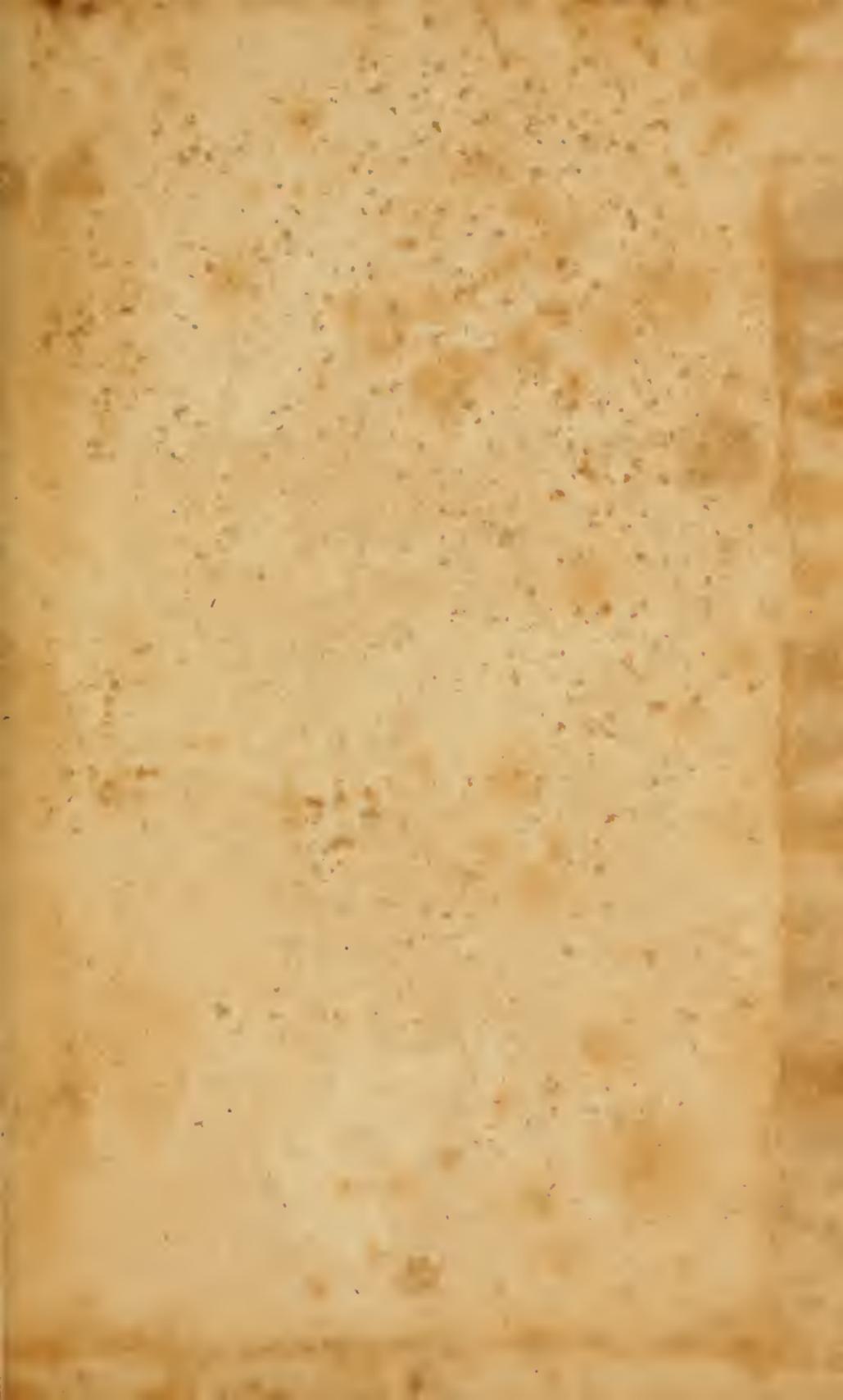




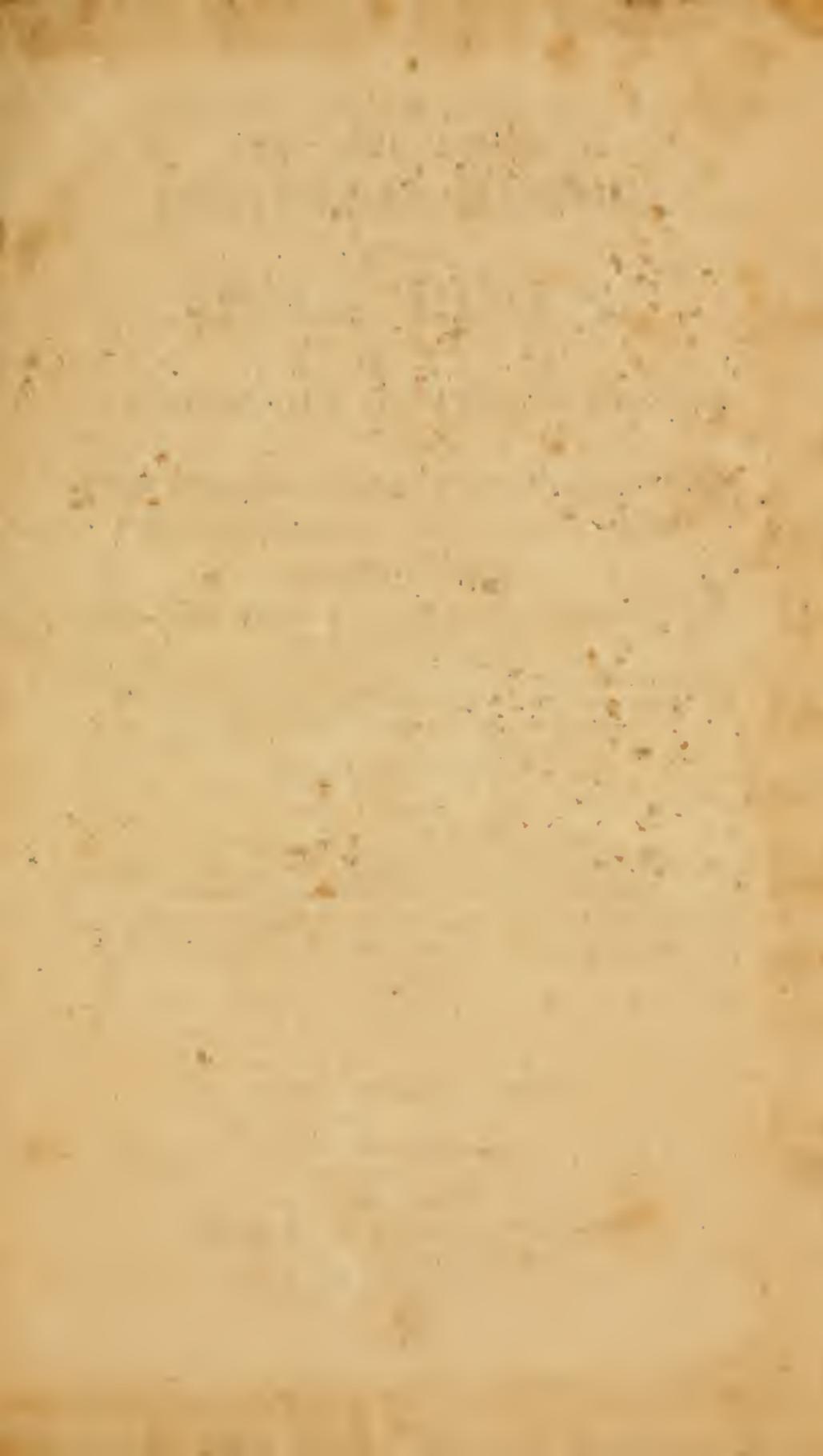
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A
NEW AND COMPLETE
UNIVERSAL HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE,
FROM THE
CREATION OF THE WORLD,
TO THE
FULL ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY,
BY OUR BLESSED LORD AND SAVIOUR
JESUS CHRIST,
AND HIS HOLY EVANGELISTS, APOSTLES,
DISCIPLES, &c.

CONTAINING A CLEAR AND COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNT OF EVERY REMARKABLE
TRANSACTION RECORDED IN THE SACRED SCRIPTURES, DURING
A PERIOD OF UPWARDS OF FOUR THOUSAND YEARS.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

— — — ✓
BY THE REV. EDWARD KIMPTON,
VICAR OF ROGATE, IN SUSSEX, MORNING PREACHER OF ST. MATTHEW'S, BETH-
NAL-GREEN, AND LATE OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.
ASSISTED BY MANY LEARNED GENTLEMEN, WHO HAVE MADE
THE SACRED WRITINGS THEIR PECULIAR STUDY.

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VOL. IV.
— — —

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

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- The Creation of Adam and Eve—their Temptation, Fall, and Expulsion from Paradise.—Its fatal consequences, &c.
- The Wickedness of Mankind.—The General Deluge.—The Preservation of Noah and his Family, &c.
- The Building of Babel—Confusion of Tongues, and Dispersion of the People.
- History of Abraham and his Family.—Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, &c.
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- Persecutions of the Israelites by Pharaoh King of Egypt, with the various Transactions that took place previous to their being miraculously released from Bondage.
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- History of Sampson, Saul and Jonathan, Naomi and Ruth, Judith and Holofernes, Susanna and the Elders, Haman and Mordecai, Deborah and Barak, &c.
- History of the Babylonish Captivity.—Destruction of Jerusalem, &c. &c.
- Account of the ancient State of Jerusalem, with an accurate description of that magnificent Building, Solomon's Temple.
- The various Predictions of the Prophets, concerning the Coming and Offices of the Messiah, the Restoration of the Jews, &c. with other Prophecies that have been, and are now fulfilling, in different parts of the World.

INCLUDING PARTICULAR ACCOUNTS

OF THE

LIVES AND TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

MOST EMINENT PATRIARCHS, PROPHETS,

AND

OTHER SERVANTS OF GOD,

Who, by an inspired Grace, have distinguished themselves in the Display of Divine Wisdom;

SUCH AS

NOAH,	JOSHUA,	EZEKIEL,	OBADIAH,
ABRAHAM,	SAMUEL,	JEREMIAH,	NEHEMIAH,
ISAAC,	DAVID,	DANIEL,	HOSEA,
JACOB,	SOLOMON,	JONAH,	ZECHERIAH,
JOSEPH,	JOB,	ELIJAH,	AMOS,
MOSES,	ISAIAH,	ELISHA,	MALACHI, &c.

TOGETHER

WITH A FULL AND UNIVERSAL HISTORY
OF THE
LIFE, TRANSACTIONS, AND MIRACLES,
OF OUR
BLESSED REDEEMER,

FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS CRUCIFIXION, RESURRECTION, AND
ASCENSION.

Also the Lives, Travels, Doctrines, Sufferings, and various Martyrdoms of the Holy Evangelists, MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE and JOHN; with the Lives of the Holy Apostles, and other Disciples; particularly ST. PETER, PAUL, ANDREW, JAMES the Great and Less, PHILIP, BARTHOLOMEW, SIMON, JUDE, MATTHIAS, BARNABAS, STEPHEN, TIMOTHY, TITUS, &c. who were made Instruments, by Divine Grace, in promoting the Establishment of Christianity, the Foundation whereon are built all our Hopes of Eternal Salvation.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

A summary View of the great Difference between the Law as delivered by MOSES and the PROPHEETS, and the Gospel under CHRIST and his APOSTLES. Also the connexion between the OLD and NEW TESTAMENTS, with a clear DISPLAY of the great TRUTHS of DIVINE REVELATION.

INCLUDING,

THE VARIOUS OBSERVATIONS, COMMENTS AND
ILLUSTRATIONS,

Of the most learned BISHOPS, DIVINES, Ecclesiastical and other authentic, ancient and modern Historians, who have hitherto written on the subject.

The whole calculated to Enlighten the Understanding, purify the Heart, and promote that Knowledge, by which we may obtain Happiness in this World, and eternal Salvation in that which is to come.

A
NEW AND COMPLETE
UNIVERSAL HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE.

PART II.

CONTAINING THE HISTORY OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT.

BOOK I.

FROM THE BIRTH OF CHRIST, TO HIS ASCENSION
INTO HEAVEN.

[INCLUDING A PERIOD OF 33 YEARS.]

CHAP. XII.

Our Blessed Lord goes to the house of Simon the leper at Bethany, where he is anointed by a poor but pious woman. The Sanhedrim meet at Jerusalem, and form an ultimate resolution of putting him to death. Our Lord teaches his disciples humility by condescending to wash their feet. Intimates to them who should betray him into the hands of his enemies. The perfidious Judas goes to the Sanhedrim and agrees to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Our Lord exhorts his other apostles to mutual love. Sends Peter and John to Jerusalem to make the necessary preparations for celebrating the Passover. Revives the drooping spirits of his

apostles, by promising them a better life, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, after his departure. Goes to Jerusalem, and after eating the Passover, institutes the Sacrament, in commemoration of his death and sufferings. Reproves his apostles for their ambitious thoughts. Predicts Peter's cowardice in denying him. Fortifies his disciples against his approaching death. Foretels Peter's cowardice again. Preaches to and prays with his disciples for the last time. Retires into the garden of Gethsemane, where he prays in private to his Father. Is in great agony on the occasion; but receives comfort from a Divine messenger. Is betrayed by Judas, and seized by a band of soldiers.

AFTER our Blessed Lord had finished his prophetic discourse to his disciples on the Mount of Olives, he retired with them to Bethany, and there entered the house of one Simon, whom, among his other miracles, he had cured of a leprosy. While he was here, a woman, who, doubtless, had been an object of his mercy, and was now desirous of testifying her acknowledgments for the past benefits received, came into the room where he was, and, out of an alabaster cruse, poured so great a quantity of rich ointment upon his head, as scented the whole house with its fragrancy. This action greatly displeased the disciples, who knew their Master was not delighted with luxuries of any kind; and therefore they rebuked the woman, imagining that it would have been more acceptable to the Son of God, if the ointment had been sold, and the money distributed among the sons and daughters of poverty and affliction. But our Blessed Lord reprov'd his disciples for their conduct. He told them that those who did not now testify their love to him would soon be deprived of the opportunity of doing it, as the time of his ministry was near its period, when the king of terrors should enjoy a short triumph over his body; and that therefore this woman had seasonably anointed him for his burial. And to make them sensible of their folly in blaming the woman for her conduct, he assured them, that she should be highly celebrated for this action, in every part of the world, and that her memory should live to the latest period of time. *Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world,*

this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her. Mark xiv. 9.

After this transaction our Lord left Simon's house, and went to that of Martha's, where he continued all the next day, without going to Jerusalem, as he had done the day before.

In the mean time the Sanhedrim assembled at the palace of Caiphaz the high-priest, where the Priests, Scribes, and Elders of the people, held 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 on the occasion, and though therein it was determined he should die, yet they thought it not advisable to put their design into execution during the time of the approaching solemnity, lest it should cause a sedition among the people, who had the highest veneration for him. *And the chief priests and the Scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death. But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar of the people.*

On the second evening of our Lord's being at Bethany, he supped, with his disciples, at Martha's house; and, while they were at table, considering within himself, that his time was now short, he resolved to give them a farther testimony of his love, and, from his own example, teach them two virtues, which, of all others, were more especially requisite in their ministry of the Gospel, namely, *humility* and *charity*. To this purpose, rising from the table, laying aside his upper garment, and girding himself with a towel (as the manner of servants then was when they waited on their masters) he poured water into a bason, and began to wash his apostles' feet, and to wipe them with the towel. Amazed at this condescension, Peter, (when he came to him) modestly declined it; but his Master told him, that if he refused to submit implicitly to all his orders, he could have no part with him; upon which Peter cried out, *Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.* But our Lord told him that the person who had bathed himself had no reason to wash any part of the body, except his feet, which he might have dirtied by walking from the bath.

When our Blessed Lord had made an end of washing his disciples' feet, he put on his garment, and sitting down again at the table, explained to them the meaning of what he had done, viz. "That since he, who was justly acknowledged to be their Lord and Master, had condescended so far as to *wash their feet*, they, in imitation of his example, ought to think it no disparagement to them, to perform the meanest offices of kindness and charity to each other; for, though they were exalted to the dignity of his apostles, yet still they were but his servants; and that therefore it would be an high piece of arrogance in them to assume more state and grandeur than their Master had done before them."

After saying this, our Blessed Lord told them, that though he had called them all to the apostleship, and well knew the secret disposition of every heart before he chose them, they need not be surprized that one among them should prove a traitor, as it was done, that the scripture might be fulfilled, *He that eateth bread with me hath lift up his heel against me*. This moving declaration greatly affected the disciples, and they began every one of them to say to their Master, *Lord, Is it I?* But Jesus not giving them any decisive answer, John, his beloved disciple, who stood nearest him, asked, in a soft tone of voice, who among the disciples would be guilty of so detestable a crime? Jesus told him that the person to whom he should give the sop, when he had dipped it, should betray him. Accordingly, as soon as he had dipped the sop in the dish, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, saying to him, at the same time, *what thou doest, do quickly*. The rest of the apostles were totally ignorant of the signal which our Lord had given to his beloved disciple John, and therefore, when they heard the words *what thou doest, do quickly*, they supposed it to be an order given to Judas (as he was the purse-bearer) either to bestow something on the poor, or to provide what was necessary for the celebration of the ensuing feast.

As soon as supper was ended, Judas, being now confirmed in his wicked resolution, left Bethany, and went to Jerusalem. On his arrival there, understanding that the Sanhedrim was met at the high-priest's house, he imme-

diately repaired to the place, and offered, upon their giving him a sufficient reward, to betray his Master, and to deliver him privately into his hands. This proposition was highly pleasing to the council, who immediately bargained with him for thirty pieces of silver; and, when Judas had received the money, he, from that moment, sought an opportunity to betray his Master in the absence of the multitude, though he immediately returned, and associated himself with his fellow disciples.

While Judas was thus bartering for his Master's blood, our Blessed Lord was preparing the rest of his apostles for his departure, and endeavoring to comfort them with this consideration: That his death would be a means of displaying both his own, and his Father's glory, as it was a preliminary to his resurrection and ascension into heaven. As, therefore, it was decreed that he must leave them, the stronger should their union be with each other; and therefore he very earnestly recommended to them the duty of mutual love, a duty which had hitherto been so much neglected, that his enjoining them might well be accounted a new commandment, and what was to be the common badge and character of his true disciples ever after.

On the day preceding that of the passover, our Lord sent Peter and John to Jerusalem, to prepare all things necessary for the celebration of the passover; and, lest they should want a convenient room for that purpose, he predisposed the heart of a certain host in the city to accommodate them with one. *Go ye (said he) into the city; and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water; follow him. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the good man of the house, The master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared; there make ready for us.* Mark xiv. 13, &c.

In obedience to these orders Peter and John immediately repaired to Jerusalem, and having provided a lamb, slain it in the temple, sprinkled its blood on the altar, and done every thing else that was required of them, they returned to their Master at Bethany. Our Lord, perceiving

that his late discourse to his disciples about leaving the world and them, had destroyed all their hopes of secular greatness, and left them melancholy and disconsolate, stayed the greater part of the day with them in order to raise their drooping spirits. To effect this he assured them of an happy immortality, which (as he told them) he was going before to prepare for them in heaven, and wanted not power to do it, because he and his Father (as to their divinity) were perfectly the same. He farther promised to send them the Holy Spirit from above, which he represented as a comforter to support them in their afflictions; as a teacher, to instruct them in all necessary truths; and as an advocate, to plead and defend their cause against all their enemies. He told them that, from these considerations, they had no reason to be dejected, because, in this sense, he would be always with them; because, whatever they asked in his name, his Father would give them; and because, when he was gone, they should be enabled to do miracles greater than what they had seen him do. And therefore, *Peace I leave with you* (says he) *my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* John xiv. 27.

As soon as our Blessed Lord had finished his discourse, he arose, and, with his disciples, repaired to Jerusalem, whither they had no sooner arrived than they went into the house which had been prepared for them for celebrating the passover. Towards the evening they sat down to table, soon after which our Lord began to renew the discourse *that one in the company should certainly betray him, but that better it had been for the man who did so if he had never been born.* This occasioned so general a concern and sadness, that every one began to enquire for himself, whether he was the man? At length it came to Judas's turn, who, having the confidence to ask the same question, received a positive answer *that he was:* whereupon he soon withdrew from his Master, and joined himself to his enemies, who were impatiently expecting the performance of his promise.

The paschal supper being ended, our Blessed Lord proceeded to the institution of another, in commemora-

tion of his own death and passion. *And Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to his disciples, and said, Take, eat: This is my body.* Matth. xxvi. 26. Observe this rite in remembrance of me, who, by dying for you, will bring you out of the spiritual bondage, a bondage far worse than the Egyptian under which your ancestors groaned, and will establish you in the glorious liberty of the children of God. Do it in remembrance of me, who, by laying down my life, will ransom you from sin, from death, from hell, and will set open the gates of heaven to you that you may enter immortality in triumph.

After having given the bread to his disciples, our Lord took the cup of wine, and having in like manner, blessed it, he gave it among them, saying, *Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* Matth. xxvi. 27, 28. All of you, and all who profess the Gospel in all ages, must drink of this cup, because it represents my blood shed for the remission of the sins of mankind; and by which the new covenant between God and man is ratified. It is, therefore, my blood of the new covenant; so that this institution exhibits to your joyful meditation the grand basis of the hopes of the children of men, and perpetuates the memory of it, to the end of the world. He added, *I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you, in my Father's kingdom.* Matth. xxvi. 29.

This manifestation of the Son of God is the most illustrious, and most momentous event that ever occurred, and must certainly engage the attention and meditation of every serious Christian. To his life and death, his resurrection and ascension into glory, we are indebted for our hopes and assurances of pardon, for our peace, and for our happiness. To procure our benefit, he condescended to put on him the veil of flesh; he poured Divine instruction from his lips, and shone forth an all-perfect and all lovely example. For our benefit he submitted to a course of the most cruel treatment, to the agonies of the cross, and to the stroke of the king of terrors. For our benefit he arose again with power and lustre, and ascended into the mansions of eternal happiness. With the

greatest wisdom and goodness, therefore, did the beneficent Jesus institute a rite, which should recal his love to our memories, and awake each pious passion in our breast; a rite which, by the breaking of bread, and the pouring out of wine, should represent to us, in a striking manner, that most signal proof of the affection both of him and his heavenly Father, when his tender frame was exposed to wounds and bruises, and when streams of the most precious blood issued from his body, for our sakes.

The more we reflect on this instance of Divine love, the more we shall perceive that there was a peculiar propriety in pointing out, by a particular ordinance, a circumstance of such immense importance. Nay, we may even venture to assert, that in some dark and corrupt ages, when the scriptures were little known by the common people, and hardly studied by the priest, the death of our Saviour might have been almost forgotten, had not the remembrance of it been renewed by the celebration of this sacred ordinance. It should also be remembered, that the vanities of the world, the allurements of sensual pleasure, the charms of ambition, the splendor of riches; in short, temptations from worldly objects of every kind, have often too fatal an influence on our tempers and conduct. They have a fatal tendency to draw the mind aside to folly, and to obliterate the practices of things Divine. It was, therefore, a wise, a kind intention of our Great Redeemer, by a frequent repetition of the sacramental feast, to call back the wandering heart of man, to a sense of his duty and obligations as a Christian.

The important, the awful scene was now approaching, when the great work was to be finished. The traitor Judas was gone to the chief priests and elders, for a band of soldiers to apprehend him; but this did not discompose the Redeemer of mankind; he took occasion to meditate on the glory that would accrue, both to himself, and to his Father, from those sufferings, and mentioned the same to his disciples. *Now (said he) is the son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.* He also told them, that, having already done honor to his Father, by the past actions of his life, and being about to honor him yet farther by his sufferings and death, which would display

his perfections, particularly his infinite love to the human race, in the most astonishing and amiable light, he was, in his turn, to receive honor from his father, intimating, that he was to be exalted to the right hand of Omnipotence.

Some of the apostles, still imagining that our Lord spoke of the glory of a temporal kingdom, their ambition was again revived, and they fell unto unseasonable contentions about priority, or who should have the office of the highest trust and honor about their Master. This contention was highly offensive to our Lord, who reproved them for their conduct, and then adjusted their disputes by the same kind of arguments he had used on a former occasion. He told them that among the Gentiles those were reckoned the greatest who had the greatest power, and exercised it in the most absolute manner; but that their greatness should be very different: that whosoever was desirous of being great, or chief among them, must be so by his humility, and the service he rendered to the rest, in imitation of him who had been a servant to them all. At the same time, to check their ambition, and lead them to form a just notion of his kingdom, he told them that he was soon to leave them, and that whither he was going, they could not at that time follow him; for which reason, instead of contending with one another which of them should be the greatest, they would do well to be strongly attached to each other in the happy bonds of unity and love.

Peter's mind was particularly impressed with the words which our Lord had spoken concerning his going to a place whither his disciples could not come. He therefore asked him, Where he was going? To which Jesus replied, *Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards.*

In order to make his disciples farther humble, watchful, and kindly affectionate towards each other, he assured them that Satan was seeking to ruin them all by his temptations; but in doing of this he particularly addressed himself to Simon. *Simon, Simon, (said he) behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not;*

and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren. Peter was greatly displeased that his Master should have singled him out as the weakest, for so he interpreted his praying for him particularly; and supposing that he mentioned Satan's seeking to sift him, as the thing which would hinder him from following his Master, *he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee into prison, and to death.* But Jesus, knowing his weakness, replied, *I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.* Luke xxii. 34.

After our Blessed Lord had thus spoken to Peter in particular, he turned himself to the rest of his disciples, and addressed the whole in words to this effect: "When I sent you formerly to preach the Gospel, I ordered you to go without any provision, either for your sustenance or defence, assuring you, that though you would, indeed, meet with great opposition, yet Providence would dispose some men in all places to be your friends, and to furnish you with all necessaries; and accordingly you found that you wanted for nothing, but were wonderfully supported; without any care or provision of your own, in the whole journey, and finished your work with success. But now the case is very different: the time of that greatest trial and distress, whereof I have often forewarned you, is just at hand; and you may now make all the provision in your power, and arm yourselves against it, as much as you are able. I have finished the work for which I was sent into the world; and nothing now remains for me, but to undergo the sufferings which the prophets have foretold concerning me, and to complete the wise dispensation of Providence, by submitting at last to a cruel and ignominious death."

The disciples, thinking that their great Master meant that they should arm themselves in a literal sense, and endeavor to oppose the assaults that would be shortly made upon them by the Jews, answered, *Lord, here are two swords.* But the Blessed Jesus, who intended only to convey an idea of their approaching distress and temptations, and to arm them against the attacks they might meet with, replied, *It is enough; you need not*

trouble yourselves about any more weapons of this nature for your defence. Be not terrified and disconsolate, because I have told you that I must undergo great sufferings, and be taken away from you for a time. You have always been taught to believe in God, who is the Almighty Preserver and Governor of all things; and to rely on him for deliverance in every affliction and distress.

Having said this, they finished the passover with singing an hymn, immediately after which our Lord quitted the place, and retired with his disciples to the Mount of Olives.

On their arrival at the place which was to be the scene of our Lord's sufferings, he desired them to fortify themselves by prayer, and forewarned them of the terrible effects his sufferings would have upon them. He told them that what he should undergo would make them all tremble, agreeable to the prediction of the prophet Zechariah: *I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.* To strengthen their faith, however, he not only mentioned his own resurrection, but told them they should see him in Galilee, after he was risen from the dead.

On our Lord's mentioning the effect that his sufferings would have upon his disciples, Peter recollected what had been said to him in particular before they left the house where they had been celebrating the passover. Grieving, therefore, afresh, to find his Master entertain such thoughts of him, and being now armed with a sword, the vehemence of his temper urged him to boast a second time of his courageous and close attachment to his Master. *Though all men (said he) should be offended because of thee, yet I never will be offended.* But Jesus, knowing that human confidence was weak and frail, thought proper to forewarn him again of his danger; and therefore told him, that the cock should not crow before he had denied him thrice. Peter, however, still continued to repeat his confidence, saying, *If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise.* And all the rest of the disciples joined with Peter in professing their fixed resolution of suffering death rather than they would deny their Master.

The compassionate Redeemer of mankind, not willing to lose one single moment of the short time of his ministry that yet remained, continued to instruct his disciples in the great truths he came into the world to explain; and from the vines that were growing round him on the Mount of Olives, delivered to them his last and most excellent discourse, the substance of which was to the following effect:

“Hitherto the Jewish church and nation have been the peculiar care of Providence, in like manner as a choice vine, likely to bring forth much fruit, is the special care of the husbandman. But from henceforth, my church, my disciples, and the professors of my religion, of what country or nation soever they be, shall become the people of God, and the peculiar care of Divine Providence. I will be to them as the root and stock of a vine, of which they are the branches, and my Father the husbandman and vine-dresser. As in the management of a choice vine, the skilful vine-dresser cuts off all barren and superfluous branches, that they may not burthen nor exhaust the tree, and prunes and dresses the fruitful branches, that they may grow continually and bear more fruit; so, in the government of my church, all useless, wicked, and incorrigible members, my Father, by his judgment, will cut off and destroy; but those who are sincerely pious and good, he will, by the various and merciful dispensations of his Providence towards them, try, purify, and amend, that they may daily improve, and be more and more abundant in all good works.

“Now ye, my apostles, are such members as these, being purified in heart and mind, and prepared for every good work, by your lively faith in me, and sincere resolutions to obey my commands. Continue steadfastly in this state, and then you may be sure of obtaining all spiritual blessings from me, as the branches receive sap and nourishment from the vine. But as a branch, without continuing on the vine, cannot bear any fruit, but presently dries up and perishes; so ye, unless ye continue steadfast in your communion with me, by a lively faith and sincere obedience, so as to receive grace and spiritual blessings, can never bring forth any good fruit of true

holiness and righteousness, but will fall into vanity, and superstition. In this case ye shall be cast out from me, and perish for ever, even as a fruitless branch is cut off from the vine, left to wither and dry, and is, at last, burnt in the fire.

“ But if you continue in me, by believing my words, and holding fast that ye believe, and obeying and practising it accordingly, no power, or malice, either of man or of devils, shall be able to hurt you, or oppose your doctrines. For though I be absent from you in body, yet I will hear your prayers, and my Father himself also will hear you; and whatsoever ye shall ask, for the glory of God, and the propagation of my true religion in the world, shall certainly be granted you. But above all things, carefully remember to demonstrate your continuance in me, by abounding in all good works of holiness, righteousness and charity. This is the honor which my Father desires and expects from you; even as it is the glory and desire of a vine-dresser that his vine should bring forth much fruit. And this is the honor that I myself expect from you, that ye should prove yourselves to be really and indeed my disciples, by imitating my example, and obeying my commands. This ye are bound to do, not only in duty, but in gratitude also; for as my Father hath loved you, so have I also loved you; and ye, in like manner, ought to love me again, that you may continue to be loved by me. But the way to express your love towards me, and to continue to be loved by me, is to keep my commandments; even as I, by keeping my Father's commandments, have expressed my love towards him, and continue to be loved by him.

“ These things do I speak to you before my departure, that the comfort ye have had in my presence may be continued in my absence, and even increased to the coming of the Holy Spirit, as it will be upon the condition that I have so often repeated to you, namely, that you keep my commandments. And the principal of these commandments is, that ye love one another; not after the common fashion of the world, but in such a manner as I have loved you; nor can you be ignorant of what sort of love that is, when I tell you that I am now going to lay down

my life for you. This is the highest instance in which it is possible for any person to express his love towards his greatest friends and benefactors; but this I am now going to do for you, and for all mankind. I do not consider you as my benefactors, but as my friends, upon this easy condition only, that ye keep my commandments. I might, indeed, justly call you servants, considering the great difference between me and you, and the obligation ye have to obey my commandments; but I have not treated you as servants, who are not admitted into their master's counsels, but as friends, revealing to you the whole will of my Father, with all freedom and plainness. I have behaved myself to you as to the nearest friends. Not that you first obliged me, or did any acts of kindness for me; but I have freely, and of my own good pleasure, chosen you to be my apostles, and the preachers of my Gospel, that you may go and declare the will of God to the world, and bring forth much and lasting fruit in the conversion of men to the profession and practice of true religion and virtue. In the performance of this work, whatsoever ye shall ask of my Father in my name, in order to enable you to perform it effectually, and with full success, shall certainly be granted unto you. "Now all these things which I have spoken unto you concerning the greatness of my love towards you, in choosing you to be my apostles, in revealing unto you the whole will of my Father, and in laying down my life for you, I have urged and inculcated, as I at first told you, chiefly for this reason, that ye may learn, after my example, to *love one another*. The world, indeed, you must expect will hate and persecute you on my account. But at this you ought not to be surprized or terrified, knowing that it is no worse treatment than I myself have met with before you. Be not, therefore, surprized when ye meet with opposition; nor think to find better treatment in the world than I have done. Remember what I have already told you, that the disciple is not above his master; nor is he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If men had generally and readily embraced my doctrine, you might, indeed, have had some reason to expect that they would willingly have received yours also. But since I myself have suffered great in-

dignities and persecutions from wicked and perverse, from obstinate and incorrigible men, only for opposing their vices, it is highly reasonable that you should expect to undergo the like treatment upon the like account. In all your sufferings, however, you will have this comfortable consideration to support you, that the justice of your own cause, and the injustice of your persecutors will, by those means, most evidently appear; seeing ye are persecuted only for professing and preaching, in my name, the doctrine of true religion and virtue; and they persecute you only because they know not God, and out of mere malice, will not bear to be instructed in his commands.

“ But notwithstanding all the opposition that wicked and incorrigible men will make against my doctrine, there will not be wanting powerful promoters of it, who shall effectually overcome all opposition. For the comforter, whom I said I would send you from heaven, even that *spirit of truth*, which cometh forth, and is sent from the Father, shall, when he cometh, with wonderful efficacy, bear testimony to the truth of my doctrine, and cause it to be spread through the world with incredible success. Nay, and ye yourselves also, though now so weak, fearful and doubting, shall then very powerfully bear testimony to the truth of all the things whereof ye, having been all along with me, have been eye-witnesses from the beginning.

“ Thus have I warned you before-hand of the opposition and persecution ye must expect to meet with in the world, that when it cometh, ye may not be surprized and terrified, so as to be discouraged thereby from persevering in the performance of your duty. Ye must expect, particularly, that the chief priests, and rulers of the Jews, men of great hypocrisy and superstition, zealous for their ceremonies and ritual traditions, but careless to know and obey the will of God in matters of great and eternal obligation, and invincibly prejudiced against the spiritual holiness and purity of my doctrine: These you must expect will excommunicate you as apostates, and cast you out of all their societies, as the vilest of people. Nay, to such an absurd height of malice will their superstition carry them, that they will even fancy they promote the

service of God, and the cause of religion, when they most barbarously murder and destroy you. But I have warned you of all this before-hand, that ye may prepare and fortify yourselves against it; and that when it cometh to pass, ye may remember, I foretold it to you, and your faith in me may thereby be strengthened.

“ Being now about to leave you, I think it necessary to mention what things are likely to come upon you after my departure, and also, at the same time, to inform you what comfort you may expect to support you under them. You may be assured that great temptations will befall you in my absence. This, indeed, ye readily apprehend, and suffer your hearts to be overwhelmed with grief at the thoughts of it. But the comfortable part of my discourse, namely, that my departure is only in order to return to him that sent me, and that I will soon after send you the Holy Spirit, and the other advantages that will thence result to you, are neither considered, nor are you solicitous about them. Nevertheless, if ye will listen, I will plainly tell you the truth. Ye are so far from having reason to be dejected at the thoughts of my departure, that on the contrary it is really profitable and expedient for you that I should now go; for such is the order and dispensation of Providence towards you, and the appointment of my Father’s eternal and all-wise counsel, that before I go and take possession of my kingdom, the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, cannot be sent unto you; but when I am departed from you, and have all power in heaven and earth committed unto me, then I will send him unto you. And when he cometh he shall abundantly support and comfort you under all your troubles: shall powerfully plead your cause against your adversaries; and shall, with wonderful efficacy, cause the doctrine of the gospel to spread and prevail in the world against all opposition. He shall particularly, and in a most extraordinary and convincing manner, make the world sensible of the greatness and heinousness of a sin of which they were not aware; of the righteousness and justice of a dispensation they did not understand, and of the execution of a judgment they did not expect. First, by wonderfully attesting and con-

firming the truth of my doctrine, by the gift of tongues, and other wonderful signs, he shall convince the world of the greatness and heinousness of their sins, in disbelieving and rejecting me. Secondly, by demonstrating, that my departure out of the world was not perishing and dying, but only a returning to my Father, in order to be invested with all power both in heaven and earth, he shall convince the world of the righteousness and justice of my cause, and of the excellency of that dispensation, which I preach and declare to mankind. Lastly, by mightily destroying the power of the devil and the dominion of sin, and propagating the doctrine of true religion in the world, with wonderful efficacy and success, he shall convince men of my power and authority to execute judgment upon mine enemies for the establishment of my kingdom upon earth.

“ There are yet many other things hereafter to be done in relation to the settling and establishing of my church, which, if it were proper, I would now acquaint you with, but ye are not yet prepared to understand and receive them. Howbeit, when the spirit of truth, whom I promised you, is come, he shall enlarge your understandings, remove your prejudices, and instruct you in all necessary and Divine truths, to enable you to go through that great work which I have begun in person, and which I will carry on by your ministry, for the spirit is not to begin any new work, or to found any new doctrine, of himself. But as I have taught and will teach you only in my Father’s name, so the spirit shall instruct you only in mine and my Father’s will, and in things necessary to promote and carry on the same design. Every thing that he does shall be only in order to manifest my glory, and establish my religion in the world: even as every thing that I have done has been only to manifest my Father’s glory, and reveal his will to mankind. For as all that I have taught is only what I received from my Father, so all that the spirit shall teach you is only what he receives from me. Whatsoever, I say, the spirit shall teach you, is only what he receives from me; for receiving from my Father, I call receiving from me, and teaching his will, is teaching mine; seeing all things that the

Father hath are common to me, and all power and dominion by him committed to me. And now be careful to remember what matter for comfort I have given you, and support yourselves with it under the approaching distress. It is now, indeed, but a very little while before I shall be taken away from you; nevertheless let not this cause you to despair; for, after I am departed, it will be also a little while before I appear to you again; forasmuch as my being taken away from you, is not perishing, but only returning to my Father."

The disciples of our Blessed Lord, not being able to comprehend the meaning of the last part of his discourse, were greatly perplexed in their minds; and enquired of each other, what he could mean by telling them, that in a very little time he should be taken from them, and that in a very little time more they should see him again; and that because he went to his Father. *What is this that he saith unto us? A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again a little while, and ye shall see me; and, Because I go to the Father? They said, therefore, what is this that he saith, A little while? We cannot tell what he saith.* John xvi. 17, 18.

Our Blessed Lord, observing the perplexity of his disciples, and knowing that they were desirous of asking him for an explanation, readily saved them that trouble, by addressing himself to them in words to this effect: "Why are ye thus disturbed and perplexed about what I have told you? Is it a thing so very hard to be understood, that I said, within a very little time I should be taken away from you, and that within a very little time more I should appear to you again? Verily, verily, I tell you I must very soon depart out of this world: then the world, who are your enemies, will rejoice and triumph over you, as if they had destroyed me, and wholly suppressed you; and ye, for your parts, will be overwhelmed with grief and sorrow. But within a short time I will return to you again; and then your sorrow shall be turned into exceeding great joy. Even as a woman, when she is in labor, hath great pain and sorrow for the present, but as soon as she is delivered forgets all her sufferings, and rejoices greatly at the birth of her son; so ye, while

ye are under the immediate apprehension of my departure from you, and during that time of distress and temptation which shall befall you in my absence, will be full of sorrow and anxiety of mind; but when I return to you again, then ye shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and no power or malice of man shall ever be able to take from you any more the cause or continuance of it. But though I shall return to you again, and your hearts will thereupon be filled with inexpressible joy, and which never shall be taken from you any more; yet there will be no necessity that I should then continue long with you in person, to instruct you upon every occasion, as I have now done with my own mouth. For besides that the Holy Spirit will be sent to instruct you in all things necessary, my Father himself also will hear your petitions, and be ready to grant you whatsoever you shall desire of him in my name, and as being my disciples. Hitherto ye have asked nothing of God in my name; but from henceforth put up your petitions in my name; and whatsoever ye shall so ask for the glory of God, and in order to enable you to go through the work of your ministry successfully, shall certainly be granted you; that your joy, which will begin at my appearing to you again, after my death, may be completed by the wonderful success and efficacy of your own ministry.

“These things I have told you, at present, imperfectly and obscurely, according as your capacities are able to bear them. But the time is coming, when I will speak to you with more openness, freedom, and plainness, the whole will of my Father concerning the nature and establishment of my kingdom, and what things and in what manner ye ought to pray unto him for. After that time ye shall, with firm assurance, pray to my Father in my name for what ye want. And I need not tell you, that I will intercede with the Father on your behalf; for besides the love he has borne for me, and the power and authority my prayers have with him, he has moreover of himself a great love for you, and a ready disposition to grant your prayers, because ye are become grateful and acceptable to him, by your love towards me, which ye have

shown in embracing willingly that holy doctrine which I have revealed to you from him.

“To conclude: the sum of what I have told you, is briefly and plainly this. I came from God my Father, and have lived upon earth in the state of frail and mortal man, that I might reveal to mankind the will of my heavenly Father, and the way to attain eternal life and happiness; and now, having finished this great work, I am about to leave this world, and return again to my Father, from whence I at first came.”

From these last words, which were more plain and express than any our Lord had spoken before, his disciples clearly perceived that the departure he had so often mentioned, was no other than his actually going out of this world; and therefore they made him a reply to this effect: “Now, Lord, you speak plainly, and without any figure; so that we apprehend fully what you mean. And now that our curiosity is satisfied, you have likewise greatly confirmed our faith, having given us a certain token whereby we are assured that you know all things, even the hearts and secret thoughts of men, since you have answered us a question which gave us great perplexity, and we were desirous to ask your opinion, but were afraid; but now we are convinced that you are endued with a truly Divine power, and did, indeed, come forth from God.”

The answer our Blessed Lord made his disciples in consequence of these acknowledgments, was to the following effect: “And do you now at length firmly believe in me? Are you resolved to continue steadfast in this faith? Do you think yourselves able to persevere immovably in the profession of it? Be not confident of your own strength; but pray that ye may be delivered from temptation in the time of distress, such as will come upon you much sooner than ye expect: For I tell you, that ye will all of ye within a few hours utterly forsake me, and fly in hopes to secure yourselves, leaving me alone. And yet I should not say alone, since my Father is with me, who is more than all. I have, therefore, acquainted you with these things before-hand, that your minds may be furnished with sufficient matter of comfort and strength to bear up

under all temptations, from the consideration of my having foretold not only what distress will befall you, but also how ye shall terminate your victory over all your enemies. You must, indeed, expect to meet with much affliction, but let not this discourage you. I have subdued the world: follow my example, and partake of my reward. *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.* John xvi. 33.

With these words our Blessed Lord finished his discourse: immediately after which *he lift up his eyes to heaven*, and, in the most devout manner, prayed to his heavenly Father, not only in behalf of himself, but likewise his apostles, and all succeeding Christians. This most beautiful and beneficent prayer is contained in the xviiith chapter of the Gospel according to St. John; and the whole of it may be thus paraphrased:

“ Oh Almighty Father, now the time of my suffering, for which I was sent into the world, is arrived. I most earnestly intreat thee to support me under it, and make me triumph over death by a glorious resurrection, and ascension into heaven; that by these means the glory may redound to thee, and cause thy will to be believed and obeyed through all the world, to the salvation of mankind, according to the full intent of that office and power with which thou didst originally invest me. In order to the bringing about this great design of salvation, I have declared thy will to mankind. I have published thy precepts, and discharged the great mission entrusted to me. I have preached the doctrine of repentance to salvation, and have finished the work which thou sentest me to do, to the glory of thy name upon earth. And now, to complete the great design, do thou, O Almighty Father, likewise glorify me with thine own self. Support me under my sufferings; let me prevail and triumph over death, by a glorious resurrection; and exalt me again to the same glory in heaven, which I had with thee before the creation of the universe. I have manifested thy will to the disciples; the men that thou gavest me out of the world. To those persons thou didst, in thine infinite

wisdom, appoint, that thy truth should be made known; therefore, to them have I revealed the mysteries of thy kingdom, the precepts of thy Gospel, and the doctrine of thy salvation. And this doctrine they have willingly embraced, steadfastly adhered to, and sincerely obeyed. They are fully satisfied and convinced that what I taught them as from thee was really a Divine doctrine, taught by thine immediate appointment and command; and that I did not preach any human invention of men, but was really sent by thy Divine authority and commission.

“For these persons, therefore, I now pray, that as thou hast begun the work of their salvation, by my preaching and revealing to them thy will, while I have been present with them here upon earth; so also that thou wouldst preserve them when I am departed from this world, and complete the work of their salvation by my resurrection and ascension into heaven, after my death. I do not pray for the unbelieving impenitent world, but for those who have embraced that most holy doctrine, which thou hast taught them through me by my preaching; for those who have glorified, and will glorify thy name, by their ministry, and who, consequently, are to be esteemed as thine own in common with me.

