavius Sabinus*, Brother to *Vespasian*, who was still in *Judæa* with his Army, which he had sworn both to *Galba* and *Otho*. Upon the nigh approach of these numerous Armies a fatal Civil War began, from which the *Roman* State had been free for near

an hundred Years; and both Parties proceeded with such Haste and Precipitation, that besides Skirmishes and other Encounters, in a very few Days, three considerable Battels were fought, one at *Placentia*, another at *Cremona*, and a third at a Place called *Castor*; in all which *Otho* and the Senate had the Advantage. But the *Vitellianists* joining all their Forces, came to a general Battel near *Bedriacum*, and after a most sharp Dispute, entirely defeated the *Othonians*, which at once decided the Contest. For *Otho*, tho' he had sufficient Encouragement to continue the War, yet being reduced to a sort of Desperation, resolved upon an Attempt, contrary to his soft and effeminate Temper; which was to die himself to spare the Blood of his Countrymen. No Arguments or Entreaties could move or divert him from this Resolution, which he carry'd on and effected with the most imaginable Calmness and Easiness, and with such tender Regard to his Soldiers, that many of them, according to their *Pagan* Superstition, killed themselves about his Funeral Pile. This Emperor's Death hapned on the 15th Day of *April* 69, after a very short and troublesome Reign of only 12 Weeks and 6 Days.

Shortly after the Death of *Otho*, *Vitellius* (still in *Gaul*) was both by the Army and Senate acknowledged Emperor, being now 56 Years of Age, and the Son of *Vitellius* Governor of *Syria*, mentioned in the Years 35 and 36. In his Journey towards *Rome*, arriving at *Bedriacum* where the last Battel was fought, he was extremely delighted at the Sight of the putrify'd Bodies, and Limbs of Men and Horses there scattered; and when several of his Train complained of the noisom Smells, he impiously reply'd, *A dead Enemy smells well, but a dead Citizen better*. Nor did he give greater Satisfaction at his Arrival at *Rome*, entring there like a Conqueror, encouraging his Soldiers in all Kinds of Insolencies and Outrages, and abandoning himself to the most extravagant Degrees of Luxury, Gluttony and Cruelty: So that no Person in this Emperor's Court sought to raise themselves by Virtue and Abilities, but by profuse Banquets and magnificent Entertainments made to him; who considering nothing but the present Enjoyment of his Pleasures, in four Months wasted above seven Millions of our Money, and ruined many Cities and Families besides. He gave himself up to such a strange Carelessness and Stupidity, that nothing but his horrid Cruelties could put him in Mind of his exalted State; and fortifying himself with confus'd Mirth and Sottishness, against all Dangers and Exigencies, he al-

VITEL-
LIUS,
The ninth
Roman
Emperor.
Tacit.
Suet.

most lost the Remembrance of Things past, and the Thoughts of Things to come; not the least mention of War was made before him, and the very Discourse of it was strictly forbidden the City. And thinking by his Industry to have prolonged his Life, he banished from *Rome* and *Italy* all the judicial Astrologers, called Mathematicians, because they had declared, *That his Reign should not continue a Year.* But shortly after the publishing of his Edict for their Banishment and Departure before the first Day of *January*, a Writing was set up in the *Forum* to this Effect, *We, in the Name of the ancient Chaldæans, give warning to Vitellius the Emperor to depart the World before the said Day.*

Vitellius having made himself odious, both to the City and Country, the Legions in the East began to revolt, and shortly after unanimously resolved to make *Vespasian* their Emperor. Now *Vespasian* had proceeded with great Bravery and Renown against the perfidious *Jews*, and had reduc'd the most considerable Part of their Country, except *Jerusalem*, when he heard of the Death of *Nero*, and the Succession of *Galba*; which caused him to defer his designed Enterprize against *Jerusalem*, sending his Son *Titus* to know *Galba's* Pleasure. *Titus* was so long retarded by contrary Winds, that upon his Arrival in *Greece*, he heard of *Galba's* Death and *Otho's* Advancement; which News caused him to return to his Father in *Judea*. And during the Civil Contests between *Otho* and *Vitellius*, *Vespasian* continued Neuter, tho' he acknowledged *Otho* for Emperor, 'till *Vitellius* obtain'd the Victory and Empire; a Matter no ways pleasing to him, nor to the Commanders in the East: So that on the appointed Day to swear Allegiance to the new Emperor, in the Presence of *Vespasian*, they performed the Solemnity with great Silence and Heaviness. And now *Vespasian* renewing the War in *Judea* with extraordinary Fame and Honour, and having resolved upon the Siege of *Jerusalem*; the Murmurings and Discontents increased against the new Emperor, not only in *Vespasian's* Army, but likewise in those of *Syria* and *Ægypt*, as also in the other Legions of the East; insomuch that they all fix'd their Eyes upon *Vespasian*, a Person of 58 Years of Age, and accounted most worthy of the highest Authority, and most able to put an End to the Miseries of his Country. This Design was promoted by the News they received, that the Legions of *Mæsia* and *Pannonia* had the same Resolution; whereupon several Messages and Letters pass'd between *Alexander* Governor of *Ægypt*, and *Mutianus* Governor of *Syria*, both determinin; *Vespasian* to be Emperor, tho' he should utterly