“I am now about to leave the world, in order to return to thee; but these my disciples, who continue after me, I recommend to thy Divine protection, when I am gone; endue them with powers to persevere in preaching and practising the truth, and to deliver the same holy doctrines which I have given to them, that so they may remain inseparably united to me, as I am to thee. So long as I have been with them in the world, I have watched over them, and kept them from falling away, both by example, preaching, and continual admonition, according to the power and authority, which thou didst commit to me; nor has one of my apostles miscarried under my care, except that perfidious traitor, who, as the scripture foretold, has ungratefully conspired with my enemies to destroy me, and will be punished according to his deserts. While I have continued with my disciples, I have watched over them and preserved them under mine own eye;

but now, as I am going to leave the world, I beseech thee to keep and assist them by thy good spirit; and let the expectation of their continuing under thy special care and protection, be their comfort and support in my absence. The world, indeed, will persecute and hate them, on this account, as my doctrine is repugnant to the lust and affections, the passions, designs, and inclinations of worldly men; it must necessarily be that the vicious and incorrigible world will oppose and persecute them, as it has before persecuted me. I beseech thee, therefore, take them under thy particular care, to support them against the violence and oppression of an evil world. I do not desire that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but preserve them in it to be instruments of thy word, thy glory, and to be teachers of thy truth; nor suffer them to be either destroyed by the malice and violence, or corrupted by the evil custom and opinions, of a perverse and wicked generation. They are of a temper and spirit very different from the current affection and common dispositions of the world, according to the example of purity which I have set before them. Do thou preserve and increase in them that moderation and candor of mind, cause them to be thoroughly affected and impressed with that true doctrine so frequently recommended to them from my mouth, so as to express it visibly in their lives and practice, and to promote it zealously in their preaching, that they may, both by word and good example, become worthy and successful ministers of my gospel.

“As thou hast sent me into the world to reveal thy will to mankind, so send I these my apostles to continue preaching the same doctrine begun by me. And the principal design of my exemplary life, constant teaching, and now voluntarily offering myself to death for it is, to sanctify and enable them to preach with success and efficacy for the salvation of men. Neither pray I for these my apostles only, but for all others, who shall, by their preaching and practice, promote thy true religion; and being converted from the world, may, by their sincere endeavors, go on to reform others, convincing the world of the excellency of their religion, and consequently enforcing men to acknowledge the truth and Divine authori-

ty thereof. For promoting which great end, I have communicated to my apostles the same power and authority of doing mighty works for the confirmation of their doctrine, and the evidence of thy truth, as thou didst communicate to me; that so I working in them, as thou hast done in me, and thus confirming with great efficacy and demonstration of the spirit, they may establish the same doctrine which I published in person, the world may, by this evidence, be convinced that I was really sent by thee, and that my disciples act by the same Divine commission.

“Holy and Almighty Father, all those whom thou hast thus given me, who have heartily embraced my doctrine, and sincerely obeyed it, I desire that thou wouldst make them partakers of the same happiness with myself, and exalt them to behold the incomprehensible glory wherewith thou didst originally invest me, in thy eternal love, before the foundation of the world. The generality of mortals, O righteous Father, have not known thee, nor been willing to embrace and obey the revelation of thy will. But I have known thy will, and have made it known to my disciples, men of simplicity and honesty; and they have embraced and obeyed it. And I will make it known to them, more and more, that they may grow up and improve in faith, in holiness, and in all good works, so as finally to arrive, and cause others to arrive, at that eternal happiness, which is the effect of thy infinite love towards me, and through me towards them.”

After our Lord had finished this pious and benevolent prayer, he left the Mount of Olives, and, accompanied by his disciples, crossed the brook Cedron, and proceeded to a place called Gethsemane, where was a garden well known to Judas, because thither our Lord and his apostles used frequently to repair, both for retirement and devotion.

When our Lord approached the entrance of the garden of Gethsemane, he ordered his disciples to sit down till he should retire to pray, taking with him only Peter, James and John, those three select disciples whom he had before chosen to be witnesses of his transfiguration.

The sufferings our Blessed Lord was now on the point of undergoing were so great, that the very prospect of

them greatly affected him, and made him express himself in this doleful exclamation: *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, tarry ye here, and watch.* On this great occasion he sustained those grievous sorrows in his soul, by which, as well as by dying on the cross, he became a sin-offering, and accomplished the redemption of mankind.

Our Blessed Lord now left his three favorite disciples, and retiring a small distance from them, prostrated himself on the ground, beseeching of God, that if it was possible (as all things were possible to him) he might be excused from drinking the bitter potion; but at the same time expressed his entire submission to the Divine will. *O my Father* (said he) *if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.* Matth. xxvi. 39. Having prayed to this effect, he returned to his apostles, but finding them asleep he awoke them, and, in a reproof full of love, reminded Peter more especially of his late promises, and present neglect of him, when he most stood in need of his comfort and assistance. *What* (said he) *could ye not watch with me one hour?* Thou, who so lately didst boast of thy courage and constancy in my service; canst thou so soon forget thy master? He then advised Peter to keep himself awake, for fear of the temptations that were busy about him, and added this compassionate observation, that though *the spirit was willing*, and ready enough to make good resolutions, yet *the flesh was weak*, and unable, very often, to put them in execution.

Thrice did our Blessed Lord retire, and pray in like manner to his heavenly Father; but, in the last time, his sense of God's indignation against the sins of mankind, and the dismal prospect of what he was to suffer in the expiation of them, made his prayer more vehement, and his agonies so violent, that the sweat which fell from his body was like large drops of blood; and *human nature* must have been exhausted under it, had not an angel from heaven been immediately sent to strengthen and support him.

After receiving this Divine refreshment, our Blessed Lord returned the third time to his apostles: but finding

them still in the same sleepy condition, he told them, that they might sleep on as long as they pleased, because he had no farther occasion for their assistance; but that it would not be improper for them to arise, because the traitor, who was to deliver him up to his enemies, was just at hand. *Sleep on now (said he) and take your rest; behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; he is at hand that doth betray me.* Matth. xxvi. 45, 46. The event will soon be over, which causes your sorrow: I am betrayed, and ready to be delivered up to death.

Our Blessed Lord had no sooner spoke these words, than the perfidious Judas, accompanied by a band of soldiers and officers, together with some of the chief priests, Pharisees, and elders of the people, all armed with swords and staves, entered the garden in order to apprehend him. To prevent all mistakes, the traitor Judas had given them a sign, that the person, whom he should kiss, was the man they were to apprehend; and therefore, approaching our Lord with an address of seeming civility, he saluted him, and in return, received a reproof for his perfidy, but in such gentle and easy terms as spake a mind perfectly calm and undisturbed. *Judas, (said our Lord) betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?* Our Lord then advanced forward, and, with an air of majesty, demanded of the soldiers whom they wanted? They told him Jesus of Nazareth. He replied, *I am he;* thereby intimating that he was willing to put himself into their hands. At the same time, to shew them that they could not apprehend him without his own consent, he, in a very extraordinary manner, exerted his Divine power, by making the whole band fall back, and, for a time, depriving them of their natural strength. *Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said unto them, I am he. And Judas also, who betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*

But the soldiers, imagining, perhaps, that they had been thrown down by some demon, or evil spirit, with

whom the Jews said he was in confederacy, advanced towards him a second time. *Then asked he them again, whom seek ye? and they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he, again expressing his willingness to fall into their hands. If, therefore, ye seek me, let these go their way; meaning, if your business be with me alone, do not interrupt my disciples. This request appears to have been made by our Lord that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. For as he always proportioned the trials of his people to their strength, so he here took care that the disciples should escape the storm, which none but himself could sustain.*

At length, some of the soldiers, more daring than the rest, began to lay hands on Jesus; upon which, some of the apostles, who were armed with swords, asked their Master if they might draw in his defence. But before he could give them an answer, Peter had drawn his sword, and, in great fury, struck at Malchus, one of the high-priest's servants, in doing which he happened to cut off his right ear. The enraged disciple was on the point of singly attacking the whole band, when Jesus ordered him to sheathe his sword, telling him, that his unseasonable and imprudent defence might prove the occasion of his destruction. *Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.* He farther told him, that his conduct implied both a distrust of God (who could always make use of a variety of means for the safety of his people) and his ignorance in the scriptures. *Thinkest thou (said he) that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be? Matth. xxvi. 53.*

Our Blessed Lord being tenderly inclined to prevent any bad consequences that might otherwise have arisen from Peter's rashness, touched the head of Malchus, and immediately healed him. Having done this, he turned about, and expostulated with the soldiers on the indignity of their apprehending him in so scandalous a manner, as if he had been a thief, or some vile malefactor, when they

had frequent opportunities of taking him in the temple. *Be ye come out* (said he) *as against a thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness,* Luke xxii. 51, &c. They had hitherto kept at some distance, but drew nearer when they found Jesus was in their power; they were proof against all conviction, and resolutely bent on putting him to death.

When the apostles saw their Master in the hands of his enemies, they lost all their courage, and (as he had foretold) left him, and betook themselves to flight. *Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled. Then the band and the captain and officers took Jesus and bound him.* But it was not the cord which held him: his immense charity was by far a stronger bond. He could have broken those weak ties, and exerted his divinity in a more wonderful manner: he could have struck them all dead, with as much ease as he had before thrown them on the ground. But he patiently submitted to this, as to every other indignity which they had thought proper to offer him. He suffered himself to be disposed of agreeable to their will; and accordingly they led him away, in order to prosecute their designs of putting him to death.

When the soldiers had bound our Lord, and were conducting him away, they observed a young man, whom they took to be one of his disciples, following him. Enraged at all those who were the followers of the Blessed Jesus, they attempted to seize him, but he having no other clothes on than a loose garment, slipped himself from it, and fled from them naked. This person, in all probability was the proprietor of the garden, who, being awakened with the noise made by the soldiers, and startled at the cause of it, hastily arose from his bed, and ran out with no other covering than a loose garment thrown over him. He might, probably, have had a respect for Jesus; and therefore, when he found him in the hands of his enemies, was desirous of following him to see what would be the issue of his then situation. But, on being seized by the soldiers, and considering his own danger, he slipped from them, and fled.

CHAP. XIII.

Our Blessed Lord is taken before the Sanhedrim, examined, and grossly insulted. Peter denies him thrice. Our Lord is condemned by the Sanhedrim, and carried before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. The traitor Judas becomes his own executioner. Pilate publicly acquits Jesus, and refers his case to the decision of Herod, who remits him to Pilate. The Roman governor makes a speech to the rulers of the Jews in favor of our Lord. The people are enraged against him, and insist upon his being put to death, in consequence of which Pilate, to excite their pity, and obviate their request of having him put to death, orders him to be scourged. The people are still resolute, upon which Pilate uses farther endeavors to appease their wrath, but without effect, and is at length obliged to comply with their unjust and severe demands. Our Blessed Lord is conducted to Mount Calvary, and there ignominiously crucified between two notorious malefactors. Is reviled and ill-treated by several of the spectators. Strange phenomena appear during the time of his being fastened on the cross. Our Lord, after being some time on the cross, calls upon his heavenly Father, and then gives up the ghost.

AFTER the band of soldiers had apprehended our Lord in the garden of Gethsemane, they first took him before Annas, who was father-in-law to Caiphas the high-priest, and had formerly discharged that office himself. But Annas, not chusing to interfere singly in so singular a matter, sent them to Caiphas, in whose palace, though it was late at night, the Sanhedrim were still sitting. Caiphas examined him very minutely concerning both his doctrine and disciples; in answer to which our Blessed Lord told him, that, since he had always taught in the most public manner, in the synagogues, and in the temple, he should rather enquire of those who had been his constant hearers. *I spake openly to the world, (said he) I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing. Why asketh thou me? Ask them which heard*

me what I have said unto them; behold, they know what I said. John xviii. 20, 21.

All the actions of our Blessed Redeemer were done in public, and even in the presence of some of his most inveterate enemies. He, therefore, in his defence, very justly appealed to that part of his character; but his answer was construed as disrespectful, for *when he had thus spoken, one of the officers, which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, answerest thou the high-priest so?* To which he meekly replied, with the greatest serenity of mind, *If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?* As if he had said, "Shew me, prove before this court, wherein my crime consists, or record it in the evidence on the face of my trial; which, if you cannot do, how can you answer this inhuman treatment to a defenceless person standing on his trial before the world, and in open court?"

The council perceiving that, from our Lord's own confession, they could not lay any just accusation against him, called upon several *false* witnesses, whom they had procured on the occasion; but these either disagreed in their relations, or came not sufficiently to the point. Two persons, indeed, were consistent in what they deposed, viz. that they had heard him say, he would pull down the temple (meaning himself when he spoke it) and in three days rebuild it. But as this accusation was false in fact, and only founded upon a *figurative* expression of our Saviour's, it was not thought to amount to any thing capital.

Our Blessed Lord did not make any reply to the evidences that were produced against him. This greatly provoked the high-priest, who, supposing he intended, by his silence, to put an affront on the council, rose from his seat, and, in the most haughty and imperious manner, demanded the reason for so remarkable a conduct. *Answerest thou nothing?* (said he) *what is it which these witness against thee?* And some of the council added, *Art thou the Christ?* In answer to this our Blessed Lord told them, that if he should tell them plainly they would not believe him; and if he should demonstrate it

to them by the most evident and undeniable arguments, yet neither would they be convinced, or let him go.

The high-priest, finding all his endeavors to trepan our Lord in vain, said to him, I adjure you, *by the living God*, in whose presence you now stand, that you tell us plainly and truly, whether or not thou art the Messiah, the Son of God?

Our Blessed Lord, being thus adjured by the chief magistrate of the council, immediately answered in the affirmative; and added, that they should shortly see a convincing evidence of the truth of what he said in the wonderful destruction he would bring on the Jewish nation; in the progress which the Gospel should make over the earth; and, finally, in his glorious appearance in the clouds of heaven at the last day, when he should come to judge the world.

On our Blessed Lord's making this answer, a number of the council cried out at once, *Art thou the Son of God?* To which our Great Redeemer replied, *Ye say that I am*: a manner of speaking among the Jews which expressed a plain and strong affirmation of the question asked.

When the high-priest heard this second assertion, he rent his clothes with great indignation, and said unto the council, Why need we trouble ourselves to seek for any more witnesses? Ye yourselves, nay, this whole assembly, are witnesses that he hath spoken manifest and notorious blasphemy? To which they all replied, that, for assuming to himself the character of the Messiah, he deserved to be put to death.

After coming to this resolution the council broke up, and the members of it repaired to their respective homes, leaving our Lord to the mercy of the soldiers and the high-priest's servants, who offered all the acts of violence and effrontery that they could invent to his sacred person. Some spit in his face, others buffeted him, others blindfolded him, and others again smote him with their fists, calling on him to prophecy who it was that struck him. Such was the treatment of the Son of God, who, though unworthy of it, bore it with patience and resignation, leaving mankind an example to follow his steps, and

submit to the will of God in all things, nor murmur at any of the dispensations of his Providence.

During this melancholy scene, Peter, whose fears had made him flee from his Master in the garden, having a little recovered his spirits, and hoping to pass undiscovered in the throng, ventured in, among others, to see the issue of this fatal night, and, by the interest of his fellow-disciple John (who went with him) was let in by a maid-servant, to the high-priest's palace. It happened to be cold weather, and the servants and officers having kindled a fire in the common-hall, Peter went in, and sat down among them to warm himself. The maid-servant, who kept the door, followed Peter, and looking earnestly in his face, charged him with being one of our Lord's disciples. *Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?* This blunt attack threw Peter into such confusion, that he flatly denied his having any connection with Jesus, replying, I am not, and adding, *I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest.* As if he had said, I do not understand any reason for your asking me such a question. Thus the very apostle who had but a short time before acknowledged his Master to be the Messiah, the son of the living God, and had so confidently boasted of his fortitude, and firm attachment to him in the greatest dangers, proved an arrant deserter of his cause upon trial. His shameful fears were altogether inexcusable, as the enemy who attacked him was one of the weaker sex, and the terror of the charge was in a great measure taken off, by the insinuation made in it that John was likewise known to be Christ's disciple: for as he was known at the high-priest's, he was consequently known in that character. *Art thou not also one of this man's disciples?* Art thou not one of them, as well as he who is sitting with you? Nothing can account for this conduct of Peter, but the confusion and panic which had seized him, on this occasion. As his inward perturbation must have appeared in his countenance and gesture, he did not chuse to stay long with the servants at the fire. He went out, therefore, into the porch, where he was a little concealed. *And another maid saw him, and began to say to them that stood by, this is one of them; and he again*

denied it, with an oath, I know not the man; adding perjury to lying.

After Peter had been thus attacked without doors, he thought proper to return and mix again with the crowd at the fire. *And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself.* From this circumstance we may conclude, that Peter left the porch where the second denial happened, and was come again into the hall. *Here one of the servants of the high-priest, (being his kinsman whose ear Peter had cut off) saith, did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied him again, and immediately the cock crew.* The words of Malchus's kinsman bringing to Peter's remembrance what he had done to that slave, threw him into such a panic, that when those who stood by repeated the charge, he impudently denied it: *He even began to curse and to swear, saying I know not this man of whom ye speak.* For when they heard Peter deny the charge, they supported it by an argument drawn from the accent with which he pronounced his answer. Surely thou art one of them; for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto: so that being pressed on all sides, to give his lie the better color, he prophaned the name of God, by imprecating the bitterest curses on himself, if he was telling a falsehood.

Thus did Peter deny his master three distinct times, with oaths and asseverations, totally forgetting the vehement protestations he had made, a few hours before, that he would never deny him. From this circumstance we are taught two lessons: first, that the greatest resolutions formed on our own strength cannot withstand the torrent of temptation; and, secondly, that the true disciples of Christ, though they fall, shall be brought to a conviction of their sin: for no sooner had Peter denied his Master the third time than the cock crew, and awaked in him the first conviction of his sin. *And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.*

The circumstance of our Blessed Lord's turning and looking on Peter is most beautifully described by the

Evangelist St. Luke. It is reasonable to suppose that our Lord was placed on some eminence at one end of the hall, where he had been examined by the council, and was surrounded by the officers left to take care of him, while Peter was at the other end with the servants at the fire; so that our Lord could easily look towards Peter, and hear him denying him. This being observed by Peter, and the cock instantly crowing, brought his master's prediction fresh into his mind. He was stung with deep remorse, and being unable to contain himself, covered his face with his garment to conceal the confusion he was in, and, going out into the porch, *wept bitterly*.

Early the next morning the Sanhedrim* met in a full body in the temple, whither they ordered Jesus to be brought; and, having again enquired of him whether or not he was the true Messiah, and again received the same answer as before, they adjudged him guilty of blasphemy, and accordingly sentenced him to death. The grand assembly, having thus condemned our Lord, immediately resolved that he should be conducted to the palace of the Roman governor,† whose name, at that time was Pontius Pilate, in order that he might ratify their sentence, and grant a warrant for his execution.

* The assembly, which was held the night before, and who had declared our Lord deserving of death, was neither general nor judicial, according to the sense of the law, which did not allow of justice being administered in private, or in the night-time. And therefore the high-priests and rulers met again in the morning, in the council-chamber in the temple, (which they could not do the night before because it was then shut up) there to re-examine our Saviour, and condemn him in form.

† The Roman governors of Judea generally resided at Cæsarea, but at the great feasts they went to Jerusalem (where was a palace appointed for their use) in order to prevent or suppress tumults, and to administer justice. Pilate, having been some time in Jerusalem before the feast, had been informed of the great ferment among the rulers, and the true character of the person on whose account it was raised. He therefore entertained a proper idea of the whole affair, and clearly saw through the malice and vindictive tempers of the rulers. *He knew that for envy they had delivered him.* He knew the cause of their envy, was impressed with a favorable opinion of Jesus, and resolved if possible, to deliver him out of the hands of his vile persecutors.

In the mean time Judas Iscariot (who had delivered our Lord into the hands of his enemies) watching the issue of these proceedings, and finding that his Master was delivered over to the secular power, repented of his perfidy, and was filled with the deepest remorse for what he had done. He saw all his golden dreams of temporal honors sunk at once to nothing; he saw his kind, his indulgent Master, condemned and forsaken by all his followers. He saw all this, and determined, if possible, to make some satisfaction for the crime he had committed.

In consequence of this repentance and resolution he went to the council-chamber, and confessed openly his sin before the chief priests and elders, *I have sinned* (said he) *in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.* He then offered them the money he had received to commit it, and earnestly wished he could recal the fatal transaction of the preceding night.

But this moving speech of Judas had no effect on the callous hearts of the Jewish rulers. They told him, that however he might think the prisoner innocent, and for that reason had sinned in bringing the sentence of death upon his head, they were not to blame; because they knew him to be a blasphemer, who deserved to die. *What is that to us?* said they; *see thou to that.* Nay, they even refused to take back the money they had given him as a reward for performing the base act of betraying his Master.

The deepest remorse now seized the mind of the wretched Judas, and his soul was agitated with the horrors of despair. The innocence and benevolence of his Master, the many favors he himself had received from him, and the many kind offices he had done for the sons and daughters of affliction, crowded at once into his mind, and rendered his torment intolerable. Racked with those agonizing passions, and unable to support the misery, he threw down the wages of his iniquity in the temple; and, again confessing his own sin, and the innocence of his Master, went away in despair, and hanged himself. Thus died Judas Iscariot the traitor, a miserable example of the fatal influence of covetousness, and a standing monument of Divine vengeance to deter future

generations from acting in opposition to the dictates of conscience, through a love of the things of this world: for which this wretched mortal betrayed his Master, his friend, his Saviour, and accumulated such a load of guilt upon himself as sunk his soul into the deepest abyss of despair, to shake off which he died an ignominious death by his own hands.

The pieces of silver, which Judas threw down in the council-chamber, were gathered up, and delivered to the priests, who did not think proper to put them into the treasury, because they were *the price of blood*. They therefore agreed to purchase with them a piece of ground then called the *Potter's Field** (but afterwards *the Field of Blood*) as a place of interment for strangers.

When the members of the Sanhedrim arrived at the governor's palace, they refused to go into the judgment-hall,† for fear of contracting some pollution. Pilate, therefore, went out to them; and as he understood that they had already passed sentence on our Lord, he demanded the grounds of their accusation against him. Though it was very natural for the governor to ask this question, yet the Jews thought themselves highly affronted by it; and being unwilling that any enquiry should be

* The spot of ground, called the Potter's Field, lay on the west side of the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and probably received its name from the people of that trade drying their pots there before they baked them. It was afterwards called the Field of Blood for the reason assigned by the Evangelist; but at present, from that veneration, which it has since obtained among Christians, it is named *Campo Sancto*, or the *Holy Field*. It is a small spot of ground, not much above thirty yards long, and about half as much broad. One part of it is taken up by a square fabric about twelve yards high, built for a charnel-house, in the covering of which are some openings to let down the bodies that are to be there interred. At a small distance from this burial-place, is an intricate cave or sepulchre, consisting of several rooms one within another; in some of which it is said the apostles hid themselves when they forsook their Master, and fled.

† In the governor's palace there was always a guard of Roman soldiers and a great company of servants; and, as they were heathens, the Jews thought that, by touching any of them, they should be defiled, and consequently, made incapable of eating the passover, of which no unclean person was to partake.

made in the particulars of their proceedings, answered in general, that if he had not been a criminal, they would not have brought him at all, much less at so early an hour.

Pilate then proceeded to examine Jesus; and finding he had not been guilty either of rebellion or sedition, but that he was accused of particulars relating to the religion and customs of the Jews, grew angry and said, What are these things to me? Take him yourselves and judge him, according to your own law. Plainly insinuating, that in his opinion the crime they laid to the prisoner's charge was not of a capital nature; and that such punishments as they were permitted by Cæsar to inflict were adequate to any misdemeanor that Jesus was charged with. But this proposal of the Roman governor was absolutely refused by the Jewish priests and elders, because it condemned their whole proceedings; and therefore they replied, that it was not permitted them to put any man to death.

Pilate, by these reserved answers, perceiving that their intention was to make him the instrument of their malice against an innocent man, refused to intermeddle any farther in the affair, unless they would exhibit some articles of accusation against him. Knowing, therefore, that Pilate was strongly attached to the Roman court, and a slave to its greatness, they alledged against our Lord, that he had been guilty of seditious practices, by using every means in his power to dissuade the people from paying taxes to Cæsar, pretending that he himself was the Messiah, the great king of the Jews, whom they had so long expected. But they brought no proof of this assertion; they only insinuated that they had convicted him of this crime, which was absolutely false.

The name of king particularly struck the attention of Pilate, who asked our Lord whether or not it was true what had been alledged against him, and whether he had really attempted to set himself up as king of the Jews? The answer our Lord made to this was to the following effect: "Have you ever, during your stay in this province, heard any thing of me that gave you reason to suspect me guilty of secret practices and seditious designs against the government? Or do you found your question only on the

present clamor and tumult that is raised against me? If this is the case, be very careful lest you be imposed on merely by the ambiguity of a word: for, to *be king of the Jews* is not to erect a temporal throne in opposition to that of Cæsar, but a thing of a very different nature; the kingdom of the Messiah is in the heavenly Canaan."

To this Pilate replied, *Am I a Jew?* Can I tell what your expectations are, and in what sense you understand these words? The rulers and chiefs of your own people, who are the most proper judges of these matters, have brought you before me as a riotous and seditious person; if this be not the truth, let me know what is, and the crime of which thou hast been guilty.

The answer our Lord made to this was to the following effect: "I have, indeed, a kingdom, and this kingdom I have professed to establish. But then it is not of this world, nor have my endeavors to establish it any tendency to cause disturbances in the government. Had that been the case my servants and followers would have fought for me, and not suffered me to have fallen into the hands of the Jews. But I tell you plainly, my kingdom is wholly spiritual. I reign in the hearts of my people, and bring their wills and affections into a conformity to the will of God."

Pilate then said unto our Lord, *Art thou a king then?* To which the Blessed Jesus replied, *Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.* As if he had said, "In the sense I have told you I do declare myself to be a king. For this very end I came into the world; and whoever sincerely loves, and is always ready to embrace the truth, will hear my testimony, and be convinced by it."

When Pilate found that our Lord disclaimed all right to *secular* kingdoms, he thought he had not any thing to do with examining him about the nature of his *spiritual* empire; and therefore, withdrawing from the court into the vestibulum (where his accusers were impatiently expecting the ratification of their sentence, in order to execution) he, contrary to their hopes, told them, that he

found nothing worthy of death in him. As if he had said, "I have again examined this man, but cannot find him guilty of any fault, which, according to the Roman law, is worthy of death."

When the chief priests and elders found themselves disappointed in their expectations, they grew exceeding clamorous, representing our Lord as a turbulent disturber of the people, and charging him with spreading seditious principles through all Galilee and Judea, even as far as Jerusalem. *He stirreth up the people, (said they) beginning from Galilee to this place.*

Pilate hearing them name Galilee, and understanding, from enquiry, that our Lord was a Galilean, and, consequently, belonged to Herod's jurisdiction,* in order to get rid of the importunity of the Jews, and withal to free himself from this disagreeable affair, ordered him immediately to be taken before Herod, who, on account of the Passover, was then at Jerusalem.

Herod was no less pleased at the honor done him by Pilate, than glad of having the opportunity of seeing Jesus, hoping that he should have the pleasure of seeing him perform some great miracle. *And when Herod saw Jesus he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.* Herod, however, soon found himself mistaken; for, as he had apostatized from the doctrine of John the Baptist, to which he was once a convert, and had even put his teacher to death, the Blessed Jesus, however liberal of his miracles to the sons and daughters of affliction, would not work them to gratify the curiosity of a tyrant; nor would he even answer a single question put to him by Herod. This made the tetrarch consider him as an insignificant, despicable person; and accordingly, having committed him to the derision and insults of his guards, who used him with the utmost indignity, he or-

* Pilate's government did not extend to Galilee; it included Judea only. Herod was at this time king, or tetrarch of Galilee, and, consequently, Jesus was his subject; and therefore, according to the Roman laws, it was Pilate's duty to send him to Herod, especially as he was accused of rebellion, and a design to make himself a king.

dered him to be immediately taken back to Pilate,* first putting on him an old robe, or garment, resembling in color those worn by kings.

The enemies of our Blessed Lord having re-conducted him to the palace of the Roman governor, Pilate addressed himself to the priests and rulers of the people, in words to this effect. He told them, "that though they had brought this man before him as a seditious person, and a seducer of the people, yet, upon examination, he could not find him guilty of any of the crimes that were laid to his charge; that this was not his opinion only, but that Herod (who was a more competent judge of the affair, and to whom he had sent him on purpose to take cognizance of it) had no ways signified that his crimes were capital; and therefore, instead of taking away his life, he proposed some lesser punishment, if they thought fit, such as scourging him a little with whips, and then dismissing him." But this lenity was so disagreeable to their enraged tempers, that they peremptorily demanded execution, crying out, *Crucify him, Crucify him*. Pilate, still tender of shedding innocent blood, expostulated farther with them on the impropriety of their conduct, desiring to know what *evil he had done*; for, as to his part, he could find no fault in him, much less any crime deserving of death. This, however, did but the more exasperate, and make them the more clamorous, for his speedy execution, *And they cried out the more exceedingly, crucify him*.

The Roman governor had still one expedient left in favor of Jesus, which he thought would not fail him. Every passover he was obliged, by a certain custom, to pardon one criminal whom the Jews should nominate; and therefore the people, being at this time urgent with him to grant them that usual favor, he proposed two persons to them: namely, Barabbas, a notorious malefac-

* Herod and Pilate had been long at variance, but on this occasion, they became perfectly reconciled. It is generally thought that the cause of their difference was, the massacre that Pilate made of some Galileans at Jerusalem during the time of the passover. (Luke xiii. 4.) which Herod resented, as an indignity put upon him, and an invasion of his authority, he being, at that time, tetrarch of Galilee.

tor, who, in an insurrection with some other seditious persons, had committed murder, and Jesus, who was called Christ. Pilate did not doubt but that the populace, whom he knew were better inclined to our Lord than the rulers, would have preferred an innocent man to a thief and a murderer. But in this he found himself greatly mistaken; for, at the instigation of their priests, and others in authority, they desired that the favor might be granted to Barabbas. In consequence of this, Pilate desired to know what he was to do with the person whom they called Christ; upon which they, one and all cried out, *Crucify him, crucify him*. Pilate still insisted on the innocence of Jesus, and requested that they would be satisfied with some lighter punishment than his being put to death; but this, instead of producing any good effect, only made them redouble their clamors, and, in the most tumultuous manner imaginable, demand that he might be crucified.

Just at this time Pilate received a message from his wife, then at Jerusalem, and who, that morning, had been informed of something in a dream, which gave her great uneasiness. The dream had such an effect on her spirits, that she could not rest till she had sent an account of it to her husband, who was then sitting with the tribunal on the judgment-seat, at the same time beseeching him not to have any hand in the death of the righteous person he was then judging. "When he was set down on the judgment-seat his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." Matthew xxvii. 19.

This message greatly affected Pilate, and made him still the more desirous of releasing Jesus, or at least of sparing his life. And therefore, in hopes of pacifying the rage of the multitude, and exciting their pity, he ordered him to be scourged.

The soldiers who were appointed to inflict this punishment on our Lord, thinking it not sufficient to execute the simple orders of Pilate, thought proper to increase the punishment by measures of their own invention. They accordingly took our Lord into the common-hall, where,

after stripping him of his own clothes, they put a loose purple coat about him, for a *robe*; a wreath of thorns upon his head, for a *crown*; and a reed in his hand, for a *sceptre*; and then, in derision, saluted him, and bowing their knees, mocked him with the sham profession of allegiance, saying, *Hail, king of the Jews*. After this, they spit in his face, smote him on the cheek, and (to make his crown of thorns pierce deeper into his flesh) several times struck him on the head. They then fastened him with cords to one of the pillars in the hall, and scourged him with such unrelenting cruelty, that the pavement was crimsoned with his most precious blood.

In this piteous plight, with his head, face and body embued in blood, and with all his mock ornaments on, Pilate, in hopes of moving the people's compassion, ordered Jesus to be brought forth. As soon as he appeared, Pilate, addressing himself to the people, cried out, *Behold the man!* As if he had said, "Will nothing make you relent? Have ye lost all the feelings of humanity, and bowels of compassion? Can you bear to see the innocent, a son of Abraham, thus injured?"

But all this was to no purpose. The priests (whose rage and malice had extinguished not only the sentiments of justice, and feelings of pity, natural to the human heart, but also that love which countrymen usually bear each other) no sooner saw Jesus, than they began to fear the fickle populace might relent; and therefore, laying decency aside, they led the way to the multitude, by crying out, with all their might, *Crucify him! Crucify him!*

Pilate, vexed to see the Jewish rulers thus obstinately bent on the destruction of a person from whom they had nothing to fear that was dangerous, either with regard to their church or state, passionately told them, that if they would have him crucified, they must do it themselves, for that he would not suffer his people to put to death an innocent man.

In answer to this, the chief priests and elders told Pilate, that, admitting the accusation which had been laid against the prisoner not to be true, yet he had committed such a crime in the presence of the whole council,

as, by their law, deserved the most ignominious death. That he had spoken blasphemy, by calling himself the Son of God, a title which no mortal could assume without the highest degree of guilt. *We have a law (said they) and by our law he ought to die, because he hath made himself the Son of God.*

These last words raised some terror in Pilate, and gave him still farther uneasiness. He probably recollected the miracles said to have been performed by Jesus, and (though an heathen himself) suspecting that he might be endued with some extraordinary powers, he began to apprehend that, if he proceeded to pass sentence on him, he should not only destroy an innocent person, but at once commit an act both of injustice and impiety. He therefore, returning with Jesus to the judgment-seat, began to enquire into his origin and pedigree; but as it was no part of our Saviour's intention to escape death, he did not think proper to answer either of the questions asked by the governor, or to say any thing in his own justification. Pilate, being greatly surprized at our Lord's silence, said unto him, *Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?* To which our Blessed Lord replied, *Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.* As if he had said, "I well know that you are Cæsar's servant, and accountable to him for your conduct. I forgive you any injury, which, contrary to your inclination, the popular fury constrains you to do unto me. Thou hast that power *from above*, from the emperor; for which cause, the Jewish high-priest, who hath put me into thy hands, and, by pretending that I am an enemy to Cæsar, forces thee to condemn me; or, if thou refusest, will accuse thee as negligent of the emperor's interest: He, therefore, is more guilty than thou." *He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.*

This modest reply made such an impression on Pilate, that he more strongly represented to the people his desire of releasing Jesus; upon which, to work effectually upon his fears, the chief priests and rulers cried out, *If*

*thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar.** If thou dost release the prisoner, who hath set himself up for a king, and endeavored to raise a rebellion in the country, thou art unfaithful in the interest of the emperor thy master.

Pilate, who well knew the jealous temper of his master Tiberius, and how easily a wrong representation of these proceedings might prove his ruin, had not courage to withstand this forcible menace. He, therefore, returning to the judgment-hall, ordered Jesus to be brought before him to his public tribunal, which stood in a paved place called Gabatha,† in order to pass that sentence on him which he had been so repeatedly requested to do by his enemies. But previous to his discharging this melancholy office, he called for some water, and, washing his

* This threat and accusation seems to be the grand reason why Pilate afterwards sent an account of our Saviour and his crucifixion to the emperor Tiberius, in order to clear himself from any imputation that might be maliciously laid to his charge, and to make the emperor sensible who were the persons that had been the sole instruments of causing our Lord to be put to death. The epistle, which Pilate wrote to the emperor on this occasion, was to the following effect:

“ Pilate to Tiberius, &c.

“ I have been forced to consent at length to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, to prevent a tumult among the Jews, though it was very much against my will: for the world never saw, and probably never will see, a man of such extraordinary piety and uprightness. But the high-priest and Sanhedrim fulfilled in it the oracles of their prophets. Whilst he hung on the cross, a horrid darkness, which covered the earth, seemed to threaten its final end. His followers, who say that he was risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and acknowledge him for their God, do still submit, and, by their excellent lives, shew themselves the worthy disciples of so extraordinary a Master. I did what I could to save him from the malice of the Jews, but the fear of a total insurrection made me submit to his being crucified for the peace and interest of your empire.”

† The word Gabatha, in the Syriac (which was the language then commonly spoken) signifies an *elevation*; and therefore the place, where Pilate had his tribunal erected, was probably a gallery or balcony belonging to his palace, and paved either with stone or marble.

hands in the presence of all the people, solemnly declared 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 cried out, *His blood be on us, and on our children*. This was an imprecation of the most shocking nature, and which brought on them that just punishment they have ever since so fatally experienced.

Our Blessed Lord being thus condemned to the cross, the soldiers and officers, after repeating their former insults and indignities, took off the purple coat, and putting his own garments on him, and, having laid a heavy cross on his shoulders, led him away to his crucifixion. But when he came to the gate of the city, his strength was so much exhausted, that he was no longer able to stand under it. The fatigue of the preceding night spent without sleep, the sufferings he had undergone in the garden, his having been hurried from place to place, and obliged to stand the whole time of his trials; the want of food, and the loss of blood he had sustained, and not his want of courage on this occasion, made him faint under the burthen of his cross. The soldiers seeing him unable to bear the weight, laid it on one Simon, a Cyrenian (the father of Alexander and Rufus, well known among the first christians) and compelled him to bear it the rest of the way.

The Blessed Jesus, in his way to the place of execution, was followed by an innumerable multitude of people, among whom were many good and pious women, who bitterly lamented the severity of his sentence, and expressed the most conspicuous tokens of sincere compassion and grief on the occasion. Upon this our Blessed Lord, turned himself about, and, with a benevolence and tenderness truly divine, said to them, *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?* Luke xxiii. 28, &c. As if he had said, “Dry up these tears ye daughters of Jerusalem, which ye shed in com-

passion to me, and reserve them for the deplorable fate of yourselves, and of your children; for the calamities that will soon fall on you and your offspring are truly terrible, and call for the bitterest lamentations. In those days of vengeance you will passionately wish that you had not given birth to a generation, whose wickedness had rendered them the objects of the wrath of the Almighty, to such a degree, as never was before experienced in the world. Then shall they wish to be crushed under the weight of enormous mountains, and concealed from their enemies in the bowels of the hills. If the Romans are permitted to inflict such punishments on me, who am innocent, how dreadful must the vengeance be, which they shall inflict on a nation, whose sins cry aloud to heaven, hastening the pace of the Divine judgments, and rendering the perpetrators as proper for punishment as dry wood is for the flames!"

When our Blessed Lord came to the place of execution, which was called Golgotha,* or Mount Calvary, the soldiers, before they nailed him to the cross, offered him a potion of vinegar mixed with gall, which, when he had tasted, he refused to drink. They then stripped off his clothes, and proceeded to the business of execution, by fastening him on the cross. But while they were piercing his hands and his feet with nails, instead of crying out from the sharpness of the pain, he calmly, though fervently, prayed for them, and for all those who had any hand in his death; beseeching the Almighty to forgive them, and excusing them himself by the only circumstance that could alleviate their guilt; namely, their ignorance. *Father* (said the compassionate Redeemer of mankind) *forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

But now behold the appointed soldiers dig the hole in which the cross is to be erected!—The cross is placed in

* The word *Golgotha*, in the Syriac language, signifies the same that *Calvary* does in Latin, and was so called, either because the form of the mount did somewhat resemble a man's skull, or else, because, from its being the common place of execution, a great number of men's skulls were usually to be seen there. It was a small eminency, or hill, upon the greater mount of Moriah, and being appropriated for the execution of malefactors, was considered as an execrable and polluted place.

the ground, and the Blessed Jesus fastened on the bed of sorrows.—He is nailed to it—His nerves crack—His blood distils—He hangs upon his wounds naked, a spectacle to heaven and earth. And, to stain his innocence in the eyes of the multitude, and to put him to the greater shame, they crucified him between two common malefactors.

It was usual for the crimes committed by offenders to be distinctly written and placed over their heads on the cross. In conformity to this custom, Pilate ordered an inscription to be placed over the head of Jesus, and to be written in the three following languages, namely, Hebrew, Greek and Latin. This was accordingly done, and the inscription, according to the translation of each, was as follows :

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

But when the chief priests and elders had read this title, they were greatly displeased : because, as it represented the crime for which Jesus was condemned, it insinuated that he had been acknowledged for the Messiah. Besides, being placed over the head of one who was dying by the most infamous punishment, it implied that all who attempted to deliver the Jews should perish in the same manner. The faith and hope of the nation, therefore, being thus publicly ridiculed, it is no wonder that the priests thought themselves highly affronted ; and accordingly came to Pilate, begging that the writing might be altered. But as he had intended the affront in revenge for their forcing him to crucify Jesus, contrary both to his judgment and inclination, he refused to grant their request. *What I have written* (said he) *I have written.*

When the soldiers had nailed the Blessed Jesus to the cross, and fixed it upright in the ground, they divided his garments among them. But his coat, or vesture, being without seam, woven from the top throughout, they agreed not to rend it, but to cast lots for it, by which was fulfilled the prediction of the prophet concerning the death and sufferings of the Messiah. *They parted my garments among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots.* A sufficient indication that every circumstance at,

tending the death and sufferings of the Blessed Jesus was long before determined in the court of heaven; and accordingly his being crucified between two malefactors was expressly foretold—and *he was numbered among the transgressors.*

The common people (whom the vile priests had incensed against the Blessed Jesus, by the malicious falsehoods they had spread concerning him, and which they pretended to found on the deposition of witnesses) seeing him hang in so infamous a manner upon the cross, and reading the inscription that was placed over his head, signified their indignation at him by sarcastical expressions, *Thou (said they) that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.*

But the common people were not the only persons who mocked and derided the Blessed Jesus, while he was suffering to obtain the remission of sins for all mankind. The rulers, who now imagined they had effectually destroyed his pretensions to the character of the Messiah, joined the populace, in ridiculing him, and with a meanness of soul, which many infamous wretches would have scorned, mocked him, even while he was struggling with the agonies of death. They scoffed at the miracles by which he demonstrated himself to be the Messiah, and promised to believe in him, on condition of his proving his pretensions, by descending from the cross. *He saved others (said they) himself he cannot save; if he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.*

The soldiers also joined in the general scene of mockery, *If thou be the king of the Jews (said they) save thyself.* If thou art the great Messiah so long expected by the Jews, descend from the cross by miracle, and deliver thyself from these excruciating torments.

With our Blessed Lord were crucified two notorious malefactors, one on his right hand, and the other on his left. One of these reviled and mocked him in the same gross manner with the multitude, requiring him to give them (as they desired) a demonstration of his being the true Messiah, by rescuing both himself and them from the

crosses whereon they were fixed. But the other malefactor reproved his companion for insulting the innocent, and (while himself was receiving the just reward of his crimes) for upbraiding a person who suffered undeservingly. Having said this, he looked upon Jesus with a noble reliance, and most wonderful faith, and humbly besought him to retain some remembrance of him, when he came into his kingdom; to which our Lord returned him his most gracious promise of speedy felicity.

But let us (before we proceed any farther in the relation of this melancholy scene) attentively consider the singularity of the circumstances that attended it, as they point out to our view events absolutely astonishing. When we remember the perfect innocence of our great Redeemer, the uncommon love he bore to the children of men, and the many kind and benevolent offices he did for the sons and daughters of affliction: when we reflect on the esteem in which he was held all along by the common people, how cheerfully they followed him to the remotest corners of the country; nay, even into the desolate retreats of the wilderness, and with what pleasure they listened to his discourses, we cannot help being astonished to find them at the conclusion rushing all of a sudden into the opposite extremes, and every individual, as it were, combined to treat him with the most barbarous cruelty.

When Pilate asked the people if they desired to have Jesus released, his followers, though they were very numerous, and might have made a great appearance in his behalf, remained absolutely silent, as if they had been speechless, or infatuated. The Roman soldiers, notwithstanding their general had declared him innocent, insulted him in the most inhuman manner. The Scribes and Pharisees ridiculed him. The common people, who had received him with Hosannas a few days before, mocked him as they passed by, and railed at him as a deceiver. Nay, the very thief on the cross reviled him.

The followers of the Blessed Jesus had attached themselves to him in expectation of being raised to great wealth and power in his kingdom, which they imagined would have been long before established. But seeing no

appearance of what they had so long hoped for, they permitted him to be condemned, perhaps because they thought it would have obliged him to break the Roman yoke by miracle.

With respect to the soldiers, they were angry that any one should pretend to royalty in Judea, where Cæsar had established his authority. Hence they insulted our Blessed Saviour with the title of *king*, and paid him, in mockery, the honors of a sovereign.

As for the common people, they seem to have lost their opinion of him, probably because he had not rescued himself when they condemned him. They began, therefore, to consider the story of his destroying the temple, and building it in three days, as a kind of blasphemy, because it required Divine power to execute such an undertaking.

The priests and scribes were filled with the most implacable and diabolical malice against him; because he had torn off their masks of hypocrisy, and shewn them to the people in their full colors. It is therefore no wonder that they ridiculed his miracles from whence he derived his reputation.

The thief also fancied that he must have delivered both himself and them, if he had been the Messiah; but as no such deliverance appeared, he upbraided him for making pretensions to that high character.

But now, serious reader, take one view of thy dying Saviour, breathing out his life upon the cross! Behold his unspotted flesh lacerated with stripes, by which thou art healed! See his hands extended and nailed to the cross; those beneficent hands, which were incessantly stretched out to unloose the heavy burthens, and to impart blessings of every kind! Behold his feet rivetted to the accursed tree with nails! those feet which always went about doing good, and travelled far and near to spread the glad tidings of everlasting salvation! View his tender temples encircled with a wreath of thorns, which shoot their keen afflictive points into his blessed head; that head which was ever meditating peace to poor lost and undone sinners, and spent many a wakeful night in ardent prayer, for their happiness! See him

laboring in the agonies of death! Breathing out his soul into the hands of his Almighty Father, and praying for his cruel enemies! Was ever love like this! Was ever benevolence so finely displayed!

O my soul, put thou thy trust in that bleeding, that dying Saviour! Then, though the pestilence walketh in darkness, and the sickness destroyeth at noon day; though thousands fall beside thee, and ten thousands at thy right hand, thou needest not fear the approach of any evil! Either the destroying angels shall pass over thee, or dispense the corrections of a friend, not the scourges of an enemy, which, instead of hurting, will work for thy good. Then, though profaneness and infidelity, far more malignant evils, breathe their contagion, and taint multitudes around thee, thou shalt be safely hid in the hollow of his hand, and freed from every danger.

Come then, my soul, let us take sanctuary under that tree of life, the ignominious cross of thy bleeding Saviour: let us fly for safety to that city of refuge, opened in his bleeding wounds. These will prove a sacred hiding-place, not to be pierced by the flames of Divine wrath, or the fiery darts of temptation. His dying merits, his perfect obedience, will be *as rivers of water in a dry place, or as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*

But particularly in that last tremendous day, when the heaven shall be rent asunder, and wrapped up like a scroll; and his Almighty arm shall arrest the sun in his career, and dash the structure of the universe to pieces; when the dead, both small and great, shall be gathered before the throne of his glory, and the fates of all mankind hang on the very point of a final irreversible decision: then, if thou hast faithfully trusted in him, and made his precepts thy constant directors, shalt thou be owned and defended by him. O! reader, may both thou that perusest, and him who hath written this for thy soul's advantage, be covered, at that unutterably important juncture, by the wings of his redeeming love; then shall we behold all the horrid convulsions of expiring nature, with composure, with comfort! we shall then welcome the consummation of all things.

But see the sun, conscious of the suffering of his Maker, and as it were to hide his face from this detestable action of mortals, is wrapped in the pitchy mantle of chaotic darkness! This preternatural eclipse of the sun continued for three hours, to the great terror and astonishment of the people present at the execution of our dear Redeemer. And surely nothing could be more proper than this extraordinary alteration in the face of nature, while the sun of righteousness was withdrawing his beams, not only from the promised land, but from the whole world; for it was at once a miraculous testimony given by the Almighty himself to the innocence of his Son, and a proper emblem of the departure of him who was the delight of the world, at least till his luminous rays, like the beams of the morning, shone out a-new with additional splendor, in the ministry of his apostles.

Nor was the darkness which now covered Judea, and the neighboring countries, beginning about noon and continuing till Jesus expired, the effect of an ordinary eclipse of the sun. It is well known that these phenomena can only happen at the change of the moon; whereas the Jewish passover, at which time our dear Redeemer suffered, was always celebrated at the full. Besides, the total darkness of an eclipse of the sun never exceeds twelve or fifteen minutes, whereas this continued three full hours. Nothing, therefore, but the immediate hand of that Almighty Being, which placed the sun in the centre of the planetary system, could have produced this astonishing darkness. Nothing but Omnipotence, who first lighted this glorious luminary of heaven, could have deprived it of its cheering rays. Now, ye scoffers of Israel, whose blood ye have so earnestly desired, and wished it might fall upon you and your children, behold, all nature is dressed in the sable veil of sorrow, and in a language that cannot be mistaken, mourns the departure of its Lord and Master; weeps for your crimes, and deprecates the vengeance of heaven upon your guilty heads! Happy for you that this suffering Jesus is compassion itself, and, even in the agonies of death, prays to his heavenly Father to avert from you the stroke of his justice!

This preternatural eclipse of the sun was considered as a miracle by the heathens themselves; and one of them cried out, *Either the world is at an end, or the God of nature suffers.* And well might he use the expression: for never, since this planetary system was called from its primitive chaos, was known such a deprivation of light in the glorious luminary of day. Indeed, when the Almighty punished Pharaoh, for refusing to let the children of Israel depart out of his land, the sable veil of darkness was for three days drawn over Egypt. But this darkness was confined to a part of his kingdom; whereas this that happened at our Saviour's crucifixion was universal.

When the darkness began, the disciples naturally considered it as a prelude to the deliverance of their master. For though the chief priests, elders, and people, had sarcastically desired him to descend from the accursed tree, his friends could not but be persuaded, that he who had delivered so many from incurable diseases, who had created limbs for the maimed, and eyes for the blind; who had given speech to the dumb, and called the dead from the chambers of the dust, might easily save himself, even from the cross.

When, therefore, his mother, his mother's sister, Mary Magdalene, and the beloved disciple John, (all of whom were dismal spectators of this unparalleled tragedy) observed the veil of darkness begin to extend over the face of nature, they drew near to the foot of the cross, probably in expectation that the son of God was going to shake the frame of the universe, unloose himself from the cross, and take ample vengeance on his cruel and perfidious enemies.

The Blessed Jesus was now in the midst of his sufferings. Yet, when he saw his mother and her companions, their grief greatly affected his tender breast, but more especially the distress of his mother. The agonies of death, under which he was now laboring, could not prevent his expressing the most affectionate regard, both for her and for them. And therefore that she might have some consolation to support her under the greatness of her sorrows, he told her, the disciple whom he loved would, for the sake of that love, supply his place to her after he was

taken away from them, even the place of a son; and therefore he desired her to consider him as such, and expect from him all the duties of a child. *Woman* (said he) *behold thy son!*

Nor was this remarkable token of filial affection towards his mother, the only instance the dying Jesus gave of his sincere love to his friends and followers; the beloved disciple John had also a token of his high esteem. He singled him out as the only person among his friends to supply his place with regard to his mother. Accordingly, he desired him expressly to reverence her in the same manner as if she had been his own parent. A duty which the favorite disciple gladly undertook, carried her with him to his house, and maintained her from that hour to the day of her death, her husband Joseph, having, it seems, been dead some time.

Thus, in the midst of the heaviest sufferings that human nature ever sustained, the Blessed Jesus demonstrated a Divine strength of benevolence. Even at the time when his own distress was at the highest pitch, and nature was dressed in the robe of mourning for the sufferings of the Redeemer of mankind; his friends had so large a share of his concern, that their happiness interrupted the sharpness of his pains, and, for a short time, engrossed his thoughts.

But now the moment, when he should resign his soul into the hands of his heavenly Father, approached, and he repeated part, at least, of the twenty-second psalm, uttering, with a loud voice, these remarkable words, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?* that is, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!* Or, as the words may be rendered, *My God, my God, how long a time hast thou forsaken me!**

* It is the opinion of some that our Blessed Saviour repeated the whole Psalm; it being the custom of the Jews, in making quotations, to mention only the first words of the Psalm or section, which they cite. If so, as this Psalm contains the most remarkable particulars of our dear Redeemer's passion, being, as it were, a summary of all the prophecies relative to that subject, by repeating it on the cross, the Blessed Jesus signified that he was now accomplishing the things that were predicted concerning the Messiah. And as this

Some of the people who stood by, when they heard our Blessed Saviour pronounce these words, misunderstood him; probably from their not hearing him distinctly, and concluded that he called for Elias. Upon which one of them filled a sponge with vinegar, put it on a reed, and gave him to drink; being desirous to keep him alive as long as possible, to see whether Elias would come to take him down from the cross. But as soon as Jesus had tasted the vinegar, he said, *it is finished*. That is, the work of man's redemption is accomplished; that great work which the only begotten Son of God came into the world to perform, is finished. In speaking these words, he cried with an exceeding loud voice; after which he addressed his Almighty Father in these words: *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*; having uttered which, *he bowed his head, and yielded up the ghost*.

But behold! at the very instant that the Blessed Jesus resigned his soul into the hands of his heavenly Father, the vail of the temple was miraculously rent, from the top to the bottom; the earth trembled, from its very foundations, the flinty rocks burst asunder, and the sepulchres hewn in them were opened; and many bodies of saints deposited there awakened after his resurrection, from the sleep of death, left the gloomy chambers of the tomb, went into the city of Jerusalem, and appeared unto many.

And as the rending the vail of the temple intimated, that the entrance into the holy place, the type of heaven, was now laid open to all nations; so the resurrection of a number of saints from the dead demonstrated, that the power of death, and the grave, was broken; the sting was taken from death, and the victory wrested from the grave. In short, our dear Redeemer's conquests over the enemies of mankind were shewn to be complete; and an earnest was given of the general resurrection of the dead.

Nor did the remarkable particulars which attended that awful period, when Jesus gave up the ghost, affect the natives of Judea only. The Roman centurion, who

psalm is composed in the form of a prayer, by pronouncing it, at this time, he also claimed of his Father the performance of all the promises he had made, whether to him, or to his people, the chief of which are recorded in the latter part of the Psalm.

was placed near the cross to prevent disorders of any kind, glorified the Almighty, and cried out, *Truly this man was the Son of God!*

The people had been very desirous of having him crucified; but when they saw the face of the creation wrapped in the gloomy mantle of darkness during his crucifixion, and found his death accompanied with an earthquake, as if nature had been in an agony when he died, they rightly interpreted these prodigies to be so many testimonies of his innocence; and their passions, which had been inflamed and exasperated against him, became quite calm, or rather exerted in his favor. Some were angry with themselves for having neglected the opportunity the governor gave them of saving his life. Some were stung with remorse for having been active in procuring Pilate to condemn him, and even offering the most bitter insults while he labored under the most cruel sufferings. And others were deeply affected at beholding the pains he suffered, which were undeservedly severe.

These various passions, being visibly painted in their countenances, afforded a melancholy spectacle; the whole multitude returned from the cruel execution with their eyes fixed on the earth, pensive and silent; their hearts were ready to burst with grief, they groaned within themselves, and as they walked, smote themselves on their breasts. *And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned.* John xxiii. 48. The grief they now felt for the Blessed Jesus arose from a very different principle to that which had occasioned their former rage against him. The latter was entirely owing to the artful insinuations of their priests; whereas their grief was genuine, and the natural feeling of their own hearts, greatly affected with the truth and innocence of him, who was the object of their commiseration. And as flattery had no share in their mourning, so the expressions of their sorrow were such as distinguished the real sentiments and feelings of their hearts.

Thus was demonstrated, by many awful tokens, the truth, the divinity, and the power of our Redeemer's mission. And thus were the blind and deluded Jews

struck with horror at what they had beheld, being fully convinced, that the person they had cruelly put to death was no other than the Son of God—the promised Messiah—the Saviour of the world.

CHAP. XIV.

Our Blessed Lord is treated with indignity after his crucifixion. Joseph of Arimathea begs his body of Pilate, in order for interment. Pilate complies with his request, upon which Joseph, assisted by Nicodemus, takes away the body, and deposits it in a sepulchre which he had made for himself. The sepulchre is guarded by a body of Roman soldiers. Our Saviour's resurrection notified by angels, and testified by Mary Magdalene, but not believed. Our Lord appeareth to Mary. The soldiers appointed to guard the door of the sepulchre, being frightened at the appearance of an angel, who rolls away the stone that was placed against it, fly to Jerusalem. They relate the particulars of what they had seen to the heads of the Sanhedrim, who bribe them to give it out that our Lord's body was stolen away by his disciples while themselves were asleep. Our Lord appears to two of his disciples as they are on their way to Emmaus, with whom he converses for some time, and then disappears. The two disciples go to Jerusalem, and report what had passed to the rest of their companions, some of whom are doubtful of the truth of their relation. While they are in debate together, our Saviour suddenly appears among them, removes their doubts, chastises them for their incredulity, and gives them several important instructions relative to their future conduct. He again appears to his apostles, and convinces Thomas (who happened to be absent at the time of his former appearance) of the reality of his resurrection. Our Lord appears to Peter, and others, as they are fishing, and performs a miracle; after which he particularly converses with Peter. He appears to his apostles for the last time, and after some conversation, and bestowing on them his benediction, visibly ascends into heaven.

THE day on which our Blessed Lord suffered was the eve, or preparation for the Paschal Festival, which,

that year, happened to fall on the Jewish sabbath-day, and was, therefore, a feast and sabbath together. That so great and solemn a day might not be prophaned* by the suspension of the bodies on the crosses, the rulers of the Jews went to Pilate, requesting of him that their legs might be broken to hasten their deaths, and that their bodies might be taken down. Pilate readily gave his consent, upon which they returned to the place of execution, and immediately caused the first ceremony to be performed on the two thieves: But, when the soldiers came to Jesus, and found him already dead, instead of breaking his legs, one of them pierced his side with a spear, from which issued out a great quantity of blood and water.

This wound was of the greatest importance to mankind, as it abundantly demonstrated the truth of our Saviour's death, and consequently prevented any objection being made by those who were enemies to the Gospel dispensation. The Evangelist adds, that the legs of our Great Redeemer were not broken, but his side pierced, that two particular prophecies might be fulfilled. *A bone of him shall not be broken, and they shall look on him whom they have pierced.*

Among the disciples of our Lord was one named Joseph, a man of great wealth and honor, born in Arimathea, and not improbably one of the council of the Sanhedrim, but who stood in some fear of them while our Saviour was alive. After his death, however, he took courage, and going to Pilate, begged that he might take

* The Jews had a strict injunction in their law, that the bodies of those who were executed should not hang *all night*, but by all means be buried *the same day*, Deut. xxi. 22, 23. But the Romans were accustomed to do otherwise; they suffered the bodies to hang on the cross some time after they were dead, and, in some cases, a considerable time longer. It is probable the rulers of the Jews would have left the Romans to follow their own custom at this time, had it not been for the near approach of their passover, the festivity attending which they thought might be damped by so melancholy a sight. On this account it was that they petitioned Pilate to have them removed; and the reason why Pilate might be rather induced to grant their request, was that the Romans themselves had such respect for the feast-days of their emperors, that if any executions happened at those particular periods, they always took down their bodies, and delivered them to their friends.

away the body of his Great Master, well knowing that if such a grant was not obtained, it would be ignominiously cast away with the two criminals that had suffered with him.

Pilate was greatly surprized at the request of Joseph, thinking it highly improbable that our Lord should be dead in so short a time. He had, indeed, given orders for the soldiers to break the legs of the crucified persons, but he knew it was common for them to live many hours after that operation was performed; for though the pain they felt must be exquisite to the last degree, yet, as the vital parts remained untouched, life would continue some time in the miserable body. Pilate, therefore, called the centurion to know the truth of what Joseph had told him; and being convinced from his answer that Jesus had been dead some time, he readily complied with his request.

In consequence of this, Joseph immediately repaired to Mount Calvary, and with the assistance of Nicodemus,* (another private disciple of our Lord's) took the body from the cross. Nicodemus had been in such fear of the Sanhedrim, and therefore was so cautious of being seen to visit Jesus, that he always went to him by night. But in paying the last duties to his Master, he did not make use of any measures to conceal his affection for him. He shewed a courage and respect far superior to any of the apostles, not only assisting Joseph in taking the body of Jesus from the cross, but likewise bringing with him spices and various perfumes properly to prepare it for interment.

Not far from the place of execution was a garden belonging to Joseph, in which he had a short time before hewn out of a rock a sepulchre for his own private interment. Having, therefore, embalmed our Saviour's body,

* This is the same ruler of the Jews and *Master of Israel* (as the Evangelist calls him, John iii. 1, 10.) who, at our Lord's first coming to Jerusalem, after he had entered upon his ministry, held a private conference with him, and for ever after was his disciple, though he made no open profession of it till after our Lord's death. There is some reason to imagine that when the Jews came to be informed of his conduct, and that he had been in his heart one of our Lord's disciples, they deposed him from the dignity of a senator, excommunicated him, and drove him out of Jerusalem.

and wound it up in clean linen cloths, they there interred it, and, with a large stone cut out of the rock for the purpose, closed the mouth of the sepulchre.

Here we must make a short digression to contemplate on the wonderful contents of this repository of the dead. He who clothes himself with light as with a garment, and walks upon the wings of the wind, was pleased to wear the habiliments of mortality, and dwell among the prostrate dead! Who can repeat the wondrous truths too often? Who can dwell upon the enchanting theme too long? He who sits enthroned in glory, and diffuses bliss among all the heavenly host, was once a pale and bloody corpse, and pressed the floor of this little sepulchre! O death! how great was thy triumph in that hour! never did thy gloomy realms contain such a prisoner before—Prisoner, did I say? No, he was more than Conqueror. He arose far more mighty than Samson from a transient slumber; broke down the gates, and demolished the strong holds of those dark dominions. And this, O mortals, is your consolation and security. Jesus, sleeping in the chambers of the tomb, has brightened the dismal mansion, and left an inviting odor in those beds of dust. The dying Jesus is your sure protection, your unquestionable passport, through the territories of the grave. Believe in him, and they shall prove an *highway to Sion*; shall transmit you safe to Paradise. Believe in him, and you shall be no losers, but unspeakable gainers by your dissolution. For hear what the oracle of heaven says, on this important point; *whoso believeth in me shall never die*. Death shall no longer be inflicted as a punishment, but rather vouchsafed as a blessing. The exit is the end of their frailty, and their entrance upon perfection: their last groan is the prelude to life and immortality.—But to return.

Mary Magdalene, and some other women of Galilee, who had watched their dear Redeemer in his last moments, and had accompanied his body to the sepulchre in Joseph's garden, observing that the funeral rites were performed in a hurry, and therefore not satisfactory to their wishes, agreed among themselves, as soon as the sabbath should be over, to return to the sepulchre, and

embalm the body of their dead Saviour, by anointing and swathing him in the manner then common among the Jews. Accordingly, they returned to the city, and purchased spices of various sorts, with other articles, necessary for that purpose.

On the sabbath-day the rulers of the Jews went to Pilate and informed him, "That our Lord (whom they called an impostor) having, in his life-time, made it his boast, that on the third day, he would rise again from the dead, they therefore requested of him, that he would order the sepulchre to be kept under a strong guard until that day was passed, lest his disciples should steal him away by night, and then give it out, that he was risen from the dead, which might prove a more dangerous seduction to the people, than any thing they had yet fallen into."

This request being thought reasonable by Pilate, he gave them leave to take as many soldiers as they pleased out of the cohort, which, at the feast, kept guard in the porticos of the temple.

The priests, having thus obtained a guard of Roman soldiers, men long accustomed to military duties, and therefore the most proper for watching the body, set out with them to the sepulchre; and to prevent them from combining with the disciples in carrying on any fraud, placed them at their post, and sealed the stone which was rolled at the door of the sepulchre. But what was designed to expose the mission and doctrine of Jesus as rank falsehood and vile imposture, proved in fact, the strongest confirmation of the truth and divinity of the same that could possibly be given; and placed, what the Jewish rulers wanted to refute (which was his resurrection from the dead) even beyond a doubt.

Early the next morning, even at break of day, Mary Magdalene, with Mary the mother of James, and the other women, who, on the Friday evening, had prepared spices and perfumes, went to the sepulchre to embalm again our Saviour's body, ignorant of the guard that was placed before the sepulchre. Their whole care and consultation on the way was, how they might get the large stone, that was at the entrance, removed. But, before

they arrived at the place, an angel from heaven had rolled it away, and sat upon it; at the sight of whom (for his countenance was like lightning) and at the noise of an earthquake, which accompanied his appearance, the guards fell down like so many dead men. By this means when the women arrived at the place they had free entrance into the sepulchre, but were not a little astonished at looking in to find an angel, in a refulgent habit, sitting in the place where the body had lain. Frightened at so unexpected a sight, they were on the point of turning back, when the heavenly messenger, to banish their fears, told them, in a gentle accent, that he knew their errand. *Fear not (said he) for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen as he said.* He then invited them to go down into the sepulchre, and view the place where the Son of God had lain; that is, to look on the linen clothes and the napkin that was about his head, and which he had left behind him when he arose from the dead.

The women, encouraged by the agreeable manner in which the angel had spoke, went down into the sepulchre, when, behold, there appeared before them another of the angelic choir. This Divine messenger gently chid them for seeking the living among the dead, and for not remembering the words which their great Master had himself told them with regard to his own resurrection. *Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen; remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, the son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.*

When the women had satisfied their curiosity by looking at the place where our Lord had lain, and where nothing was to be found but the linen clothes which were wrapped round his body, and the napkin about his head, the angel, who first appeared to them, bade them go immediately and tell his disciples (but particularly Peter) the glad tidings of his resurrection from the dead: that he was going before them to Galilee: and that they should there have the pleasure of seeing him.

In obedience to these commands, the women immediately left the sepulchre, and hastened to find out the apostles, which they had no sooner done, than Mary Magdalene related to them all they had heard and seen; but they, instead of believing them, looked upon all they said as nothing more than the product of a weak and frightened imagination. Out of curiosity, however, Peter and John ran to the sepulchre, and found all they had said to be true, the body being gone, the burying clothes lying on the ground, and the napkin, which was about our Lord's head, folded and laid by itself. But notwithstanding this, such was their incredulity with respect to his being risen from the dead, that they returned quietly home, not supposing any thing else but that some person or other had taken away the body.

Mary Magdalene, however, who had returned with Peter and John, stayed behind, and continued weeping at the door of the sepulchre. She could not yet understand what was meant by the angel's telling her our Lord was risen from the dead, and therefore was exceeding anxious to find the body. Accordingly, going down into the sepulchre to examine it once more, she saw two angels, the one sitting at the head, and the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain. On beholding these heavenly messengers dressed in the robes of light, she was greatly terrified. But her fears were greatly mitigated by their asking her, in the most endearing accent, this question: *Woman, why weepest thou?* To which she replied, *Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.* On pronouncing these words she turned herself about, and saw Jesus standing near her; but the terror she was in, and the garments in which he now appeared, prevented her, for some time, from knowing him. Jesus repeated the same question before put to her by the angels: *Woman* (said he) *why weepest thou?* To which Mary (who now supposed him to be the gardener) answered, *Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.* But our Blessed Lord, being willing to remove her anxiety, called her by her name, with his usual tone of voice. On this she immediately knew him,

and, falling down, would have embraced his knee, according to that modesty and reverence with which the women of the east saluted the men, more especially those who were their superiors. But Jesus refused this compliment, telling her that he was not immediately going to ascend to his father. At the same time he said unto her, *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God;* intimating that he had risen from the dead, and should, in a short time, totally leave the world, and ascend into heaven.

The kindness of this message, sent by our dear Redeemer to his disciples, will appear above all praise, if we remember their late behavior. They had every one of them forsaken him in the greatest extremity. When he was scourged and mocked by the Roman soldiers, derided by his countrymen, and spitefully treated by all, they hid themselves in some place of safety, and preferred their own security to the deliverance of their Master. Simon, a Cyrenian, was compelled, by the Roman soldiers, to ease him of his ponderous burthen. But, notwithstanding they had refused to assist their Master, during his sufferings for the sins of the world, he graciously, he freely forgave them; he assured them of their pardon, and called them even by the endearing name of *brethren*.

In the mean time the guards, who had been appointed to watch the sepulchre in which our Lord was laid, and was frightened at the appearance of the angel that sat on the stone which had fastened up the mouth of it, fled into the city, and related all that had happened to the chief priests and rulers of the Sanhedrim. In consequence of this a general council was immediately summoned, in order to consult what was to be done in an affair of so important a nature. After various debates, they at length resolved to bribe the soldiers with a large sum of money, and thereby engage them to give it out among the people, that while themselves were asleep, the disciples of Jesus came, and stole him away; promising them withal, that, in case this their pretended neglect should come to the ears of the governor, they would take care to pacify him.

The soldiers readily accepted this offer, took the money, and strictly obeyed the orders of their masters. And the report they propagated, in consequence of this, was current among the Jews for many years after.

In the afternoon of the same day on which our Blessed Lord arose from the dead, two of his disciples left Jerusalem, in order to go to a village called Emmaus, about two miles distant. The concern they were in on account of the death of their great and beloved Master was sufficiently visible in their countenances; and as they pursued their journey talking to each other about the things that had lately happened among them concerning the life and doctrine, the sufferings and death of the holy Jesus, and of the report that was just spread of his being that very morning risen from the dead, Jesus himself appeared and joined company with them.

As our Lord looked like a stranger, the two disciples had not the least suspicion that he was the Great Redeemer of the sons of men. But he soon entered into discourse with them, by enquiring what event had so closely engaged them in conversation, and why they appeared so sorrowful and dejected, as if they had met with some heavy disappointment?

One of them, whose name was Cleopas, being greatly surprized at this question, asked our Lord if it were possible that he could be so great a stranger to the affairs of the world, as to have been at Jerusalem, and not to have heard the surprizing events that had happened there? Events that had astonished the whole city, and were then the general topics of conversation among all the inhabitants? Jesus answered, *What things? What surprizing events do you mean?*

Cleopas, thinking our Lord a total stranger to what had happened, proceeded to relate to him the particulars, which he communicated in words to this effect: “The
“ events I mean are those which have happened con-
“ cerning Jesus of Nazareth, who appeared as a great
“ prophet and teacher sent from God; and accordingly
“ was highly venerated among the people for the excel-
“ lency of his doctrine, and the number, benefit, and
“ greatness of his miracles. Our chief priests and elders,

“ envying him as one who lessened their authority
“ over the people, apprehended him, and found means
“ to put him to death. But we firmly believed that he
“ would have proved himself the Messiah, or Great
“ Deliverer. And this persuasion we supported for a
“ long time, nor were willing to abandon it, even when
“ we saw him put to death. But it is now the third day
“ since these things were done; and therefore begin to
“ fear we were mistaken. This very morning, indeed, a
“ circumstance happened which greatly surprized us,
“ and we are exceeding anxious with regard to the event.
“ Some women who had entertained the same hopes and
“ expectations as ourselves, going early in the morning
“ to pay their last duties to their Master, by embalming
“ his body, returned in great haste to the city, and in-
“ formed us, that they had been at the sepulchre, but
“ were disappointed in not finding the body; and, to in-
“ crease our surprize, they added, that they had seen
“ two angels, who told them that Jesus was risen from
“ the dead. This relation appeared at first to us as an
“ idle tale, altogether incredible; but two of the company
“ going immediately after to the sepulchre, found every
“ thing exactly as the women had reported; so that we
“ are in great doubt and perplexity with regard to this
“ wonderful event.”

The reply our Lord made to his two disciples, after having heard this relation from Cleopas, was to the following effect: “ Why are ye so very averse to believe
“ what the prophets have, as it were, with one voice,
“ predicted concerning the Messiah? Is it not clearly,
“ and very expressly, foretold in all the prophetic
“ writings, that it was appointed by the Almighty for the
“ Messiah to suffer in this manner; and that, after sus-
“ taining the greatest indignities, reproach, and contempt,
“ from the malice and perverseness of mankind, and even
“ undergoing an ignominious and cruel death, he should
“ be exalted to a glorious and eternal kingdom?” Having
said this, he began at the writings of Moses, and explained to them, in order, all the principal passages, both in the books of that great legislator, and the writings of the other prophets, relative to his own sufferings, death, and

glorious resurrection. This he did with such surprizing clearness and strength, that the two disciples (not yet suspecting who he was) were as much amazed to find him so well acquainted with all that Jesus did and suffered, as they at first wondered at his appearing to be totally ignorant of these transactions.

When the two disciples, accompanied by our Blessed Lord, arrived at the village whither they were going, and Jesus seemed as if he would have passed on, and travelled farther, they, desirous of his company, pressed him, in the strongest manner, to tarry with them that night, the day being then far spent. To this request the great Redeemer of mankind consented; and when they were sat down to supper, he took bread, gave thanks to God, brake it, and gave it to them, in the same manner he had done while he conversed with them upon earth before his death. This circumstance strongly engaged the attention of the two disciples, who, looking steadfastly at him, discovered that he was no less a person than their great and beloved Master. *And their eyes were opened and they knew him.* But they had no time to express their astonishment and joy on the occasion; for he immediately *vanished out of their sight.*

As soon as the two disciples had recovered from their surprize, they immediately hastened to Jerusalem, where they found all the apostles (Thomas excepted) together, with several other disciples, discoursing about the resurrection of their Master; and, on their entering the room, the disciples accosted them with these words: *The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon.* They had given little credit to the reports of the women, supposing they were occasioned more by imagination than reality. But when a person of Simon's capacity and gravity declared he had seen the Lord, the greater part of them began to think that he was really risen from the dead. And their belief was greatly confirmed by the arrival of the two disciples from Emmaus, who declared that Jesus had appeared to them on the road, and had discovered himself to be their Master, by breaking of bread.

While the two disciples from Emmaus were describing the manner of our Lord's appearing to them, and using arguments to convince those who doubted of the truth of it, their great Master himself put an end to the debate by suddenly appearing in the midst of them, and saying, *Peace be unto you.* The appearance of our Blessed Saviour greatly terrified the disciples, who imagined they saw a spirit; for having secured the doors of the house where they were assembled for fear of the Jews, and Jesus having entered without the knowledge of any person belonging to the house, it was natural for them to think that a spirit only could enter. The circumstance, therefore, of the doors being shut, is very happily mentioned by the Evangelist, because it points out a clear reason why the disciples took their Master for a spirit, notwithstanding many of them were convinced, in their own minds, that he was really risen from the dead, and were that moment conversing about his resurrection.

But to dispel their fears and doubts, our Blessed Lord spoke to them in the most endearing manner; having done which he shewed them his hands and his feet, and desired them to handle him, in order to convince themselves, by the united powers of their different senses, that it was he himself, and no spectre, or apparition. *Why are ye troubled* (said the benevolent Redeemer of mankind) *and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.*

These infallible proofs sufficiently convinced the disciples (at the time they saw them) of the truth of their Lord's resurrection, and they received them with rapture and exultation. But their joy and wonder had so great an effect upon their minds, that some of them (sensible of the great commotion they were in) suspended their belief till they had considered the matter more calmly. Jesus, therefore, knowing their thoughts, called for meat, and eat with them, in order to prove more fully the truth of his resurrection from the dead, and the reality of his presence with them on this occasion.

After our Blessed Redeemer had given his apostles and disciples this farther demonstration of his having

vanquished the power of death, and opened the tremendous portals of the grave, he gently chastised them for their unbelief, and then repeated his salutation, *Peace be unto you*. Having done this, he gave his apostles some instructions relative to their future conduct, and informed them with what power they should be invested, in order to propagate his Gospel, during their residence on earth; all which he expressed in words to this effect: "The same commission that my Father hath given unto me, I give unto you: go ye, therefore, into every part of the world, and preach the Gospel to all the children of men." Then breathing on them he said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.* "Receive the Holy Ghost to direct and assist you in the execution of your commission. Whoever embraces your doctrine, and sincerely repents, ye shall remit his sins, and your sentence of absolution shall be ratified and confirmed in the courts of heaven. And whoever either obstinately rejects your doctrine, disobeys it, or behaves himself unworthily after he has embraced it, his sins shall not be forgiven him; but the censure ye shall pass upon him on earth shall be confirmed in heaven." Having said this, our Blessed Lord disappeared, leaving his apostles and disciples to contemplate on the wonderful things they had both seen and heard.—And thus ended the first day of the week, which, in honor of our Blessed Saviour's resurrection, has, ever since, among all Christians, been kept as the Sabbath.

Thus have we enumerated, in the most explicit manner, the transactions of that day on which the great Redeemer of mankind arose from the dead; a day highly to be remembered by the children of men, throughout all generations. A day, in which was fully completed and displayed the conceptions lodged in the breast of infinite wisdom from all eternity! even those thoughts of love and mercy, on which the salvation of the world depended. Christians have therefore the highest reason to solemnize this day with gladness, each returning week, by ceasing from their labor, and giving up themselves to prayer, pious meditations, and other exercises of religion. The

redemption of mankind which they weekly commemorate affords matter for eternal thought; it is a subject impossible to be equalled, and whose lustre neither length of time, nor frequent reviewing, can either tarnish or diminish. It resembles the sun, which we behold always the same glorious and luminous object; for the benefit we celebrate is, after so many ages, as fresh and beautiful as ever, and will always continue the same, flourishing in the memories of pious people, through the endless revolutions of eternity. Redemption is the brightest mirror by which we contemplate the goodness of the Almighty. Other gifts are only mites from the Divine treasure; but redemption opens, I had almost said exhausts, all the stores of his grace. May it be constantly the favorite subject of our meditations, more delightful to our musing minds, than applause to the ambitious ear! May it be the darling theme of our discourse; sweeter to our tongues than the dropping of the honey comb to the taste! May it be our choicest comfort, through all the changes of this mortal life; and the reviving cordial, even in the last extremities of dissolution itself!

At the time our Blessed Lord appeared before his apostles at Jerusalem after his resurrection, Thomas, otherwise called Didymus, was absent. When, therefore, he came to them they told him that they had seen the Lord, and repeated to him the words he had delivered in their hearing. But Thomas, who was naturally of a very incredulous disposition, would not believe them, saying, *Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.* As if he had said, "This event is of such great importance, that unless, to prevent all possibility of deception, I see him with my own eyes, and feel him with mine own hands, putting my fingers into the prints of the nails whereby he was fastened to the cross, and thrust my hand into his side which the soldier pierced with his spear, I will not believe that he is really and truly risen from the dead."

Eight days after this, when the apostles were met together in the same place, with the doors shut for fear of the Jews, and Thomas was with them, Jesus again ap-

peared, and standing in the midst of them, saluted them, as before, with the blessing of Peace. Having done this he turned himself to Thomas, and, knowing his unbelief, addressed him in words to this effect: "Thomas, since
" thou wilt not be contented to rely on the testimony of
" others, but must be convinced by the experience of thy
" own senses, behold the wounds in mine hands, and
" reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and
" doubt no longer of the reality of my resurrection."

Thomas immediately obeyed the kind invitation of his dear Master, and being fully satisfied, according to his own desire, he cried out, *My Lord and my God*. As if he had said, "I am now abundantly convinced; thou art, indeed, my Lord, the very same that was crucified; and I acknowledge thy Almighty power in having triumphed over death, and most sincerely worship thee as my God."

To this the Blessed Jesus replied, *Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed*. "Because thou hast both seen and felt me, thou hast believed that I am really risen from the dead. But blessed are those, who, without such evidence of the senses, shall, upon credible testimony, be willing to believe and embrace a doctrine, which tends so much to the glory of God, and the salvation of the sons of men."—St. John adds, that the Blessed Jesus appeared, on several other occasions, to his disciples after his resurrection; and by many clear and infallible proofs, not mentioned by him, fully convinced them that he was alive after his resurrection. He observes, at the same time, that those which he has mentioned are abundantly sufficient to induce men to believe that Jesus was the Son of God, the great Messiah so often foretold by the ancient prophets; and that by means of that belief they may obtain everlasting life in the happy regions of the heavenly Canaan.

Our Blessed Saviour having, first by the angels; and afterwards in person, ordered his disciples to repair into Galilee, they accordingly, as soon as the feast was over, left Jerusalem, and returned to the different provinces from whence they came. They had not been long there

when Peter, with several others of the apostles, returned to their old trade of fishing, in the lake, or sea of Tiberias. After toiling all night without success, early in the morning they saw Jesus standing on the shore, but did not then know him to be their Master. He, however, called to them, and asked if they had taken any fish; to which they answered, they had caught nothing. Jesus then said unto them, *Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find.* The disciples, imagining that he might be acquainted with the places proper for fishing, did as he had directed them, and inclosed in their net such a multitude of fishes, that they were not able to draw it into the boat, but were forced to drag it after them in the water towards the shore.

This remarkable success, after toiling all night to no purpose, caused various conjectures among them with regard to the stranger on shore, who had given them such happy advice. The greater part of the apostles said they could not imagine who he was; but two of them were persuaded that he was no other than their great and beloved Master. John was fully convinced of his being the Lord, and accordingly told his thoughts to Simon Peter, who, making no doubt of it, immediately girt on his fisher's coat, and leaped into the sea, in order to get ashore sooner than the boat could be brought to land, dragging after it a net full of large fishes.

When all the apostles had got on shore, they were greatly surprized to find a fire kindled, on which was a fish, and near it some bread. But these not being sufficient for them all, Jesus bade them bring some of the fish they had just caught, which having done, he divided the bread and fish among them, and they sat down to refresh themselves in the presence of their beloved Master. Thus did the Blessed Jesus prove again to his disciples the reality of his resurrection, not only by delivering food to them with his own hands, but by working a miracle like that which, at the beginning of his ministry, had made such an impression on their minds as to induce them to become his followers. This was *the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead.*

When the disciples had sufficiently refreshed themselves, Jesus entered into conversation with Peter. To whom he said, *lovest thou me more than these?* Art thou more zealous and affectionate towards me, than the rest of my disciples? To which Peter answered, *Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee.* Jesus repeated the same question twice, and received the same answer from Peter; upon which he said unto him, *Feed my lambs, Feed my sheep.* “Express thou thy love towards me, by the care of my flock committed to thy charge. Shew your love to me, by publishing the great salvation I have accomplished; and feeding the souls of faithful believers with that food which never perishes, but endureth for ever and ever.” Our Lord then farther said unto Peter: *Verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girded thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not.* By these last words Jesus signified that Peter’s death was to be by crucifixion, which he should suffer for the glory of God, and the testimony of the truth of the Christian religion.

When Peter was informed by our Lord of what was to be his own fate, he was desirous of knowing that of his fellow-disciple John, and therefore said unto Jesus, *Lord, and what shall this man do?* But Jesus, instead of gratifying his curiosity, required him to attend to his own concerns, and as he was to resemble him in the manner of his death, so to endeavor to imitate him in his deportment under it.

After this our Lord having appointed a solemn meeting of as many of his disciples as could conveniently be got together, and named a certain mountain in Galilee (probably that on which he was transfigured) for the purpose, they assembled at the time appointed. They did not wait long before the Blessed Jesus appeared to them, on which they were seized with rapture, their hearts overflowed with gladness, they approached their kind and benevolent Master, and worshipped him. Here our Blessed Lord told his apostles, that all power, both in heaven and earth, was given to him; commanded them to instruct all

nations, and to baptize *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; and to press them to be diligent in enforcing his precepts among their hearers, he promised them his protection and assistance in the arduous task they were about to undertake.

Forty days was the time pre-ordained for our Lord's continuance upon earth after his resurrection. These days being now almost expired, the apostles (according as they had been ordered) with some of their select friends, returned to Jerusalem, and there assembled themselves in a private place, as they had always done after the crucifixion of their Master. Here our Blessed Lord appeared to them for the last time; and after instructing them in many particulars concerning the kingdom of God, and the manner in which they were to behave themselves in propagating the doctrine of the Gospel, he put them in mind, that during his abode with them in Galilee, he had often told them, that all things written in the law, the prophets, and the psalms, concerning him, were to be exactly accomplished. At the same time, *he opened their understandings*; that is, he removed their prejudices by the operation of his spirit, cleared their doubts, improved their memories, strengthened their judgments, and enabled them to discern the true meaning of the scriptures. He then reminded them that both Moses and the prophets had foretold that the Messiah was to suffer in the very same manner he had suffered; that he was to rise from the dead on the third day as he had done; and that repentance and remission of sins was to be preached, in the Messiah's name, among all nations, beginning with the Jews. He told them, that they were to testify unto the world the exact accomplishment in him of all things foretold concerning the Messiah; and closed his instructions to them by giving them a particular charge that they should not depart from Jerusalem, until they had received that miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost, which he had promised, and would shortly send down upon them. He likewise gave them to understand, that, after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, they would have juster notions of those matters, and be sufficiently

enabled to be the authentic witnesses of his life and actions throughout the world.

After our Blessed Lord had thus fortified his apostles for the important work they were going to undertake, he led them out of the city to that part of the mount of Olives, which was nearest to Bethany. On their arrival there, he gave them some farther instructions relative to the measures they were to follow in order to propagate his gospel, after which he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was doing this, and his apostles were placed in an adoring posture, he was parted from them in the midst of the day, being gradually taken up, in a shining cloud, and triumphantly carried into heaven, where he now sitteth at the right hand of God his Father, *to whom be honor, glory and power, for ever and ever.* Amen.

Hossanna to the prince of light,
That clothed himself in clay;
Opened the iron gates of death,
And tore the bars away.

Death is no more the king of dread,
Since Christ our Lord arose;
He took the tyrant's sting away,
And spoiled our hellish foes.

See how the Conqueror mounts aloft,
And to his Father flies,
With sears of honor in his flesh,
And triumph in his eyes.

There our exalted Saviour reigns,
And scatters blessings down;
Our Jesus fills the right hand seat
Of the celestial throne.

In this illustrious manner did the Great Redeemer of mankind depart, after having finished the grand work about which he was sent into the world: a work, which angels, with joy, described was to happen, and which, through all eternity to come, at periods the most immensely distant from the time of its execution, will be looked back upon with inexpressible delight by every inhabitant of

heaven: for, though the minute affairs of time may vanish together, and be lost, when they are removed back far by the endless progression of duration, yet this object is such, that no distance, however great, can lessen it. The kingdom of heaven is erected on the incarnation and sufferings of the Son of God, and therefore no mortal whatever can forget the foundation on which his happiness stands established; nor will any fail of obtaining a seat in those mansions, provided he preserves a proper subjection to him, who reigneth for ever and ever, and whose favor is better than life itself.

It may not be improper, in this place, to admit a few reflections on the life of the Blessed Jesus—a life the greatest and best that was ever led by man, or was ever the subject of any history, since the universe was called from its original chaos by the powerful word of the Almighty.

The human character of the Blessed Jesus is entirely different from that of all other men whatever; for whereas they have selfish passions deeply rooted in their breasts, and are influenced by them in almost every thing they do, Jesus was so entirely free from them, that the most severe scrutiny cannot furnish one single action, in the whole course of his life, wherein he consulted his own interest only. No; he was influenced by very different motives; the happiness and eternal welfare of sinners regulated his conduct; and while others followed their respective occupations, Jesus had no other business than that of promoting the happiness of the sons of men. Nor did he wait till he was solicited to extend his benevolent hand to the distressed: *he went about doing good*, and always accounted it *more blessed to give than to receive*; resembling God rather than man. He went about doing good: benevolence was the very life of his soul: he not only did good to objects presented to him for relief, but he industriously sought them out, in order to extend his compassionate assistance.

It is common for persons of the most exalted faculties to be elated with success and applause, or dejected by censure and disappointments; but the Blessed Jesus was not elated by the one, nor depressed by the other. He

was never more courageous, than when he met with the greatest opposition and cruel treatment; nor more humble than when the sons of men worshipped at his feet.

He came into the world inspired with the grandest purpose that ever was formed, that of saving from eternal perdition, not a single nation, but the whole world; and in the execution of it, went through the longest and heaviest train of labors that ever was sustained, with a constancy and resolution, on which no disadvantageous impression could be made by any accident whatever. Calumny, threatenings, bad success, with many other evils constantly attending him, served only to quicken his endeavors in this glorious enterprize, which he unweariedly pursued even till he finished it by his death.

The generality of mankind are prone to retaliate injuries received, and all seem to take a satisfaction in complaining of the cruelties of those who oppress them; whereas the whole of Christ's labors breathed nothing but meekness, patience, and forgiveness, even to his bitterest enemies, and in the midst of the most excruciating torments. The words, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*, uttered by him when his enemies were nailing him to the cross, fitly express the temper which he maintained through the whole course of his life, even when assaulted by the heaviest provocations. He was destined to sufferings here below, in order that he might raise his people to honor, glory, and immortality, in the realms of bliss above; and therefore patiently, yea joyfully, submitted to all that the malice of earth and hell could inflict. He was vilified, that we might be honored: he died, that we might live for ever and ever.

To conclude: the greatest and best men have discovered the degeneracy and corruption of human nature, and shewn themselves to have been nothing more than men; but it was otherwise with Jesus. He was superior to all the men that ever lived, both with regard to the purity of his manners, and the perfection of his virtues. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners.

Whether we consider him as a teacher, or as a man, *he did no sin; neither was guile found in his mouth.*

His whole life was perfectly free from spot or weakness; at the same time it was remarkable for the greatest and extensive exercises of virtue. But never to have committed the least sin, in word or in deed, never to have uttered any sentiment that could be censured, upon the various topics of religion and morality, which were the daily subjects of his discourses, and that through the course of a life filled with action, and led under the observation of many enemies, who had always access to converse with him, and who often came to find fault, is a pitch of perfection evidently above the reach of human nature; and consequently he who possessed it must have been Divine.

Such was the person who is the subject of the evangelical history. If the reader, by reviewing his life, doctrine and miracles, as they are here represented to him, united in one series, has a clearer idea of these things than before, or observes a beauty in his actions thus linked together, which taken separately do not appear so fully; if he feels himself touched by the character of Jesus in general, or with any of his sermons and actions in particular, thus simply delineated in writing, whose principal charms are the beauties of truth: above all, if his dying so generously for men strikes him with admiration, or fills him with joy in the prospect of that pardon which is thereby purchased for the world: let him seriously consider with himself what improvement he ought to make of the Divine goodness.

Jesus, by his death, hath set open the gates of immortality to the sons of men; and by his word, spirit and example, graciously offers to make them meet for the glorious rewards in the kingdom of the heavenly Canaan, and to conduct them into the inheritance of the saints in light. Let us, therefore, remember, that being born under the dispensation of his gospel, we have, from our earliest years, enjoyed the best means of securing to ourselves an interest in that favor of God, which is life; and that loving-kindness, which is better than life.

We have been called to aspire after an exaltation to the felicity of the heavenly mansions exhibited to mortal eyes in the man Jesus Christ, to fire us with the noblest

ambition. His Gospel teaches us that we are made for eternity; and that our present life is to our future existence, as infancy is to manhood. But as in the former, many things are to be learned, many hardships to be endured, many habits to be acquired, and that by a course of exercises, which in themselves though painful, and possibly useless to the child, yet are necessary to fit him for the business and enjoyments of manhood. So while we remain in this infancy of human life, things are to be learned, hardships to be endured, and habits to be acquired, by a laborious discipline, which, however painful, must be undergone, because necessary to fit us for the employments and pleasures of our riper existence, in the realms above, always remembering that whatever our trials may be, in this world, if we ask for God's assistance, he has promised to give it. Enflamed, therefore, with the love of immortality and its joys, let us submit ourselves to our heavenly teacher, and learn of him those graces, which alone can render life pleasant, death desirable, and fill eternity with ecstatic joys.

We cannot close the solemn scene of the life of our dear Lord and Saviour with greater propriety than by making a few observations on the nature of his religion, and considering the great benefits which will infallibly result to all, who shall, by faith, receive and embrace his holy doctrine.

The religion of Christ is the perfection of human nature, and the foundation of uniform, exalted pleasure: of public order, and private happiness. Christianity is the most excellent and the most useful institution, having *the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*. It is the voice of reason; it is also the language of scripture: *the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace*: And our Blessed Saviour himself assures us, that his precepts are easy, and the burthen of his religion light.