ly refuse it. The Matter being brought to this Issue, *Alexander* made the first Overture, and on the first of *July* proclaim'd *Vespasian* Emperor; and on the third Day, his own Army in *Judæa* did the same; and because he absolutely refused that Honour, his Soldiers compelled him with their drawn Swords, threatning him with immediate Death, if he did not take the Empire upon him. Whereupon *Vespasian* yielded, and not long after called a Council of War, with *Mutianus*, *Alexander*, and his Son *Titus*; where it was determined, That *Titus* should continue the Wars against the *Jews*; That *Mutianus* should enter *Italy* with the greatest Part of the Legions; and that *Vespasian* shou'd go to *Alexandria*, to make Provision for all Parts, from thence to join *Mutianus* if Occasion required it. In the midst of these Consultations, *Vespasian* forgot not his famous Prisoner *Josephus*, but publicly applauded his Valour, and gratefully acknowledg'd his Predictions concerning his own Advancement; and accordingly ordered his Chains not to be unloos'd, but to be broken in sunder, by way of Amends for his former Treatment.

In the mean time *Antonius Primus*, Commander of the *Mælian* Legions, being a Friend to *Vespasian*, and knowing his Designs, immediately marched with all his Forces into *Italy*, before *Mutianus* could arrive; and being oppos'd by the *Vitellianists* under *Cæcinnæ*, in one Batel he entirely defeated them, and marched directly towards *Rome*. At which *Vitellius* was so extremely startled and irresolute, that he became ridiculous and despicable; sometimes proposing Terms of Accommodation, and offering to lay down his Authority, then reassuming of it again, 'till it caus'd a Faction and a Civil War even in the City; in which the Capitol was besieg'd, taken and laid in Ashes, and *Sabinus* the Governor slain. After which *Anthony* would hearken to no Treaty nor Composition, but continued his March even to the Walls of *Rome*, and in *December* vigorously attacked the City on three Sides: The *Vitellianists* sally'd out in as many; but after a furious Battel of almost a Day's Continuance, they were driven into the City, and pursued through the *Campus Martius*, and all the Streets with a most terrible Slaughter, which was continued with the most inhuman Barbarities imaginable. Yet in the midst of these Devastations, the People being celebrating their *Saturnalia*, rather than not enjoy the Pleasures of the Festival, they converted the common Calamity into Mirth and Jollity, not wanting a Relish in their extreamest Miseries. So that throughout

the whole City there was both a barbarous and shameful Spectacle, and a scandalous Mixture of Cruelty and Lewdness; in one Place wounding and slaying, in another tipping and bathing; here Streams of Blood and Heaps of mangled Bodies, and hard by, lewd Debauches and shameless Prostitutes; in summ, all the abominable Licentiousness of a most dissolute and riotous Peace, and all the deplorable Miseries of a most dreadful and cruel Captivity. And thus was this mighty City, the Head and Empress of the World, taken and ravag'd by her own natural Subjects; and as it was fatal to many thousands, so it was no less to *Vitellius* himself, whom the Soldiers dragged out of his Palace, and without hearkning to any Entreaties, bound his Hands behind him, and threw an Halter about his Neck. Then tearing his Cloaths, they drew him half naked into the publick *Forum*, through the main Street called *Via Sacra*, upbraiding him with a thousand opprobrious Words, and treating him with all imaginable Indignities, tying his Hair backwards, as was usual to the most execrable Malefactors, and holding the Point of a Sword under his Chin to prevent his concealing his Face. At length they brought him to the *Gemoniæ*, the Place for notorious Criminals, and with many Wounds dispatched him; from whence they dragged him with a Hook, and with all possible Ignominy threw him into the *Tiber*. This was done upon the 20th Day of *December* 69, after a short Reign of eight Months and five Days; a Reign which together with that of *Galba* and *Otho*, make but a little above 18 Months; which occasioned some Writers not to put them into the Catalogue of Emperors, and *Plutarch* to compare them to Kings in Tragedies, who continue so short a Time upon the Stage.