The Christian religion comprehends all we ought to believe, and all we ought to practise: its positive rites are few, and perfectly intelligible to every capacity; and the whole is manifestly adapted to establish in us a

proper sense of the great obligations we lay under both to God and Christ.

The Gospel places religion not in abtruse speculation, and metaphysical subtleties; not in outward shew, and tedious ceremony; not in superstitious austerities and enthusiastic visions; but in purity of heart and holiness of life. The sum of our duty (according to our Great Master himself) consists in the *love of God*, and *of our neighbor*. According to St. Paul, in denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts; and in living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. According to St. James, in visiting the fatherless and widow in affliction, and in keeping ourselves unspotted from the world. This is the constant strain and tenor of the gospel. This it inculcates most earnestly, and on this it lays the greatest stress.

It may be asked if the Christian religion is only a view of the law of nature, or merely a refined system of morality? To which we answer, that it is a great deal more than either. It is an act of grace, a stupendous plan of Providence, for the recovery of mankind from a state of degradation and ruin, to the favor of the Almighty, and to the hopes of a happy immortality through a Mediator.

Under this dispensation, true religion consists in a *repentance towards God*, and *in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ*, as the person appointed by the supreme authority of heaven and earth, to reconcile apostate man to his offended Creator. And what hardship is there in all this? Surely none. Nay, the practice of religion is much easier than the servitude of sin.

It certainly must be allowed by all that our rational powers are impaired, and the soul weakened by sin. The animal passions are strong, and apt to oppose the dictates of the Spirit of God: objects of sense make powerful impressions on the mind. We are, in every situation, surrounded with many snares and temptations. In such a disordered state of things, to maintain an undeviating path of duty, cannot be effected by poor weak man. There are, however, generous aids afforded us to persevere in the ways of the Lord.

The gracious Author of nature has planted in the human breast a quick sense of good and evil; a faculty

which strongly dictates right and wrong; and though by the strength of appetite and warmth of passion, men are often hurried into immoral practices, yet in the beginning, especially when there has been the advantage of a good education, it is usually with reluctance and opposition of mind. What inward struggles precede! What bitter pangs attend their sinful excesses! What guilty blushes and uneasy fears! What frightful prospects and pale reviews! *Terrors are upon them, and a fire not blown consumeth them.* To make a mock at sin, and to commit iniquity without remorse, requires great length of time, and much painful labor; more labor than is requisite to attain that habitual goodness which is the glory of the man, the ornament of the Christian, and the chief of his happiness.

The soul can no more be reconciled to acts of wickedness and injustice, than the body to excess, but by suffering many bitter pains, and cruel attacks.

The mouth of conscience may, indeed, be stopped for a time, by false principles: its secret whispers may be drowned by the noise of company, and stifled by the entertainments of sense; but this principle of conscience is so deeply rooted in human nature, and, at the same time, her voice is so clear and strong, that the sinner's arts will be unable to lull her into a lasting security.

When the hour of calamity arrives: when sickness seizeth, and death approaches the sinner, conscience now constrains him to listen to her accusations, and will not suffer the temples of his head to take any rest. *There is no peace to the wicked;* the foundations of peace are subverted, they are at utter enmity with their reason, with their conscience, and with their God.

Not so is the case of true religion. For when religion, pure and genuine, forms the tempers, and governs the life, conscience applauds, and peace takes his residence in the breast. The soul is in its proper state. There is order and regularity both in the faculties and actions. Conscious of its own integrity, and secure of divine approbation, the soul enjoys a calmness not to be described. But why do we call this happy frame calmness only? It is far more than mere calmness. The air may be calm,

and the day overcast with thick mists and clouds. The pious and virtuous mind resembles a serene day, enlightened and enlivened with the brightest rays of the sun. Though all without may be clouds and darkness, there is light in the heart of a pious man. *He is satisfied from himself, and is filled with peace and joy in believing.* In the concluding scene (the awful moment of dissolution) all is peaceful and serene. The immortal part quits its tenement of clay, with the well grounded hopes of ascending to happiness and glory.

Nor does the gospel enjoin any duty but what is fit and reasonable. It calls upon all its professors to practice reverence, submission, and gratitude to God; justice, truth, and universal benevolence to men; and to maintain the government of our own minds. And what has any one to object against this? From the least to the greatest commandment of our dear Redeemer, there is not one which impartial reason can find fault with. *His law is perfect; his precepts are true and righteous, altogether.* Not even those excepted, which require *us to love our enemies, to deny ourselves, and to take up our cross.* To forgive an injury is more generous and manly than to revenge it: to control a licentious appetite than to indulge it: to suffer poverty, reproach, and even death itself, in the sacred cause of truth and integrity, is much wiser and better, than, by base compliances, to make *shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.*

Thus in a storm at sea, or a conflagration on the land, a man with pleasure abandons his lumber, to secure his jewels. Piety and virtue are the wisest and most reasonable things in the world; vice and wickedness the most irrational and absurd.

The all-wise Author of our being hath so framed our natures, and placed us in such relations, that there is nothing vicious, but what is injurious; nothing virtuous but what is advantageous to our present interest, both with respect to body and mind. Meekness and humility, patience and universal charity, and grace, give a joy *unknown to transgressors.*

The divine virtues of truth and equity are the only bands of friendship, the only supports of society. Tem-

perance and sobriety are the best preservatives of health and strength; but sin and debauchery impair the body, consume the substance, reduce us to poverty, and form the direct path to an immature and untimely death.

To render our duty easy, we have the example, as well as the commands, of the blessed Jesus. The masters of morality among the heathens gave excellent rules for the regulation of men's manners; but they wanted either the honesty, or the courage to try their own arguments upon themselves. It was a strong presumption that the yoke of the Scribes and Pharisees was grievous, when they laid *heavy burdens upon men's shoulders*, which they themselves refused to touch with one of their fingers. Not thus our great law-giver, Jesus Christ the righteous. His behavior was in all respects, conformable to his doctrine. His devotion towards God, how sublime and ardent! benevolence towards men, how great and diffusive! He was in his life an exact pattern of innocence; for he *did no sin; neither was guile found in his mouth*. In the Son of God incarnate is exhibited the brightest, the fairest resemblance of the Father, that heaven and earth ever beheld, an example peculiarly persuasive, calculated to inspire resolution, and to animate us to use our utmost endeavors to imitate the divine pattern, the example of *the author and finisher of our faith, of him who loved us, and gave himself for us*. Our profession and character as Christians oblige us to make this example the model of our lives. Every motive of decency, gratitude, and interest, constrain us to tread the paths he trod before us.

We should also remember that our burden is easy; because God, who *knoweth whereof we are made, who considereth that we are but dust*, is ever ready to assist us. The heathens themselves had some notion of this assistance, though guided only by the glimmering lamp of reason. But what they looked upon as probable, the Gospel clearly and strongly asserts. We there hear the apostle exhorting, *Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*. We there hear the blessed Jesus himself arguing in this convincing manner: *If ye, being evil,*

know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?

We would not here be understood to mean, that the agency of the spirit is irresistible, and lays a necessitating bias on all the faculties and affections. Were this the case, precepts and prohibitions, promises and threatenings, would signify nothing; and duty and obligation would be words without a meaning. The spirit assisteth in a manner agreeable to the frame of human nature; not controlling the free use of reason, but by assisting the understanding, influencing the will, and moderating the affections. But though we may not be able to explain the mode of his operations, the scriptures warrant us to assert, that when men are renewed and prepared for heaven, it is *through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth*. How enlivening the thought! how encouraging the motive! We are not left to struggle alone with the difficulties which attend the practice of virtue, in the present imperfect state. The merciful Father of our spirit is ever near to help our infirmities, to enlighten the understanding, to strengthen good resolutions, and in concurrence with our own endeavors, to make us conquerors over all opposition. Faithful is he to his promises, and will not suffer the sincere and well disposed to be tempted above what they are able to bear. What can be desired more than this? To promote the happiness of his people, every thing is done that is requisite, his grace is all sufficient, his spirit is able to conduct us through this vale of tears, to never-fading bliss.

We should also remember, that the great doctrine of the Gospel, concerning the propitious mercy of God to all penitents, through Christ Jesus, greatly contributes to the consolation of Christians. Let it be granted, that the hope of pardon is essential to the religion of fallen creatures, and one of its first principles, yet, considering the doubts and suspicions which are apt to arise in a mind conscious of guilt, it is undoubtedly a great and inestimable favor, to be relieved in this respect, by the interposition of Divine assistance. This is our happiness. We are fully assured, that upon our true repentance, we

shall, *through the mediation of Christ*, receive the *full remission of sins*, and be restored to the same state and favor with our Maker, as if we had never transgressed his laws. Here the Gospel triumphs. With these assurances it abounds. Upon this head the declaration of our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles are so express and full, that every one who believes them, and knows himself to be a true penitent, must banish every doubt and fear, and rejoice with joy unspeakable. *Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Matt. xi. 28. *All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.* Matt. xii. 31. *Be it known unto you therefore men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses.* Acts xiii, 38, 39. What grace and favor is this! who can dwell upon the transporting theme too long! Now our way is plain before us, and the burden we are to bear is made comfortably easy. No sins are unpardonable, if repented and forsaken.

Consider this, all ye who have never yet regarded religion, but pursued a course of vice and sensuality all your lives long. Though your conduct has been base, to the last degree, your case is not desperate. Far from it. The God whom you have so highly offended commiserates your errors, is ever ready to extend his pardoning mercy to his most degenerate creatures, upon their faith and repentance, and *is in Christ Jesus reconciling the world to himself, not imputing unto penitent sinners their trespasses.* *Let the wicked, therefore, forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Isaiah iv. 7.

Another particular, which renders the Christian religion delightful is, its leading us to the perfect, eternal life of heaven. It cannot be denied but that we may draw from the light of nature strong presumptions of a future state. The present existence does not look like an entire scene, but rather like the infancy of human nature, which

is capable of arriving at a much higher degree of maturity; but whatever solid foundation the doctrine of a future state may have had, in nature and reason, certain it is, through the habitual neglect of reflection, and the force of irregular passions, this doctrine was, before the coming of our Blessed Saviour, very much disfigured, and, in a great measure, lost, among the sons of men.

In the heathen world, a future state of rewards and punishments was a matter of mere speculation and uncertainty, sometimes hoped for, sometimes doubted of, and sometimes absolutely denied. The law of Moses, though of divine original, is chiefly enforced by promises of temporal blessings; and, even in the writings of the prophets, a future immortality is very sparingly mentioned, and obscurely represented, but the doctrine of our Saviour hath *brought life and immortality to light*. In the gospel we have a distinct account of another world, attended with many engaging circumstances; about which the decisions of reason were dark and confused. We have the testimony of the author of our religion, who was raised from the dead, and who afterwards, in the presence of his disciples, ascended into heaven. In the New Testament it is expressly declared, that good men, *when absent from the body, are present with the Lord*. Here we are assured of the resurrection of the body in a glorious form, clothed with immortal vigor, suited to the active nature of the animating spirit, and assisting its most enlarged operations and incessant progress towards perfection. Here we are assured, that *the righteous shall go into life everlasting*, that they shall enter into the heavenly Canaan, where no ignorance shall cloud the understanding, no vice disturb the will. In these regions of perfection, nothing but love shall possess the soul; nothing but gratitude employ the tongue; there the righteous shall be united to an innumerable company of angels, and to the general assembly and church of the first born: there they shall see their exalted Redeemer, at the right hand of Omnipotence, and sit down with him on his throne; there they shall be admitted into the immediate presence of the supreme fountain of life and happiness,

and, beholding his face, be changed into the same image, from glory to glory.

Here language—here imagination, fails us! It requires the genius, the knowledge, the pen of an angel, to paint the happiness, the blissful scene of the New Jerusalem, which human eyes cannot behold, till this mortal body shall be purified from its corruption, and dressed in the robes of immortality: “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart to conceive, the joys which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

What is the heaven of the heathens when compared with the heaven of the Christians? The hope, the prospect of this, is sufficient to reconcile us to all the difficulties that may attend our progress, sweeten all our labors, alleviate every grief, and silence every murmur.

But why, says the libertine in the gaiety of his heart, should there be any difficulties, or restraint, at all? God hath made nothing in vain. The appetites he hath planted in the human breast are to be gratified. To deny or restrain them, is ignominious bondage; but to give full scope to every desire and passion of the heart, without check or control, is true manly freedom.

In opposition to this loose and careless way of reasoning, let it be considered, that the liberty of a rational creature doth not consist in an entire exemption from all control, but in following the dictates of reason, as the governing principle, and in keeping the various passions in due subordination. To follow the regular notion of those affections which the wise Creator hath implanted within us, is our duty; but as our natural desires, in this state of trial, are often irregular, we are bound to restrain their excesses, and not indulge them, but in a strict subserviency to the integrity and peace of our minds, and to the order and happiness of human society established in the world. Those who allow the supreme command to be usurped by sensual and brutal appetites, may *promise themselves liberties*, but are truly and absolutely the *servants of corruption*. To be vicious, is to be enslaved. We behold with pity those miserable objects that are chained in the galleys, or confined in dark prisons and loathsome dungeons; but how much more abject and vile

is the slavery of the sinner! No slavery of the body is equal to the bondage of the mind: no chains press so closely, or gall so cruelly, as the fetters of sin, which corrode the very substance of the soul, and fret every faculty.

It must, indeed, be confessed, that there are some profligates, so hardened by customs, as to be past all feeling; and, because insensible of their bondage, boast of this insensibility as a mark of their native freedom, and of their happiness. Vain men! they might extol, with equal propriety, the peculiar happiness of an apoplexy, or the profound tranquility of a lethargy.

Thus have we endeavored to place, in a plain and conspicuous light, some of the peculiar excellencies of the Christian religion; and, from hence, many useful reflections will naturally arise in the mind of every attentive reader. It is the religion of Jesus that hath removed idolatry and superstition, and brought immortality to light, when concealed under a veil of darkness almost impenetrable. This hath set the great truths of religion in a clear and conspicuous point of view, and proposed new and powerful motives to influence our minds, and to determine our conduct. Nothing is enjoined to be believed, but what is worthy of God; nothing to be practised, but what is friendly to man. All the doctrines of the Gospel are rational and consistent; all its precepts are truly wise, just, and good. The gospel contains nothing grievous to an ingenuous mind; it debars us from nothing, but doing harm to ourselves, or to our fellow creatures; and permits us to range any where, but in the paths of danger and destruction. It only requires us to act up to its excellent commands, and to prefer to the vanishing pleasure of sin, the smiles of a reconciled God, and *an eternal weight of glory*.

Surely no man who is a real friend to the cause of virtue, and to the interest of mankind, can ever be an enemy to Christianity, if he truly understands it, and seriously reflects on its wise and useful tendency. It conducteth us to our journey's end, by the plainest and surest path; where the *steps are not straitened, and where he that runneth stumbleth not*.

We ought daily to adore the God of nature, for lighting up the sun, that glorious, though imperfect image of his own unapproachable lustre; and appointing it to gild the earth with its various rays, to cheer us with its benign influence, and to guide and direct us in our journies and our labors. But how incomparably more valuable is that *day-spring from on high, which hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace?* Oh Christians, whose eyes are so happy to see, and your ears to hear, what abundant reason have you to give daily and hourly praise to your beneficent Creator! When, therefore, your minds are delighted with contemplating the riches of the Gospel, when you reflect (as you certainly must do) with wonder and joy on the happy means of your redemption; when you feel the burthen of your guilt removed, the freedom of your address to the throne of Grace encouraged, and see the prospect of a fair inheritance of eternal glory opening upon you; then, in the pleasing transports of your souls, borrow the joyful anthem of the psalmist, and say, with the humblest gratitude and self-resignation, *God is the Lord who sheweth us light; bind the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar. Adore God, who first commanded the light to shine out of darkness, that by the discoveries of his word, and the operations of his spirit, he hath shined in your hearts, to give you the knowledge of his glory, as reflected from the face of his Son.*

Blest are the souls that hear and know
 The Gospel's joyful sound;
 Peace shall attend the paths they go,
 And light their steps surround.

Their joy shall bear their spirits up,
 Through their Redeemer's name!
 His righteousness exalts their hope,
 Nor Satan dares condemn.

The Lord, our glory and defence,
 Strength and salvation gives:
 Christian, thy king for ever reigns
 Thy God for ever lives.

Let us, therefore, who live under the Gospel, the most gracious dispensation bestowed by God to mankind, *count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord*; and not suffer ourselves, by the slight cavils of unbelievers, to be *moved away from the hope of the Gospel*. Let us demonstrate that we believe the superior excellency of the Christian dispensation, by conforming to its precepts. Let us shew that we are Christians in deed, and in truth; not by endless disputes about trifles, and the transports of a blind zeal, but by abounding in those *fruits of righteousness, which are, through Christ, to the praise and glory of God*.

From what has been said, we may clearly perceive how groundless all those prejudices are, which some conceive against religion, as if it was a peevish, morose thing, burdensome to human nature, and inconsistent with the true enjoyment of life. Such sentiments are too apt to prevail in the heat of youth, when the spirits are brisk and lively, and the passions warm and impetuous; but it is wholly a mistake, and a mistake of the most dangerous tendency. The truth is, there is no pleasure like that of a good conscience; no real peace but what results from a sense of the Divine favor. This enables the mind, and can alone support it under all the various and unequal scenes of the present state of trial. This lays a sure foundation of an easy, comfortable life, of a serene, peaceful death, and of eternal joy and happiness hereafter; whereas vice is ruinous to all our most valuable interests; spoils the native beauty, and subverts the order of the soul; renders us the scorn of man, the rejected of God, and, without timely repentance, will rob us of a happy eternity. Religion is the health, the liberty, and the happiness of the Soul; sin is the disease, the servitude, and destruction of it.—It will, perhaps, be said, that the sons of vice and riot have pleasure in sensual indulgences. This we allow; but must observe, that it is altogether of the lowest kind, empty, fleeting, and transient; *like the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the mirth of the wicked*. It makes a noise and a blaze for the present; but soon vanishes away into smoke and vapor.

On the other hand, the pleasure of religion is solid and lasting; and will attend us through all, even the last stages of life. When we have passed the levity of youth, and have lost all relish for gay entertainments; when old age steals upon us, and stoops towards the grave, this will cleave fast to us, and give us relief.

Clad in this immortal robe, we need not fear the awful summons of the king of terrors, nor regret our retiring into the chambers of the dust. Our immortal part will wing its way to the arms of its Redeemer, and find rest in the heavenly mansions. And though our earthly part, this tabernacle of clay, returns to its original dust, and is dissolved, our joy, our consolation, our confidence is, that *we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

Such will be the happy consequences attendant on all those who strictly adhere to the Christian religion, and diligently, through the course of their lives, follow (as far as human nature will admit) the precepts laid down by their Divine Master, the Great Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

Who shall inhabit in thy hill,
O God of Holiness?
Whom will the Lord admit to dwell
So near his throne of grace?

The man that walks in pious ways,
And works with righteous hands,
That trusts his Maker's promises,
And follows his commands.

He speaks the meaning of his heart,
Nor slanders with his tongue;
Will scarce believe an ill report,
Nor do his neighbor wrong.

The wealthy sinner he contemns,
Loves all that fear the Lord;
And throughout life, in all he says,
Most strictly keeps his word.

His hands disdain a golden bribe,
And never gripe the poor:
This man shall dwell with God on earth,
And find his heaven secure.

A
NEW AND COMPLETE
UNIVERSAL HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE.

PART II.

FROM THE ASCENSION OF OUR BLESSED LORD INTO HEAVEN, TO THE FULL
ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY, BY HIS APOSTLES AND OTHER
PROPAGATORS OF HIS GOSPEL.

BOOK II.

[INCLUDING A PERIOD OF 64 YEARS.]

CHAP. I.

After our Lord's ascension into heaven the apostles return to Jerusalem, and elect Matthias into their number. They are all filled with the Holy Ghost. The Jews are surprised at the event, and some of them endeavor to turn it into ridicule; but Peter confutes their calumny, and, by an admirable speech on the occasion, makes many converts. Peter performs a miracle, and makes another speech to the people, which proves highly successful to the propagation of the gospel. At the instigation of the rulers of the Jews, the twelve apostles are committed to prison, and taken before the Sanhedrim; but, after an unanswerable vindication of their conduct, are dismissed. The punishment of Ananias and Sapphira. Peter cures many people of different infirmities. The apostles are again committed to prison, but released in the night by an

angel from heaven. They, however, go before the Sanhedrim, and are sentenced to be scourged. They elect seven deacons as stewards of the public stock for the relief of the distressed. Stephen, one of the new-elected deacons, is accused of blasphemy, and taken before the Sanhedrim. He vindicates himself before his judges, and boldly accuses the Jews of being more impious than their ancestors. The Jews are so enraged at this, that they unmercifully drag him out of the city, and stone him to death. Saul, a young man of Cilicia, is particularly active in the death of Stephen, and, at his instigation, most of the Christian converts are compelled to leave Jerusalem.

THE Blessed Saviour of the world having fulfilled all things prophesied of his mission here on earth, and having, in a most solemn manner, taken leave of his disciples, visibly retired before their eyes to eternal rest in his Father's kingdom. With hearts full of grief and admiration they deplored the loss of the presence of their dear-loved Lord; and, with longing eyes, paid their last attendance till he disappeared. They continued, for some time, fondly looking towards the place where their Lord was gone, till at length two angels in the shape of men, and gloriously apparelled, appeared before them, and delivered a message of consolation to this effect: "Forbear, O Galileans, your further admiration: Your gracious Lord, whom even now you beheld ascending to heaven, shall one day come to judge the world in as glorious a manner as he now departed from you. He hath not absolutely left you, but is gone to take possession of that kingdom which he will continue to govern to the end of the world."

The apostles and disciples of our Lord (among whom was Mary the mother of Jesus, and some other pious women who had attended him in his ministry) being greatly comforted by this Divine message, immediately returned to Jerusalem, where they spent their time in acts of religious worship, assembling daily in a certain upper room which they had made choice of for that purpose.

Peter had thought it necessary that a proper person should be chosen to supply the place of the perfidious

Judas, that the number of the apostles might be twelve, as was originally appointed by their Master. To effect this, in one of their assemblies (which consisted of an hundred and twenty) Peter addressed himself to his fellow-apostles in a speech which he had made for the purpose, the substance of which was to this effect: “Ye know, brethren, what the royal prophet David* fore- told, and which has been punctually fulfilled, concern- ing Judas, who was of our society, a fellow-disciple, and an apostle chosen with us. For a sum of money he betrayed his Master to his enemies, after which, being troubled for what he had done, he returned the money to the priest, who, not daring to put it into the treasury, bought a field with it for the interment of strangers. This fact, and the fate of Judas, was universally known to all that dwelt in Jerusalem, and therefore the field that was bought with that money was vulgarly known by the name of the Field of Blood. To Judas, therefore, belongs that which is mentioned by the holy Psalmist,† not by way of execution, but of prediction: that as he should come to a desperate miserable end, so the office which he had held with the rest of the twelve, should be bestowed on another. It is then our duty, according to this prophecy, to make choice of some one of these persons that are present (and who have continued with us ever since our Lord undertook the charge and care of us, till his ascension into heaven) that he may succeed Judas in the apostleship.”

The proposition made by Peter was unanimously approved of by the assembly; upon which two candidates were immediately nominated, namely, Jonas, surnamed Barnabas, and Matthias, one of the seventy disciples. The choice of one of these two was to be determined by lot, previous to which the apostles solemnly invoked the Divine direction in the following words: *Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of those two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of*

* Psl. xli. 9.

† Psal. lxxix. 25. and cix. 8.

this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas, by transgression, fell. Acts i. 24, 25. Having said this, they proceeded to draw lots, which happening to fall on Matthias, he was accordingly elected into the number of the twelve apostles.

The number of the apostles being now complete, on the day of Pentecost,* they all assembled together at their accustomed place, in order to perform their religious duties. While they were thus employed, a prodigious noise (much like the rushing of a loud impetuous wind) suddenly filled all the house in which they were, and a kind of fiery vapor, or exhalation, formed in the figure of a man's tongue, but divided a little at the tip, sat on the head of each; whereupon they were all immediately filled with the Holy Ghost, and, by its Divine inspiration, were enabled to speak in several different languages.

At this time there were at Jerusalem many Jews and proselytes, who had come thither from different parts of the world, to the celebration of the feast. When these, therefore, were informed of the great miracle which had taken place with the apostles, and were convinced of the truth of it by hearing them speak the languages of their respective countries, they were greatly astonished, and knew not what to make of so singular an event. Some of them argued among themselves to this effect: "How have these men, who are natives of Galilee, and have

* This word is derived from the Greek, and signifies the *fiftieth*, because the Feast of Pentecost was celebrated the *fiftieth* day after the sixteenth of the month Nisan, which was the second day of the Feast of the Passover, Levit. xxiii. 15, 16. And for the same reason it is called the *Feast of Weeks*, because it was observed seven weeks after the Passover, Deut. xvi. 9. It was at first instituted in order to oblige the Jews to repair to the temple of the Lord, there to acknowledge his dominion and sovereignty over all their labors, and there to render thanks to him for the law, which he gave them on the *fiftieth* day after their departure out of Egypt. In like manner, the Christian Church celebrates the feast of Pentecost fifty days, or seven weeks, after the Passover, or resurrection of our Blessed Saviour, to put us in remembrance, that the *Gifts of the Spirit* were then poured out in a plentiful manner, as the *first-fruits* of our Saviour's ascension into heaven, and that the *Gospel* began to be published by the apostles on the like day that the ancient *Law* was given to the Hebrews.

“continued all their lives there, acquired this knowledge?
 “For in our respective languages we hear them preach-
 “ing the doctrine of Christ, and the wonderful things
 “God hath wrought by him. This certainly must imply
 “something of very great moment.” But others were of
 a different opinion, and, in a scoffing manner, ridiculed
 the miracle, attributing the powers possessed by the
 apostles to arise from inebriation: *These men* (said they)
are full of new wine.

To destroy this calumny, and to open the eyes of the
 yet deluded and perverse Jews, Peter, in the name of the
 rest, addressed the multitude in a most admirable speech,
 the substance of which was to the following effect: “Ye
 “men of Judea, and all that at this time see and hear
 “what the Lord hath done, be assured these things are
 “not the effect of wine: ye know in your consciences, it
 “cannot be so, since *it is but the third hour of the day.**
 “But this is the completion of a famous prophecy of Joel,
 “who saith, *In the last days I will pour out my Spirit*
 “*upon all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall*
 “*prophecy, your young men shall see visions, and your*
 “*old men shall dream dreams.†* All ranks and qualities
 “of men shall receive the effusion of the Spirit of God,
 “and those who were never brought up in the schools of
 “the prophets, shall be enabled to preach the Gospel of
 “Christ wherever they go. And after that there shall be
 “fearful and astonishing sights and prodigies, and many
 “great slaughters in Judea, as forerunners and prog-
 “nostics of the destruction which shall befall this people
 “for their crucifying Christ, and from which the only
 “way to rescue yourselves is, to repent and acknowledge
 “him, which is the design of this miraculous descent of
 “the Holy Ghost. Observe and attend, ye men of Israel,
 “for you are chiefly concerned in this great affair. This
 “Jesus of Nazareth being demonstrated to be sent from
 “God by the mighty works he did among you, all which
 “you know to be true: Him, I say, being permitted to
 “fall into your hands, you apprehended and barbarous-

* That is, nine o'clock, the time of morning prayers, to which the
 Jews generally went fasting.

† See Joel ii. 28.

ly crucified: Him, whom God, by his determinate
 council, had given to retrieve you from your lost condi-
 tion, ye, with profane hands, have slain. This same
 Jesus, whom ye thus treated, hath God raised again,
 delivering him from the power of death; and, besides
 many other things, the prophecies concerning him re-
 quired that he should not long lie under death. Hear
 what David the royal psalmist says, *I have set the*
Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand,
I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and
my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.
For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt
thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou
wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is ful-
ness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for
ever more. Give me leave, brethren, to speak freely
 concerning David, who thus prophesied. He died
 like other men, had a solemn interment, and we have
 his monument this day to shew, and from whence he
 never arose. Therefore, he spake not of himself, but
 by way of prediction of the Messiah, whom he knew
 would infallibly spring from his loins, and be a prince
 and ruler of his church. These words of his were
 prophetic, and literally verified in the resurrection of
 Jesus, whose soul did not continue so long in a state of
 separation as that his body should be corrupted; and
 accordingly God raised him up in three days, of which
 all we apostles were eye-witnesses. He having, there-
 fore, assumed his regal state and office in heaven, and
 God having given him power to send the Holy Ghost,
 he hath now punctually fulfilled his promise in sending
 it on us in the most extensive manner; one great effect
 of which yourselves can testify, by having heard us
 speak languages which, a short time before, we did not
 understand. This great and important truth, therefore,
 I now proclaim to you, That God the Father hath
 raised up that Christ, whom ye Jews have crucified,
 and that he now sits on the right hand of him in the
 kingdom of heaven."

This speech, or rather sermon, of Peter's, so wrought
 upon the minds of the people, that they called out most

passionately to him, and the rest of the apostles, requesting their advice what measures they should pursue, in order to shake off that guilt with which they had been so long loaded. Peter readily complied with their request, and in a most tender and affectionate address, told them, that in order to lay aside their infidelity, they must, with true contrition, acknowledge their sins, enter upon the Christian profession with a firm resolution of never falling from it; and that they must receive baptism from the apostles, who were thereby empowered to convey remission of sins to all true penitents. *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* Acts ii. 38, 39.

In consequence of this affectionate address, those who were really touched with what Peter had said immediately renounced their former course of life, and proved the sincerity of their hearts by receiving baptism. On that day about three thousand people were converted to the faith of Christ, who continued assiduous in hearing the apostles teach, and in bringing their goods liberally for the relief of the distressed. Nor were the converts only impressed with fear and reverence, but a general surprize took place among all that saw these strange and early operations of the Holy Ghost, which were still farther confirmed by several miracles performed by the apostles.

The Gospel thus gaining ground, those that received it assembled together for the service of God, constantly observing the times of public prayers, and receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper: they distributed to the necessities of the poorer sort as freely as God had given them ability, spending their time in acts of devotion and charity, and exercising works of mercy to all. By the pious examples of these many others were induced to join them, which gave the apostles a fruitful harvest of their ministry, and by their repeated exhortations, others were daily rescued from the wicked and dangerous con-

verse of the perverse Jews, and heartily embraced the doctrine of Christ.

After this wonderful reformation among the people in consequence of Peter's discourses, that apostle, accompanied by John, went one day to the temple about three o'clock in the afternoon, which was one of the times generally set apart for prayer. As they entered in at the gate of the temple towards the east in Solomon's porch, which was called the *beautiful gate*, they saw a poor cripple, who had been lame from his birth, lying there, and begging alms of those who passed him. As soon as the cripple saw Peter and John, he looked up in their faces and earnestly begged charity of them; upon which Peter, looking steadfastly at him, said, *Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.* No sooner were these words spoken than the poor cripple was made whole. His joints became strait and his nerves strong, so that he went with the apostles into the temple, *walking, and leaping, and praising God.*

The poor man, who had sat daily, for a long time, asking alms at the door of the temple, was universally known by the people, who seeing him walking and praising God, were amazed at the greatness of the cure: they therefore flocked in great numbers round the apostles, by whom the poor man kept close, being unwilling to part with those from whom he had received so distinguished a benefit. Peter, observing the astonishment of the multitude, and thinking it a convenient opportunity of increasing the number of his followers, addressed himself to them in a long and very pertinent harangue, the substance of which was to this effect: "Ye men of
" Israel, why do you look upon this cure as a thing
" strange? Or why do you attribute any thing to us in
" this matter, as if it were in our power to perform so
" great a miracle? The God of our fathers gave this
" power to Jesus, whom you delivered to Pilate to be
" crucified, releasing a known murderer and a thief, and
" putting to death Him, who came to give life to the
" world; whom God hath been pleased to raise from the
" dead, and make us witnesses thereof. Be assured, it is

“ by belief in him that this man hath been recovered
 “ from his lameness. The man you all well know,
 “ having, for many years, seen him a begging cripple;
 “ and the faith we have in the power of Him on whom
 “ we believe, hath wrought the remarkable cure at
 “ which you all so greatly wonder. I do imagine,
 “ brethren, that such among you who rejected Christ did
 “ it through ignorance, not knowing him to be the Mes-
 “ siah; and that the like was the case with your rulers.
 “ But by these means the many prophecies in the
 “ scriptures, that the Messiah should be put to death,
 “ have been fulfilled. Do you, therefore, amend your
 “ lives, that your past offences may be pardoned, and
 “ that, at the second coming of Christ for the delivery
 “ and rescue of the faithful, you may, by repentance, be
 “ admitted into the number of the elect. The Christ you
 “ have persecuted, and of whose resurrection we have
 “ been eye-witnesses, hath now entered upon his sove-
 “ reignty in heaven, whereby hath been fulfilled all the
 “ prophecies concerning him, particularly that of Moses,
 “ who truly said unto the fathers, *A prophet shall the*
 “ *Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren,*
 “ *like unto me, and him shall ye hear in all things what-*
 “ *soever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass,*
 “ *that every soul which shall not hear that prophet, shall*
 “ *be destroyed from among the people.* And not only
 “ Moses, but all the prophets, from Samuel, *as many as*
 “ *have spoken,** have foretold the coming of the Messiah,
 “ with the destruction of those who should reject, and
 “ the especial mercies to them that should believe in him.
 “ Ye are the particular persons of whom the prophets
 “ foretold, and to whom the *promise and covenant* which

* The account of the prophets is here begun from Samuel, be-
 cause the schools of the prophets were first instituted and erected by
 him; and not that there was no prophet before him. The sons of
 the prophets spent the greater part of their time in studying the law,
 and praising and serving God, and some were sent on messages to
 the people (for all were not called to the prophetic office) and there-
 fore it is added, *as many as have spoken*; that is, as many out of the
 schools of the prophets as were Divinely called to the prophetic
 office.

“ God made with Abraham (*that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed*) did primarily belong. Ye are the heirs of this covenant, and God hath been pleased to make the first overtures of mercy to you, that ye might receive the Gospel of his beloved Son, and repent of the iniquities which ye have done unto him.”—This was the purport of St. Peter’s speech on this occasion; and such was its efficacy, that it converted so many of his hearers, as to make the whole number amount to no less than five thousand.

While Peter was instructing the people, *the captain of the temple*, at the instigation of the priests and sadducees, came with an armed force, suddenly seized the two apostles, and conducted them to prison. The next morning the great Sanhedrim met, and having ordered the apostles to be brought before them, demanded by what power they had wrought that miracle upon the lame man, and who it was that gave them authority to preach to the people? In answer to these questions, Peter, being endued with an extraordinary presence of mind and elocution of tongue, spoke to this effect: “ Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, we are this day examined before you concerning an action, which is so far from being criminal, that it is an act of special mercy. Be assured, that the miraculous cure performed on the lame man was wrought by no other means, than by invoking the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, and God most miraculously raised again. This is he that was prophesied of under the title of a refuse stone, rejected by you, the chief of the Jews, and treated with contempt; but is now, by his resurrection, enthroned in power, and is, indeed, become the ruler and king of the church, the prime foundation-stone of the whole fabric. In him alone must salvation now be hoped for by all; nor can ye expect to be saved unless you readily receive, and heartily embrace, his doctrine.”

The council, seeing with what courage and freedom of speech the apostles behaved themselves, and withal considering that their education alone could not have raised them above the capacity of other men (being neither

skilled in the learning of the Jews, nor, as men of distinction, instructed in their laws) they were greatly astonished; and still more so, when they recollected that the two apostles were of those who had attended Jesus in his life time, and saw the man on whom they had wrought the miraculous cure stand by them ready to attest the truth of it. From these considerations they knew not, for some time, how to act, till at length they resolved to hold a private conference among themselves, and, for that purpose, ordered the apostles to withdraw. As soon as they were gone, the council entered into debate on the subject, arguing with one another to this effect: "As to the men, we have nothing to accuse them of; for, that they have performed a great miracle is apparent to many, and the man that was healed is a living witness of the truth of it. Since, therefore, they have not been guilty of any breach of our laws, to prevent their further seducing the people (who are too apt to be led away by them) we will call them in, and forbid them, upon severe penalties, to preach Christ and his Gospel any more." In consequence of this resolution, the two apostles, were called in, and commauded not to talk privately, or teach publicly, any thing concerning the faith of Christ. But the Christian heroes, whose commission was from an higher power than any on earth, slighting this interdiction, and all their threats, made answer, "That since they had received a command from heaven, to declare to all nations what they had heard or seen, it was certainly their duty to obey God rather than them." This was a fair appeal to the consciences of their very judges; but their judges, instead of being satisfied with it, would probably have proceeded to some greater violence, had not the people's veneration for the apostles put a restraint upon their malice. All, therefore, that they dared to do was, to repeat and enforce their menaces; having done which, they ordered them to be discharged.

As soon as the two apostles were dismissed, they returned with great joy to their brethren, who, with infinite satisfaction, heard the report of all that had passed. They then unanimously glorified God, who, by his holy prophet David, had foretold what was now come to pass;

that the Jews should oppose Christ, say false things of him, deny and crucify him first, and, when God had raised him from the dead, oppose the preaching of him; that the princes and governors, Herod and Pontius Pilate, should combine against him, and the rulers should, in council, endeavor to suppress the propagation of his doctrine. *And now Lord, said they, behold their threatenings; and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.* No sooner had they concluded their prayer than the house in which they were was shaken with a mighty wind, in like manner as it had been before on the day of Pentecost; whereupon they were instantly replenished with fresh measures of the Holy Ghost, and, notwithstanding all the threats of the Jewish rulers, found themselves invigorated to preach the Gospel of Christ with more boldness and resolution than ever.

The charity, at this time, among believers, was very large and extensive. Such as had houses, or possessions of any kind, sold them, and deposited the money in the hands of the apostles, to be by them distributed, in due proportions, according to the necessities of their brethren. This a certain Levite, (a native of Cyprus, called Joses, but by the apostles, surnamed Barnabas, or *the Son of Consolation*) did with great readiness and singleness of heart, selling the estate of which he was possessed, and giving the whole produce to the apostles. In imitation of this good man, one Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, resolved to *devote all they had* to the service of the church; in consequence of which they sold their estate, but afterwards altering their minds jointly agreed to keep some part of the money, intending thereby to impose upon the apostles. Ananias going first into the presence of the apostles, with great assurance, and seeming cheerfulness, produced the money, and laid it at their feet. But Peter, who, by Divine inspiration, knew the cheat, in a holy indignation and abhorrence of so vile an act of sacrilege, reprehended him in words to this effect: "How, O Ananias, hath Satan persuaded thee thus to attempt to de-

“ceive the Holy Ghost, in purloining part of that which
 “thou hadst consecrated to God’s service, and the use of
 “his church? Before thy land was sold, was it not
 “wholly thine? And when it was sold, didst thou not
 “receive the full price for it? Was it not then in thy full
 “power to perform thy vow? Thy iniquitous conduct in
 “concealing a part of the money is not only an injury to
 “the church, but to God, who knew thy private vow, that
 “it was consecrating of all, and not this part only which
 “thou hast brought to us.” These piercing words, together
 with the horrors of conscious guilt, so impressed the mind
 and heart of Ananias, that he fell down dead on the spot,
 to the great astonishment and terror of all present; and his
 body was immediately taken away for interment. About three
 hours after, his wife Sapphira went to the assembly, not in
 the least suspecting what had happened to her sacrilegious
 consort. Peter asked her whether the sum which her husband
 had brought was the whole for which their estate was sold.
 To this she answered in the affirmative; upon which Peter
 reprehended her in words to this effect: “How durst you both
 “bine to provoke God, to try whether he will punish this
 “your impious fraud, or not? That you may see how
 “highly God resents your sacrilegious intentions, behold
 “the men are coming in, who have buried your dead
 “husband, and now they shall do as much for you.” No
 sooner had he spoken these words than Sapphira fell dead
 at his feet, and the same persons that had buried Ananias,
 carried her out from the assembly, and laid her by him.
 These remarkable instances of the Divine wrath filled all
 the converts with fear and trembling, and prevented, in a
 great measure, that hypocrisy and dissimulation by which
 others might have flattered themselves with deceiving the
 church.

Miracles of severity were not, however, much practised
 by the apostles. Acts of mercy were their proper province,
 and healing the diseased and freeing the *possessed*, a great
 part of their employment. In the execution of this business
 the Divine power so far attended them, that even the shadow
 of Peter passing by cured the sick, who, in the open streets,
 were laid on beds and couches,

on purpose to receive the benefit of his salutary influence. Nor were these marvellous cures confined to the inhabitants of Jerusalem only, but the people of several neighboring towns and villages brought thither their sick, their lame, and *possessed*, all of whom were, by the apostles, relieved from their respective infirmities.

The fame of these cures, and the great success which Christianity gained by the miracles and preaching of the apostles, reaching the ears of the high priest, and some others of the Sanhedrim (who were of the sect of the Sadducees) they were highly incensed against the apostles, and therefore caused them to be apprehended, and thrown into the common prison. But that very night they were released from their confinement. The prison-doors, though fastened with the utmost caution, opened of themselves at the approach of a messenger from the courts of heaven, who commanded the apostles to leave the dungeon, repair to the temple, and preach the glad tidings of the Gospel to the people.

Early the next morning the council again assembled, and, thinking the apostles were in safe custody, dispatched their officers to the prison, with orders to bring them immediately before them. The officers accordingly went to obey their orders, but, behold, when they came to the prison, they could not find the apostles. In consequence of this they returned to the council, telling them, that the doors of the prison were shut, indeed, and the keepers all upon their guard, but as for the persons whom they were sent for, there was not one of them to be found. This intelligence greatly surprized the council, who wondered how it could be, that, the prison being shut, and the guard at the doors, the prisoners should escape. But while they were in this state of perplexity a messenger arrived with news, that the men, whom they had the night before committed to prison, were then in the temple, preaching and instructing the people. In consequence of this, the captain of the guard, with some other officers, immediately went to the temple, and entreated the apostles to go before the council, not daring to offer any violence to them, for fear of being stoned by the people.

As soon as the apostles appeared before their judges, the high-priest demanded how they durst presume to preach a doctrine, which so lately had been interdicted them? To which Peter, in the name of the rest, returned them an answer to this effect: "We certainly ought to obey God rather than man. And though you have so barbarously and contumeliously treated the Blessed Jesus, yet God hath raised him up to be a prince and Saviour, to give both repentance and remission of sins. And of these things both we, and the miraculous power which the Holy Ghost hath conferred on all Christians, are witnesses."

This answer greatly exasperated the council, and they began to consult among themselves in what manner they should punish them. Their first resolution was, to put them to death, but this was over-ruled by the wise advice of a certain Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a man of the most distinguished reputation, and universally respected. After ordering the apostles to withdraw, he advised the council to proceed in the affair with great caution, lest bad consequences might attend their resolutions. He told them that several persons had formerly raised parties, and drawn great numbers of people after them; but that all their schemes had miscarried, and their designs rendered abortive, without the interposition of that court. That they would, therefore, do well to let the apostles alone; for if their doctrines and designs were of human invention, they would come to nothing; but if they were of God, all their powers and policies would be of none effect, and sad experience would too soon convince them, that they had themselves opposed the counsels of the Most High.

This speech so far diverted the indignation of the council, that they changed the sentence (at first designed against the apostles' lives) into a corporal punishment. They therefore, after remanding them into court, ordered them to be immediately scourged, which being done, they strictly charged them not to preach any more in the name of Jesus, and, with this charge, gave them their liberty.

But this punishment and injunction had little effect on the disciples of the Blessed Jesus. They returned home

in triumph, rejoicing that they were thought worthy to suffer in so righteous a cause, and to undergo shame and reproach for so kind and powerful a Master. Nor could all the opposition of man, blended with the malice of the power of darkness, discourage them from performing their duty to God, or lessen their zeal for preaching, both in public and private, the doctrine of the Gospel.

The great increase of believers, and the ready access to the common fund for the relief of the poor, made the institution of another order of men in the Christian church highly necessary. Among the great number of converts were some Jews, who, by having been long in foreign countries, had disused the Hebrew, and spoke only the Grecian tongue, so that they were considered by the common Jews as if they had been foreigners. These people complained to the apostles, that, in the distribution of the charity-money, an undue preference was given to the Hebrew widows, whilst theirs were too frequently neglected. In consequence of this complaint the apostles assembled together the whole multitude of their disciples, when Peter, in the name of the rest, addressed them in words to this effect: "It is not reasonable that we should neglect the preaching of the Gospel, by undertaking the care of looking after the poor. Therefore, brethren, do you nominate to us seven men, who have shewn themselves to be faithful, trusty persons, eminent among you for wisdom, and other good gifts, that we may appoint (that is, consecrate or ordain) to the office of Deacons in the church, and entrust them with the care of distributing to those who want out of the public stock. In the choice of these, let it be observed, that they be persons well versed in the knowledge of Divine matters, that they may give assistance to us occasionally in preaching the word, and receiving proselytes to the faith by Baptism. And by these means we shall be less interrupted in our daily employment of praying, and preaching the Gospel."

This proposal was highly satisfactory to the whole assembly, who immediately nominated seven persons, namely, Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Pharnenas, and Nicolas. These seven they presented

to the twelve apostles, who, by prayer, and laying their hands on them, ordained them to the office of deacons.* Of these seven, the most eminent for the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit was Stephen. He preached the Gospel with a noble courage and resolution, and confirmed it with many public and unquestionable miracles among the people, insomuch, that by his means the Christian religion gained ground abundantly. Converts came in apace; and great numbers of the priests themselves laid aside their prejudices and embraced the Gospel.

The great zeal of Stephen for propagating the Gospel, and the success that attended his endeavors, soon awakened the malice of his adversaries, who procured some members† of the most learned synagogues, then in Jeru-

* The names of these seven deacons are all of Greek extract, from whence we may infer, that, very probably, they were all natives of Greece, and that, consequently, by their designation, the church was desirous to give full satisfaction to the complaint of those, whose widows had been before neglected. Of the two first of these, viz. Stephen and Philip, the sacred history has given us a sufficient account, but of the rest we have nothing certain, except we will admit of what the Latins tell us of Prochorus, viz. that on the 9th of August he suffered martyrdom at Antioch, after having made himself famous for his miracles: of Nicanor, that on the 10th of January he suffered in the Isle of Cyprus, after having given great demonstrations of his faith and virtue: of Timon, that on the 19th of April, he was first thrown into the fire, and, when he had miraculously escaped from thence, he was fixed upon a cross at Corinth: of Parmenas, that on the 23d of January he suffered at Philippi, in Macedonia: and of Nicolas, that, either by design or indiscretion, he gave rise to the infamous sect of Nicolaitans, and therefore no Christian church has ever yet paid any honor to his memory.

† As there were people of all nations, proselytes to the Jewish religion, dwelling at Jerusalem, it is reasonable to imagine, that they had synagogues, or places appointed for prayer, for hearing the law, and pious exhortations in their own languages. The Jews tell us, that there were no less than four hundred and eighty of these in Jerusalem, which were so many inferior churches, and subordinate to the temple, as their cathedral. These synagogues very probably were built, and maintained by the several nations, or degrees of people that resorted to them, and from these they had their names, as the Synagogue of Libertines, i. e. of such as were Denizens of Rome, of the Cyrenians, the Alexandrians, &c. But it is to be observed of these synagogues, that they were not only places of religious worship, but a sort of colleges, or schools likewise, where

salem, to dispute with him. But, when they found their disputants baffled, and unable to withstand the force of those arguments with which the Divine wisdom had inspired Stephen, they betook themselves to vile practices. Having procured some profligate men to accuse him of blasphemy, they caused him to be apprehended, and, in a tumultuous manner, took him before the Sanhedrim, in order to obtain a formal sentence against him.

While Stephen stood before the council, the judges, and all the people then present, beheld a lustre and radiancy in his countenance, not unlike the appearance of an angel. This, however, did not so far intimidate the Sanhedrim as to prevent them from listening to the accusation of the false-witnesses, who charged him with blasphemy, in foretelling the destruction of the temple, and the change of the Mosaic rites and ceremonies. *This man (said they) ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law. For we have heard him say, Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.*

The high-priest, having heard the accusation against Stephen, asked him, whether or not he was guilty of thus prophesying the destruction of the temple, and change of the Jewish religion? In answer to this question, Stephen made a very grave and severe oration, the substance of which was to the following effect:

“Hearken unto me, ye descendants of Jacob; the Almighty, whose glory is from everlasting, appeared to our father Abraham, before he sojourned in Charran, even while he dwelt in Mesopotamia, commanding him to leave his country and relations, and retire into a land which he would shew him.

persons were instructed in the law and traditions of the Jews. The Jews at this time were dispersed in several foreign parts, and from these they sent their youth to Jerusalem to be educated in the synagogue, or college, peculiar to their respective countries. St. Paul was of the province of Cilicia, and, as it is reasonable to think that he studied in a college, either belonging to the country where he was born, or proper to his quality, as a freeman of Rome; there seems to be no incongruity in supposing, that he might possibly be one, either of those Libertine, or Cilician disputants, who entered the lists with St. Stephen.

“ Abraham obeyed the Divine mandate; he left the land of the Chaldeans and pitched his tent in Charran; from whence, after his father was dead, he removed into Canaan, even the land you now inhabit; but he gave him no inheritance in this country, not even so much as to set his foot upon. He promised, indeed, he would give it him for a possession, which should descend to his posterity, though at this time he had no child.

“ God also indicated to him that his seed should sojourn in a strange land; the people of which should make them bondmen, and treat them cruelly four hundred years. After which, he would judge that nation, bring out his people who should serve him in this place, as an earnest of which, he gave him the covenant of circumcision; and afterwards a son whom Abraham circumcised the eighth day, calling his name Isaac, who begat Jacob, and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.

“ But these, moved with envy, sold their brother Joseph into Egypt, where the Almighty protected him, delivered him from all his afflictions, indued him with wisdom, and gave him favor in the sight of Pharaoh, the monarch of Egypt, who made him governor both of his house and kingdom.

“ Soon after this exaltation of Joseph, the countries of Egypt and Canaan were afflicted with a terrible famine, and our fathers found no sustenance either for themselves or flocks. But as soon as Jacob heard the welcome tidings, that there was corn in Egypt, he sent our fathers thither to purchase bread for the people of his household. And in their second journey thither, Joseph made himself known to his brethren, and also informed Pharaoh of his country and relations. After which Joseph's father, with his whole house, consisting of three-score and fifteen souls, went down into Egypt, where both Jacob and our fathers died, and were carried to Sychem, and deposited in the sepulchre purchased of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sychem.

“ But as the time for fulfilling the promise made to Abraham approached, the people multiplied in Egypt, till another king arose, who was not acquainted with the merits of Joseph, and the great things he had done for

that country. This prince used our fathers with cruelty, and artfully attempted to destroy all the male children. At this time Moses was born, and being exceeding fair, was nourished three months in his father's house; but as it was dangerous to conceal him there any longer, he was hid among the flags on the bank of the river; when the daughter of Pharaoh found him, and educated him as her own son.

“ Thus Moses became acquainted with all the learning of Egypt, and was mighty both in word and deed; but when he was forty years old he thought proper to visit his brethren, the children of Israel; and seeing an Egyptian smite an Hebrew, he assisted the suffering person, and slew the Egyptian; supposing that his brethren would have been persuaded that from his hand, with the assistance of the Almighty, they might expect deliverance; but they conceived no hopes of this kind.

“ The next day he again visited them, and seeing two of them striving together, he endeavored to make them friends: Ye are brethren, said he to them, why do ye injure one another? But he who did his neighbor wrong, instead of listening to his advice, thrust him away, saying, By what authority art thou a judge of our actions? wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?

“ Moses, at this answer, fled from Egypt, and sojourned in the land of Media, where he begat two sons. And at the end of forty years, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, out of the middle of a bush burning with fire: this was a sight which surprized Moses; and as he drew near to view more attentively so uncommon a thing, God called unto him, saying, *I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* At which Moses trembled, and turned aside his face. But the Lord said to him, *Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground. I have long seen the afflictions of my people, which are in Egypt; I have heard their cries, and am now descended from heaven to deliver them. Come therefore, I will send thee into Egypt.*

“ Thus was that Moses whom they refused, sent by God to be ruler and deliverer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. Accordingly he brought them out after he had shewed signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, in the Red sea, and in the wilderness, forty years. It is this Moses that told our fathers, *A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, and your brethren, like unto me. Him shall ye hear.*

“ And this prophet is the same who was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel which spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: the same who received the lively oracles to give unto us: he whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and were desirous of returning to their state of bondage; commanding Aaron to make them gods to go before them; and pretending that they knew not what was become of Moses, who delivered them from the slavery of Egypt. They now made a calf, offered sacrifices to it, and rejoiced in the work of their own hands. From these idolatrous proceedings they lost that divine protection which had hitherto attended them as the prophets have recorded. *O ye houses of Israel! have you offered unto me slain beasts and sacrifices, by the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan: figures which ye made to worship them: I will carry you away beyond Babylon.*

“ Our fathers were possessed of the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness; being made according to the pattern Moses had seen in the mount. This tabernacle our fathers brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, who were driven out by the Almighty, till the days of David, a favorite of the Most High, and who was desirous of finding a tabernacle for the God of Jacob; but Solomon built him an house.

“ We must not, however, think, that the Almighty will reside in temples made with hands, as the prophet beautifully observed, *Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me, saith the Lord, or where is the place of my rest? Hath not mine hand made all these things?*

“Ye stiff-necked, ye uncircumcised in heart and ears, will ye for ever resist the Holy Ghost? Ye tread in the paths of your fathers; as they did, so do you still continue to do. Did not your fathers persecute every one of the prophets? did not they slay them who shewed the coming of the Holy One, whom ye yourselves have betrayed and murdered? Ye have received the law by the disposition of angels, but never kept it.”

This speech, but particularly the conclusive part of it, incensed the council to such a degree against Stephen, that they made use of the most bitter invectives, and resolved to chastise him by no less a punishment than death. But Stephen was totally regardless of what they said or did, having his mind employed in the delightful prospect of heaven, and the appearance of the Blessed Jesus standing at the right hand of God. The visionary prospect of this heavenly scene so enraptured his soul, that he could not help communicating it to the council. *Behold, (said he) I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.* On saying these words, the resentment of the council against him was so ungovernably increased, that raising a loud clamor, and stopping their ears against all cries for mercy, they immediately dragged him away without the city, and stoned him to death. Whilst Stephen was undergoing this punishment, he first devoutly recommended his soul to God, and then earnestly prayed for his murderers, that the sin they were committing *might not be laid to their charge*; having done which he quietly resigned his soul into the hands of Him who gave it. His remains were decently interred by *devout men* (proselytes to the Christian faith) who *made great lamentation over him.*

Among the many that were enraged against Stephen, one particular person, who had but too great an hand in his death, was a young man of Cilicia, named Saul. This person, out of his great officiousness to have Stephen executed, undertook to look to the clothes of the witnesses, who usually stripped themselves to throw the first stones (as the law directed) at the person who was to suffer by their evidence. Not satisfied with this, Saul, out of his passionate concern for the traditions of the

ancients, and his natural inveteracy on that account, against the advocates of the Gospel, resolved to persecute all he could who professed the new religion. He accordingly applied to the Sanhedrim for a commission for this purpose, which was no sooner granted, than he immediately proceeded to carry it into execution. Having proper assistance, he broke open houses, seized upon all who looked like the disciples of Jesus, and unmercifully dragged them to prison, where he caused them to be scourged, and otherwise ignominiously punished. These acts of cruelty he exercised wherever he went; so that most of the believers, except the apostles, were forced to leave Jerusalem, and disperse themselves in the regions of Judea and Samaria, Syria and Phœnicia, Cyprus and Antioch, &c.

In consequence of this, the glad tidings of the Gospel, (which had, till now, been confined to Judea, and many professors of it obliged to hide themselves in secret places) was preached to the Gentile world, and an ancient prophecy was fulfilled, which says, *Out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* Thus did the Almighty bring good out of evil, and cause the malicious intentions of the wicked to redound to his honor and praise.

CHAP. II.

Philip, the deacon, preaches the Gospel in Samaria with great success. One Simon, a magician, pretending to become a convert, is baptized by Philip. The apostles, hearing of Philip's success in Samaria, send Peter and John thither to confirm his doctrine. Simon the magician offers the apostles money to invest him with the power of working miracles; but Peter, knowing the iniquity of his heart, instead of complying with his request, severely rebukes him. Peter and John return to Jerusalem. Philip converts an eunuch belonging to the queen of Ethiopia. The miraculous conversion of Saul, the great persecutor of the proselytes in Judea. He preaches the Gospel at Damascus, for which the inhabitants seek his life, but he happily makes his escape. He goes to Jerusalem and is kindly received by the apostles. Proceeds from thence to Tarsus, and preaches the Gospel in Cilicia and Syria. Peter visits various parts of Judea, Galilee and Samaria. Cures one Æneas of a paralytic disorder, and raises a dead woman to life at Joppa. Is sent for by Cornelius, a Roman officer, whom he converts, with several other Gentiles. He returns to Jerusalem, and is censured by the Jewish converts there, for his familiarity with the Gentiles. He justifies his conduct on this head, and acquits himself with satisfaction to his hearers.

AMONG those who fled from Jerusalem in consequence of the violent persecution by Saul, was Philip the deacon, the next in order after Stephen. He directed his course towards Samaria, preaching the Gospel at various places in his way, and at length took up his residence in that city. His labors here were crowned with success; he confirmed the doctrine he preached by the performance of many distinguished miracles, and in a short time, was attended by a prodigious number of converts. In the city lived a person named Simon, who, by his sorcery and magical arts, had so strangely gained the veneration of the people, that they considered his diabolical illusions as real operations of *the power of God*. Simon, seeing great numbers of his admirers fall off from him, and embrace the doctrine preached by Philip,

pretended to be a convert likewise, and (in hopes of obtaining some share of the miraculous gifts, which he could not but admire in Philip) was baptized by him with some others who had embraced the doctrine of Christ.

The great success which attended Philip at Samaria being made known to the apostles at Jerusalem, they sent Peter and John to confer the gifts of the Holy Ghost on the new converts. Simon, the magician, perceiving that a power of working miracles was consequent to all those on whom the apostles laid their hands, offered to give them money if they would invest him with a like power. But Peter, knowing the insincerity of his heart, rejected his offer with scorn and detestation; and severely rebuked him in words to this effect: “ *Thy money* “ (said the great apostle) *perish with thee.* As thy heart “ is full of hypocrisy and deceit, thou shalt never be in- “ vested with any part of this Divine privilege, for thy “ design in desiring these gifts is, to advance thy own “ credit and esteem among men, and not to enlarge the “ kingdom of Christ. Repent, therefore, and humble “ thyself before God for this wicked and impious pro- “ posal, that the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven “ thee; for I perceive that thy temper and disposition of “ mind is still vicious and corrupt; that thou art yet “ bound by the chains of iniquity, and in a state dis- “ pleasing to God, and dangerous to thyself.”

This severe rebuke from Peter greatly affected the mind of Simon: his conscience flew in his face, and he earnestly entreated the apostles to make intercession for him to the throne of grace, that the Almighty might pardon his sins, and not inflict on him those heavy judgments which Peter had intimated were likely to fall on him for his enormous transgressions.

The two apostles, having confirmed the doctrine preached by Philip in Samaria, left that city and returned to Jerusalem, in their way to which they expounded the doctrine of Christ in several considerable villages, and were so successful, as to bring over a prodigious number of sincere proselytes.

Soon after Peter and John left Samaria, Philip received orders from an heavenly messenger to quit that city, and go Southward into the road which led from Jerusalem to Gaza. Philip immediately obeyed the Divine mandate; but he had not travelled far before he espied a chariot with a splendid retinue, which, on enquiry, he found belonged to an eunuch, the treasurer of Candace, queen of Ethiopia, who being a proselyte to the Jewish religion, had been to pay his devotions at Jerusalem, and was then upon his journey home. When Philip approached the chariot he was directed by the Spirit of God to stop and speak to the person within it. This he accordingly did, and found the treasurer commendably employed in reading a passage of the prophet Isaiah. Philip, after apologizing for interrupting him, asked if he clearly understood what he was reading; upon which the treasurer candidly acknowledged he did not, and besought him to get into the chariot and instruct him. Philip readily obeyed, and when he came to examine the passage which had so much perplexed, and engaged the attention of the treasurer, he found it to be the following: *He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and like a sheep dumb before the shearer he opened not his mouth; in his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation? For his life was taken from the earth.* This text the treasurer desired Philip to explain, asking him, whether the prophet spoke this of himself, or of some other person? Philip took this opportunity of preaching to him the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and clearly pointed out to him that not only the sense of the passage in question, but likewise several others in the ancient prophets, was fully accomplished in his person, and the transactions that had taken place during his stay on earth.

While Philip was expounding the doctrine of Christ to the Ethiopian, they happened to come to a piece of water by the road side; upon which the eunuch said, *See here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?* Philip said, *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.* And he answered and said, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.* On this the eunuch ordered

the chariot to stop, and both getting out and entering the water, Philip performed on him the ceremony of baptism. *And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus; and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cesarea.* Acts viii. 39, 40.

In the mean time Saul was very active in persecuting the believers of Christ in Jerusalem and its neighborhood; but such was his fiery zeal against the faithful, that he resolved to carry his cruelty and resentment still farther. He therefore applied to the Sanhedrim, and obtained a commission from that court to extend his persecution to Damascus, and to bring such believers as he might find in that city bound to Jerusalem.

Saul, pleased with the horrid power with which he was invested by the Sanhedrim, left Jerusalem, and prosecuted his journey towards Damascus, being fully resolved to execute his commission with the strictest severity. But it was the Divine will, in mercy to him as well as those he went to persecute, to frustrate his intentions. When he came near Damascus, a refulgent light, far exceeding the brightness of the sun, darted upon him, at which he was greatly amazed and confounded, falling, together with his horse, prostrate on the ground. This light was accompanied with a voice, in the Hebrew language, saying, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* To which Saul replied, *Who art thou, Lord?* He was immediately answered, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.* As if he had said, "All thy attempts to extirpate the faith in me will prove abortive, and, like kicking against the spikes, wound and torment thyself."

Saul was now sufficiently convinced of his folly in acting against Jesus, whom he was now assured to be the true Messiah. He therefore, trembling with fear, said, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* On which a voice replied, *Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.* Those who accompanied Saul were struck with fear and amazement, wondering that they should hear a voice, and yet see no man speak, whilst

Saul himself was so dazzled and overpowered by the light, that he quite lost his eye-sight. His companions, therefore, led him by the hand into the city of Damascus, where he continued three days totally blind, nor did he, in the whole time, take the least refreshment.

At this time there dwelt in the city a certain disciple, named Ananias, whom the Lord, in a vision, commanded to go and find out one Saul of Tarsus (then lodging at the house of one Judas, a Jew) and, by laying his hands on him, to remove his blindness. Ananias was startled at the name of the man, and, to excuse himself, alledged his violent persecutions of the church, and with what a wicked intent he was then come to Damascus. But to this the vision told him, that he was appointed, by the Divine Being, to be a powerful instrument in the propagation of the Gospel, both among the Jews and Gentiles, and that, how much soever he had persecuted Christianity heretofore, he was now to become a zealous defender of it, and even to die in testimony of its truth.

Encouraged with this assurance, Ananias repaired to the house where Saul was, and, laying his hands on him, delivered a message to this effect: "That the Lord Jesus, who had appeared to him in his journey, had sent him not only to restore his eye-sight, but likewise to bestow upon him the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, such as might qualify him for the ministry to which he was then appointed." No sooner had Ananias finished his speech, than thick films, like scales, fell from Saul's eyes, and he received his sight; immediately after which he was baptized, and continued some days with the disciples at Damascus, preaching in the synagogues, and proving that Jesus was the Messiah.

After staying some time at Damascus, Saul retired into the neighboring parts of Arabia Petrea, where he first planted the Gospel; and, in the beginning of the next year, returned to Damascus. Here he applied, with the utmost assiduity, to the great work of the ministry, preaching Christ daily in the synagogues, and confuting all those who argued against his doctrine. He was, indeed, remarkably zealous in his preaching, and blessed with a very extraordinary method of reasoning, whereby

he undeniably proved the fundamental points of Christianity. This irritated the Jews to the highest degree; and at length, after about three years continuance in the city, they found means to prevail on the governor of Damascus to have him apprehended, and confined. But they knew it would be difficult to take him, as he had so many friends in the city; they therefore kept themselves in continual watch, searching all the houses where they thought he might conceal himself, and likewise obtained a guard from the governor, to attend the different gates of the city, in order to prevent his escape. In this distress his Christian friends were far from deserting him; they tried every method that offered to procure his escape; but finding it impossible for him to pass through either of the gates of the city, they let him down from one of their houses in a basket over the wall, by which means the cruel designs of his enemies were rendered abortive.

Saul, having thus escaped from his malicious persecutors in Damascus, repaired to Jerusalem, where, at first, he was but coolly received among many of the disciples. They were not insensible of his former conduct, and were therefore doubtful of the sincerity of his heart, till at length Barnabas, who was privy to the circumstances that had attended him both before and after his conversion, introduced him to the apostles, and, having clearly related to them every particular that had passed, they admitted him into their communion. He continued some time at Jerusalem, during which he preached with great boldness to the people; and his sermons were so powerful, and disputations with his opponents so unanswerable, that they, like the Jews at Damascus, formed designs against his life. But as soon as this was known to the brethren, they conducted him to Cesarea, from whence he set sail to his own city Tarsus, and continued, for some years, preaching the Gospel with great success in various parts of Cilicia and Syria.

The church, at this time, was free from persecution, and flourished exceedingly; upon which Peter took the opportunity of making a general visitation to all the reformed places in Judea, Galilee and Samaria. In his progress he arrived at a town called Lydda, where he

cured one Æneas of a paralytic disorder, which had confined him to his bed for eight years; and from this miracle all the inhabitants of Lydda (as well as a neighboring town called Saron) were prevailed on to embrace the doctrine of Christ. From Lydda he was entreated by two messengers to go over to Joppa, a noted port about six miles distant, on account of one Tabitha, a Christian woman, venerable for her piety and diffusive charity, who was lately dead. Peter complied with the request of the messengers, and immediately accompanied them to Joppa. On his arrival at the house he found the body in an upper chamber ready prepared for interment, and surrounded by a number of mournful widows, who shewed him the coats and garments wherewith she had clothed them, the monuments of her liberality. They durst not, however, request him to raise her from the dead, but by their tears, and great commendations of her charity, sufficiently testified their wishes that he would do it. Peter was not insensible of their meaning, and was willing to grant what he knew would give them general satisfaction. Having, therefore, ordered them to withdraw, he first knelt down, and prayed for some time, with great fervency; after which, turning himself to the body, he said, *Tabitha, arise*. Upon this, the good woman instantly opened her eyes, and Peter, taking her by the hand, raised her up, and presented her alive to her friends and relations. This miracle gained Peter a prodigious number of converts, and encouraged him, for a considerable time, to continue his abode at Joppa, during which he resided in the house of one Simon a Tanner.

During his stay at Joppa, he one day retired to the top of the house, about noon, to pray. After he had finished his devotions he found himself hungry, and called for meat; but, while the people were preparing his dinner, he fell asleep, and beheld, in a vision, a large sheet, or tablecloth, let down, as it were, by the four corners from heaven, wherein were creatures of all kinds, clean and unclean; and, at the same time a voice said to him, *Arise, Peter, kill and eat*. But the apostle, being tenacious of the rites and institutions of the Mosaic law, declared his aversion to such a proceeding; upon which the voice re-

joined, that what God had pronounced clean, he ought by no means to account common or unclean. This representation was made to him three several times, after which the sheet was taken up, and the vision disappeared.

When Peter awoke he could not help seriously reflecting on the vision he had beheld; and while he was wondering within himself what might be the event, he was interrupted by three messengers, who, knocking at the gate, desired to speak with him. They were accordingly admitted, and as soon as they saw Peter they acquainted him with their business, which was to the following purport: "That Cornelius, a Roman, captain of a
" company in the Italian Legion,* then at Cesarea, a
" person of eminent virtue, piety and charity, had, by an
" immediate command from God, sent to him, begging
" that he would return with them to give him some in-
" structions on so important and singular an occasion." Peter detained the messengers that night; but the next day he set out with them, accompanied by some of his brethren, and the day following arrived at Cesarea.

Cornelius, being in expectation of his coming, had invited his friends and relations to his house, and as soon as Peter entered, he fell down at his feet to worship him; but the apostle, rejecting that honor as being due to God alone, raised him up, and then told the company, "That
" though they must know it was not lawful for a Jew to
" converse (more especially on the duties of religion) with

* The Cohort of the Romans, which we call band, was a body of infantry, consisting of five hundred men, ten of which bands made a legion; and the manner in which the Romans distinguished and denominated their bands and legions was very various. Sometimes it was from the order of places, and so they were called the first or second band, according to their rank and precedency; Sometimes from the commanders they were under, as the Augustan and Claudian band, &c. because persons of that name did lead them; Sometimes from their own behavior, as the Vietrix, the Ferrea, the conquering, the iron band, &c. by reason of the great valor, which, in some sharp engagements, these had shewn; Sometimes from the countries they were chiefly quartered in, as the German and Pannonian band, &c. and sometimes from the parts from whence they were gathered, as this of Cornelius, is called the Italian band, because it was raised out of that country, and was a body of forces well known for their gallantry and great exploits, among the writers of the Roman history.

“ those of another nation ; yet, since God had taught him
“ to make no distinction, he very readily attended their
“ pleasure, and desired to know the occasion of their send-
“ ing for him.”

The reply Cornelius made in answer to this was to the following effect: “ Four days ago, being fervently em-
“ ployed in the duties of fasting and prayer, an angel
“ from the courts of heaven appeared to me, declaring that
“ my prayers and alms were come up as a memorial before
“ the throne of the Most High ; and at the same time or-
“ dered me to send to Joppa for one Simon Peter, who
“ lodged in the house of a Tanner near the sea side, and
“ would give me farther information in the mysteries of
“ salvation. Accordingly I made no hesitation to obey
“ the heavenly messenger ; I sent immediately for thee,
“ and now thou art come, and we are met together, I
“ desire to hear what instructions thou hast to communi-
“ cate.”

From this relation of the Roman officer Peter delivered a discourse to the assembly, which he began by declaring,
“ that he perceived plainly God had made no distinction
“ of persons and people, but that the pious and godly of
“ all nations, were to meet with acceptance. He told them,
“ that peace and reconciliation between God and man was
“ a doctrine published by the prophets of old, and, of
“ late, since the time of John the Baptist, preached
“ through Galilee and Judea ; that of this peace Jesus of
“ Nazareth was the only Mediator between God and
“ Man, as appeared by the Divine powers and graces
“ wherewith he was invested, and which he constantly
“ exercised in doing good to mankind ; that of his life and
“ actions, more especially of his Crucifixion by the Jews,
“ and resurrection from the dead, of his appearing to his
“ disciples, and even eating and drinking with them after
“ his resurrection, he and the rest of the apostles were
“ chosen *witnesses* ; that from him they had received, be-
“ fore his ascension, a command and commission to pub-
“ lish to all nations, that he was the person, whom God
“ had ordained to be the Great Judge of the world ; that
“ all the prophets, with one consent, bore witness of him ;

“and that whoever believed in his name would certainly receive the remission of sins.”

While Peter was thus speaking, the Holy Ghost came down upon the whole audience, and inspired them with gifts and graces, fitting them for several conditions in the church. The Jews who accompanied Peter, were greatly astonished to see that the gifts of the Holy Ghost were poured upon the Gentiles; which being observed by Peter, he told them he knew no reason why those persons should not be baptized (having received the Holy Ghost) as well as they. He accordingly gave orders that they should be baptized, which being done, he staid with them several days, in order to confirm them in the Holy Faith they had so happily and earnestly embraced.

The conduct of Peter on this occasion was considered in various lights by the brethren at Jerusalem, who being but lately converted to the Christian Faith, were zealously attached to the religious ceremonies of the Mosaic institution, and therefore most of them severely charged Peter, on his return to Jerusalem, as being too familiar with the Gentiles. How powerful is the prejudice of education! The Jews had, for many ages, conceived an inveterate hatred to the Gentiles, considering them as persons not approved of by the Almighty, who had chosen the Jews for his peculiar people. The law of Moses, indeed, enjoined them to be kind to their own nation, in preference to all others; and the rites and institutions of their religion, and the peculiar form of their commonwealth, rendered them very different from the inhabitants of other countries; a separation which in after ages they contracted into a much narrower compass. They were also tenaciously proud of their external privileges in being the descendants of Abraham; and therefore looked upon the rest of the world as reprobates, refusing to hold any conversation with them, or even to treat them with common civility.

It is therefore no wonder that they were highly displeased with Peter; nor would he, in all probability, have been able to have defended his conduct in a satisfactory manner, had he not been charged with a peculiar commission from God for extending the privileges of the

Gospel to the Gentile world. To satisfy them, however, of the propriety of his conduct, he first gave them a plain and minute narrative of the whole affair, together with the occasion of it; and then took occasion from the whole, to draw this inference: "That, since God had been pleased to bestow on these Gentiles the same privileges, and marks of conversion, that he had done on his select disciples, it would have been direct disobedience in him to the Divine will, had he denied them admission into the church, or refused them his instructions and conversation."

From this representation the whole audience were perfectly satisfied; and their displeasure against Peter was turned into praise and thanksgiving to God, for having communicated the same mercy to the Gentiles as he had done to the Jews; namely, *repentance unto life eternal*.

CHAP. III.

Barnabas and Saul preach with great success at Antioch. Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great, persecutes the Christians, and orders James (the brother of John) to be put to death. He casts Peter into prison, from whence he is miraculously released by an angel. The miserable death of Agrippa. Saul and Barnabas preach the Gospel in Cyprus, where they convert the governor; and Saul changes his name to that of Paul. They go from Cyprus to Perga, Pisidia, and Lystra. At the latter place Paul cures a lame man, from which incident he and Barnabas are reputed as Gods. Paul is stoned, but revives and returns to Antioch. He and Barnabas go from thence to Jerusalem, in order to settle a matter of controversy relative to circumcision. They return to Antioch, where he reproves Peter for the impropriety of his conduct. Paul and Barnabas disagree, part, and go different ways.

AFTER the general dispersion which took place in consequence of the martyrdom of Stephen, and the persecutions that followed, some disciples, who were

born in Cyprus and Cyrene,* having travelled through several countries, and hitherto preached to the Jews only, at length came to Antioch,† where hearing of the conversion of Cornelius, and others, they applied themselves to the Greeks, who lived in that city, and, by the blessing of God, daily made great numbers of converts. Intimation of this being given to the apostles at Jerusalem, they dispatched one Barnabas, a pious man, and endued with many excellent gifts, to assist the disciples, and confirm the believers in that city.

The success of the Gospel in so large a place as Antioch, gave great satisfaction to Barnabas, who, after continuing there some time, and exhorting the people to hold fast the possession of that faith they had newly embraced, departed from thence to Tarsus, in order to find out Saul, whom he considered, from the fame he had heard of him, as a necessary person to assist him in facilitating the farther promulgation of the Gospel. Having found out Saul, he returned with him, in a short time, to Antioch, where, for the space of a whole year, they daily resorted to the most public places, preaching and expounding the doctrine of their Great Master; by means of which they soon gained over such a prodigious number of converts,

* This was a city of great note, and once of such power, as to contend with Carthage for some pre-eminences. It stood on the western parts of Lybia, (properly so called) and, as it was the principal city, it sometimes gave the name of Cyrenaica to the whole country, which by the sacred writer is paraphrastically called Lybia about Cyrene, Acts ii. 10. The city itself is famous in Holy Writ for being the birth-place of that Simon, whom the Jews compelled to bear our Saviour's Cross.

† This Antioch, (to distinguish it from sixteen other cities, which, in Syria, and other countries, bore that name) was frequently called Antiochia Epidaphne, from its neighborhood to Daphne, a village where the Temple of Daphne stood. It was built, as some say, by Antiochus Epiphanes; as others, by Seleneus Nicanor, the first king of Syria after Alexander the Great, in memory of his father Antiochus, and was, after that, the royal seat of the kings of Syria. In the flourishing times of the Roman empire it was the ordinary residence of the prefect, or governor of the eastern provinces, and was also honored with the residence of many of the Roman emperors, especially of Verus and Valens, who spent here the greatest part of their time. As to its situation, it lay on both sides the river Orontes, about twelve miles distant from the Mediterranean Sea; was, in

that in this city the disciples of Jesus were first distinguished by the honorable name of Christians.*

The extensive circulation of the Gospel at Antioch opened an intercourse between the Christians of that city and those of Jerusalem. Many people resorted from the latter place to the former, and among them was one person named Agabus, who foretold, that there would shortly be a great famine in many parts of the Roman empire, which accordingly happened in the fourth year of the reign of the emperor Claudius. In consequence of this prophecy, the Christians of Antioch determined to make a collection for their brethren in Judea, which, on the approach of the dearth, they accordingly did, and sent it to the elders at Jerusalem by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

About this time Herod Agrippa (the grandson of Herod the Great) in order to ingratiate himself with the heads of the obstinate Jews, raised a most violent persecution against the Christians, in the commencement of which he ordered James, the son of Zebedee (and brother of John) commonly called *the Great*,† to be put to death. Finding this cruel act was acceptable to the chief priests and rulers, he resolved to extend his cruelty

former times, adorned with many sumptuous palaces and stately temples, and both by Nature and Art fortified even to admiration; but, being taken by the Saracens, and afterwards by the Turks, it began to grow into decay, and has ever since been in a desolate and ruinous condition.

* Before this they were called among themselves *brethren, saints, disciples, believers*, and those that called on the name of Christ; and among their enemies, *Galileans, Nazarenes, and men of the sect*: but now by the conversion of so many heathens, both in Cesarea and Antioch, the believing Jews and Gentiles being all made one church, this new name was given them, as being more expressive of their common relation to Christ, their great Lord and Master.

† He is commonly called *the Great* to distinguish him from another of the same name, who was bishop of Jerusalem, and called *the Less*. He had his first instruction, together with John, from the Baptist; but how he disposed of himself after our Lord's ascension does not appear. That he was very zealous and industrious in propagating the Gospel, appears evident from Herod's making choice of him for the first sacrifice (after the death of Stephen) to the fury of the people.

to Peter. He accordingly caused him to be apprehended and put into prison, designing, immediately after the Feast of the Passover, to bring him forth to the Jews, and, if they desired it, to have him executed. But the Christians were incessant in their prayers to God for his safety; nor were their prayers and solicitations in vain. Herod was persuaded in his own mind, that he should soon accomplish his design, and sacrifice Peter to the insatiable cruelty of the Jews. But the night before this intended execution, a messenger from the courts of heaven visited the gloomy horrors of the dungeon, where he found Peter asleep between two of his keepers. The angel raised him up, and taking off his chains, ordered him to gird on his garments, and follow him. Peter obeyed, and having passed through the first and second watch, they came to the iron gate leading to the city, which opened to them of its own accord. The angel also accompanied him through one of the streets, and then departed. On this Peter (who had hitherto been confused, thinking all that had passed was no more than a dream) came to himself, and perceived that it was no vision, but that his great and beloved Master had really sent a messenger from above, and released him from prison. He therefore repaired to the house of Mary, the mother of John, surnamed Mark, where several disciples were met together, and sending up their prayers to heaven for his deliverance. As he stood knocking without, a maid-servant of the house, named Rhoda, knowing his voice, ran in, and acquainted the company that Peter was at the door. At first they would not pay any attention to what she said; but on her persisting in the truth of what she asserted, they concluded that it must have been his angel. Their doubts, however, were soon removed by the entrance of Peter, at the sight of whom they were all greatly astonished. Peter, beckoning them to hold their peace, related the whole particulars of his miraculous escape from prison, and, after ordering them to acquaint James, and the other brethren, with this good news, withdrew himself to a place of more retirement and security.

Early the next morning the officers went from Herod to the prison, with orders to bring Peter out to the people, who were gathered together to behold his execution. But when they came to the prison, they were informed by the keepers that Peter had made his escape. The officers immediately returned with this intelligence to Herod, who was so irritated at his being disappointed in his wicked design, that he commanded the keepers to be put to death, as supposing them accessory to his escape; after which he left Jerusalem, and retired to Cesarea.

While Herod was in Cesarea a misunderstanding took place between him and the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, against whom he was about to declare war. But they, dreading his power, (and knowing that in this time of scarcity their country was in a great measure dependent on Herod's dominions for its support) sent ambassadors to Blastus, Herod's chamberlain, requesting him to intercede in their behalf, and, if possible, to bring about an accommodation. Though Herod was highly displeased with them, yet he so far listened to his chamberlain as to appoint a day for holding a public conference with the ambassadors; at which time, being dressed in his royal robes, and seated on a throne, he made a long harangue on the occasion. The fawning multitude, thinking to ingratiate themselves in his favor, and please the tyrant's pride with flattering applause, shouted out, *It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.* This gratified the pride of Herod, who, assuming to himself that praise which belonged only to God, was instantly struck by an angel with a mortification in his bowels, which, in a short time, put a period to his existence.

The tyrant Herod being thus removed, the Gospel greatly flourished and increased, new converts daily thronging to be admitted to the faith.

About this time Barnabas and Saul, having discharged their trust in disposing of the contributions raised in Antioch for the benefit of the Christians in Jerusalem and Judea, returned to that city, taking with them John, sur-

named Mark,* a person well calculated to assist them in the propagation of the Gospel.

Barnabas and Saul had not been long returned to Antioch, when God, by some particular inspiration, gave them to understand, that he had appointed them to carry his word into other places. This was likewise revealed to the members of the church then at Antioch, who, in consequence thereof, betook themselves to fasting and prayer; and Simeon, Lucius, and Manaen, (all of whom were endued with the spirit of prophecy) having laid their hands on them, sent them away, to preach the Gospel wherever they might be directed by Divine inspiration.

On their departure from Antioch they went first to Seleucia,† from whence they took shipping for Cyprus, and began their ministerial office in the city of Salamis,‡ where they preached in the synagogues, and employed Mark, who was of their company, in several offices of the church which they could not conveniently attend themselves.

From Salamis they proceeded to Paphos,§ the residence of Sergius Paulus, the pro-consul, or governor of

* This person, who is sometimes called John-Mark, and at other times simply Mark, or John, is very frequently confounded with the Evangelist St. Mark. He was a cousin and disciple of Barnabas, and the son of a Christian woman called Mary, at whose house in Jerusalem the apostles and disciples often assembled.

† This city lay on the west, or rather a little north-west of the city of Antioch, upon the Mediterranean sea, and was so called from Seleucus its founder.

‡ This was once a famous city in the isle of Cyprus, opposite to Seleucia, on the Syrian coast; and, as it was the first place in these parts where the Gospel was preached, it was, in the primitive times, made the See of the Primate, or Metropolitan of the whole island. In the reign of the emperor Trajan, it was destroyed by the Jews, and re-built, but, after that, being in the time of Herodius, sacked, and razed to the ground by the Saracens, it never recovered its former splendor, though out of its ruins is said to have arisen Famagusta, which was the chief place of the isle, when the Turks took it from the Venetians, in the year 1570.

§ Paphos was another city of Cyprus, lying on the western (as Salamis did on the eastern) track of the island. It was once famous for having in it a celebrated temple dedicated to Venus, who, from thence, is called, by antient writers, the Paphian Queen.

the island, a man of great wisdom and prudence, but unhappily seduced by the wicked artifices of Bar-jesus, an impostor, who stiled himself Elymas, or the magician. The governor being informed of the doctrine preached by Saul and Barnabas was desirous of hearing it, and therefore sent to them for that purpose. They accordingly attended, but while Saul was delivering a discourse to him and the company present, the sorcerer (who stood by the pro-consul) used all the arguments he could to prevent his being converted to the faith. This being observed by Saul, he turned himself to the sorcerer, and severely chastised him in words to this effect: "O thou vile sorcerer! Like the devil, by whom thou workest, thou art an enemy to all goodness. Wilt thou persist in sorcery, in defiance of the faith of Christ, which comes armed with a much greater power of miracles than those to which thou falsely pretendest? Thou shalt soon feel the vengeance of heaven; for thou that per-versely holdest out against the light of the Gospel, shalt lose thy sight, which, by the power of God, shall, for a time, be taken from thee." No sooner had Saul uttered these words than the sorcerer was struck blind, and implored some of the company to conduct him to his habitation. This miracle convinced the pro-consul of the truth of the doctrine he had heard, and he immediately became a convert to the faith. And from this event it is supposed, by some, that Saul changed his name to that of Paul,* which he ever after retained.

* It is very observable, that, all along, before this circumstance of the Apostle's life, St. Luke calls him by the name of Saul, but ever after by that of Paul. From hence some imagine, that he assumed that name to himself, in memory of his converting of Sergius Paulus; just as the ancient Roman generals were accustomed to adopt the names of the provinces which they conquered. St. Austin, more than once, asserts, that he took it from a principle of humility, by a small variation changing his former name (whereby a proud haughty king of Israel was called) into that of Paulus, which signifies *little*; and that, in conformity to this, he calls himself *less than the least of the apostles*. But the most rational account of the matter seems to be that of Origen, viz. that he, being of Jewish parentage, and born in Tarsus, a Roman city, had, at his circumcision, two names given him, Saul, a Jewish, and Paul, a Roman name, and

After staying some time in the island of Cyprus, Paul and his companions went to Perga in Pamphylia,* where Mark (not chusing any longer to prosecute so wandering a course of life) took his leave, and returned to Jerusalem.

From Perga they went to Antioch in Pisidia,† where, going into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, they sat themselves down to hear the performance of divine worship. After the lessons, one out of the law, and the other out of the prophets (it being the custom for the Jewish doctors to expound some part of the scripture for the instruction of the people) the chief persons of the assembly sent to Paul and his companions, to know whether either of them would preach a sermon of exhortation to the audience. This was an offer highly satisfactory to Paul, who, after intimating his acceptance of it, arose, and delivered a discourse to the people in words to this effect:

“Hearken, all ye descendants of Jacob, and ye that fear the Almighty, to the words of my mouth. The God of Israel made choice of our fathers, and loved them, when they had no city of their own to dwell in, but were strangers and slaves in Egypt, bringing them from thence with a mighty hand, and a stretched-out arm; fed them in the wilderness forty years, and would not suffer his anger to rise against them, though they often provoked him in the desert. On their arrival in the land he promised their fathers, he destroyed the nations that inhabited it, and placed them in that fruitful country; dividing it to them by lot.

“When they were settled in the land, he gave them judges during four hundred and fifty years, till Samuel the prophet. But on their desiring a king, he placed over them Saul the son of Cis, a Benjamite, who reigned about forty years. After his death he placed David on the throne of Israel, giving him this testimony, *I have found David the Son of Jesse, a man after mine own*

that when he preached to the Jews, he was called by his Jewish, and when to the Gentiles (as he did chiefly after this time) by his Roman name.

* Pamphylia was a province of the Lesser Asia, not far from Cyprus.

† This lay a little to the north of Pamphylia.

heart, which shall fulfil all my will. And according to his promise the Almighty hath raised up to the sons of David a Saviour Jesus, *which is Christ the Lord*; the Baptism of repentance having been preached before his coming by John. And as his fore-runner executed his office, he asked his followers, *whom think ye that I am?* You must not mistake me for the Messiah; he will soon follow me; but I am not worthy to perform the meanest office for him.

“To you, therefore, ye descendants of Abraham, and all others who fear the Almighty, *is this word of salvation sent.* For the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and rulers of Israel, being ignorant of him, and the voices of the prophets, though read every sabbath in their synagogues, fulfilled their predictions by condemning the immaculate son of the Most High. They found, indeed, no fault in him, though they earnestly desired Pilate that he might be slain.

“When every thing that had been written by the prophets concerning him was fulfilled, they took him from the tree, and deposited his body in the chambers of the grave. But death had no power to detain him: his Almighty Father raised him from the habitations of the dead. After which, he was seen during many days by his disciples who attended him from Galilee, and were the witnesses chosen by Omnipotence, of these great and miraculous works. And we now declare unto you glad tidings, namely, That the promise made by the Almighty to our forefathers, he hath performed to us their children by raising Jesus from the dead. The prophet David also said, *Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.* He also foretold, that he should return from the chambers of the dust, and no more be subject to corruption: *I will give you, (said he) the sure mercies of David.* And again, *Thou shalt not suffer thine holy one to see corruption.* Now this prophecy must relate to the Messiah, for David himself, after he had swayed the sceptre of Israel a certain time, died, was deposited in the chambers of the grave, and his flesh saw corruption; but the great son of David, whom the Almighty raised from the dead, never saw corruption.

“ Be it therefore known unto you, men and brethren, that through this Saviour is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. It is by his merits we are justified from all things, which was impossible by the law of Moses. Be careful, therefore, lest what was foretold by the prophets come upon you, *Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.*”

This discourse was so well received by great numbers of the people, that when they got out of the synagogue, they besought Paul that he would deliver it again on the next sabbath. Paul promised to comply with their request, which he accordingly did, and on that day almost all the inhabitants of the city flocked to hear him. This irritated such of the Jews as were strong enemies to the Gospel: nor could they refrain from shewing their malice on the occasion. They several times not only interrupted, but peremptorily contradicted Paul while he was preaching, and at length uttered many blasphemous expressions against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. But their opposition could not daunt the apostles, who boldly answered them as follows: *It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.*

When the Gentiles heard this, they were greatly rejoiced, and glorified the name of God for his beneficent mercy revealed in the Gospel; and all who had any care or thought of the life to come immediately embraced the doctrine of Christ. This increased the malice and fury of the Jews, who, by false and artful insinuations, prevailed on some of the more bigotted and honorable women to bring over their husbands to their party: the consequence of this was, that Paul and Barnabas were driven out of the city, on leaving which they shook the dust off their feet, in testimony of the sense they had of the ingratitude and infidelity of their oppressors.

From Antioch Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium,* where they entered into the synagogue of the Jews, and, according to their usual custom, preached to the people; the consequence of which was, that many, both Jews and Greeks, became proselytes to the Christian religion. From this success the two apostles continued some time at Iconium, during which the number of converts daily increased, and to confirm them in the faith, God added his testimony to their preaching, by enabling them to work miracles. But though they had gained a considerable number of inhabitants to the faith, yet there were many who continued in their infidelity: the whole leaven of Jewish malice began again to shew itself, and the unbelieving Jews, having stirred up the Gentiles against the apostles, at length prevailed on the multitude to stone them. But the apostles, having timely notice of their design, fled from the city to Lystra and Derbe, (two other cities in the province of Lycaonia) where they preached the Gospel to the inhabitants, as also to those who dwelt in the countries adjoining.