VI. After the deplorable Ravages were abated, and some Order began to appear in the State, the *Roman* Senate assembled, where *Vespasian* was declared Emperor by the unanimous Consent of all; and they gave his two Sons *Titus* and *Domitian* the Titles of *Cæsar*, nominating the former to be Consul with his Father for this Year now beginning, and the latter for *Prætor* with Consular Power. *Mutianus*, *Antony*, and several others were rewarded with great Revenues and Dignities, for contributing towards this happy Establishment; and Couriers were immediately dispatched to *Vespasian* at *Alexandria*, to yield Obedience to him, and to desire his Return to *Rome*; but the Winter being dangerous for sailing, he deferred his Voyage

A. D.

70.

VES-
PASI-
AN,the tenth
Roman
Emperor.

Tacit.

Suet.

Dian.

to a more convenient Season. During his Stay in that City, this remarkable Accident is related of him by the most authentick Writers: A blind and a lame Man, of mean Condition, presenting themselves to him as he sat upon his Tribunal, most humbly beseech'd him, *That he wou'd vouchsafe to cure them, for they had been inform'd by their God Serapis in a Dream, that if he pleas'd but to spit upon the Eyes of one, and to tread upon the other's Foot, both of them shou'd be cur'd.* *Vespasian* doubting much of the Success, durst not put it in Practice; till being over-rul'd by the Importunity of his Friends, he try'd both Means before the whole Assembly, and found the Persons effectually cured. If we consider, That *Vespasian* was by some thought to be the *Messiah*, this, no doubt, may be reckon'd among those Miracles that our Saviour foretold shou'd happen about this Time from *false Messiahs, and false Prophets, who shou'd shew great Signs and Wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shou'd deceive the very Elect,* Matth. 24. 24. *Vespasian*, before his Departure from this City, left his Son *Titus* to continue the Wars against the *Jews*, well knowing his extraordinary Valour and Skill for such an Undertaking.

And now we are arriv'd at the great and terrible Year, for the Dissolution of the *Jewish* Oeconomy, which St. *Peter* calls *the End of all Things*, and St. *James* *the Coming of the Lord*, 1 Pet. 4. 7. James 5. 8. And the Sound of the Gospel having gone through all Nations to the utmost Parts of the Earth, by Means of the Apostles and others, in less than forty Years Time, now God thought fit to make a dreadful Example of the most perverse Opposers of it, the *Jews*. These miserable People, still thinking themselves the Favourites of Heaven, now languish'd in a deplorable Manner under all the Miseries and Calamities, which cou'd possibly befall Mankind; and as our blessed Saviour predicted, *Such Tribulation as never was since the Beginning of the World to that Time, nor ever shou'd be again,* Matth. 24. 21. Famines, Plagues, Earthquakes, Prodigies in Heaven and Earth, omenous Voices, Armies, and flaming Swords in the Air, as we have formerly mention'd, were so many fatal Presages of the Destruction of that glorious City and Temple of *Jerusalem*, now threatned by the *Roman* Eagles: And there never was the like signal Instance of Heaven's Visitation of a People, who by their obstinate Blindness, and Impieties, were become miserable Objects of divine Wrath, and fully ripen'd for Vengeance.

Joseph.

The Revolutions in the *Roman* Empire gave some Diversion to *Vespasian's* Arms, so that after his first Campaign he could not pursue the War vigorously; but this gave but small Ease to the *Jews*, for before *Titus's* Expedition against *Jerusalem* this Year, they were most grievously embroil'd in Factions and Dissentions, pillaging, robbing and murdering each other in all Parts; at length great Numbers gathering together in whole Troops, committed such Ravages and Cruelties, as equal'd all the Miseries and Calamities they receiv'd from the *Roman* Armies. Afterwards the Robbers being loaden with Pillage and Plunder, violently broke into *Jerusalem* it self, where they not only consum'd the Provisions of the People, but fill'd the City with miserable Slaughters, Rapines and Dissentions. They cast *Antipas* and many of the principal Citizens and Nobility into Prison, and then put them to Death unheard; pretending that they design'd to have betray'd the City to the *Romans*: Yet after all these horrid Outrages and Impieties, they boasted of Zeal for the Law of God, and the religious Customs of their Country, and thereupon were term'd *Zealots*. Finding the People were ready to oppose them with Arms, they retir'd to the Temple it self, which they us'd for a Fortress, where they made an ignorant mean Person call'd *Phanias* High-Priest, tho' he was not of the Sacerdotal Order: But they were sharply resisted by *Ananus*, once High-Priest, who procur'd the People to rise against them, and after a severe Contest, forc'd them into the inward Part of the Temple. Upon which Exigency they privately sent to the *Idumæans*, accusing *Ananus* of wickedly designing to betray his Country, and imploring their assistance, since they themselves, who fought for the Liberty of it, were now closely besieg'd. The *Idumæans* immediately repair'd thither, to the Number of twenty thousand Men, who being in the Night let into the City by Means of the *Zealots*, together with them committed most insupportable Outrages and Devastations against the miserable Inhabitants. Besides an infinite Number of the meaner Sort, they massacred eight thousand Citizens the first Night, and afterwards twelve thousand of the higher Rank, among whom was *Ananus*, who was now justly punish'd for his unjust Condemnation of *St. James*, the Bishop of the City. The *Zealots* also finding *Zacharias* the Son of *Barachias*, a Person of eminent Piety, declaring against their Wickedness, formally judg'd him, and after he was clear'd slew him in the midit of the Temple by the Altar; which many believe to be the same Person mention'd *Matth.* 23. 35. and that our