While they were at Lystra a happy circumstance occurred both for the promulgation of the Gospel, and the conversion of a people who had greatly been devoted to paganism. As Paul was one day preaching to the multitude, he saw amongst them a man who had been lame from his mother's womb, and had never walked. From the earnest attention which the cripple gave to the

* This was the chief city of Lycaonia, a small province of Asia Minor, lying on the north-east of Pisidia, and bounded on the south by Pamphylia and Cilicia. It is said, by Strabo, to have been well built, and situated in the richest part of the province. This is confirmed by that celebrated modern historian and geographer, Mr Middleton, who says, "Iconium is situated in the ancient Lycaonia, in a fertile plain, near a fine large lake of fresh water, which was anciently called Palus Toogilis. The city is surrounded by strong walls, adorned with towers, and the whole is enclosed by a broad and deep ditch. The Turks only inhabit the city. The Greeks, Armenians and Jews dwell in the suburbs, which are exceeding spacious. The city is defended by a small castle, and in it are several mosques, with some spacious caravanseras (or places of entertainment) for the accommodation of such caravans and travellers as pass through the town."

discourse, Paul (who had, for some time, taken particular notice of him) perceived that he had faith, and therefore thought proper to add the cure of his body to that of his soul, knowing that it would not only be beneficial to him, but would likewise confirm the faith of all those who should believe in his doctrine. And that the miracle might be wrought in the most conspicuous manner, Paul, in the midst of the congregation, said, in an audible voice, to the man, *Stand upright on thy feet; which words were no sooner pronounced than he arose, and leaped and walked.*

The people who beheld this miracle well knew that it could not be wrought by any human power; but having been initiated in the superstitious customs of the heathens, they cried out, *The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.* Accordingly they called Barnabas Jupiter, on account of his venerable gravity, and Paul they named Mercurius, *because he was the chief speaker.*

It was not long before the fame of this miracle was spread throughout the city, in consequence of which almost all the inhabitants gathered themselves together, and, preceded by the priest of Jupiter, and oxen dressed in garlands, went to the house where the apostles resided, intending to offer sacrifice before them. But as soon as Paul and Barnabas understood their intentions, they were greatly affected at their superstitious design; and renting their clothes to express their grief and abhorrence of the action, ran out to the multitude, whom Paul addressed in words to this effect: “Ye men of Lystra, ye
 “ are mistaken in the object of your worship; for though
 “ we have done many miraeles in the name, and by the
 “ power of Christ, yet we are no more than men, and
 “ subject to the same passions with yourselves, and
 “ preach unto you the glad tidings of salvation, that ye
 “ may forsake the vanities of this world, and return to the
 “ living God, who created the heaven and the earth, the
 “ sea, and all the creatures they contain. This Omnipotent Being suffered all nations formerly to walk in their
 “ own ways, though he never left himself without witness,
 “ doing the greatest good to the children of men; it is He
 “ that sendeth rain from heaven, and crowneth the year

“with fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with joy and
“gladness.”

This argument had the desired effect, the people, (though with some difficulty) being persuaded to lay aside their idolatrous intentions. And surely no argument could be more properly adapted to answer the wishes of the inspired preacher. Is it possible that any human being can survey the several parts of the creation, and not discover, in every place, evident traces of an infinite wisdom, power and goodness? Who can survey universal nature, and not at once see and admire its great Author, who has disposed of all created things with such order and regularity, as to display, in the clearest manner, his own power and glory? Behold the sun! how justly is that source of light and heat placed in the centre of the planetary choir, that each may enjoy its destined share of its prolific beams; so that the earth is not burnt by a too near approach, nor chilled by the northern blasts from too great a recess, but impregnated with fruits and flowers, by the happy influence of a vital heat, and crowned with luxuriant plenty by the benign influences of the season. Who can contemplate the wonderful properties of the air, and not reflect on the Divine wisdom that formed it? If we survey the earth, we there discover the footsteps of an Almighty Being, who hath filled it with a great variety of admirable and useful creatures, all of which are maintained by the bounty of his hand. It is he that clothes the grass with a delightful verdure, that *crowns the year with his loving kindness*, and causes the *vallies to stand thick with corn*. It is he that *maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, and herbs for the service of man*. He adorns the lilies of the field that neither toil nor spin, with a glory that excels the pomp and grandeur of Solomon's court. *He shut up the sea with doors*, and said, *Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed*. It is the Almighty Being that arrests the storm, and smooths the tempestuous billows of the deep; that delivereth the mariner from all his troubles, and bringeth his ship into the desired haven of safety. How reasonable, therefore, is it that we should worship and adore this Omnipotent,

this kind Creator, and not transfer the honors due to him alone to frail mortals, much less to dumb idols, the work of men's hands!

After Paul had performed the miracle on the lame man, he and Barnabas continued to persevere in the execution of their important commission, declaring, wherever they went, the glad tidings of salvation to all who believed in the doctrine of Christ. But the malice of their enemies still pursued them: some inveterate Jews, who had come from Antioch and Iconium, so exasperated and stirred up the multitude against them, that they took Paul, whom, just before, they would have adored, and stoned him; after which they dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. But when the disciples went to the place where he was (probably to inter his body) he rose up,* and went into the city for that night, and the next day departed, with Barnabas, to Derbe, where they preached the Gospel, and converted many to the faith.

They did not, however, continue long at Derbe, but returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, confirming the Christians of those places in the faith, earnestly persuading them to persevere, and not to be discouraged at those troubles and persecutions which they must expect would attend the profession of the Gospel. And that the affairs of the church might be conducted with more regularity, they ordained elders and pastors, to teach, instruct, and watch over them; having done which, they left them to the protection of the Almighty, to whose care they recommended them by prayer and fasting.

From Antioch they passed through Pisidia, and from thence went to Pamphylia; and, having preached to the people at Perga, they went down to Attalia, and return-

* This circumstance strongly confirmed the faith of his new converts, who all supposed that he was dead. His recovery must have evidently appeared miraculous, approaching, as near as can be conceived, to a *resurrection from the dead*. That it arose from a superior power was undeniably demonstrable, by his going the next day to Derbe, which was a considerable distance, and which he could not have done without the interposition of Divine Providence, because, in the common course of nature, he would more sensibly have felt his bruises than when he first received them.

ed, by sea, to Antioch in Syria, from whence they had set out on this holy expedition. On their arrival here, they immediately assembled the church together, and, having given an account of their success, what miracles God had wrought by their hands, and a large *door of faith*, he, by their ministry, had opened to the Gentiles, they suspended their farther travels for the present, and, for a considerable time, took up their abode with the disciples in that city.

During their stay here, the church was greatly disturbed by means of some persons coming from Judea, who taught the people that there was no salvation without circumcision, and the observance of other legal ceremonies. This doctrine was strongly opposed by Paul and Barnabas; in consequence of which, after many conferences and disputations, it was at length proposed, that the decision of the matter should be referred to the general assembly of the apostles at Jerusalem. This the whole church readily agreed to; and having deputed Barnabas and Paul, together with some others, to go with the message, they conducted them part of the way, and the two apostles, in passing through Phœnicia and Samaria, took care to relate what success they had met with in the conversion of the Gentiles, to the great joy and comfort of all the brethren in those parts.

On their arrival at Jerusalem they were kindly received by the apostles and elders of the church, to whom, after reciting the great success they had met with in the propagation of the Gospel, they delivered the message on which they were sent. They told them, that when the Gentile proselytes, or others uncircumcised, came in to the faith, some Jewish converts, of the sect of the Pharisees, said, that such could not be admitted into the church of Christ without circumcision; that great disputes had arisen on this head, and that the matter was referred to the church at Jerusalem.

In consequence of this intelligence a council was immediately summoned to deliberate on the matter, and great disputes took place on the occasion. At length Peter, rising from his seat, addressed the audience in words to this effect: "It is well known to you all, that

“ some time since God made choice of me first to
 “ preach the Gospel to the Gentiles; and God, who
 “ knew the sincerity of their hearts, testified that they
 “ were acceptable to him and fit to be baptized, bestow-
 “ ing on them the gift of the Holy Ghost, as he had
 “ before upon us, making no difference between us and
 “ them. By this one act the matter is already sufficiently
 “ determined. Why, then, do ye press this thing so con-
 “ trary to the will of God? and why would ye wish to
 “ impose on the Gentile converts the performance of the
 “ Mosaic law, which belonged not to them, and which
 “ we Jews were so far from being able to perform, that
 “ our conduct could not be justified? It is from the
 “ Gospel that we expect salvation and justification,
 “ through faith and obedience to Christ, and not by an
 “ observation of the Mosaic law: from whence it is plain,
 “ that if the Gentiles believe, they have the same way to
 “ salvation as ourselves.”

When Peter had concluded his observations, Paul and Barnabas, in confirmation of what he had said, declared what miracles God had done by them in the conversion of the Gentiles, which, they said, was another argument and testimony from heaven, that no difference ought to be made between them and the Jews.

Upon this James (who was then bishop of Jerusalem and president of the council) stood up, and spoke to this effect: “ Men and brethren, Peter hath sufficiently de-
 “ monstrated that it was the will of God the Gentiles
 “ should, without scruple, have the Gospel preached to
 “ them, and be baptized. And this is agreeable to what
 “ hath been foretold by the old prophets, particularly
 “ Amos: *In the later days I will return, and will build
 “ again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down;
 “ and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set
 “ it up: That the residue of men might seek after the
 “ Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is
 “ called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.*
 “ Wherefore it is my conclusion and determination, that
 “ we should not compel those to be circumcised, who
 “ from Gentiles turn Christians, but content ourselves if
 “ they believe. We who are Jews need not fear that this

“ will bring a contempt upon Moses or the laws of the
“ Jews, since the contrary appears by the Christian
“ practice; for even where those proselytes of the Gen-
“ tiles are, the books of Moses are continued among
“ them, being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day,
“ to signify their respect to the law.”

The determination of the bishop of Jerusalem being unanimously agreed to, it was next resolved to send some proper persons with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, in order that they, having been present, might give a satisfactory account of the result of the apostles' embassy. They accordingly made choice of two, namely, Judas, surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, men of distinguished reputation, and well respected by all Christians. These, accompanied by Paul and Barnabas, proceeded to Antioch, taking with them a decree drawn up by the council, the substance of which was to this effect: “ The apostles,
“ bishops of Judea and the whole society of Christians in
“ Jerusalem, salute the church of the Gentiles which is in
“ Antioch, Syria and Cilicia. We having received an ac-
“ count, that some of the Judaizing Christians who went
“ from hence endeavored to subvert you, and lead you to
“ a groundless new doctrine of the necessity of all
“ Christians being circumcised, they having no instruc-
“ tions from us so to do. We have decreed in council to
“ send two of our own bishops to accompany Barnabas
“ and Paul, persons who have, in preaching the Gospel,
“ behaved themselves with all sincerity, and hazarded
“ their lives in the service of Christ. We have sent these
“ that they may tell you by word of mouth more at large
“ our determination relative to the business on which you
“ sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem. Having prayed
“ to God to send his Holy Spirit to abide among us, and
“ lead us to all truth, we have determined, that the Gen-
“ tile Christians shall not be obliged to circumcision, or
“ other Judaical observances, or to any more than those
“ few things that have among the Jews been required of
“ all proselytes; namely, that ye abstain from meats of-
“ fered to idols, and from blood, and from things
“ strangled, and from fornication; which things, if ye
“ shall observe, there will be no more of the Mosaic law

“required of you, particularly circumcision shall not.
“Farewel.”

With this decree they immediately repaired to Antioch, whither they had no sooner arrived, than the Christian converts, both Jews and Gentiles, assembled together in order to know the issue of their embassy. As soon as they were met, Paul and Barnabas presented to them the decretal epistle, which they caused to be read in the hearing of the whole congregation. The contents of the decree, which were ultimate, gave the highest satisfaction to the Gentile converts, who greatly rejoiced at finding themselves discharged from the burden of the law, and confirmed in their Christian liberty.

While Judas and Silas were at Antioch, (being both men of excellent gifts in the interpretation of the scriptures) they employed their time in confirming believers in the truth of Christianity, and, after a short stay, were, with all kindness and civility, dismissed by the church, in order to return to Jerusalem. But Silas, for some reasons, was unwilling to depart so soon, choosing rather to tarry with Paul and Barnabas. This he accordingly did, and those three, together with several others of the brethren, employed themselves in instructing such as had already received the Christian faith, and in preaching to others who had not yet embraced it.

Soon after the determination of the council at Jerusalem, Peter went from thence to Antioch, where using the liberty, which the Gospel had given him, he, for some time, conversed familiarly with the Gentile converts, eating with them, and living with them in the same manner they did. This he had been taught to do by the vision of the sheet let down from heaven; this had been lately decreed at Jerusalem; this he had before practised with regard to Cornelius and his family, and justified the action to the satisfaction of his brethren; this he had likewise done after his arrival at Antioch, till some Jewish Christians (still tenacious of the ceremonial law) coming thither from Jerusalem, Peter, fearful of offending or displeasing them, withdrew himself from the Gentiles, as if it had been unlawful for him to hold conversation with uncircumcised persons; notwithstanding he knew, and

was fully satisfied, that our Blessed Saviour had broken down the wall of partition between the Jew and Gentile.

Peter, by thus acting against the light of his own mind and judgment, condemned what he had approved, and destroyed the superstructure he had before erected: at the same time he confirmed the Jewish zealots in their gross errors, filled the minds of the Gentiles with scruples, and their consciences with fears.

Paul, who was not ignorant of what pernicious influence the example of so great an apostle might be (especially when he saw Barnabas carried away with the stream of his indiscretion) was greatly irritated at his conduct, and, in the presence of the whole church, severely rebuked him, for endeavoring to impose that yoke on the Gentiles, which he, though a Jew, thought himself at liberty to shake off.

A few days after this Paul and Barnabas resolved to leave Antioch, and visit those places in which they had some time before planted Christianity among the Gentiles. In this intended excursion Barnabas proposed taking with them John Mark; but the proposition was highly disapproved of by Paul, on account of Mark's having deserted them at Pamphylia. In consequence of this, a warm dispute took place between them, the issue of which was, that they determined to separate.* Accordingly, Barnabas, accompanied by Mary, went to Cyprus, which was his native country; and soon after Paul having chosen Silas for his companion, set out on his intended visitation of the several places, in which he had before propagated Christianity.

* From hence we may learn, not only, that these great lights in the Christian Church were men of the like passions with us, but that God, upon this occasion, did most eminentl. illustrate the wisdom of his providence, by rendering the frailties of two such eminent servants instrumental to the benefit of his church, since both of them thenceforward employed their extraordinary industry and zeal, singly and apart, which till then had been united, and confined to the same places.

CHAP. IV.

Paul travels through various countries, accompanied by Silas and Timothy. They go to Philippi, where Paul ejects a spirit of divination, for which he and Silas are first scourged, and then put in prison, but afterwards honorably dismissed. Paul meets with great opposition at Thessalonica, upon which he goes to Berea, and from thence to Athens, where he preaches and disputes with the people of that city. He goes from Athens to Corinth, from whence he writes his first epistle to the Thessalonians. Makes some converts, but is greatly opposed by the Jews. Writes his second epistle to the Thessalonians. Goes from Corinth to Ephesus, and, after staying there a short time, proceeds to Jerusalem, in order to celebrate the feast of the Passover. Returns from thence to Ephesus, where he baptizes several converts, confers on them the spirit of the Holy Ghost, and performs many astonishing miracles. Seven brothers, who are exorcists, attempt to imitate Paul, but are severely punished for their presumption. The travels of Peter, with the contents of his first Epistle to the converted Jews.

WHEN Paul left Antioch, after his separation from Barnabas, he and his companion Silas travelled over the provinces of Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches, and leaving with each a copy of the synodical decree, which, a short time before, had been passed by the council at Jerusalem. From these parts they sailed to Crete,* where Paul propagated the Gospel, and constituted Titus bishop and pastor of the island, leaving him to settle those

* This was one of the richest and best islands in the whole Mediterranean Sea. It is said, at one time, to have contained no less than an hundred considerable towns or cities, from whence it had the name of Hecatompolis. From the goodness of the soil, and temperature of the air, it was likewise stiled Macorios, or the Happy Island. At present it is commonly called Candia, from its principal town, which bears that name. It is situated opposite the mouth of the Ægean Sea, or Archipelago; and, while it continued in the hands of the Venetians, was an archbishop's see; great, rich and populous: but, since it came into the possession of the Turks (which was in the year 1669) it has lost all marks of its former grandeur.

affairs of the church, which time would not permit the apostle to do.

From Crete, Paul and Silas returned to Cilicia, and from thence went to Lystra. Here they met with a young man named Timothy, whose father was a Greek, but his mother a Jewish convert, by whom he had been brought up under all the advantages of a pious and religious education, especially with regard to the Holy Scriptures, which he had studied with the greatest assiduity and success. This person Paul designed as a companion of his travels, and a special instrument in the ministry of the Gospel. But knowing that his being uncircumcised would prove a stumbling-block to the Jews, he caused him to be circumcised; being willing, in lawful and indifferent matters, to conform himself to the tempers and dispositions of all, that he might thereby farther succeed in his ministry, and the sooner establish that doctrine he was sent to propagate.

After staying a short time at Lystra, they passed through Phrygia* and Galatia,† where the apostle Paul was entertained with the greatest kindness and veneration by the people, who looked upon him as an angel sent immediately from heaven. From hence he intended to have continued his progress through the proconsular Asia, but was prohibited from so doing by a particular revelation. In consequence of this he went to Mysia,‡ and after attempting in vain to go into Bithynia,§ proceeded to Troas,||

* Phrygia is a province of Asia Minor, having Bithynia to the north, Galatia to the east, Lycia to the south, and Mysia to the west. The inhabitants of this country (who are said to have been the inventors of augury and other kinds of divination) were anciently more superstitious than the other Asiatics, as appears from the rites which they used in the sacrifice of Cybele, and other heathen goddesses.

† Galatia is a province of Asia Minor, bounded on the west by Phrygia, on the east by the river Halys, on the north by Paphlagonia, and on the south by Lycaonia.

‡ Mysia is another small province of Asia Minor, bounded on the east by Phrygia, on the west by Troas, on the north by Bithynia, and on the south by the river Hermus.

§ Bithynia is likewise a region of Asia Minor, and received its name from one of its kings, named Bythinus; but in what age he reigned we are not informed.

|| Troas was a small country belonging to Phrygia Minor, and situated to the west of Mysia, upon the Hellespont. It took its name

where soon after his arrival he had a vision, commanding him to direct his course for Macedonia.* Paul made immediate preparations for obeying these orders, being fully assured it was the Lord who had called him to preach the Gospel in that country.

Paul and his companions, having embarked at Troas, sailed to the island of Samothracia,† and, the next day, landed at Neapolis,‡ a port in Macedonia, from whence they travelled to Philippi,§ a Roman colony, where they continued some days.

At a small distance from Philippi the Jews had a *proseuche*, or place of devotion, which was much frequented by the devout women of their religion, who met there to pray and hear the law. In this place Paul and his companions preached the glad tidings of the Gospel, and, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, made many converts. Among these was a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple in Philippi, but a native of Thyatira, whom they baptized, with her whole family; in return for which she invited them to lodge in her house during their abode in that city.

from its principal city, which was a sea-port, and situated about four miles from old Troy.

* This is a large province in Greece, and was anciently called Emmathia, but, from the kings of Macedon, it was afterwards called Macedonia, which name it has ever since retained.

† Samothracia is a small island in the Ægean Sea, lying to the west of Troas, opposite the coast of Thrace, from whence it received its name.

‡ Neapolis was a sea-port, and stood very near to Thrace. At first it belonged to that province, but was afterwards taken into Macedonia.

§ Philippi was one of the chief cities of Macedonia, lying to the west of Neapolis. It was originally called Dathos, but afterwards took its name from Philip, the famous king of Macedon, who repaired and beautified it. In process of time it became a Roman colony, and the inhabitants enjoyed the privileges of Roman citizens, and were governed by the Roman laws. These indulgences were conferred on them both by Julius and Augustus Cæsar, very probably, in memory of the two great battles that were fought in the plains adjacent, the first between Julius and Pompey the Great, and the second between Augustus and Mark Antony on the one side, and Cassius and Brutus on the other.

As Paul and his companions were one day going, as usual, to the before-mentioned place of devotion, they were met by a certain damsel, who was possessed with a spirit of divination, by means of which her masters acquired considerable advantage. This woman followed Paul and his companion, crying out, *These men are the servants of the Most High God, which shew us the way of salvation.* Paul, at first, took no notice of her, not being willing to multiply miracles without necessity. But when he saw her following them several days together, he began to be troubled; and therefore, in imitation of his great master, (who would not suffer the devil to acknowledge him, lest his false and lying tongue should prejudice the truth in the minds of men) commanded the spirit, in the name of Jesus, to come out of her. Accordingly the evil spirit obeyed, and at that instant left the damsel.

This miraculous cure proving a great loss to her masters, (who had acquired large sums from her soothsaying) they were vehemently incensed against the apostles. They therefore caused Paul and Silas to be apprehended and carried before the magistrates of the city, to whom they accused them of introducing many innovations, which were prejudicial to the state, and unlawful for them to comply with, as being Romans.

The magistrates, being concerned for the tranquility of the state, and fearful of all disturbances, were very forward to punish the offenders, against whom the multitude testified; and therefore they commanded the officers to strip them, and scourge them severely as seditious persons. This was accordingly done, after which they were committed to close custody, and the jailer, having received a strict charge to keep them in the utmost security, not only thrust them into the inner prison, but likewise made their feet fast to the stocks.

But neither the obscure dungeon, nor the pitchy mantle of the night, can intercept the beams of Divine joy and comfort from the souls of pious men. Their minds were all serenity; and at midnight they prayed, and sung praises to God so loud, that they were heard in every part of the prison. Nor were their prayers offered to the throne of grace in vain: an earthquake shook the foundations of

the prison, opened the doors, loosed the chains, and set the prisoners at liberty.

This convulsion of nature roused the jailor from his sleep; and concluding, from what he saw, that all his prisoners were escaped, he was going to put a period to his life, which being observed by Paul, he hastily called out, *Do thyself no harm, for we are all here.* The keeper was as much surprized at this as he had been before terrified at the thoughts of their escape; and calling for a light, he went immediately into the presence of Paul and Silas, fell down at their feet, took them from the dungeon, brought them to his own house, washed their stripes, and then besought them to instruct him in the knowledge of that God who was so mighty to save. Paul readily granted his request, telling him, that, if he believed in Jesus Christ, he and his whole house might be saved. Accordingly the jailor, with all his family, were, after a competent instruction, baptized, and received as members of the Christian church.—How happy a change does the doctrine of the Gospel make in the minds of men! How does it smooth the roughest tempers, and instil in their minds the sweetest principles of civility and good-nature! He, who but a few moments before tyrannized over Paul and Silas with the most cruel usage, now treated them with the greatest respect, and shewed them the highest marks of kindness.

Early the next morning the magistrates (either having heard what had happened, or reflecting on what they had done as too harsh and unjustifiable) sent their serjeant to the jailor, with orders immediately to discharge Paul and Silas. The jailor joyfully delivered the message, and bade them *depart in peace*; but Paul, in order to make the magistrates sensible what injury they had done them, and how unjustly they had punished them without examination or trial, refused to accept of their discharge, alledging, “that they were not only innocent persons, but denizens of Rome; that, as they had been illegally scourged and committed to prison, their delivery should be as public as was the injury, and attended with a solemn retraction of what they had done.”

The magistrates were greatly terrified at this message, well knowing how dangerous it was to provoke the formidable power of the Romans, who never suffered any free man to be beaten uncondemned. They therefore went to the prison, and very submissively entreated them to depart without any farther disturbance. This small recompence for the cruel usage they had received was accepted by the meek followers of the Blessed Jesus: they accordingly left the prison, and retired to the house of Lydia, in which were a great number of converts. To those they related all that had passed, and after some conference with them, they took their leave and departed.

From Philippi Paul and his companions travelled towards the west, till they arrived at Thessalonica,* the metropolis of Macedonia. Here Paul preached in the synagogues of the Jews three sabbath-days successively, proving, from the predictions of the Old Testament, that the Messiah was to suffer, and to rise again; and that the Blessed Jesus was the Messiah spoken of by the prophets. Some of his hearers, among whom were several women of rank and quality, believed, and were converted to the faith, but the greater part of the Jews disapproved of his doctrine.

During their stay at Thessalonica, they lodged in the house of a certain Christian named Jason, who entertained them very courteously. But the Jews, in general, were so incensed against them, that they would not suffer them to continue at rest. They refused to embrace the Gospel themselves, and therefore envied its success, and determined to oppose its progress. Accordingly they gathered together a great number of lewd and wicked people, who beset the house of Jason, intending to take Paul, and deliver him up to an incensed multitude. But in this they were disappointed, he, with his companions,

* Thessalonica was anciently called Thesma, from the sea to which it adjoins. It is the opinion of some that it received the latter name in memory of the victory which Philip king of Macedon obtained over the Thessalonians; but others think it took its name from Thessalonica, the wife of Cassander, and daughter of Philip. It is at present called Salonichi, has a safe harbor for the benefit of commerce, and is an archbishop's see of the Grecian church.

being removed from thence by the Christians, and concealed in some other part of the city. This disappointment increased their rage, and they determined to be revenged on Jason, who had concealed them. Accordingly they seized him, with some others of the brethren, and carried them before the magistrates of the city, accused them with disturbing the peace of the empire, and setting up Jesus as a king, in derogation of the emperor's dignity and authority. In consequence of this accusation both the people and magistrates became their enemies; and though Jason was only accused of harboring Paul and his companions, yet the magistrates could not be prevailed on to dismiss Jason and his brethren till they had given security for their future appearance.

As soon as the tumult was over, those Thessalonians who had been converted sent away Paul and his companions, by night, to Beræa, a city about fifty miles to the south of Thessalonica. Here also Paul's great love for his countrymen the Jews, and his earnest wishes for their salvation, excited him to preach to them in particular. Accordingly, he entered into their synagogue, and explained the Gospel to them, proving, from the scriptures of the Old Testament, the truth of the doctrine he advanced. The Jews here were of a more ingenuous and candid temper than those of Thessalonica; and as they heard him, with great reverence and attention, expound the scriptures, so they searched diligently, whether his proofs were proper and pertinent, and consonant to the sense of the text to which he referred. Having done this, and found every thing agreeable to what Paul had advanced, many of them believed; and some Gentiles (among whom were several women of quality) following their example, became obedient to the faith. The news of this remarkable success being carried to Thessalonica, the Jews of that place were so incensed that great numbers of them went to Beræa, and raised tumults in that city; in consequence of which Paul, to avoid their fury, was obliged to leave the place, but Silas and Timothy, who, perhaps, were either less known, or less envied, remained behind.

Paul, leaving Beræa under the conduct of certain guides, it was imagined that he designed to retire by sea out of Greece, that his restless enemies might cease their persecution; but the guides, in conformity to Paul's direction, conducted them to Athens,* where they left him, after receiving orders to tell Silas and Timothy to repair to him as soon as possible.

While Paul continued at Athens, expecting the arrival of his companions, he walked up and down to take an accurate survey of the city, which he found wretchedly over-run with superstition and idolatry. The inhabitants were remarkably religious and devout, they had a great number of Gods whom they adored; false, indeed, they were, but such as they, being destitute of revelation, accounted true; and so very careful were they that no deity should want due honor from them, that they had an altar inscribed, *to the unknown God.*†

These superstitious practices greatly afflicted Paul, in consequence of which he exerted all his endeavors to convert the people. He disputed on the sabbath-day in the synagogues of the Jews; and, at other times, took all opportunities of preaching to the Athenians the coming of the Messiah to save the world.

This doctrine was equally new and strange to the Athenians; and though they did not persecute Paul as

* Athens was once the most celebrated city for learning of any in the world. It was situated on a gulf of the Ægean Sea, which comes up to the isthmus of the Peloponnese, or Morea, in that district of Greece, called Attica, and was the parent of that dialect which was esteemed the purest and finest Greek. Cicero calls it the fountain, from whence civility, learning, and laws were derived to other nations.

† That the Athenians had altars in their public places, without names on them, and others to unknown gods, is evident from the testimony of Laertius, who informs us, that when a great plague raged at Athens, and several means had been attempted for the removal of it, they were advised by Epimedes the philosopher, to build an altar and dedicate it to the proper and peculiar God to whom sacrifices were due. And the Athenians not knowing by what name to call him, erected an altar with this inscription, *To the Gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa, to the strange and unknown God;* by which, as some imagine, they intended the God of the Jews, who had given such wonderful deliverances to his own people.

the Jews had done, yet his preaching Jesus was considered, by the Epicurean* and Stoic philosophers, as a fabulous legend. The generality of the people, however, considered it as a discovery of some new gods, which they had not yet placed in their temples; and though they were not unwilling to receive any new deities, yet, as the Areopagus† was to judge of all gods, to whom public worship might be allowed, they took him before the members of that court, to give an account of his doctrine.

Paul, being placed before the judges of this high assembly, explained the nature of the doctrine he taught in a very grave and elegant speech, the substance of which was to this effect: “Ye men of Athens, I am here brought as a prisoner into your supreme tribunal, as one who sets forth strange doctrines; and yet, from the observations I have made since I arrived in your city, I find you so much attached to superstition, that you know not what you worship, nay, that you even have such a number of idols, that you cannot find names for them; for one of your altars has upon it an inscription *to the unknown God*. That the true God of heaven and earth is, in a great measure, unknown to you is very evident, and *that* is the Being whose works I now publish to you. By Him was all nature created; and as he fills immensity with his presence, so he cannot be circumscribed by temples made with hands. Our worship, as men, can add nothing to his perfections; for all we have, and all we enjoy, is the unmerited gift of his inexhaustible bounty. When he created us out of nothing he appointed that we should consider ourselves as children of the same common parent; and in the course of his Providence he has so

* The Epicureans among the Greeks and Romans were much the same as the Sadducees among the Jews; for both denied a Divine providence and a future state.

† The Areopagus was a celebrated court or senate, where justice was administered to all ranks of people by judges learned in the law. It was situated on Mars-hill, an eminence without the city, and many of the inhabitants of Athens spent much of their time in it, disputing with each other on speculative points, and asking news concerning the progress of the Roman arms in different parts of the world.

“ ordered it, that either by nature or revelation we should
 “ use such means as may, in the end, lead us to the
 “ knowledge of himself, and promote our eternal happi-
 “ ness, for he is every where present, and none of our
 “ thoughts can be hidden from him. Nay, be not sur-
 “ prized, for one of your own poets has expressly de-
 “ clared, that we are the offspring of the Supreme Being,
 “ and, therefore, we are not to form carnal notions of his
 “ perfections, as if he could be represented in a human
 “ shape. It is true, God, in his infinite mercy, drew a
 “ veil over those ages of ignorance; but now he hath
 “ made his will known, and, therefore, those who have
 “ been long slaves to their lusts and passions, are com-
 “ manded to turn from the evil of their ways, in order to
 “ obtain the Divine favor. And this is the more neces-
 “ sary, because he hath fixed, by an unalterable decree,
 “ that when the universal frame of nature shall be dis-
 “ solved, he will raise mankind from the grave, and re-
 “ ward or punish them according to their works here
 “ below. As a proof of this he has already raised up
 “ Christ from the dead, and, as he has become the first
 “ fruits of those who still sleep, so he has ordered that,
 “ by him, all mankind shall be judged. Such is the
 “ doctrine I deliver unto you, and I leave you to judge
 “ whether or not I have acted as an impostor.”

That part of Paul's discourse in which he mentioned
 the resurrection gave great offence to some of the philoso-
 phers, who mocked and derided him; while others, more
 modest, but not satisfied with the proofs he had given,
 gravely said, *We would hear thee again of this matter.*
 After this Paul left the court, but not without some
 success, for a few of his auditors (among whom were
 Dionysius, one of the senators, and Damaris, a lady of
 considerable rank) believed his doctrine, and attended his
 instructions.—Thus boldly did this intrepid servant and
 soldier of Jesus Christ assert the cause of his Divine
 Master among the great, the wise and the learned; and
 thus did he reason, with the most distinguished strength
 and eloquence, on the nature of God, and the manner in
 which he has commanded his creatures to worship him
 even in spirit and in truth.

During Paul's stay at Athens, Timothy and Silas (according to the orders they had received) came to him from Thessalonica, with an account that the Christians there had been under persecution from their fellow-citizens ever since his departure. This gave great uneasiness to Paul, and at first inclined him to visit them in person, in order to confirm them in the faith they had embraced. But reflecting on the consequences that might ensue if he went himself, he sent Timothy and Silas to comfort them, and put them in mind of what he had before told them, namely, that persecution would be the constant attendant on their profession.

After the departure of Timothy and Silas, Paul left Athens, and went to Corinth,* where he met with a certain Jew, named Aquila, lately come from Italy, with Priscilla his wife, because Claudius had made an edict for banishing all the Jews from Rome. Paul having instructed these two in the Christian faith, took up his lodgings, with them (and made their house his principal place of residence) during his stay at Corinth. Every sabbath-day he preached in the synagogues, laboring to convince both Jews and Greeks, that Jesus was the true M^essiah.

A short time after Paul had been at Corinth, Timothy and Silas arrived thither from Thessalonica, with the joyful news of the steadfast adherence of the Christians in that city to the truth of the Gospel. This was a matter of great consolation to Paul, who thereupon wrote his first Epistle to the Thessalonians. In this epistle " he highly applauds their courage and zeal in the belief of the Christian religion, and exhorts them to a noble constancy and perseverance amidst their afflictions: he commends them for their charity to the believers in Macedonia, and gives them many instructions concerning con-

* Corinth was the capital of Achaia, and had its name from one Corinthus, who took and rebuilt it. Its situation, which is at the bottom of the isthmus which joins the Peloponnesus to the continent, rendered it capable of commanding all Greece; but its inhabitants, living as it were upon two seas, were chiefly merchants, and by their commerce produced abundance of wealth, which produced ostentation, effeminaey, and all manner of vice.

versation, and leading a good life: he exhorts them to the practice of all purity and holiness; to avoid idleness; to be diligent in their callings, and not immoderate in their grief for the dead; and concludes with instructions to them concerning the doctrine of the resurrection, the manner of Christ's coming to judge the world, and the obligation all were under to make a timely preparation for so solemn an event."

After the arrival of Timothy and Silas at Corinth, Paul preached the doctrine of Christ with fresh ardor to the Jews; but they instead of attending to what he said, opposed him, and what they could not conquer by fair argument, and force of reason, they endeavored to carry by noise and clamor, blended with blasphemous and opprobrious language. In consequence of this, Paul, to testify his abhorrence of their behavior, shook his garments, and told them, that since they were determined to draw down the vengeance of heaven upon their own heads, he was absolutely guiltless and innocent, and would thenceforth address himself to the Gentiles. Accordingly he left them, and repaired to the house of one Justus, a religious proselyte, where, by his preaching and miracles, he converted great numbers to the faith, among whom were some few Jews, particularly Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and two others of considerable distinction, who, with their families, were baptized, and admitted members of the Christian church.

Paul was greatly perplexed in his mind on account of the perverseness and obstinacy of the Jews, and began to despair of being able to convince them of the impropriety of their behavior, or to bring them to an effectual discernment of the truth of his doctrine. But he was encouraged to persevere in the attempt by an heavenly vision, in which he was told, that notwithstanding the bad success he had hitherto met with, there was a large harvest to be gathered in that place: that therefore he should not be afraid of his enemies, but preach the Gospel boldly, for that he might be assured of the Divine protection in all his undertakings. In consequence of this, and in certain hopes of success, Paul continued at Corinth for the space

of one year and six months, teaching the word of God with various success to the people.

Some time after Paul had received encouragement from the heavenly vision, the Jews made a general insurrection against him, and having taken him into custody, carried him before Gallio, who, at that time, was pro-consul of Achaia. The accusation they laid against him was, that he had attempted to introduce a new religion, contrary to what was established by the Jewish law, and permitted by the Roman powers. But, as Gallio apprehended that this was a controversy which did not fall under the cognizance of the civil judicature, he would not have any concern in it, and therefore ordered his officers to drive them out of the court. Upon this the Gentiles took Sosthenes, a ruler of the synagogue, and one of Paul's chief accusers, and beat him publicly before the tribunal; but this did not give the pro-consul the least disturbance.

Paul continued at Corinth some time after this incident, and, before his departure from thence, wrote his second Epistle to the Thessalonians. In this Epistle "he endeavors 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: he rectifies the misinterpretation which false teachers had made of some passages in his former Epistle, relative to the day of judgment, as if it was just at hand, and shews what events (especially that of the coming and destruction of *the man of sin*) must precede the approach of that day. Having craved their prayers in *his behalf*, and made his request to God in *theirs*, he concludes with divers precepts, especially to shun idleness and ill company, and *not to be weary in well-doing.*"

After Paul had planted the church of Corinth, he left that city, and, taking with him Aquila and Priscilla, embarked at Cenchrea, from whence they sailed to Ephesus.*

* Ephesus, the metropolis and principal mart of the Pro-consular Asia, was situated upon the river Cayster, and on the side of a hill, which, towards the west, had the prospect of a lovely plain, watered and beautified with the pleasant circles of the river,

Here he preached some time in the synagogue of the Jews; but, being resolved to attend the celebration of the passover at Jerusalem, he set sail for Cesarea, leaving behind him Aquila and Priscilla, to whom he promised to return (if God would permit) as soon as possible. From Cesarea Paul proceeded to Jerusalem, and after having visited the church there, and kept the feast of the Passover, went to Antioch. Here he stayed some time, and then traversed the countries of Galatia and Phrygia, taking his course towards Ephesus, and confirming the new converted Christians in every place through which he passed.

During the time Paul spent in this large circuit, Providence took care of the churches of Ephesus and Corinth by means of one Apollos, an eloquent Jew of Alexandria, and well acquainted with the law and writings of the

turning and winding in so many curious mazes, that some travellers have mistaken it for the meander, and this the rather, because the Turks gave it the name of the Lesser Mendres. Among heathen authors this city was once much celebrated for its famous temple of Diana, which, for its largeness and workmanship, was accounted one of the seven wonders of the world. It is said to have been 425 feet long, 220 broad, and to have been supported with 127 pillars of marble, 70 feet high, whereof 27 were most curiously wrought, and all the rest polished. One Ctesiphon, a famous architect in his time, contrived the model of it, and that with so much art and curiosity, that it took up two hundred years before it was finished, even though it was built at the common charge of all Asia properly so called. After it was finished it was seven times set on fire; but once more especially, on the very same day that Socrates was poisoned, 400 years before Christ; and, at another time (when Erostratus fired it only to get himself a name) on the same night that Alexander the Great was born. It was rebuilt, however, and beautified by the Ephesians, to which work the Ladies of Ephesus contributed very largely. In the time of our apostle, it retained a great deal of its former grandeur; but at present it is only an heap of ruins. The only two buildings worth observation are, a strong and lofty castle, situate on an eminence, and a beautiful church, honored with the name of St. John, but now converted into a Turkish mosque. All the rest of the place is the habitation of herdsmen and farmers, who live in low and humble cottages of dirt, covered on the top with earth, and sheltered from the extremity of the weather by mighty masses of ruinous walls, the pride and ostentation of former days, and in the present, the emblem of the frailty of the world, and the transient vanity of human glory.

prophets. This man, going to Ephesus, though he was only instructed in the rudiments of Christianity, and John's baptism, yet taught with great courage, and a most powerful zeal. After being fully instructed in the faith by Aquila and Priscilla, he passed over into Achaia, being furnished with recommendatory letters by the churches of Ephesus and Corinth. He was of great service in Achaia, by watering what Paul had planted, confirming the disciples, and powerfully convincing many others of the Jews that Jesus was the true and only Messiah promised in the Sacred Writings.

While Apollos was thus employed, Paul returned to Ephesus, where he took up his abode for a considerable time. The first thing he did after his return was, to examine certain disciples (in number about twelve) *whether they had received the Holy Ghost since they believed?* To which they answered, "That the doctrine they had received did not promise any thing of that nature, nor had they ever heard that such an extraordinary spirit had been bestowed on the members of the church." This answer greatly surprized the apostle, who asked them in what name they had been baptized; since in the Christian form, the name of the Holy Ghost was always expressed? They replied, that they had only received John's baptism; upon which the apostle informed them that, though John's baptism commanded nothing but repentance, yet it tacitly implied the whole doctrine of Christ and the Holy Ghost. When they heard this they were baptized according to the form prescribed by Christ himself, that is, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and after the apostle had prayed and laid his hands on them, they received the gifts of tongues and other miraculous powers.

After this Paul entered into the Jewish synagogues, in which (for the first three months) he daily contended and disputed with the Jews, endeavoring, with great earnestness and resolution, to convince them of the truth of the Christian religion. But when, instead of meeting with success, he found they were inflexible in their obstinacy and infidelity, he left the synagogue, and, taking those with him whom he had converted, instructed

them, and others who resorted to him, in the school of one Tyrannus. Here he continued to preach the Gospel two years, by which means the Jews and proselytes had an opportunity of hearing the glad tidings of salvation; and as miracles were the clearest evidence of a Divine commission, God was pleased to testify the truth of the doctrine Paul preached, by a variety of miraculous operations, many of which were of the most peculiar and extraordinary nature; for he not only healed those diseased persons that came to him, but, if handkerchiefs or aprons were only touched by him, and applied to the sick, or those possessed with evil spirits, they were instantly cured.

In the city of Ephesus, and its neighborhood, were many vagabond Jews, who went about, from one place to the other, pretending to cure diseases, and cast out devils by their exorcisms. Among these were seven brothers (the sons of one Sceva, a Jewish priest) who observing with what facility Paul effected his miraculous cures and dispossessions of evil spirits, attempted themselves to do the like; and, to add greater force to their proceedings, instead of the usual form of incantation (which was in the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) they invoked the name of Jesus over a demoniac. But here it pleased God to make a most distinguished and visible difference between those who applied this *powerful* name *regularly* and with *commission*, and others, who, of their own heads, and for ill designs, dared to usurp it; for the demoniac, falling upon the exorcists, tore off their clothes, wounded their bodies, and scarce suffered them to escape with their lives.

When this singular event came to be known among the Jews and Gentiles in Ephesus, they were filled with such a reverential fear, that none dared to mention the name of Jesus, but with the most profound respect; and many, who had addicted themselves to the study of magic, acknowledged their sins, and publicly burnt their books, the value of which was estimated at no less than *fifty thousand pieces of silver*. So efficacious was the Gospel of Christ in these parts!

While Paul was diligently pursuing his ministry at Ephesus, Peter was preaching the Gospel to the Jews in several provinces of the Lesser Asia; from whence, travelling eastward, he at length came to the ancient city of Babylon in Chaldea. Here he staid some time, and from hence wrote his first epistle (which is called a Catholic or General Epistle) to the converted Jews who were dispersed in various parts of Chaldea. Peter introduces this admirable epistle with a solemn thanksgiving to God for their call to Christianity, whereby they had obtained a lively hope of an eternal inheritance in heaven; after which he recommends them to the practice of several virtues, as a means to make their *culling* and *election* sure, viz. “That they should live in a constant worship and fear of God, and imitate their Master, Jesus Christ, in holiness and purity; that they should be diligent hearers of the Gospel, and grow up to perfection by it; that they should lead exemplary lives among the Gentiles, abstaining from carnal lusts, and behaving themselves with modesty, thereby to convince their enemies, that calumnies would be unreasonable; that they should behave themselves well under their respective relations, submitting themselves to their governors, whether superior or inferior to themselves in point of circumstances; that servants should obey their masters, wives be subject to their husbands, and husbands honor their wives; that they should all love one another fervently and unfeignedly, bear afflictions patiently, live in union, and sympathize with each other in their afflictions. And lastly, that the ministers and pastors of the several churches should take special care of the flocks committed to their charge; teach them diligently, and govern them gently, not seeking their own gain and profit, but the salvation of the souls of the people.”—This is the purport of Peter’s Epistle to the converted Jews; and the whole is written with a fervor and zeal truly consistent with the sentiments and abilities of so great an apostle. The language is simple, and every expression so formed, as to convey a thorough idea of his meaning to the weakest capacity. All the arguments he makes use of to teach them patience are drawn

from the sacred writings, and are consistent with the doctrines of true religion.

CHAP. V.

Paul forms the resolution of leaving Ephesus, but, before his departure, receives advice of the misconduct of the converts at Corinth, in consequence of which he writes his first Epistle to the Corinthians. He likewise, on a like complaint, writes his Epistle to the Galatians. A great tumult happens at Ephesus, occasioned by one Demetrius, a silversmith; but is at length suppressed by the judicious conduct of the Recorder of the city. Paul, after appointing Timothy bishop of Ephesus, leaves that city, and goes to Macedonia, from whence he writes his second Epistle to the Corinthians. He leaves Macedonia, and goes to Corinth, from whence he writes his Epistle to the Romans. Returns from Corinth to Macedonia, and performs a singular miracle at Troas. Goes from Troas to Miletus, where he gives the Ephesian clergy his pastoral charge. Proceeds from Miletus to Jerusalem, where he is apprehended by the Jews. Claudius Lysias, commander of the Roman garrison in the castle of Antonia, interposes in his behalf. Paul escapes scourging, and happily eludes the malice of the Jews.

PAUL, having been at Ephesus about two years, resolved to return into Macedonia, and after going from thence to Jerusalem, in order to celebrate the feast of Pentecost, to proceed in his journey, which he had long intended, to Rome. In consequence of these resolutions, and as a necessary preparation to carry them into execution, he sent Timothy and Erastus before him into Macedonia, while himself staid behind at Ephesus, in order to settle some matters that were necessary to be adjusted previous to his departure.

Soon after Timothy and Erastus had left Ephesus, Paul received information of some disturbances at Corinth, hatched and fomented by a number of false teachers crept in among the converts of that city, who endeavored to

draw them into parties and factions, by persuading some to be for Paul, and others for Apollos, the different persons from whom they had received instructions relative to the Christian faith. In consequence of these disturbances they committed great disorders, and celebrated the Holy Sacrament very irreverently. They were addicted to fornication, and one in particular had run into incest, by marrying his Father's wife. They were unjust and fraudulent in their dealings; they went to law at heathen tribunals, and, among them were found some, who were bold and profligate enough to deny the resurrection.

To quell these schisms and factions which had taken place, and to chastise them in a proper manner for their misconduct, Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians, in which he "shews the inequality of Christ's ministers, and their insufficiency for the work to which they are ordained, without the Divine assistance; orders the incestuous person to be excommunicated, lest his example should infect others; blames their litigious law-suits, as thinking it much better to refer their differences to some of their own body; propounds the first institution of the sacrament, and a previous examination of their lives, to bring them to a right use of it; and, having added several things concerning a decent behavior, both of men and women, in their churches; concerning the gifts of the Holy Ghost; the excellency of charity; the gift of tongues, and prayer in an unknown language, he proves the truth of the Gospel, and the certainty of a future resurrection, almost to a demonstration.

It was about this time also that Paul wrote his Epistle to the Galatians. He had received information that, since his departure from thence, several impostors had crept in among them, who strongly insisted on the necessity of circumcision, and other Mosaic rites, and greatly disparaged his authority. Paul, therefore, in this Epistle, reproves them with some necessary warmth and severity, for suffering themselves so easily to be imposed upon by the crafty artifices of seducers. He largely refutes these judaical opinions wherewith they were infected, and, by several arguments, proves, that the slavery of the law brought a curse with it; was destructive of their Christian

liberty, and incapable of procuring their justification in the sight of God. Among these reproofs and arguments, however, he intermixes several exhortations full of paternal and apostolic charity; and, towards the conclusion, gives them many excellent rules and directions for the conduct of their lives and conversations."

A short time before Paul left Ephesus, a circumstance occurred, which occasioned a general disturbance throughout the city, and had nearly proved fatal to him and his adherents. In the celebrated temple of Diana was an image of that goddess, which the idolatrous priests persuaded the people was made by Jupiter himself, and dropped down from heaven; for which reason it was held in great veneration, not only at Ephesus, but throughout all Asia. In consequence of this the people procured silver shrines, or figures of the temple and Diana, of such a size as to carry in their pockets, either for curiosity, or to stir them up to their devotion. This proved the source of a great deal of business to the silversmiths of Ephesus; of whom one Demetrius was the chief. This man plainly perceiving that Christianity tended to the subversion of idolatry, and consequently to the ruin of their gainful employment, called all the artists together, and pathetically represented to them, how inevitably they must be reduced to a state of poverty, if they suffered Paul to bring their temple and goddess into contempt, by persuading people, as he did, that they were no gods which were made with hands.

This speech of Demetrius fired them with a zeal which they could no longer contain; so that they cried out with one voice, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*. They should, indeed, have considered that if their goddess was able to defend herself against the doctrines preached by Paul, neither she nor the temple were in any danger: whereas if Paul was able to destroy their gods, it was in vain for them to resist him. But interest and superstition meeting in the minds of a bigotted multitude, admitted of no reason. They were all fired with a zeal for their goddess, and determined, if they could find Paul, to expose him to the beasts in the theatre, it being customary, in those days, at the celebration of their public games and

festivals. to expose such as they deemed criminals to the ravage of wild beasts for the diversion of the spectators. The whole city was filled with the tumult; and the crowd missing Paul, laid hold on Gaius and Aristarchus, two Macedonians of Paul's company, and hurried them into the theatre, with a design to throw them to the wild beasts. Paul, who was at this time in a place of security, hearing of the danger to which his brethren were exposed, was very desirous of venturing after them, in order to speak in their behalf; but he was at last dissuaded from it not only by the Christians, but also by the Gentile governors of the theatrical games, who were his friends, and who assured him that he would only endanger himself without rescuing his friends.

The noise and confusion of the multitude was now prodigious, most of them not knowing the reason for which they were come together; and therefore some said one thing, and some another. In this distraction Alexander, a Jewish convert, was singled out by the multitude, and by the instigation of the Jews was going to make his defence, in which, doubtless, he would have laid the whole blame upon Paul; but the multitude perceiving him to be a Jew, and therefore suspecting he was one of Paul's associates, raised another outcry for near two hours together, wherein nothing could be heard, but *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*. This confusion brought the town-clerk, or recorder of the city, who kept the register of the games, into the theatre, to suppress, if possible, so uncommon a tumult. Having, with great difficulty, obtained silence, he calmly and discreetly told them, "That it was sufficiently known to all the world what a mighty veneration the inhabitants of Ephesus had for their great goddess Diana, and the famous image which fell down from Jupiter, so that there needed not any disturbance to vindicate and assert it; that they had seized on persons, who were not guilty either of sacrilege or blasphemy against their goddess; that if Demetrius and his company had any just charge against them, the courts were sitting, and they might enter their accusation; or, if the controversy was about any other matter, there were proper judicatures to determine it in; that therefore they

would do well to be pacified, having done more already than they could answer, and being in danger of incurring a severe punishment, if they should be called to an account (as very likely they might) for that day's riotous assembly."

This speech had the desired effect: the multitude were convinced that they had acted very improperly, and therefore repaired to their respective habitations; and Gaius, Aristarchus, and Alexander were released without any hurt. But the escape of Paul was so remarkable, that he mentions it as a miraculous deliverance. *We had* (says he) *the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who raised the dead, who delivered us from so great a death.* And in another place he tells us, *he fought with beasts at Ephesus*; alluding either to the design of the enraged multitude of throwing him to the wild beasts in the theatre, though their intention was not executed, or to the manners of the people, who justly deserved the character of being savage and brutal to the highest degree.

Soon after the tumult was suppressed at Ephesus, Paul, having called the church together, and constituted Timothy bishop of the place, took his leave, and departed by Troas to Macedonia; where, having instructed some, and confirmed others in the principles of a sound faith and holy life, he continued his preaching all over the country, even as far as Illyricum.* During this journey Paul met with many troubles and dangers, *without were fightings, and within fears*; but God, who comfort-

* This is a province of Europe, lying to the north or north-west of Macedonia, along the Adriatic Sea, now called the Gulph of Venice. It was commonly distinguished into two parts; Lyburnia to the north, where now lies Croatia; and Dalmatia to the south, which still retains its name. St. Paul tells us, that *from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, he had fully preached the Gospel of Christ.* Rom. xv. 19. So that he must have travelled into Syria, Phœnicia, Arabia, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, Lyeaonia, Galatia, Pontus, Paphlagonia, Phrygia, Troas, Asia, Caria, Lysia, Ionia, Lydia, the isles of Cyprus and Crete, Thracia, Macedonia, Thessalia, and Achaia. So justly, and without ostentation, might he say, that, in relation to the other apostles, *he labored more abundantly than them all.* 1 Cor. xv. 10.

eth those that are cast down, revived his spirits by the arrival of Titus, who gave him a pleasing account of the good effects his epistle had produced at Corinth, and what great reformation it had wrought among the converts of that city. But, as several vain-glorious teachers still persisted in their contumacy, vilifying his authority, and misrepresenting his words and actions; charging him, particularly with levity, in not going there according to his promise; with severity, in his dealings with the incestuous person; with imperiousness in his writings, abjectness in his person, and some small tincture of irreligion in overthrowing the Mosaic law (all which he understood from Titus) he thought it necessary to write a second epistle to the Corinthians. In this epistle "he excuses his not going directly to Corinth, for fear of occasioning them sorrow, and giving himself uneasiness, in being obliged to treat with severity those who had not yet amended their faults. He commends their zeal against the incestuous person, but now that he had suffered enough for his transgression, allowed them to be reconciled to him. He justifies his own conduct, vindicates the dignity and ministry of the Gospel, and proves its great excellence above the law. He declaims against those false teachers, who made it their business to traduce and vilify him, and threatens them with his apostolic authority whenever he shall arrive among them. He then speaks of himself with some advantage, and, though he mentions his supernatural gifts and revelations, yet seems to glory most in his extraordinary laborings and sufferings for the Gospel. And, lastly, he exhorts them all to the works of penance and mortification, lest, when he arrived thither, he should be obliged to exert his authority against offenders; and particularly cautions them to have their alms in readiness, that they may not be an hindrance to him when he shall arrive at Corinth."

After Paul had travelled through the principal places in Macedonia and Achaia, confirming those who had been converted, and bringing over others to the faith, he proceeded to Corinth, where he took up his residence for the space of three months. During his abode here he wrote his famous Epistle to the Romans, which he sent

by Phebe, a deaconess of the church of Cenchrea, near Corinth. In this Epistle "he states and determines the great controversy between the Jews and the Gentiles, relative to the obligation of the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, and those main and material doctrines of Christianity which depend on it, such as that of Christian liberty, the use of different things, &c. He also points out the effects of original sin, and the power it has even among the regenerate; and, through the whole of the Epistle, intermixes many admirable instructions and exhortations to the duties of an holy and religious life, such as the Christian doctrine doth naturally tend to produce."

Paul, having gathered considerable alms both in Macedonia and Achaia, resolved to leave Corinth, in order to carry them into Judea for the relief of the Christians in those parts. His first intention was to go through Syria, as being by far the nearest way; but having received information that the Jews of that country had formed a conspiracy against his life, he altered his course, and determined to go through Macedonia. Accordingly, leaving Corinth, he proceeded to Philippi, where he stayed some time, in order to celebrate the Feast of the Passover. From hence he took shipping, and, in five days, landed at Troas, where he continued a week. On the sabbath, which was the last day of his staying there, he preached to the Christians of the place, who had assembled together in order to receive the sacrament; and, as he intended leaving them the next morning, he continued his harangue till midnight. The length of his discourse, and the time of night, caused some of his hearers to be so fatigued as to fall asleep. Among these was a young man named Eutychus, who, sitting in a higher window, so forgot himself, that he fell from thence to the ground, and was taken up dead. This circumstance being made known to the apostle, he stopped his discourse, and going to the young man, by prayers to the throne of grace, restored him to life and health.—How indefatigable was this great apostle in doing good! how closely did he tread in the steps of his great master, who *went about doing good!* He preached and wrought miracles, wherever he went. Like a master-builder, he either laid a

foundation, or raised the superstructure. He was *instant, in season and out of season*, and spared no pains in endeavoring to secure the eternal welfare of his fellow-creatures.

After performing this miracle, Paul resumed his discourse, and having spent the whole night in these holy exercises, early the next morning he took his leave, and travelled on foot to Assos,* whither he had before sent his companions (among whom was Luke) by sea. From Assos they sailed to Mitylene; † then passing by Chios, ‡ arrived at Samos, § and proceeded to Trogyllium, || from

* Assos is a sea-port town, situate on the south-west part of the province of Troas, and over-against the island Lesbos. By land, it is a great deal nearer Troas, than it is by sea, because of a promontory that runs a great way into the ocean, and must be doubled before we can come to Assos, which was the reason that the apostle chose rather to walk it.

† Mitylene was one of the principal cities of the isle of Lesbos, seated in a peninsula, with a commodious haven on each side, and soon became so considerable, as to give name to the whole island (at present called Metelin) many years ago. The island (which is one of the largest in the Archipelago) was, in former times, renowned for the many eminent persons it had produced; such as Sappho, the inventress of Sapphic verses; Alcæus, a famous Lyric poet; Pittacus, one of the seven wise men of Greece; Theophrastus, the noble physician and philosopher; and Arion, the celebrated musician; and the Turks, who have it now in possession, think it still a place of consequence enough to deserve a fortress and garrison to defend it.

‡ Chios is an island in the Archipelago, next to Lesbos, or Metelin, both in its situation and bigness. It lies over-against Smyrna, and is not above four leagues distant from the Asiatic continent. It is celebrated by Horace and Martial, for the wine and figs that came from thence; but, at present, its renown is, that it produces the most excellent mastic in the world, wherein the people pay their tribute to the Grand Seignior. Nor is it less remarkable for what Sir Paul Ricaut, in his Present State of the Greek Church, tells us of it, viz. that there is no place in the Turkish dominions, where Christians enjoy more freedom in their religion and estates than in this isle, to which they are entitled by an ancient capitulation made with Sultan Mahomet II. which, to this day, is maintained so faithfully, that no Turk can strike or abuse a Christian, without severe correction.

§ Samos is another isle in the Archipelago, lying south-east of Chios, and about five miles from the Asiatic continent. It is famous among the heathen writers for the worship of Juno; for one of the sybils called Sybilla Samia; for Pherecydes, who foretold an earth-

whence, after staying one day, they went to Miletus,* not putting in at Ephesus, because the apostle was resolved, if possible, to be at Jerusalem at the Feast of Pentecost.

Soon after Paul arrived at Miletus he sent to Ephesus, to assemble together the pastors and elders of the churches in that city. On their arrival, he delivered to them a very long and pathetic discourse, wherein he reminded them with what uprightness and integrity, with what affection and humility, and, with what great danger and trouble, he had been conversant among them, and preached the Gospel to them, ever since his coming into those parts: that he had not failed to acquaint them both publicly and privately, with whatsoever might be profitable to their souls, urging both Jews and Gentiles to repentance and reformation, and an hearty reception of the faith of Christ: That now he was determined to go to Jerusalem, where he did not know what particular sufferings would befall him, only that he had been foretold by those, who were endued with prophetic gifts of the Holy Ghost, that, in every city, bonds and afflictions would attend him; but that he was not concerned at this, being

quake that happened there by drinking of the waters; and more especially, for the birth of Pythagoras, who excelled all the seven wise men, so renowned among the Greeks. It was formerly a free commonwealth, and the inhabitants were so powerful, that they managed many prosperous wars against their neighbors; but, at present, the Turks have reduced it to such a mean and depopulated condition, that a few pirates dare land and plunder as they please; so that ever since the year 1676, no Turk has ever ventured to live upon it for fear of being carried into captivity by those rovers.

|| Trogyllium is a cape, or promontory, on the Asiatic coast, opposite to Samos, and much below Ephesus, having a town of the same name.

* Miletus was a port town on the continent of Asia Minor, and in the province of Caria, memorable for being the birth-place of Thales, one of the seven wise men in Greece, and father of the Ionic philosopher; of Anaximenes, his scholar; Timotheus the musician, and Anaximenes the philosopher. At present it is called by the Turks, Melas; and not far distant from it is the true meander, which, though it encircles all the plain it runs through with many pleasing mazes and innumerable windings, yet, in some places, it goes with such a current, as stirs up the earth and gravel from the bottom, which makes its water not so clear and crystalline, as might be expected.

willing to lay down his life whenever the Gospel required it, and fully determined to serve, with the strictest fidelity, his great Lord and Master. Here he made a short pause, and then resumed his discourse in words to this effect: "I well know that you will see my face no more; but for my encouragement and satisfaction, ye yourselves can bear me witness, that I have not, by concealing any part of the Christian doctrine, betrayed your souls. And as for yourselves, whom God hath made bishops and pastors of his church, you should be careful to feed, guide and direct those Christians under your inspection, and be infinitely tender of the welfare of souls, for whose redemption the Blessed Jesus laid down his own life. All the care, therefore, possible for you to use is no more than necessary; for, after my departure, heretical teachers will appear in the church, to the great danger of the souls of men, seeking, by every crafty method, and pernicious doctrine, to gain proselytes to their party, and, by those means, fill the church of Christ with schisms and factions. Watch ye, therefore, and remember with what tears and sorrow I have, during three years, warned you of these things. And now I recommend you to the Divine favor and protection, and to the rules and instructions of the Gospel, which, if properly adhered to, will undoubtedly dispose and perfect you for that state of happiness which the Almighty hath prepared for good men in the mansions of eternity. Ye well know that I have, from the beginning, dealt faithfully and uprightly with you; that I have not had any covetous designs, or ever desired the riches of other men; nay, I have labored with mine own hands, to support myself and my companions: you ought therefore to support the weak, and relieve the poor, rather than be yourselves chargeable to others, according to that incomparable saying of the great Redeemer of mankind, *It is more blessed to give, than to receive.*"—If we minutely attend to the whole of this apostle's preaching and writing, we shall find that he strenuously inculcates not only points of faith, but also practical duties, without which our faith would be in vain.

After Paul had finished his farewell discourse to the bishops and pastors of Ephesus, he knelt down, and, by way of a final conclusion, joined with them fervently in prayer; which being over they all melted into tears, and, with the greatest expression of sorrow, attended him to the ship, grieving, in the most passionate manner, on account of his having told them *that they should see his face no more.*

After Paul had taken this affecting farewell of the pastors and elders of Ephesus, he, with his attendants, left Miletus, and going on board a ship sailed with a fair wind to Coos.* The day after their arrival here, they proceeded to Rhodes,† and from thence to Patara,‡ where, meeting with a ship bound for Phœnicia, they went on board; and, passing Cyprus, sailed to Syria, and landed at Tyre, the place where the ship was to unlade her burthen.

Paul staid at Tyre seven days, in the course of which he was advised by some Christians of the place not to go up to Jerusalem. But this advice Paul would by no means take; upon which the disciples, accompanied by their wives and children, attended him out of the city, and when they came to the sea-shore, Paul knelt down

* This was an island in the Archipelago, lying near the south-west point of Asia Minor, and having a city of the same name. It was formerly celebrated for the birth of Hippocrates the famous physician, and Apelles the famous painter; for a stately temple dedicated to Apollo, and another to Juno; for the richness of its wines, and for the fineness of a *stuff*, made here, which was perfectly transparent, and called *vestimenta coa*.

† Rhodes lies south of the province of Caria in Lesser Asia; and, among the Asiatic isles, was accounted for dignity next to Cyprus and Lesbos. It was remarkable among the ancients for the expertness of its inhabitants in the art of navigation; for a college, in which the students were eminent for eloquence and mathematics; for the clearness of its air; for its pleasant and healthy climate, which induced the Roman nobility to make it a place of their recess; and more especially, for its prodigious statue of brass, consecrated to Apollo, or the sun, and called his *Colossus*. This statue was seventy cubits high, and stood astride over the mouth of the harbor, so that the ships sailed between its legs.

‡ This is a sea-port of Lycia, formerly beautified with a good harbor, and many temples, whereof one was dedicated to Apollo.

and prayed for them, in the same manner he had done before at Miletus.

From Tyre Paul and his companions sailed to Ptolemais,* where they staid one day, spending their time in conversation with the disciples of that place. The next day they went to Cesarea, and visited Philip, one of the seven deacons, who had been sent by the apostles to preach the Gospel in Samaria and other places. This Philip had four virgin daughters, all of whom were endued with the gift of prophecy; and on this account, together with Paul's great regard for Philip, he resided at his house during his stay at Cesarea.

While Paul was at Philip's house, there came thither a prophet, named Agabus, from Judea. This person, after the manner of the old prophets (who often prophesied by symbols, or significant expressions) took Paul's girdle, and, binding it about his own hands and feet, said, in the presence and hearing of the whole company, *Thus saith the Holy Ghost; So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.* On the prophet's saying these words, not only the companions of Paul, but likewise all the Christians present, were greatly troubled, and earnestly besought him that he would not go up to Jerusalem. To which Paul replied, *What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.*

When the disciples found that Paul's resolution was not to be shaken, they did not importune him any farther; in consequence of which, he and his companions left Cesarea, and prosecuting their journey arrived safe at Jerusalem, where they were kindly and joyfully received by the Christians of that city.

The day after Paul and his companions arrived at Jerusalem, they went to the house of James the apostle, where the rest of the bishops and governors of the church were assembled together. After mutual salutations, Paul gave them a particular account of the success with which

* A sea-port, of Syria, between Tyre and Cesarea.

God had blessed his endeavors in propagating Christianity among the Gentiles, for which they all joined in glorifying God. Having done this they told Paul, that he was now come to a place, in which were many thousands of Jewish converts, who were all zealous for the law of Moses, and who had been informed that he taught the Jews whom he converted to renounce circumcision, and the ceremonies of the law. That as soon as the multitude heard of his arrival, they would all assemble together to see how he behaved himself in this matter; and therefore, to prevent any disturbance, they thought it advisable for him to join himself with four men who were then going to discharge a vow; to perform the usual rites and ceremonies with them; to be at the charge of having their heads shaved; and to provide such sacrifices as the law directed; whereby it would appear, that the reports spread of him were groundless, and that himself was an observer of the Mosaic institutions.

Paul readily agreed to follow the advice given him by his brethren; in consequence of which, taking with him the four persons who were to discharge their vows, he went into the temple, and told the priests that, as the time of their vow was now expired, and their purification regularly performed, they were come to make their oblation according to law.

The time of offering these oblations was seven days, near the close of which certain Jews from Asia (who had there been strong opposers to Paul's doctrine) finding him in the temple began to raise a tumult, and seizing on him called to their brethren the Jews to assist them, declaring that he was the person who had preached doctrines derogatory to the Jewish nation, and destructive to the institutions of the law of Moses. This accusation, though absolutely false, occasioned such an universal disgust among the people to Paul, that they immediately fell on him, and dragged him out of the temple, shutting the doors to prevent his returning into that holy place. After they had got him out of the temple they treated him with great indignity, and would certainly have killed him, had not Claudius Lysias, the commander of the Roman garrison in the castle of Antonia, come, with a

considerable force, to his assistance. Lysias conducted him to the castle, in the way to which Paul begged permission to speak to him; but the governor (supposing him to be an Egyptian, who, not many years before, had raised a sedition in Judea, and headed a party of four thousand profligate wretches) seemed to refuse him that favor, until Paul informed him that he was a Jew of Tarsus, and a freeman of a rich and honorable city, and therefore humbly hoped that he would not deny him the privilege of vindicating himself. The governor consenting to this request, Paul, standing upon the stairs that led into the castle, after making signs for the multitude to be silent, made a speech to them in the Hebrew language, the substance of which was to the following effect:

“ Listen, ye descendants of Jacob, to a person of your own religion, and like yourselves a child of Abraham; born in Tarsus, and brought up in this city; at the feet of Gamaliel, and fully instructed in the law delivered by Moses to our forefathers, and formerly as zealous for the temple worship, as ye are at present.

“ Nay, I persecuted unto death all who believed in Jesus, seizing on all I could find, both men and women, and casting them into prison.

“ But as I was pursuing my journey, to execute this commission, and was arrived near Damascus, there appeared about mid-day, a light from heaven, shining round about me.

“ Terrified at so awful an appearance, I fell to the ground, and heard a voice, saying unto me, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* To which I answered, *Who art thou, Lord?* And the voice replied, *I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.*

“ After recovering from the terror with which my mind was filled, I answered, *What shall I do, Lord?* And the Lord said unto me, *Arise, and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.*

“ The brilliancy of the glory deprived me of sight; so that my companions led me by the hand to Damascus, where one Ananias, a person well respected by all the Jews of that city, visited me, and said, *Brother Saul, re-*

ceive thy sight. And in a moment my eyes were opened, and I saw him standing before me. When he saw that my sight was restored, he said to me, 'The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, hath appointed thee to know his will, to see the great Messiah, the Holy One of God, and hear the voice of his mouth; for thou art chosen to be a witness to all the nations of the earth for those surprising things thou hast seen and heard. Why, therefore, tarriest thou here any longer? *Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*

"After this glorious vision, and miraculous power of the Most High, when I was returned from Damascus to Jerusalem, and offering up my prayers in the temple, I fell into a trance, and again saw the Great Son of David, who said unto me, Depart quickly from Jerusalem; for the descendants of Jacob will refuse to believe thy testimony concerning me. And I answered, "Lord, they know how cruelly I used thy saints and followers; that I imprisoned and beat them, in every synagogue whither I went. Nay, when they shed the blood of thy holy Martyr Stephen, I was also one of the spectators; I consented to his death; I even kept the raiment of those that slew him." But the Lord replied, *Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.*"

The Jews had been very quiet, and paid great attention to Paul's speech till he came to this part of it: his mentioning the commission he had received to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, threw them into the most violent outrage, and they cried out, with one voice, *Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.* And, the more to express their indignation, they threw off their clothes, and cast dust into the air, as if they intended that moment to stone him.

When Lysias, the captain of the guard, found to what a violent degree the people were incensed against Paul, he ordered him to be taken within the castle, and that he should be examined by scourging till he confessed the reason of the uncommon rage shewn against him by the people.* Accordingly, the lictor bound him, and was

* As Lysias did not understand Hebrew, he could not tell what the purport of St. Paul's speech to the people was; but, by their mad

going to put the orders he had received into execution, when Paul asked the centurion who stood by, whether or not it was lawful to scourge a citizen of Rome, before any sentence had been passed upon him? But the centurion, instead of answering his question, immediately repaired to Lysias, beseeching him to be careful how he proceeded against the prisoner, because he was a Roman. On this information Lysias went immediately into the prison, and asked Paul whether he was really a free citizen of Rome? Being answered in the affirmative, Lysias said, he had himself procured that great privilege by a large sum of money; upon which Paul answered, *But I was free-born.** On receiving this account, Lysias commanded the centurion not to scourge him, being terrified at what he had already done, namely, his causing to be bound with chains a free denizen of the Roman empire. The next day he ordered his chains to be taken off; and that he might thoroughly satisfy himself of the cause of so unusual a tumult, convened the members of the Sanhedrim, before whom he conducted Paul, in order to undergo an examination by that tribunal.

Paul was not in the least terrified at the sight of so considerable and powerful an assembly. Without waiting for any questions being asked him, looking earnestly at the council, he coolly said, *Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.†* But

and outrageous behavior, he guessed that he must have said something very provoking, either against the law or the dignity of their nation, and therefore was willing to know the truth of it from himself. Scourging was a method of examination used by the Romans, and other nations, to force such as were supposed guilty to confess what they had done, what were their motives, and who were accessaries to the fact.

* It is probable that Paul's father might have been rewarded with the freedom of the city for his fidelity and bravery in some military service, emoluments being then conferred, not on those who had most interest with men in power, but on those who had most merit from their actions.

† The apostle, by here using the words *a good conscience*, does not mean a conscience void of all error and offence, because he owns himself to have been guilty of a great sin in *persecuting the church of Christ*, i Tim. 1. 13. His meaning therefore is, such a conscience as was consistent with the ideas he entertained at different periods

however this expression might tend to shew the true state of his mind, Ananias the high-priest was so offended at it, that he commanded those who stood next him to strike him on the face; at which Paul replied, *God shall smite thee thou whited wall.** On this, some of the spectators, looking sternly at Paul, cried out, *Revilest thou God's high-priest?* In answer to this Paul told them, he did not know that Ananias was high-priest, not supposing it possible, that a person who can give such unjust orders could be invested with so sacred a character. But, since it was so, he confessed it was very wrong to revile him, God himself having commanded that *no man should speak evil of the rulers of the people.*

Paul, perceiving that the council consisted partly of Sadducees, and partly of Pharisees (in order to elude the malice of his enemies) made open declaration that he was a Pharisee, even as his father was before him, and that the great offence taken against him was, his belief of a future resurrection. This declaration threw the whole

of his life, namely, before and after his conversion. The sense, therefore, of this passage may be thus explained: "While I was persuaded that the Christian religion was false, I persecuted it with the utmost vigor; but, as soon as I came to perceive its Divine institution, I declared for it, and have ever since maintained it, even to the hazard of my life. The religion of the Jews I did not forsake out of any hardships that it required, or any prejudice I had conceived against its precepts; nor did I embrace that of the Christians upon any other account, than a full conviction of its truth and veracity. I was a good Jew, in short, as long as I thought it my duty to be so; and, when I thought it my duty to be otherwise, I became a zealous Christian; in all which God knows the sincerity of my heart, and is witness of my uprightness."

* *A whited wall* was a proverbial expression, denoting an hypocrite of any kind, and the propriety of it appears in this—That as the wall had a fair outside, but nothing but dirt or sticks, and stones within, so the high-priest had the outward appearance of a righteous judge, sitting as one that would pass sentence according to law, and yet commanding him to be punished for speaking the truth, and so condemning the innocent, contrary to the law of nature, as well as that of Moses. Our Blessed Saviour makes use of a comparison of the same nature, when he calls the scribes and Pharisees *whited sepulchres*. It should be observed, in vindication of St. Paul, that his words, *God shall smite thee*, are a prediction, not an imprecation; and a prediction which Josephus tells us was fulfilled in a short time; for he was murdered in a mutiny.

court in confusion, by exciting the regard of the Pharisees, who favored the doctrine of the resurrection, and incurring the resentment of the Sadducees, who strongly opposed it.

The dissensions between these two sects, on this occasion, arose to such a violent degree, that Lysias, fearing lest Paul should be torn in pieces between them, commanded the soldiers to take him from the bar, and re-conduct him to the castle. This was accordingly done, and to comfort him after all his frights and fears, God was pleased to appear to him that night in a vision, encouraging him to constancy and resolution, and assuring him that, as he had borne testimony to his cause at Jerusalem, so, in despite of all his enemies, he should live to do the like at Rome. *Be of good cheer Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.*

The next morning the Jews, whose envy and malice were increased against Paul by the dilatory proceedings of the Sanhedrim, determined to use a quicker method of putting a period to his life. In order to this about forty of the most turbulent among them entered into a wicked conspiracy, which they ratified with an imprecation never to eat or drink, until they had killed Paul. Having formed this inhuman resolution they went to the Sanhedrim and acquainted them with their design, to effect which they advised, that some of the members should solicit Lysias to bring Paul again before them, under pretence of enquiring more accurately into his case, and that, before he reached the court, they would not fail to way-lay and dispatch him.

This wicked plot was readily approved of by the Sanhedrim, but its execution was happily frustrated by Paul's nephew, who, having discovered their intentions, went immediately to his uncle, to whom he related the whole affair. Paul communicated the intelligence to Lysias, who immediately commanded two parties of foot, and one of horse, to be ready by nine o'clock, in order to conduct him to Cesarea, where Felix, the Roman governor, then resided. At the same time Lysias dispatched a letter to Felix, the substance of which was, "That the person

“ whom he had sent to him was a freeman of Rome ; that
“ the Jews had ill treated him, and conspired against his
“ life ; that the measures he had taken were designed to
“ secure him from the violence of the multitude ; and that
“ he had ordered his enemies to appear before him at
“ Cesarea, that he might judge what was the cause of
“ their being so incensed against the person whom he had
“ sent to him under military protection.”

The guards, having received these orders from Lysias, conducted Paul the same night to Antipatris,* and the next morning to Cesarea. On their arrival there, they immediately gave Lysias's letter to Felix, who, after having read the contents, asked Paul some questions relative to the place of his birth, and the manner of his life. Finding, by his answers, that Paul was a native of Cilicia, Felix told him, that as soon as his accusers came thither from Jerusalem, he would give him a fair and candid hearing ; and, in the mean time, gave orders that he should be secured in that part of his palace called Herod's Hall,† where he should be supplied with every article that was necessary during his confinement.

* Antipatris was a city on the borders of Samaria, near the Mediterranean Sea ; and situated about thirty-eight miles from Jerusalem.

† This was a magnificent palace built by Herod the Great for his own habitation whenever he went to Cesarea : and was afterwards used by the Roman governors for the place of their residence, and for the confinement of some particular persons.

CHAP. VI.

Paul is taken before Felix, and acquits himself of the accusation laid against him by Tertullus, one of his principal enemies. Felix is terrified at the force of his arguments. Paul is taken before Festus (the successor of Felix) and after answering the accusation laid against him by the Jews, makes an appeal unto Cæsar. He boldly defends himself, and the Christian cause, before Festus and king Agrippa. Is sent to Rome by sea, in the way to which he is shipwrecked, and cast upon the island of Melitus, where he performs several astonishing miracles. He is conducted from thence to Rome, where he is received with the most distinguished respect by the Christians in that city. He confers with the chief of the Jews, to whom he preaches the doctrine of the Gospel with different success. Writes an Epistle to Philemon, a person of distinction at Colosse. Sends Epistles to the Philippians, Ephesians and Colossians. The Epistle of James to the dispersed Tribes, with an account of the sufferings and martyrdom of that apostle.

AFTER Paul had been confined five days at Cæsarea, by order of Felix, there came thither Ananias the high-priest, and several other members of the Sanhedrim, together with Tertullus, a man of great elocution, and an inveterate enemy to Paul. Being all assembled before Felix, Tertullus made a long speech, in which he made use of all the insinuating arts that could arise from human invention to prepossess the Governor in his own favor; having done which he accused Paul “of being a seditious person, and a disturber of the public peace; who had set himself at the head of the sect of Nazarenes, and made no manner of scruple to profane even the temple itself.” This accusation was altogether false, notwithstanding which it was confirmed by all the members of the Sanhedrim, who had come from Jerusalem on this occasion.

Tertullus having finished his accusation against Paul, Felix told him that he was now at liberty to make his defence; upon which Paul addressed himself to the court in words to this effect:

“ I answer this charge of the Jews with the greater satisfaction before thee, because thou hast for many years been a judge of this nation. About twelve days since, I repaired to Jerusalem, to worship the God of Jacob. But I neither disputed with any man, or endeavored to stir the people in the synagogues or the city. Nor can they prove the charge they have brought against me.

“ This, however, I readily confess, *that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers*, and according to this faith, I am careful to maintain a clear and quiet conscience, both towards God and man.

“ After I had spent some years in distant countries, I repaired to Jerusalem, with the alms I had collected in other provinces, for the poor of mine own nation, and offerings to the God of Jacob. And while I was performing the duties of religion, certain Asiatic Jews found me in the temple, purified according to the law; but neither attended with a multitude of followers, or the least tumultuous assembly. It was therefore necessary that these Jews should have been here, if they had any thing to alledge against me. Nay, I appeal to those of the Sanhedrim here present, if any thing has been laid to my charge, except the objections of the Sadducees, who violently opposed me for asserting the doctrine of the resurrection.”

Felix, having thus heard both parties, refused to make any final determination till he had more fully advised about it, and consulted Lysias, the governor of the castle, who was the most proper person to give an account of the cause of the controversy. In the mean time Felix gave orders that, though Paul should be kept under a guard, yet his confinement should be so free and easy, that none of his friends should be hindred from visiting, or doing him any offices of kindness.

A few days after this Felix, being desirous that his wife Drusilla (who had been a Jewess) should hear Paul, he ordered him to be brought before them, and gave him permission to speak freely concerning the doctrines of Christianity. In his discourse he particularly pointed out the great obligation which the laws of Christ laid on

mankind to preserve justice and righteousness, sobriety and chastity, both towards themselves and others, more especially from this consideration, viz. the strict and impartial account that must be given, in the day of judgment, of all the actions of their past lives, and the consequences that would inevitably follow, either to be rewarded or eternally punished.

This discourse had such an effect on Felix, that he could not help trembling as he sat on his throne; and, as soon as he had a little recovered his spirits, he abruptly interrupted Paul, by saying, *Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.*

Felix, no doubt, had sufficient reason to tremble, and his conscience to be sensibly alarmed at Paul's discourse; for he was a man notoriously infamous for rapine and violence. He made his own will the law of his government, practising all manner of cruelty and injustice. To these bad qualities he added bribery and covetousness; and therefore often sent for Paul to discourse with him, expecting he would have given him a considerable sum for his release, having, in all probability, heard that Paul had taken with him a large quantity of money to Jerusalem. But finding that no offers were made him, either by the apostle or his friends, he kept him prisoner two years; when himself being discharged from his office by Nero, he left Paul in prison, in order to gratify the malice of the Jews,* and engage them to speak the better of him, after his departure from Judea.

On the deposition of Felix the government of Judea was invested in Portius Festus, who, after staying three days at Cesarea, went to Jerusalem. On his arrival

* Felix had greatly exasperated the Jews by his unjust and violent proceedings while he continued in the government; and, therefore, upon his dismissal, he thought to have pacified them, in some measure, by leaving Paul (whom he might have discharged long before) still in custody, and consequently still liable to become a prey to their greedy malice. But herein he found himself greatly mistaken; for no sooner was he removed from his office, than several of the principal Jews of Cesarea took a journey to Rome on purpose to accuse him, and would certainly have wrought his ruin, had not his brother Pallas (who was in very distinguished favor with Nero) interceded for his pardon.

thither, the high-priest, and other members of the Sanhedrim, exhibited fresh accusations against Paul, and, in order to his trial, desired that he might be sent for up to Jerusalem, intending to have him assassinated in the way. But Festus, being unwilling to grant their request, told them, that he was shortly going himself to Cesarea, and that if they had any complaint against Paul, they must come thither and accuse him, when he would not fail to do them justice.

In consequence of this the Jews followed Festus to Cesarea, and when he was seated on his throne, they renewed their charge, and produced their articles against Paul, which were much the same as what they had accused him of before Felix. But Paul defended himself so well, by making it appear that he had neither offended against the Jewish laws, nor against the temple, nor against the emperor, that their charge, for want of sufficient proof, fell to the ground. Festus, however, being willing to procure the favor of the Jews at his entrance on the government, asked Paul if he would go and be tried before him at Jerusalem? But the apostle, well knowing the malice of his enemies, and being unwilling to trust himself in their power, boldly declared, "as he then stood at the emperor's judgment-seat, when he ought to have a final trial, if he had done any thing worthy of death, he did not wish to avoid punishment; but that, as he had not injured any of the Jews, and they could not prove any thing against him, he ought not to be made a victim to their fury; and therefore, as he was a Roman, he appealed to the emperor himself."* Festus, finding Paul resolute in maintaining his privilege, conferred for some time with his council, and then, with some seeming emotion, told him that, since he *had appealed unto Cæsar, unto Cæsar he should go.*

* This manner of appealing was very common among the Romans, and introduced to secure the lives and fortunes of the people from the unjust encroachments and over-rigorous severities of the magistrates. Paul well knew he should not have fair and equitable dealings from the governor, when swayed by the Jews, his sworn and inveterate enemies, and, therefore, appealed from him, to the emperor; nor could Festus deny his demand.

A few days after this king Agrippa (who succeeded Herod in the tetrarchate of Galilee) with his sister Bernice, went to Cesarea, in order to pay a visit to the new governor. Festus took this opportunity of mentioning Paul's case to Agrippa, with the remarkable tumult that had been occasioned by him among the Jews, and the appeal he had made to Cæsar; the whole of which he related in words to this effect: "That Felix, upon his parting
 " with the government of Judea, had left a certain pris-
 " oner, against whom some of the chief of the Jews had
 " brought an information, and immediately demanded
 " judgment, which, according to the Roman law, could
 " not be done without first hearing the case, and bringing
 " the parties together. That to this purpose he had or-
 " dered his accusers to come to Cesarea, but, upon the
 " result, found that the dispute between them was about
 " matters of religion, and whether a person, called Jesus,
 " was really dead or alive. That, being himself unac-
 " quainted with such kind of controversies, he had re-
 " ferred the prisoner to the Jewish Sanhedrim, but that
 " he, declining their judgment, had appealed to Cæsar:
 " and that therefore he kept him still in prison, until he
 " could meet with a convenient opportunity to send him
 " to Rome."

This account given of Paul by Festus greatly excited the curiosity of king Agrippa, who intimated his desire of hearing himself what Paul had to say in his own defence. Accordingly the next day the king and his sister, accompanied by Festus the governor, and several other persons of distinction, went into the court with a pompous and splendid retinue, where the prisoner was brought before them. As soon as Paul appeared, Festus informed the court "how greatly he had been importuned by the
 " Jews, both at Cesarea and Jerusalem, to put the pris-
 " oner to death as a malefactor; but having, on examina-
 " tion, found him guilty of no capital crime, and the
 " prisoner himself having appealed unto Cæsar, he was
 " determined to send him to Rome. That he was will-
 " ing, however, to have his cause again discussed before
 " so judicious a person as Agrippa, that he might be
 " furnished with some material particulars to send with

“him; as it would be highly absurd to send a prisoner without signifying the crimes alledged against him.”

Festus having finished his speech, king Agrippa told Paul he was at full liberty to make his own defence; upon which, after silence being called, Paul, chiefly addressing himself to Agrippa, spoke to this effect:

“I consider it as a peculiar happiness, king Agrippa, that I am to make my defence against the accusations of the Jews, before thee; because thou art well acquainted with their customs, and the questions commonly debated among them: I therefore beseech thee to hear me patiently. All the Jews are well acquainted with my manner of life, from my youth, the greatest part of it having been spent with mine own countrymen at Jerusalem. They also know that I was educated under the institutions of the Pharisees, the strictest sect of our religion, and am now arraigned for a tenet believed by all their fathers; a tenet sufficiently credible in itself and plainly revealed in the scriptures, I mean the resurrection of the dead. Why should any mortal think it either incredible or impossible, that God should raise the dead?

“I, indeed, thought myself indispensably obliged to oppose the religion of Jesus of Nazareth. Nor was I satisfied with imprisoning and punishing with death itself, the saints I found at Jerusalem; I even persecuted them in strange cities, whither my implacable zeal pursued them, having procured authority for that purpose from the chief priests and elders.

“Accordingly, I departed for Damascus, with a commission from the Sanhedrim; but as I was travelling towards that city, I saw at mid-day, O king, a light from heaven, far exceeding the brightness of the sun, encompassing me and my companions. On seeing this awful appearance, we all fell to the earth; and I heard a voice, which said to me, in the Hebrew language, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks?* To which I answered, *Who art thou Lord?* And he replied, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.* But be not terrified, arise from the earth: for I have appeared unto thee, that thou mightest be

“ both a witness of the things thou hast seen, and also of
 “ others which I will hereafter reveal unto thee; my
 “ power, delivering thee from the Jews and Gentiles, to
 “ whom now I send thee to preach the Gospel; to with-
 “ draw the veil of darkness and ignorance; to turn them
 “ from falsehood unto truth, *and from the power of Satan*
 “ *unto God.*

“ Accordingly, king Agrippa, I readily obeyed the
 “ heavenly vision; I preached the Gospel first to the in-
 “ habitants of Damascus, then to those of Jerusalem,
 “ and Judea, and afterwards to the Gentiles; persuading
 “ them to forsake their iniquities, and, by sincere re-
 “ pentance, turn to the living God.

“ These endeavors to save the souls of sinful mortals
 “ exasperated the Jews, who caught me in the temple,
 “ and entered into a conspiracy to destroy me. But, by
 “ the help of Omnipotence, I still remain a witness to all
 “ the human race, preaching nothing but what Moses and
 “ all the prophets foretold; namely, That the Messiah
 “ should suffer, be the first that should rise from the
 “ chambers of the grave, and publish the glad tidings of
 “ salvation, both to the Jews and Gentiles.”

This discourse was conceived in such a light by Festus, that he thought Paul was delirious, and therefore abruptly told him, that his too much learning had made him mad. The reply Paul made to this was to the following purport: “ I am far, most noble Festus, from
 “ being transported with idle and distracted ideas; the
 “ words I speak are dictated by truth and sobriety; and
 “ I am persuaded that king Agrippa himself is not
 “ ignorant of those things; for they were transacted
 “ openly before the world. I am confident, king Agrippa,
 “ that thou believest the prophets; and therefore must
 “ know that all their predictions were fulfilled in Christ.”
 To this Agrippa answered, “ Thou hast almost persuad-
 “ ed me to become a Christian.” Paul replied, “ I sin-
 “ cerely wish, that not only thou, but also all that hear
 “ me, were not *almost*, but *altogether*, the same as myself,
 “ except being prisoners.” Upon this the assembly broke
 up; and, when Agrippa and Festus had conferred to-
 gether about Paul’s case, they freely owned that the

accusation laid against him amounted neither to a capital offence, nor any thing deserving imprisonment; and that, had he not appealed unto Cæsar, he might have been legally discharged.*

It being now finally determined that Paul should be sent to Rome, he, and some other prisoners of note, were committed to the charge of one Julius, a centurion, or captain of a legion called Augustus's Band. Accordingly they went on board a ship of Adramyttium,† and coasting along Asia, arrived at Sidon, where Julius (who all along treated Paul with great civility) gave him leave to go ashore, and refresh himself. From Sidon they set sail, and came within sight of Cyprus, and having passed over the seas of Cilicia and Pamphylia, landed at Myra, a port in Lycia, where the ship finished its voyage. From hence they embarked on board a ship of Alexandria bound for Italy; and having passed by Cnidus‡, with some difficulty made for Salome, a promontory on the Eastern shore of Crete, from whence, after many days slow sailing, they arrived at a place called the Fair Havens, on the coast of the same island. As the season of the year was far advanced, and sailing in those seas exceeding dangerous, Paul advised the centurion to put in here, and winter. But Julius, preferring the judgment of the master of the ship, and the wind, at that time, blowing gently at south, they put again to sea, in hopes of reaching Phenice, another harbor of Crete, where there was safe riding, and there to winter. It was not long, however, before they found themselves disappointed; for the calm southerly gale, which blew before, suddenly changed to a stormy and tempestuous north-east wind, which bore down all before it, so that they

* It was the custom of the Romans, that after a prisoner had appealed unto the emperor, no inferior judge could either condemn or acquit him.

† Adramyttium was a sea-port in Mysia, a province of Asia Minor, lying opposite to the Isle of Lesbos, and not far from Troas.

‡ Cnidus was a city which stood on a promontory, or fore-land of the same name, in that part of the province of Caria, which was more particularly called Doris. This city was remarkable for the worship of Venus, and for the celebrated statue of that goddess made by the famous artificer Praxiteles.

were forced to let the ship drive; but, to secure it from splitting, they undergirt it, and to prevent its running aground on the shallows, threw out a great part of its lading and tackle.

In this wretched and dangerous situation did they continue for the space of fourteen days, during which they neither saw sun or stars, so that the whole company (except Paul) began to give themselves up as lost. This being observed by the apostle, he addressed himself to them in words to this effect: "Had you taken my advice, and staid at Crete, you would not have been in this danger; but take comfort, for we shall suffer no loss but that of the ship. This I can assure you has been made known to me by a Divine messenger, who, appearing to me in the night, said, Fear not Paul, for thou must be brought before Cæsar, and God hath, for thy sake, granted life and safety to all them that are with thee in the ship. Wherefore be of good cheer, for I am confident this vision will be made good, coming from God, as it certainly doth. But one passage more I received in this vision, namely, that after shipwreck we shall be cast on a certain island."

On the fourteenth night the sailors, thinking they were near land, sounded, and found themselves in twenty fathoms water, soon after which they were convinced, by a second sounding, that they were near some coast. But apprehending that they might strike upon some shelves in the dark, they thought proper to come to an anchor, till the morning might give them better information. In the mean time the weather continuing exceeding boisterous, they altered their intentions, and not staying for daylight, attempted to save themselves by getting into the boat. On this Paul told Julius, "that though he had said no person in the ship should perish, it was upon condition that they believed and trusted in God for their preservation: that therefore the seamen should continue in the ship and do their duty, and not endeavor to effect their escape by the boat; which if they did, they would be all in danger of their lives." Upon this the soldiers, to prevent the seamen's design, cut the ropes that fastened

the boat, which was soon driven away by the impetuosity of the waves.