our Saviour nam'd him by way of Prolepsis, or Propheſie, when the Nation ſhould have fill'd up the Meaſure of the Wickedneſs, and answer for all the Blood of the Saints from *Abel*, to that very Time.

In a ſhort Time after the *Idumæans* began to relent, and perceiving the unreaſonable Practices of the *Zealots*, and that they had falſly accus'd the Nobility, they ſet at Liberty two thouſand, whom they had imprifon'd, and then return'd to their own Country. After whoſe Departure the *Zealots* renew'd their Rapines and Slaughters, and rag'd more barbarouſly than ever, eſpecially againſt ſuch as endeavour'd to flie to the *Romans*, whom they ſlew, without permitting any to bury them. But ſhortly after, the *Zealots* were divided among themſelves, by Reaſon of one *John*, who with a ſeditious Party holding *Giſcala*, pretended to accept of the Articles offer'd by *Titus*, and privately fled to *Jeruſalem*, as was formerly mention'd. His Party joining with the *Zealots*, he himſelf became the principal Incendiary, and now affected Sovereign Power over the reſt; but he was vigorouſly oppos'd by ſuch as before had been his Equals. Yet tho' they diſagreed in this Matter, they all were unanimous in plundering the People; and *Jeruſalem* being thus fill'd with Tumults and Diſturbances, thoſe who were without the City had Liberty to rob and pillage, and thoſe whoſe Towns were deſtroy'd by theſe Means, aſſembled together in the Deſarts, and in great Bodies broke into other Temples and Towns; ſo that there was no Place in *Judæa* which did not ſuffer after a moſt ſtrange and unheard of Manner. Not long after, a new Faction was rais'd againſt the *Zealots* by one *Simon* the Son of *Giora*, a bold and valiant Man, who gathering together great Multitudes of Robbers and Murtherers, who were got into the mountainous Parts, and encreasing in Strength, attack'd many Cities and Towns, conquer'd all *Idumæa*, waſted *Judæa*, encamp'd with all his Forces before *Jeruſalem* it ſelf, and became a mighty Terror to the Inhabitants, who were already moſt miſerably oppreſs'd by the *Zealots* within. In the mean Time, ſuch *Idumæans* as had lately fled into the City, and join'd themſelves with the *Zealots*, deteſting the Cruelties of *John*, whom the *Zealots* had choſen for their Commander, oppos'd his Proceedings, kill'd many of his Men, burn'd down his Palace, and forc'd the Tyrant into the Temple; but the Citizens greatly dreading his Temper, and that he ſhould deſtroy the City in the Night, agreed to let in *Simon* with his Army; who entering the City, immediately attack'd the Temple, but in vain. About

the same Time *Eleazar*, who formerly was chief Commander of the *Zealots*, envying the new Authority of *John*, found Means to draw over many of his Soldiers to him, and seiz'd on the inward Part of the Temple; so that now a third Faction was rais'd, and *John* was oblig'd daily to fight both against *Eleazar* within and *Simon* without. By which Means the Temple and Altar were abominably profan'd and polluted with Blood, all Things about it were burnt up, and such Quantities of Provisions destroy'd, as might have serv'd the City for many Years, and for want of which it suffer'd so extremly in a short time. So that that renowned City, which was formerly celebrated for Peace and Unity within it self, now became the Place of all imaginable Divisions, Distractions and Confusion; and perhaps had a nearer Resemblance of Hell, and the State of the Damn'd, than any Thing before in this World.

Joseph. **VII.** *Jerusalem* was involv'd in all these miserable Calamities, when *Titus* with a powerful Army approach'd the Place to invest it, being attended by *Alexander* Governor of *Ægypt*, *Agrippa*, *Sohemus*, and *Josephus* now at Liberty. *Titus* sat down within six or seven Furlongs of the City, in the Beginning of *April* 70, and immediately before the Feast of the Passover, and shut up an infinite Multitude of People in the Place, who according to Custom came from all Parts to that great Solemnity; by which Means all Subsistence, and Provisions were consum'd in a short Space. The City, not very large in Extent, was advantagiously situated for Defence, and strongly fortify'd with three Walls; besides which, the Castle of *Antonia*, the Palace, and above all the Temple, were as so many distinct Citadels. The three unnatural Factions, upon the Sight of the *Roman* Army, unanimously agreed to join and oppose it, and accordingly sally'd out with great Fury and Resolution, put the *Romans* to Disorder, and oblig'd them to abandon their Camp and fly to the Mountains; but the *Jews* were at last repell'd, and driven into the City, by the extraordinary Skill and Valour of *Titus*, who highly signaliz'd himself in this and all other Actions in the Siege. During all Intermissions of the Besiegers Attacks, the civil Contests were reviv'd within the City with great Slaughters and Confusions; and upon the first Day of the Passover, now the 14th Day of *April*, *Eleazar* and his Associates open'd the Gates, that all Persons might have Liberty to perform their usual Ceremonies and Devotions in the Temple. But *John*, who held the other Part of the Temple, us'd this Festival as a
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Means to effect his treacherous Designs, causing great Numbers of his Party to enter among the People with Weapons under their Garments, to get Possession of the Inner Temple; who being admitted with the rest of the Multitude, in a short Time shew'd themselves in Armour. Immediately a dreadful Tumult arose in the Temple; for all the Multitude, who were not of the Sedition, thought themselves betray'd, and the *Zealots* imagining this Treason only to prejudice them, abandon'd their Post, leap'd from the Towers, and fled into the Vaults about the Temple; so that the poor People flocking about the Altar, not knowing how to secure themselves, and others who were driven into the Temple, were kill'd with Clubs and Swords, and trodden under Foot after a barbarous Manner. Great Numbers were slain upon private Resentments, and all such as had formerly offended these Traitors were destroy'd without Mercy: But they who so cruelly rag'd against the Innocent, gave the Offenders Time and Leisure to escape out of their Vaults, by which Means they regain'd the inward Part of the Temple, and with great Slaughter assaulted the other Parties; the Issue of which was that *Eleazar* being kill'd, the three Factions were at length reduc'd to two, that under *John*, consisting of 8400 Men, and the other under *Simon* of 10000, besides 5000 *Idumæans*. Notwithstanding the Enemy was at the Walls, and to oppose them they usually join'd their Forces, yet upon all Intermissions they violently rag'd against each other, and both against the unfortunate Citizens; so that never any City in the World was more severely harrass'd without, and more miserably torn within.

The City being strongly fortify'd with three Walls, as before mention'd, *Titus* found great Difficulties in the Siege; but having with much Opposition plac'd his Engines, he batter'd the outward Wall, and the *Jews* retiring, on the third Day of *May*, he broke in and possess'd himself of the North Quarter of the City, as far as the Castle of *Antonia*, and the Valley of *Cedron*. In all which Time he shew'd great Clemency and Commiseration to the Besieged, giving them all possible Assurances of Pardon, and civil Treatment if they would submit; but the *Jews* were so obstinate, that they refus'd all Terms and Conditions, and judg'd his generous Humanity to be nothing but Cowardice. This more exasperated the *Romans*, and caus'd them to proceed with the greater Fierceness and Severity; so that God and Man, Heaven and Earth seem'd to fight against this wretched Nation. Five Days after, *Titus*, having beaten down a certain

tain Tower with the Ram from the North Quarter, broke through the second Wall, and possess'd himself of the new Lower City; from whence he was repuls'd by the Besieged's vigorous Sallies: But on the fourth Day he regain'd the Place intirely, and prepar'd for the Battery of the third Wall. After which, being still desirous to save the City, and especially the Temple, he sent *Josephus* to his Countrymen to exhort them from the Walls to yield, who, tho' he us'd all the powerful and patheticall Persuasions imaginable, and offer'd to sacrifice the Life of himself and Family for his Country's Preservation, yet he was entertain'd only with a Shower of Darts, Scoffs, and Reproaches: So that *Titus* was now no ways inclin'd to shew Mercy to a People that had been perfidious and rebellious to the highest Degree, and was now stubborn and remorseless beyond all Example and Belief. The Citizens designing to escape out of the City, *John* and *Simon* stop'd up all Passages; but the Famine encreasing, notwithstanding great Numbers stole out, who being taken Prisoners by *Titus*, he caus'd them to be scourg'd and crucify'd, as they had formerly treated our Saviour; and in such Numbers that Room was wanting for Crosses, and Crosses for Persons: Still designing by the Cruelty of the Spectacle to terrifie the City, and hasten its Surrender. The Seditious made a contrary Use of this Management, shewing the Citizens this dismal Sight from the Walls, to terrifie them from flying to the Enemy; whereupon *Titus* cut off many of the Prisoners Hands, and sent them to *Simon* and *John* in the City, that their Calamity might testifie them to be Captives, and not such as fled voluntarily to the *Romans*.

On the 12th Day of *May*, *Titus* began four Mounts for his Battering-Rams, which were all finish'd on the 29th, two nigh the Castle of *Antonia*, where he was in Hopes of taking the Temple, and two nigh the Monument of *John* the High-Priest, where he suppos'd he might break into the Upper City with greatest Facility. But *John*, whose Office was to oppose the *Romans* about the Castle *Antonia*, with great Bravery sally'd out, undermin'd the Ramparts, and destroy'd them; and two Days after *Simon* with as much Courage ruin'd the other Mounts by Fire, tho' seventeen Days had been spent in compleating them all. He likewise burnt the Enemies Rams and Engines, and courageously pressing forwards, broke into the very Camp of the *Romans*; but at length was valiantly repuls'd by *Titus* into *Antonia*. The Mounts being thus burnt and demolish'd, *Titus* design'd to erect new ones, but calling a Council of War,

War, it was determin'd that the whole City should be surrounded by a Wall or Intrenchment, both to hinder the Flight of the Besieged, and to prevent all Relief from coming into the City; all which with incredible Diligence and Celerity was finish'd in three Days, the whole being 39 Furlongs, or near five Miles in Compass, having thirteen Forts or Castles without, each consisting of ten Furlongs Compass. This exactly verify'd our blessed Saviour's Predictions, *Luke 19. 43. viz. 'The Days shall come upon thee that thine Enemies shall cast a Trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every Side.* The Seditious seem'd nothing mov'd at this, tho' the Famine not only rag'd among the common Sort, but likewise began to afflict the Soldiers; and such a Mortality ensu'd, that from the 14th Day of *April*, to the first of *July*, 115080 Carcasses of the poorer sort were carry'd out to be bury'd at the publick Charge, as *Titus* was inform'd by one *Maxneus*, who was appointed to pay the Mony. Divers Noblemen that fled to him, assur'd him that 600000 of the ordinary Rank were cast dead out of the Gates, and others who dy'd besides were innumerable; and that when so many dy'd, as they were not able to bury them, they gather'd their Bodies together into the largest Houses adjoining, and there shut them up. A Bushel of Corn was sold for 600 Crowns; Sinks and Holes were continually rak'd to find the old Dung of Oxen, to satisfie their Hunger; Wives took the Meat out of their Husbands Mouths, Children from their Parents, and Mothers from their Infants: Old Men were driven from their Meat as Persons of no Use, young Men were tortur'd to confess where their Provisions lay, and all suffer'd after an unheard-of Manner.

These deplorable Calamities extreamly mov'd the Compassion of the *Romans* themselves; and *Titus* going about the Walls, and beholding the Ditch fill'd with dead Bodies, wept, and with Hands lifted up to Heaven, call'd God to witness, *That it was not his doing.* But the Minds of the Seditious were not at all chang'd, who continually proceeded in their Rapines and Murthers; those that *Simon* robb'd were sent to *John*, and those that *John* pillag'd were sent to *Simon*; drinking as it were to one another in the Blood of the People, and dividing their dead Carcasses between them. The Nobility daily suffer'd; and *Simon* proceeded to murder *Matthias* the present High-Priest, by whom he had Entrance into the City, with his three Sons, and sixteen others of the highest Rank, pretending that they design'd to flee to the Enemy. Upon which *Judas*, one
of

of his Officers, being tired out with his insupportable Cruelties, attempted to betray a certain Tower to the *Romans* where he commanded; but being discover'd by an Accident, he was put to Death with ten other of his Accomplices, in the Sight of the *Roman* Soldiers, and their Bodies thrown down to them. *John* also being driven by extream Necessity, converted the golden Vessels of the Temple, with the Sacred Mony, to prophane Uses; and was constrain'd to divide the Wine and Oil, ordain'd for Sacrifices, among his Soldiers. And now the Famine rag'd so extreamly, that the Soldiers began to eat Girdles, Shoes, Skins and Hay; and a noble Woman boil'd her own Child to eat it, which last was look'd upon as so detestable an Act among the *Romans*, as well as the *Jews*, that *Titus*, after he had insisted upon his frequent Offers of Peace and Pardon to the *Jews*, declar'd, *That he would bury that abominable Crime in the Ruins of their Country; and would not suffer the Sun to shine upon that City, where Mothers eat their own Children, and where Fathers no less culpable reduc'd them to that Extremity by their Obstinacy.* So plainly had our Lord foretold the Daughters of *Jerusalem*, *'That the Days were coming, in the which they should say, Blessed are the Barren, and the Wombs that never bare, and the Paps which never gave suck,* Luke 23. 29.

Titus having brought Materials from all Parts, and cutting down Woods and all Trees, even to 90 Furlongs Distance, with great Labour erected new Mounts in 21 Days, one on every Side of the Castle *Antonia*. Which when *John* and his Party had weakly and vainly attempted, they were repuls'd by the *Romans*; and *Titus* on the Beginning of *July* order'd the Ram to be brought to the Wall of *Antonia*, by which a Breach being made on the fifth of that Month, the *Romans* broke into the Castle, and pursu'd the flying *Jews* even to the Temple. At which Time many false Prophets deluded the Multitude, by telling them, *That they should have Assistance from God;* and therefore tho' *Titus* and *Josephus* still exhorted them to yield, they obstinately refus'd all Accommodation, boasting, *That they had rather endure all Kinds of Miseries.* On the 17th Day of *July*, the perpetual Sacrifice in the Temple, which was offer'd Morning and Evening, ceas'd, for Want of Persons to officiate; which was a new and killing Affliction to the People. A few Days after, *Titus* erected Mounts nearer, the Materials of which had been brought 100 Furlongs distant, and overturning therewith the Foundations of *Antonia*, made an easie Ascent to the Temple; then breaking in

in by *Antonia*, he seiz'd upon the North and West Porticos or Cloysters of the outward Range of the Temple; part of which joining to *Antonia*, were burn'd and ruin'd by the *Jews*, and two Days after the other Part was burn'd by the *Romans* on the 24th of *July*, the *Jews* not quenching the Fire, that the Porch might be clearly separated from *Antonia*. On the 27th the *Jews* began to burn the Western Porticos as far as to the Bridgethat led to the Gallery, whither many of the *Romans* getting up, were burn'd alive; but on the following Day the *Romans* burn'd all the North Porticos, as far as those in the East. On the eighth Day of *August*, when *Titus* could not prevail against the strong Walls of the Inner Temple, either by Batterings, Underminings, or Ladders, he resolv'd upon that from which Reverence had long restrain'd him, which was to set Fire to the Gates, which soon caus'd the Porches to be all in a Flame; which amazing Sight so stupify'd the infatuated *Jews*, that they hinder'd not the Fire, so that the Porches burn'd all that Day and the following Night. Still *Titus* and his Commanders resolv'd to save the Temple, if possible; but on the tenth of *August*, when as the *Romans*, which guarded the outward Range of the Temple, being provok'd by the *Jews*, had driven them into the Temple, a certain *Roman* Soldier, contrary to the Command of his General, getting upon his Fellow's Shoulders, and being excited by some divine Fury, cast a flaming Firebrand through the golden Window into the Chambers and Buildings on the North Side, which immediately took Fire, and spread throughout the whole Fabrick, consuming the most glorious and beautiful Structure that the World ever saw: And in spight of all Opposition the triumphant Flames prevail'd, and made their Way with so fierce a Rage, as if they threatned to burn up all Mount *Sion* to the Roots.

The Sight of this extream Misfortune put a killing Damp to all the Courage and Fury of the *Jews*, now neither esteeming their Lives nor Forces, having lost their greatest Jewel for which they fought: The loud Outcries, and miserable Lamentations of the People eccho'd from all the adjacent Mountains; and many famish'd and expiring Persons, whose Eyes Death had already clos'd, reassum'd new Strength, and open'd their Eyes to bewail the glorious Temple, which they now beheld all in Flames. *Titus* in vain using all Methods to save the Temple, found so much Time as to enter the Sanctuary, with his chief Officers, where they beheld all the holy Things, and found its Riches and Magnificence far surpassing all Strangers Reports:

ports: They also were entertain'd with a dismal Spectacle of Blood, Smoak and Flames, and the great Altar cover'd with an infinite Number of dead Bodies, which had sustain'd all the Miseries of Fire, Sword and Famine. The *Roman* Soldiers pursu'd their Victory with all imaginable Fury and Revenge, cutting in pieces all that they found about the Temple, and setting Fire to the rest of the Buildings; in one of which 6000 Men, Women and Children, being deluded and brought thither by a false Prophet, perish'd miserably in the Flames. *Titus* was shortly after saluted *Imperator* by his Soldiers, who at the East Gate of the Temple offer'd Sacrifices to their own *Pagan* Deities. In all these Confusions the Seditious found Means to flee into the City; where seeming to relent, they desir'd a Parly with the General himself, who highly condemn'd them for their Obstinacy, but notwithstanding promis'd them their Lives upon immediate Submission. But they refusing to rely upon his Promises, demanded Liberty to depart the City with their Wives and Children, which so extreamly exasperated *Titus*, that he commanded it to be proclaim'd by a publick Cryer, *That they were not any longer to expect any Mercy.* Whereupon he permitted his Soldiers to plunder and burn all the Lower City, with the Palace *Acra*; but the Seditious Tyrants retired to the King's Palace, where great Numbers had deposited their Wealth, and from thence repell'd the *Romans*. They likewise barbarously slew 8400 of their own Countrymen, and rifling all the Mony and Treasure, betook themselves to the upper and strongest Part of the City, situated upon a steep Rock, and call'd *Sion*, where notwithstanding these deplorable Calamities, they still more cruelly tyranniz'd. *Titus* having consider'd the Strength of the Place, began his Mounts on the 20th of *August*, and finishing them the seventh of *September*, he very soon made a Breach in the Walls. Whereupon the Tyrants were seiz'd with no little Fear and Consternation, not knowing how to proceed; so that *Titus* became Master of all the City on *Saturday* the 8th of *September*. The Power of Heaven appear'd in the Overthrow of these Wretches; for they abandon'd their Towers, which were their only Strength, and in vain sought to escape, by hiding themselves in Vaults and Privies; from whence both *John* and *Simon* were drag'd, the former being condemn'd to perpetual Imprisonment, and the latter reserv'd for a Triumph. The rest were all put to the Sword, and *Titus* commanded both the Temple and the City to be entirely raz'd, by a Plow being brought over it

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by *Turhus Rufus*, according to the ancient Custom, which remarkably accomplish'd our Saviour's Prophecies, *That not one Stone shou'd remain upon another*; only he preserv'd the West Part of the Wall with three Towers, which for their Strength and Beauty might bear Testimony of the Stateliness of the City to Posterity.

The Soldiers offer'd to have crown'd *Titus* as a Conqueror for this Act, and upon the Account of his extraordinary Valour in the Siege, in which he had in one Encounter slain twelve Men with his own Hands. But *Titus* modestly refus'd the Honour, denying himself to have been the Conqueror, and declaring, *That he only executed the Designs of Heaven, which had apparently manifested its Wrath against the Jews*. To this fatal End came the famous City of *Jerusalem*, after a Siege of about five Months, having from King *David's* Reign flourish'd under God's own Hand and Protection for above 1100 Years; and it is remarkable that this fatal Siege began a little before the *Passover*, at the same Time that they had most barbarously treated and put to Death the Son of God. Never was any Siege in the World more memorable, the Captives amounting to 97000, and those who perish'd in the Siege to 1100000, which last Number being added to the 237490 which *Josephus* particularly enumerates in the *Jewish Wars*, it makes 1337490. So heavy was the Guilt of our Saviour's and his Saints Blood upon this wretched Nation, and so abominable were their Vices, that we have Reason to agree with the last nam'd Author, who believ'd, That if the *Romans* had not come against them, the City wou'd have been swallow'd up by the Earth, or else by Thunder-bolts and Lightnings have born the Punishment of *Sodom*, whose Inhabitants they exceeded in Wickedness. Here ended the Temporal State and Oeconomy of the *Jews*; and that Province, which had been govern'd by the *Romans* in a great Measure as their Friends and Protectors, was now made Captive; and the *Jews*, once the freest People in the World, were made Slaves, banish'd, sold and dispers'd throughout all Parts of the World. This did also most compleatly fulfil the ancient Prophecie of the *Scepter's departing from Judah*; tho' it was in some Measure accomplish'd under the Reign of *Herod the Great*. That this dismal Destruction of *Jerusalem* is set out in *Matth. 24.* as the Destruction of the whole World, or at least as a renowned Type of it, need not seem strange, if it be consider'd, that it was the Destruction of the Lord's own Habitation, and the Place chosen before all other Places, to put his Name there, and the Destruction of

of the State and Policy of his old Peculiar People; a People once highest in his Favour, now deepest in his Displeasure, whose Rejection was now seal'd by the Ruin of their City and Temple. So that the Evangelical State succeeding the *Jewish*, may be call'd a new World, a new Church and Oeconomy, according to the Apostle, *Old Things are past away, behold all Things are become new,* 2 Cor. 5. 17. This was completed 37 Years after our Saviour's Crucifixion, in the 2d Year of *Vespasian's* Reign, under the Consulships of *Vespasian* and *Nerva*.

The End of the First Volume.