A little before day-break Paul advised all the people on board the ship to take some refreshment, because, during the time of their danger, which had been fourteen days, they had taken but very little sustenance; and, to encourage them to do this, he assured them again, that *not a hair of their heads should perish*. Having said this, Paul *took bread, and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken it, he began to eat. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.*

In the morning they discovered land, and, discerning a creek, which seemed to make a kind of haven, they resolved, if possible, to put in there; but, in their passage, unexpectedly fell into a place where two seas met, and where the fore-part of the ship striking upon a neck of land that ran out into the sea, the hinder part was soon beaten in pieces by the violence of the waves. When the soldiers saw what was likely to be their fate, they proposed putting all the prisoners to the sword, lest any of them should swim to land, and make their escape; but the centurion, who was willing to save Paul, not approving of this design, gave orders that every one should shift for himself; the issue of which was, that, some by swimming, others fastening to planks, and others on pieces of the broken ship (to the number of 276 persons) all got safe on shore.

The country on which they were cast was (as Paul had foretold) an island called Melita,* now called

* This island is supposed to have received its name from the great quantity of honey (in Greek called *Meli*) which it produced. It is computed to be about twelve miles broad, and twenty long. It lies distant from Sicily about sixty miles. At present it is called Malta, and is remarkable on account of its being granted to the knights of St. John, of Jerusalem (formerly called the knights of Rhodes, but now knights of Malta) by the emperor Charles V. after the Turks had driven them out of Rhodes, in the year of our Lord, 1530. These knights, according to the institution, are in number a thousand, of which five hundred are to be resident in the island; the other five hundred are dispersed through Christendom in their several seminaries, which are in France, Italy and Ger-

Malta, situated on the Lybian Sea, between Syracuse and Africa. The natives of the place received them with great civility and kindness, made fires to dry their wet clothes, and entertained them with every necessary that was requisite for their distressed situation.

As Paul was laying a few sticks upon the fire, a viper, enlivened by the heat, came out of the bundle of wood from whence he had taken them, and fastened upon his hand. When the natives saw this they concluded that he must certainly be some notorious murderer, who, though Providence had suffered to escape the dangers of the sea, had reserved for a more public and solemn execution. But when they saw him shake off the venomous creature into the fire, and no harm ensue, they changed their sentiments, and cried out, *that he was a god*.*

At a small distance from that part of the island on which Paul and his company were shipwrecked lived Publius the governor, who received and entertained them with great civility and hospitality for three days. During this time Paul, being informed that the governor's father lay dangerously ill of a fever and bloody flux, in acknowledgment for the favors received from Publius, went to his apartment, and after praying some time, layed his hands upon him and healed him. The news of this miraculous cure was soon spread throughout the island, in consequence of which such as were afflicted with any disease were brought to Paul, who restored them to their former health and strength. This increased Paul's fame, and was of considerable advantage to his companions and fellow-sufferers, who, on his account, were highly caressed and entertained; and when they left the island they received many marks of esteem from the inhabitants, who furnished them with all necessaries proper for their voyage.

many; as there was one also in England, before it was suppressed by king Henry VIII. They are called knights *hospitallers*; from whom many places that formerly belonged to them here in England, do still retain something of their name, by being called in short *spittals*.

* Hercules was one of the gods whom the people of this island worshipped; and to him they ascribed the power of curing the bite of serpents.

After staying three months at Miletus they embarked on board the *Castor and Pollux*, a ship of Alexandria bound for Italy. On their arrival at Syracuse,* they cast anchor, and went on shore to refresh themselves. Here they stopped three days, when they again embarked, and sailed for Rhegium,† and from thence to Puteoli,‡ where they landed. Finding in this place some Christians, at their earnest solicitation, they continued with them a week, and then set forward on their journey to Rome.

* This was a city of Sicily, seated on the east side of the island, with a fine prospect from every entrance, both by sea and land. Its port, which had the sea on both sides of it, was almost all of it environed with beautiful buildings, and all that part of it, which was without the city, was on both sides banked up, and sustained with very fair walls of marble. The city itself, while in its splendor, was the largest and richest that the Greeks possessed in any part of the world. For (according to Strabo) it was twenty-two miles in circumference; and both Livy and Plutarch informs us, that the spoil of it was equal to that of Carthage. It was called quadruplex, as being divided into four parts, Aeradino, Tyehe, Neapolis, and the island of Ortygia. The first of these contained in it the famous temple of Jupiter; the second, the temple of Fortune; the third, a large Amphitheatre, and a wonderful statue of Apollo, in the midst of a spacious square; and the fourth, the two temples of Diana and Minerva, and the renowned fountain of Arethusa. About two hundred and ten years before the birth of Christ, this city was taken and sacked by Marcellus, the Roman general, and, in storming the place, Archimedes, the great Mathematician, who is esteemed the first inventor of the sphere, and who, during the siege, had sorely galled the Romans with his military engines, was slain by a common soldier, while he was intent upon his studies. After it was thus destroyed by Marcellus, Augustus rebuilt that part of it which stood upon the island, and, in time, it so far recovered itself, as to have three walls, three castles, and a marble gate, and to be able to send out twelve thousand horse, and four hundred ships. But it was totally destroyed by the Saracens in 884, and scarce any vestiges of it are now to be seen.

† *Rhegium*, now called Reggio, was a port town in Italy, opposite to Messina in the island of Sicily; it is thought to have this name given it by the Greeks, who suppose, that about this place Sicily was broken off from the continent of Italy by the sea.

‡ *Puteoli* was a noted town for trade, which lay not far from Naples; it was famous for its hot baths; and from these baths, or pits, of water, called in Latin *putvi*, the town is said to have taken its name.

When the Christians of Rome heard that Paul was on his journey to that city, great numbers of them went to meet him, some as far as *Apiaforum*,* and others as far as a place called the *Three Taverns*.† As soon as Paul saw them he was greatly rejoiced, and thanked God and took courage. They all conducted him in a kind of triumph to the city, on their arrival at which Julius delivered the rest of his prisoners over to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to take up his residence in a private house, with only one soldier to guard him.

After Paul had been at Rome three days he sent for the heads, or rulers of the Jews, in that city, who being assembled, he addressed himself to them in words to this effect: “Men and brethren, though I have done nothing contrary to the laws and customs of the Jews, yet was I by them apprehended and accused before the Roman governor, who, when he had examined me, and found no capital accusation laid by my enemies, would have discharged me. But the Jews opposing it, I was forced to appeal to Cæsar to get out of their hands, not that I had any complaint to make to him against my countrymen. And this is the cause of my desiring to speak with you; for I am imprisoned, as you see, for teaching the belief and expectation of a future resurrection, which is the result of all the promises of God to the Jews, and that on which every true Israelite depends.” The answer the rulers made to this was to the following purport: “We have no letters from Judea that mention thee, neither have the converted Jews made any complaint against thee. But we desire to hear thy opinion more at large; for as concerning this profession and doctrine of Christianity, we know it is generally opposed by our brethren the Jews.”

Paul readily complied with this request, and a day being appointed, not only the rulers, but many others of the

* *Apia-forum* was an ancient city of the Volsci, about 50 miles distant from Rome; and is thought to have had its name from the statue of Appius Claudius the Roman censor here erected, who paved the famous way from Rome to Capua.

† *The three taverns* was another place which stood upon the Apian way, about thirty miles distant from Rome.

Jews assembled at his house, to whom he preached from morning till night, explaining the doctrine of the Gospel, and proving, from the promises and predictions of the Old Testament, that Jesus was the true Messiah. But his discourse was attended with different success, some of his hearers being convinced of the truth of what he asserted, while others persisted in their infidelity. In consequence of this warm disputes took place between them; upon which, as they were about to depart, Paul, addressing himself to those who opposed his doctrine, told them that their unbelief was a strict fulfilment of what had been predicted by the prophet Isaiah: *Well (said he) spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive. For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them, Be it known, therefore, unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.* After Paul had said this the whole company departed, disagreeing among themselves on the subject which had been propounded to them.

Paul continued to reside in the house he had hired for the space of two years, during which he employed himself in expounding the doctrine of the Gospel to all who came to him. He preached daily without the least molestation, and with such success, that many people of distinction (some of whom were of the emperor's court) were converted, and became his constant disciples.

Among others of the apostle's converts at Rome was one Onesimus, who, some time before, had been servant to Philemon, a person of distinction at Colosse.* Onesi-

* This was a great city of Phrygia in Asia Minor, built by the river Licus, near the place (as Herodius informs us) where it begins to run under ground, as it does for five furlongs before it rises again, and empties itself into the Meander. This city was situated at an equal distance between Laodicea and Hierapolis, and, therefore, we find St. Paul (in his Epistle to the Colossians, Chap. iv. 13.) making mention of the inhabitants of all these three cities together; which

mus, having committed some indiscretion, left his master, and rambled as far as Rome, where, hearing Paul preach, he conceived such an idea of the truth of his doctrine, that he became a most serious convert. Paul, however, understanding that he was another man's servant, advised him to return to his master, which he readily agreeing to, Paul sent an epistle by him to Philemon, in which he "earnestly requests that he will pardon him, and, notwithstanding his former faults, treat him as a brother; promising withal, that if he had wronged or owed him any thing, he himself would not fail to repay it." This epistle may be considered as a masterpiece of eloquence in the persuasive way; for the apostle has therein had recourse to all the considerations which friendship, religion, piety and tenderness can inspire, to reconcile an incensed master to an indiscreet servant.

The Christians of Philippi having heard of Paul's imprisonment at Rome, and not knowing to what distress he might be reduced, raised a contribution for him, and sent it by Epaphroditus their bishop. This gave great satisfaction to Paul, not so much on account of the money they had sent, but, from its being a proof that they still retained Christian principles. To encourage them, therefore, to persevere in the faith of Christ, and to withstand all opposition that might be made against them by the enemies of the Gospel, he returned them an Epistle, "wherein he gives some account of the state of his affairs at Rome; gratefully acknowledges their kindness to him; and warns them against the dangerous opinions which the Judaizing teachers might vent against them. He likewise advises them to live in continual obedience to Christ; to avoid disputations, delight in prayer, be courageous under affliction, united in love, and clothed in humility, in imitation of the Blessed Jesus, who so far humbled himself, as to *become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*"

Paul had lived three years at Ephesus, preaching the Gospel to the numerous inhabitants of that city, and was

(according to the account of Eusebius) were all destroyed by an earthquake, in the tenth year of the emperor Nero.

therefore well acquainted with the state and condition of the place; so that taking the opportunity of Tychicus's going thither from Rome, he wrote his Epistle to the Ephesians, wherein " he endeavors to countermine the principles and practices both of the Jews and Gentiles; to confirm them in the belief and practices of the Christian doctrine; and to instruct them fully in the great mysteries of the Gospel; their redemption and justification by the death of Christ; their gratuitous election, their union with the Jews in one body, of which Christ is the head, and the glorious exaltation of that head above all with creatures both spiritual and temporal; together many excellent precepts, both as to the general duties of religion, and the duties of their particular relations."

Paul himself had never been at Colosse; but one Epaphras, who was at that time a prisoner with him at Rome, had preached the Gospel there with good success, and from him he learnt that certain false teachers had endeavored to corrupt the minds of the Christians in that city. In opposition to this, and to secure the converts in their faith, he wrote his Epistle to the Colossians, wherein " he beautifully sets forth the Messiah, and all the benefits that will be bestowed on such as believe in Him, as being the image of his Father, the Redeemer of all mankind, the reconciler of all things to God, and the head of the church, which gives life and vigor to all its members. He commends the doctrine preached to them by Epaphras, and exhorts them not to be led away by the reasonings of human philosophy. And concludes with giving them a list of many chief and principal duties of a Christian life, especially such as respect the relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants."

During the time Paul was thus laudably employed at Rome, James the apostle, and bishop of Jerusalem, was dedicating his time, as much as in him lay, to the propagation of the Gospel within his provinces. Considering within himself that it belonged to his Apostolical office to take care of all the converted among the twelve tribes of Israel, wherever dispersed, he wrote an Epistle to them,

which, among those that are called Catholic,* is placed first in the sacred canoa. The design of James, in writing this Epistle was, “to confute and suppress a dangerous error then growing up in the church, viz. that a bare *naked faith* was sufficient to secure men’s salvation, without any attention to good works; to comfort Christians under the persecutions, which were going to be raised against them by worldly powers; and to awaken them out of their stupidity, when judgments were ready to overtake them.” To this purpose he inserts, in his Epistle, many excellent exhortations, such as, “to bear afflictions, to hear the word of God, to mortify their passions, to bridle their tongues, to avoid cursing and swearing, and to adorn their Christian profession with a good conversation, with meekness, peaceableness and charity.”

It was not long after James had written this Epistle, before a period was put to all his labors. The governing part of the Jews, being highly enraged at the disappointment they had met with in Paul’s appealing to Cæsar, were now resolved to revenge it upon James; accordingly, taking the opportunity of the death of Festus (before the arrival of Albinus his successor) Ananias the high-priest summoned James, and some others, before the Sanhedrim, who required them to renounce their Christian faith. Their desire more especially was, that James should make his renunciation in the most public manner, and therefore they carried him up to the battlements of the temple, and threatened to throw him down from thence in case he refused complying with their request. But James, instead of gratifying their desires, began himself to confess, and to exhort others to confess, the faith of Christ, in the presence of those who came to hear his recantation; upon which the members of the Sanhe-

* This Epistle of St. James, with the two of St Peter, three of St. John, and that of Jude, obtained the name of *Catholic*, from their being directed (not as St. Paul’s were to any *particular church*) but to all the *faithful* wherever dispersed. Their being, therefore, only in the nature, as it were, of circular letters, was the reason why it was some time before they were admitted into the canoa of the church.

drim were so incensed that they ordered him to be thrown down headlong from the place where he stood. By this fall he was greatly bruised, but not quite killed; and therefore having recovered himself so far as to be able to rise on his knees, he prayed fervently to heaven for his persecutors, in the manner of the protomartyr Stephen. But malice is too diabolical to be pacified with kindness, or satisfied with cruelty. Accordingly, his enemies, vexed that they had not fully accomplished their work, poured a shower of stones upon him while he was imploring their forgiveness at the throne of grace, and one of them, more cruel and inveterate than the rest, put an end to his misery, by dashing out his brains with a fuller's club.*

Thus did this great and good man finish his course in the 96th year of his age, and about twenty-four years after our Blessed Saviour's ascension into heaven. His remains were deposited in a tomb, which he had caused to be made on the Mount of Olives; and his brother Simon was, by the general voice of the Christians, appointed his successor in the bishopric of Jerusalem.

The apostle James was a man of exemplary piety and devotion. Prayer was his daily business and delight: so constant was he at his devotions that his knees became hard and callous; and so prevalent in his petitions to heaven, that, in a time of great drought, he prayed for rain and obtained it. Nor was his charity to his fellow-creatures less than his piety towards God; he did good to all, watched over the souls of men, and made their eternal welfare his constant study. He was of a remarkable meek and humble temper, honoring what was excellent in others, but concealing what was valuable in himself. The dignity of the place he so worthily filled

* The perpetrators of this barbarous act were considered in the most detestable light by the sober and just persons among the Jews themselves. Even their own historian Josephus could not but condemn it, and (as himself testifies) all the honest and conscientious people of the city remonstrated against it, both to their king Agrippa, and to the Roman governor Albinus; insomuch that the high-priest, by whose authority it was committed, was, in a few months after, degraded, and another placed in his stead.

could not induce him to entertain lofty thoughts of himself above his brethren: on the contrary, he strove to conceal whatever might place him in a higher rank than the other disciples of the Lord of Glory. He was the delight of all good men, and so much in the favor and estimation of the people, that they used to flock after him, and strive who should touch even but the hem of his garment. In short, he was a man of so amiable a temper as to be the wonder of the age in which he lived; and from the reputation of his holy and religious life, was stiled *James the Just*.



CHAP. VII.

Paul, after being confined more than two years at Rome, obtains his liberty, and writes his Epistle to the Hebrews. He travels into Spain and other western parts, and then returning eastward, goes to Judea. Account of the Travels and preaching of Peter, with his conquest over Simon Magus, the noted sorcerer. Peter and Paul are committed to prison by order of the emperor Nero, who raises the first general persecution against the Christians. Account of Paul's farther travels, with his first Epistle to Timothy, and another to Titus. He returns to Rome, and, with Peter, is again committed to prison. Paul writes his second Epistle to Timothy. Both suffer martyrdom at Rome, the one being crucified, and the other beheaded.

AFTER Paul had continued at Rome upwards of two years, in a state of confinement, he obtained his liberty, but by what means we have not any account in history. It may be presumed that, the Jews not having sufficient proof of the accusation they had laid against him, or being informed that what they alledged was no violation of any Roman law, they durst not implead him before the emperor; and therefore, of course, he was permitted to go at large.

Paul, having obtained his liberty, left Rome, and travelled into various parts of Italy, preaching the Gospel.

with different success. In some places he made many converts, but in others he met with great opposition. Before he left Italy, he wrote his famous and most elaborate Epistle to the Hebrews, that is, to the converted Jews who dwelt in Jerusalem and its neighborhood. His main design, in this Epistle, is, “to magnify Christ, and the religion of the Gospel, above Moses and the Jewish economy, that, by this means, he may the better establish the converted Jews in the belief and profession of Christianity. To this purpose he represents our Saviour, in his Divine nature, far superior to all angels, and all created beings; and, in his mediatorial capacity, a greater lawgiver than Moses; a greater priest than Aaron; and a greater king and priest than Melchisedec. He informs them, that the ceremonies, the sacrifices, and the observances of the law, could have no virtue in themselves, but only as they were types of Jesus Christ; and, being now accomplished in his person, and by his ministry, were finally and totally abolished. He insists upon the necessity of faith, and, by the examples of the patriarchs and prophets, proves, that justification is to be had no other way, than by the merits of a dying Saviour. And lastly, he lays before them many excellent precepts for the regulation of their lives; exhortations to trust and confidence in Christ, in all their sufferings; and strict cautions against apostacy from his religion, even in the hottest persecutions.”

A short time after Paul had written this Epistle to the Hebrews, he left Italy, and, accompanied by Timothy, prosecuted his long intended journey into Spain; and, according to the testimony of several writers, crossed the sea, and preached the Gospel in Britain.* What success

* Clements, in his famous Epistle to the Corinthians, expressly tells us, that, being a preacher, both to the East and West, he taught righteousness to the whole World, and went to the utmost bounds of the West; and Theodoret and others inform us, that he preached not only in Spain, but went to other nations, and brought the Gospel into the isles of the sea, by which he undoubtedly means Britain: and, therefore, he elsewhere reckons the Gauls and Britons, among the people, whom the apostles, and particularly Paul, persuaded to embrace the doctrine of Christ.

he had in these western parts is not known: however, after going from one place to another for the space of eight or nine months, he returned again eastward, visited Sicily, Greece and Crete (at the latter of which places he constituted Titus bishop of the island) and then went into Judea, where we shall for the present leave him, in order to take some notice of Peter, his fellow-laborer in the cause of Christ.

In what manner Peter employed his time, after his escape out of prison, we have not any certain account. It is, however, generally agreed, that about the second year of the emperor Claudius, he went to Rome, and there continued for some time, till at length that emperor, taking advantage of some seditions and tumults raised by the Jews, published an edict for banishing all the Jews from that city; in consequence of which Peter returned to Jerusalem. After staying some time in the capital of Judea, he visited the several churches which he had planted in the East, and carried the glad tidings of the Gospel into Africa, Sicily, Italy, and even as far as Britain, in all which places he brought over great numbers to the Christian faith.

Having thus propagated the Gospel in the Western, as well as the Eastern parts of the world, Peter, towards the latter end of the reign of Nero, returned to Rome, the Jews, after the death of Claudius, being permitted to reside in that city with the same freedom as before that emperor issued his edict for their banishment. On Peter's arrival at Rome, he met with his fellow-laborer Paul, who had just returned thither from Judea. The two apostles found the minds of the people strangely bewitched, and hardened against the doctrines of the Gospel, by the subtilties and magical arts of Simon Magus, whom Peter had severely chastised for his wickedness at Samaria. This monster of impiety not only opposed the preaching of the apostles, but likewise did all in his power to render them and their doctrine odious to the emperor. Peter, foreseeing that the calumnies of Simon and his adherents would be injurious to the cause of his great Master, thought himself obliged to oppose him with all his might; and having discovered the vanity of

his impostures in several remarkable instances,* he at length worked him up to such a pitch of madness and desperation, that to give the people an evident demonstration of his having those supernatural powers he had pretended, he promised that, on such a day, he would ascend visibly up into heaven. Accordingly, at the time appointed, when prodigious numbers of people were assembled to behold so extraordinary a sight, he went up to the summit of a mount, from whence he raised himself, and, by the assistance of some magic arts, seemed as if he was flying towards the regions of heaven. Peter and Paul, beholding the delusion, had recourse to prayers, and obtained their petitions of the Almighty, namely, that the impostor should be soon discovered, for the honor of the Blessed Jesus. Accordingly, he fell headlong to the ground, and was so bruised by the fall, that, in a short time, he expired.

* Cave, in his Lives of the Apostles, mentions one of these instances as related by Hegeſippus the younger, who was contemporary with St. Ambrose. "There was (says that writer) in Rome, a gentleman of some note, a kinsman to the emperor, who had lately died. In consequence of this, those who knew St. Peter's power in working miracles, advised his friends to send for him, and others likewise prevailed, that Simon the magician might be sent for. Glad of this occasion to magnify himself before the people, Simon proposed to Peter, that, if he raised the man to life, Peter, who had reviled *the mighty power of God* (as he stiled himself) should lose his life; but that, if Peter prevailed, he would submit to the same penalty. Peter accepted the challenge; and, when Simon began his charms and enchantments, the dead body seemed to move his hand: whereupon, the people who stood by, thinking that the person was alive, were going to fall foul on Peter, for daring to oppose so great a power. But Peter, intreating their patience, desired only that the magician might be removed from the bed-side; which, when they had so done, the deception vanished, and the body remained without the least sign of motion. Then Peter, standing at a good distance from the bed, silently made his addresses to heaven, and when he had so done, in the presence of them all, commanded the man, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to arise, which he instantly did; so that the people changing their minds, were going to stone the magician, but that Peter interposed for his life, by telling them, that it would be punishment enough to him to live, and see, that in despite of all his power and malice, the kingdom of Christ would increase and flourish."

The emperor Nero was a professed patron of magicians, and therefore, when he heard of this event, he was greatly irritated. He had a particular dislike to the doctrine of Christianity, as being totally repugnant to the lusts and passions which he indulged; and was highly offended at Peter for having made so many converts, among whom were several persons of distinction. In consequence of this he ordered him and Paul to be apprehended and cast into prison, soon after which, an event* occurred, from whence he took the opportunity of shewing his resentment to the Jews, and that in the most severe manner. He issued out an edict, ordering the Christian Jews to be persecuted in every part of his empire; in consequence of which all orders and degrees of

* The emperor Nero, in the former part of his reign, governed with tolerable credit to himself; but in the latter part he gave way to the greatest extravagance of temper, and to the most atrocious barbarities. The event above alluded to is this. Among other diabolical whims he took it into his head to order, that the city of Rome should be set on fire, which was done by his officers, guards, and servants, accordingly. While the imperial city was in flames, he went up to the tower of Maecenas, played upon his harp, sung the song of the burning of Troy, and openly declared, "That he wished the ruin of all things before his death." Among the noble buildings burnt was the Circus, or place appropriated to horse-races: it was half a mile in length, of an oval form, with rows of seats rising above each other, and capable of receiving, with ease, upwards of 100,000 spectators. Besides this noble pile, many other palaces and houses were consumed; several thousands perished in the flames, were smothered with the smoke, or buried beneath the ruins.

This dreadful conflagration continued nine days; when Nero finding that his conduct was greatly blamed, and a severe odium cast upon him, determined to lay the whole upon the Christians, at once to excuse himself, and have an opportunity of glutting his sight with new cruelties. This was the occasion of the first persecution; and the barbarities exercised upon the Christians were such as even excited the commiseration of the Romans themselves. Nero even refined upon cruelty, and contrived all manner of punishments for the Christians, that the most infernal imagination could design. In particular, he had some sewed up in the skins of wild beasts, and then worried by dogs till they expired; and others dressed in shirts made stiff with wax, fixed to axle-trees, and set on fire in his gardens in order to illuminate them. This persecution was general throughout the whole of the Roman empire; but it rather increased than diminished the spirit of Christianity.

that people were treated with the greatest contempt and cruelty that could be invented.

But before the burning of the city, and the persecution commenced against the Christians, in consequence of Nero's edict, both Peter and Paul made their escape from confinement. Peter continued at Rome, but Paul left it, and went into Judea, where he staid some time, after which he went into Asia, and met Timothy at Ephesus. From hence he paid a visit to the Colossians, whom he had never before seen, and after staying with them some time returned to Ephesus, and excommunicated Hymeneus* and Alexander, for denying the resurrection of the dead, and other articles of the Christian faith. From Ephesus he went into Macedonia, but previous to his departure, enjoined Timothy (whom he had constituted bishop of Ephesus† constantly to reside in that city, and to take the charge of all the Pro-consular Asia.

After Paul had visited several places in Macedonia, he went to Philippi,‡ where he staid some time, during which he daily preached to the people, made many new converts, and farther established those who had before

* This Hymeneus was, very probably, a citizen of Ephesus, who, being converted by St. Paul's first sermons, fell afterwards into the heresy of those, who denied the resurrection of the body, and affirmed, that there was no other resurrection, than that of the soul, which, by faith and baptism, is revived from sin to grace. The Alexander, who was his colleague in this heresy, was doubtless, the copersmith whom St. Paul, in his second Epistle to Timothy, so loudly complains of, as greatly obstructing the good effects of his preaching, chap. iv. 14. but whether it was the same Alexander, who would have addressed himself to the multitude, which Demetrius, the silversmith of Ephesus, had drawn together, Acts, xix. 24. is a matter of some doubt. However this be, it is certain, that their notion of no other resurrection than a spiritual one, was destructive of the very foundations of Christianity, which are laid in the hopes of a resurrection from the dead; and, therefore, the apostle thought it expedient to have them excommunicated, i. e. separated from the society of the faithful, and deprived of the privileges of being present at religious assemblies, of partaking of the Lord's Supper, and joining in such other holy offices, as linked Christians together in one and the same society and communion.

† See 1 Tim. i. 3.

‡ See Philip. i. 25, 26.

embraced the faith in the principles of Christianity. Before he left Macedonia he wrote his first Epistle to Timothy, in which “ he lays down the duties and qualifications of a bishop, as well in respect of his ministry, as of his private conversation, and instructs him in the office of a true Christian pastor.”

Leaving Macedonia, Paul directed his course to Nicopolis, a populous city situated on the banks of the Danube, where he took up his winter quarters. During his stay here he wrote his Epistle to Titus at Crete; wherein “ he describes to him (as he had done to Timothy) the qualifications which a bishop ought to have, and more especially a bishop of Crete, where some sharpness and severity was necessary amidst a people of their perverse and obstinate tempers. He admonishes him not to suffer the flock, committed to his charge, to be led away by the delusions of Judaism; and lastly, lays down precepts for people in all conditions of life, even not forgetting servants, because our Blessed Saviour has poured out his *grace upon all men.*”

In the beginning of the spring Paul left Nicopolis, and went to Corinth. After staying a short time here, he crossed the sea into Asia, and went to Ephesus, and from thence proceeded to Miletum. From Miletum he travelled northward to Troas, and lodged with Carpus, one of his disciples, where he left his cloke,* some books, and other articles. From Troas he went to Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, where he suffered those persecutions and afflictions, of which he makes mention to Timothy, and thanks God for his deliverance from them.†

After visiting these, and many other places, Paul went again to Rome, knowing that the persecution which had taken place in that city, in consequence of the edict issued by Nero, was somewhat abated. Meeting with Peter, they conjunctively used their utmost endeavors to instruct the Jews in their synagogues, and to convert the Gentiles in all public places and assemblies. This, however, soon

* See 2 Tim. iv. 13.

† 2 Tim. iii. 4.

raised the malice and indignation of the magistrates, who were still inflamed against the Jews. Nero was at that time in Greece, and had left Helius to supply his place during his absence, investing him with exorbitant powers, which he exercised with the most unbounded rigor. It was a crime sufficient for these two apostles (in the eyes of Helius) that they were Christians. The particular prejudice he took against Peter was, his having defeated Simon Magus; and that against Paul, his having converted one of the emperor's concubines. He therefore ordered them both to be apprehended and committed to prison, where they spent their time in the most solemn acts of devotion, and, as opportunity offered, preached the Gospel to their guards and fellow prisoners, among whom it is said they converted Processus and Martinian, two principal officers of the army.

While they were in prison Peter wrote his second general epistle to the converted Jews, who were dispersed in the several provinces of Asia. In this epistle "he endeavors, by earnest exhortations, to prevail with them to persevere in the doctrine which they had received, and to testify the soundness and sincerity of their faith by a Christian life. He forewarns them of the false teachers that would shortly spring up among them, foretels their sad and miserable destruction, and describes them by their odious characters that they may avoid them. He vindicates the doctrine of Christ's coming to judgment, which the heretics of those times denied, that thereby they might encourage men the more securely to pursue their lewd courses. And lastly, he describes the *great and terrible day of the Lord*, when the *elements shall melt*, and the whole frame of nature be dissolved, thereby to excite them to become circumspect and diligent, in order to be *found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.*"

Much about the same time that Peter wrote this epistle to the converted Jews in Asia, Paul wrote his second epistle to Timothy, wherein "he informs him of the near approach of his death, and desires him to come to him before winter, because most of his companions, upon one affair or other, were departed from him. He ex-

“ horts him to discharge all the duties of a bishop and
 “ pastor, suitable to those excellent gifts he had received,
 “ and with a generous contempt of the world, and world-
 “ ly things. He admonishes him, not to forget the doc-
 “ trine which he had taught him, nor to be surprized or
 “ disturbed at the apostacy of some from the faith, but to
 “ preach the more zealously against such opposers, as
 “ placed their confidence in those teachers, who left the
 “ truth to turn unto fables. And lastly, he informs him,
 “ how, at his first appearing before Helius, all his com-
 “ panions, for fear of being involved in his punishment,
 “ *forsook him*, but that *the Lord stood by him and*
 “ *strengthened him, to make his preaching more con-*
 “ *spicuous and effectual to the Gentiles.*”

When the two apostles had been in confinement about eight months, the cruel Nero returned from Greece, and entered Rome in triumph. Soon after his return it was ultimately resolved, that the two apostles should be put to death. Peter, as a Jew and foreigner, was sentenced to be crucified; and Paul, as a Roman citizen, to be beheaded. On the 29th of June (as it is generally supposed) these sentences were put in execution. Peter, after being first scourged, according to the Roman custom, was taken from the prison, and led to the top of the Vatican Mount near the Tiber, where he was sentenced to surrender up his life on the cross. On his arrival at the place of execution, he begged the favor of the officers that he might not be crucified in the common manner, but with his head downwards, *thinking himself unworthy to suffer in the same posture in which his Lord and Master had suffered before him*. This request was accordingly complied with; and in this manner did the great apostle Peter resign his soul into the hands of Him who came down from heaven to ransom mankind from destruction, and open for them the gates of the heavenly Canaan.

While Peter was suffering on the top of the Vatican Mount, his fellow-apostle Paul was conducted to a place called Aquæ Salvæ, about three miles from Rome, in order to undergo the punishment denounced against him by the cruel Nero. In his way he converted three of the soldiers who were sent to guard him to his execution, and

who, within a few days after, died martyrs themselves. As soon as Paul arrived at the place of execution, he knelt down, and after praying for some time with the greatest fervency, cheerfully gave up his neck to the fatal stroke; quitting this vale of misery in hopes of passing to the blissful regions of immortality, to the kingdom of his beloved Master, the Great Redeemer of the human race.

Thus died these two most eminent apostles of Jesus Christ, after they had, with indefatigable labor, reaped a glorious harvest of infinite numbers of souls, and triumphantly propagated salvation through the then most considerable parts of the world.

The body of Peter, being taken from the cross, was embalmed after the Jewish manner by Marcellinus the Presbyter, and buried in the Vatican near the Triumphal Way. Over his grave a small church was afterwards erected, which being, in the course of time, destroyed, his body was removed to the cemetery in the Appian Way, two miles distant from Rome. Here it continued till the time of pope Cornelius, when it was re-conveyed to the Vatican, where it abode in some obscurity, till Constantine the Great, from the profound reverence he had for the Christian religion, having re-built and enlarged the Vatican to the honor of St. Peter, enriched it with gifts and ornaments, which, in every age, increased in splendor and beauty, till it became one of the wonders of the world, and in that light was considered for many years after.

The remains of Paul were deposited in the Via Ostiensis, about two miles from Rome. Constantine the Great, at the instance of Pope Sylvester, built a stately church over his grave, which he adorned with an hundred marble columns, and beautified with the most exquisite workmanship.

It may not be improper, before we part with these two great apostles, to mention some particulars relative to their persons and characters. And first,

St. Peter (according to the description given of him by Nicephorus) was of a middle size, but somewhat slender, and inclining to tallness: his complexion was very pale;

his hair thick and curled; his eyes black; his eye-brows thin; and his nose large, but not sharp. With respect to his disposition, if we consider him as a man, there seems to have been a natural eagerness predominant in his temper, which animated his soul to the most bold and sometimes rash undertakings. It was this, in a great measure, that prompted him to be so very forward to speak, and to return answers sometimes before he had well considered them. It was this that made him expose his person to the most imminent dangers, promise those great things in behalf of his master, resolutely draw his sword in his quarrel against a whole band of soldiers, and wound a servant of the high-priest; nay, he had, in all probability, attempted greater things, had not his Lord restrained his impetuosity, and given a reasonable check to his fury.

If we consider him as a disciple of the Blessed Jesus, we shall find him exemplary in the great duties of religion. His humility and lowliness of mind were remarkable. With what a passionate earnestness on the conviction of a miracle, did he beg of our blessed Saviour to depart from him; thinking it unworthy the Son of God to come near so vile a sinner!

When the great Redeemer of mankind, by that amazing condescension, stooped so low as to wash the feet of his disciples, Peter could not be persuaded to admit his performing it, thinking it highly improper that so great a person should submit to such a servile office towards a person so mean as himself; nor could he be induced to admit of it till his great Master threatened to deprive him of his favor.

When Cornelius, the Roman centurion, would have treated him with more than ordinary marks of esteem and veneration, he was so far from complying with it, that he declared he was nothing more than a mortal like himself.

His love and zeal for his master were remarkable; he thought he could never express either at too high a rate: venturing on the greatest perils, and exposing his life to the most imminent dangers. His forwardness to own his great Master for the Messiah and Son of the Most High,

was remarkably great; and it was this that drew from his Lord that honorable encomium, *Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona.*

But his distinguished courage and constancy in confessing Christ, even before his most inveterate enemies, was still greater, after he had recovered himself from his fall. How plainly does he tell the Jews that they were the murderers and crucifiers of the Lord of Glory? Nay, with what an undaunted courage, with what an heroic greatness of soul, did he tell the very Sanhedrim, who had sentenced and condemned him, that they were guilty of his death, and that they had no other way of escaping the vengeance of the Almighty, but by the merits of that very Jesus, whom they had crucified and put to death.

Lastly, if we consider him as an apostle, as a pastor, or shepherd of the souls of men, we shall find him faithful and diligent in his office, zealously endeavoring to instruct the ignorant, reduce the erroneous, strengthen the weak, confirm the strong, reclaim the vicious, and turn the children of men into the paths of righteousness. He never omitted any opportunity of preaching to the people, and spreading the glad tidings of the Gospel among the human race; and so powerful were his discourses, that he brought over many thousands of converts. How many painful journies and dangerous voyages did he undertake! with what unconquerable patience did he endure the greatest trials, surmount every difficulty, and remove every disposition, that he might circulate and establish the Gospel of his beloved Master! Never refusing even to lay down his life to promote it. Nor was he assiduous only to perform these duties himself; but was also careful to animate others to do the like, earnestly pressing and persuading the pastors and governors of the church to *feed the flock of God*, to labor freely for the good of the souls of men, and not to undertake those offices to acquire advantages to themselves; beseeching them to treat the flock committed to their care with lenity and gentleness, and to be themselves shining examples of piety and religion, the surest method of rendering their ministry successful. And because it was impossible for him to be always present, to teach and warn the children of men,

he endeavored, by letters, to imprint in their minds the practice of what they had been taught—a method he tells us he was resolved to pursue, as long as he continued an inhabitant of this world; *thinking it meet, while he was in this tabernacle, to stir up, by putting them in mind of these things; that so they might be able, after his decease, to have them always in remembrance.*

Thus lived, thus died, Simon Peter, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, and at length to offer up his life in ratification of the doctrine he delivered and the faith he maintained and propagated.

St. Paul was, in person, of a low and small stature, somewhat stooping: his complexion was fair; his countenance grave; his head small; his eyes sparkling; his nose high and bending; and his hair thick and dark, but mixed with grey. His constitution was weak, and he was often subject to distempers; but his mind was strong, and he possessed a solid judgment, quick discernment, and prompt memory, all which were improved by the advantages of a liberal education. His humility and self-abasement were wonderful; his sobriety and temperance singularly strict; and his contempt for the world great and generous. His kindness and charity were remarkable: he had a quick sense of the wants of others, and a most compassionate tenderness for all who were in distress. To what place soever he went, it was always one of his first cares to make provision for the poor, and to stir up the bounty of the rich and wealthy in their behalf. But his charity to the souls of men was infinitely greater, fearing no dangers, refusing no labors, going through good and evil report, that he might gain men over to the knowledge of the truth, take them out of the crooked paths and place them in the strait way that leadeth to life eternal.

Nor was his charity to men greater than his zeal to God, laboring, with all his might, to promote the honor of his Master. When he was at Athens, and saw the people of that city involved in the grossest superstition and idolatry, and giving that honor which was due to God alone, to statues and images, his zeal was fired and he could not help letting them know the resentment of

his mind, and how greatly they dishonored God, the great Maker and Preserver of the world.

Through the course of an extensive ministry, he never suffered himself to be interrupted in his endeavors for propagating the Gospel by the dangers and difficulties he met with, or the troubles and oppositions that were raised against him. This will evidently appear if we take a survey of the trials and sufferings he underwent; some part whereof are thus briefly summed up by himself: *In labors abundant, in stripes above measure, in death oft; thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice suffered shipwreck, a night and a day in the deep. In journeying often, in perils of water, in perils by his countrymen, in perils by the heathens, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst: in fastings often: in cold and nakedness, and besides those things that were without, which daily came upon him, the care of all the churches: 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c.* An account, though very great, yet far short of what he endured. He did not want for solicitations both from Jews and Gentiles; and might, doubtless, in some measure, have made his own terms, would he have been false to his trust, and quitted that way which was then every where spoken against. But alas! those things weighed little with our apostle, who counted not his life dear unto him, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus. And therefore, when he found himself under the sentence of death, he could triumphantly say, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*

In short, he was a man in whom the grace of God was displayed with peculiar lustre, and who gave the most convincing proof that the influence of Gospel principles exceed all moral and legal obligations.

The Gospel 'tis which streaks the morning bright,
 'Tis this which gilds the horrors of the night.
 When wealth forsakes us, or when friends are few;
 When friends are faithless, or when foes pursue;

'Tis this which wards the blow, or stills the smart,
 Disarms affliction, or repels its dart;
 Within the breast bids purest raptures rise,
 Bids awful conscience spread her cloudless skies.
 When the storm thickens, and the thunders roll,
 When the earth trembles to the affrighted pole,
 The virtuous mind, nor doubts, nor fears assail,
 For storms are zephyrs, or a gentler gale;
 But when disease obstructs the laboring breath,
 When the pulse thickens, and each gasp is death,
 E'en then religion shall sustain the just,
 Grace their last moments, nor desert their dust.

CHAP. VIII.

Containing an Account of the Transactions, Travels, Persecutions and Sufferings of St. ANDREW, St. JAMES THE GREAT, St. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, St. PHILIP, and the other Apostles, Evangelists and Disciples of Christ, who, after our Lord's ascension into heaven, spent their time in laboring to propagate the Gospel in different parts of the world; most of whom suffered martyrdom for the cause of their Great Lord and Master.

IN the preceding Chapters we have given a minute detail of the transactions of those two great apostles Peter and Paul, as related by the Evangelist St. Luke; together with an account of the persecutions and sufferings of St. Stephen, and St. James the Less, bishop of Jerusalem. We shall therefore, in this Chapter proceed to relate the particulars concerning their fellow-laborers in the cause of Christ; in doing which we shall begin with the Apostle

St. ANDREW.

After the ascension of our Blessed Lord into heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost on the apostles, to qualify them for the great business they were about to undertake, St. Andrew was appointed to preach the Gospel in Scythia and the neighboring countries. Accordingly

he departed from Jerusalem, and first travelled through Cappadocia, Galatia and Bythia, instructing the inhabitants in the faith of Christ, and continued his journey along the Euxine Sea, into the deserts of Scythia. On his arrival at a place called Amynus, he was received with great civility by a distinguished Jew of that town; upon which he went into the synagogue, preached to them concerning Jesus, and, from the prophecies of the Old Testament, proved him to be the Messiah and Saviour of the world. During his stay here he converted many to the true faith, having done which, previous to his departure, he ordained them priests, and settled the times of their public meetings for the performance of Divine worship.

Leaving Amynus, he proceeded to Trapezium, a maritime city on the Euxine Sea; from whence, after visiting many other places, he went to Nice, where he staid two years preaching and working miracles with great success. From Nice he proceeded to Nicomedia, and from thence to Chalcedon, where he took shipping, and sailing through the Propontis, passed the Euxine Sea to Heraclea, and afterwards to Amastris; in all which places he met with very great difficulties, but overcame them by an invincible patience and resolution.

From Amastris, Andrew went to Sinope, a city situated on the Euxine Sea, and famous both for the birth and burial of King Mithridates. The inhabitants of this city were chiefly Jews, who, partly from a zeal for their religion, and partly from their barbarous manners, were exasperated against Andrew, and entered into a confederacy to burn the house in which he lodged. But being disappointed in their design, they treated him with the most savage cruelty, throwing him on the ground, stamping upon him with their feet, pulling and dragging him from place to place: some beating him with clubs, and others pelting him with stones, till at length, apprehending they had entirely deprived him of life, they cast him out into the fields. But he miraculously recovered, and returned publicly into the city; by which, and other miracles he wrought among them, he converted many from the errors of their ways, and induced them to become disciples of the Blessed Jesus.

Departing from Sinope, he returned to Jerusalem, and, after staying a short time in his own country, went again into the province allotted for the service of his ministry, which greatly flourished through the power of the Divine grace that attended it. He travelled over Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Achaia, and Epirus,* preaching the Gospel, propagating Christianity, and confirming the doctrine he taught with signs and miracles. At length he arrived at Patrea,† a city of Achaia, where he gave his last and greatest testimony to the Gospel of his Divine Master, by cheerfully sealing it with his blood.

It happened that Ægenas, the pro-consul of Achaia, came at this time to Patrea, where, knowing that many of the people had abandoned the heathen religion and embraced the gospel of Christ, he had recourse to every method both of favor and cruelty, to reduce the people to their old idolatry. The apostle, whom no difficulties or dangers could deter from performing the duties of his ministry, addressed himself to the pro-consul, calmly putting him in mind that, being only a judge of men, he ought to revere Him who was the supreme and impartial judge of all, pay him the divine honors due to his exalted majesty, and abandon the impieties of his idolatrous worship; observing to him, that if he would renounce his idolatries, and heartily embrace the Christian faith, he might, with him and the members who had believed in the Son of God, receive eternal happiness in the Messiah's kingdom.

The pro-consul told St. Andrew he would never embrace the religion he had mentioned, and that if he did not sacrifice to the Gods (in order that all those whom he

* Epirus was a province of Greece, lying along the coast of the Ionian Sea, and having for its bounds Albania on the north, Thessaly on the south, Achaia on the south east, and the ocean on the west.

† Patrea was situated on an hill near the sea, about ten miles from the mouth of the gulph Lepanto. The goddess Diana was worshipped here in the most diabolical manner, having a most beautiful young man and maid, every year, sacrificed to her, till by the preaching of St. Andrew, one Eurypilus, a great man of the place, being converted to Christianity, occasioned that barbarous custom to be totally laid aside.

had seduced might, by his example, be brought back to the ancient religion they had forsaken) he would cause him to be immediately put to death. The apostle replied, that he saw it was in vain to endeavor to persuade a person incapable of sober counsels, and hardened in his own blindness and folly, to forsake his evil ways; and that, with respect to himself, he might act as he pleased, and if he had any torment greater than another, he might inflict it upon him; as the stricter constancy he shewed in his sufferings for Christ, the more acceptable he should be to his Lord and Master, after his departure from this wicked world.

This so irritated Ægeas, that he immediately condemned him to death. Accordingly, after being scourged, in the most unmerciful manner, by seven lictors, he was led away to be crucified. As soon as he approached the cross he knelt down, and saluted it in words to this effect: "I have long desired and expected this happy hour. The cross has been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it, and adorned with his members as with so many inestimable jewels. I therefore come joyfully and triumphantly to it, that it may receive me as a disciple and follower of Him, who once hung upon it, and be the means of carrying me safe to my Master, being the instrument on which he redeemed me."

After offering up his prayers to the throne of grace, and exhorting the people to constancy and perseverance in the faith he had delivered to them, he was fastened to the cross, on which he hung two whole days teaching and instructing the people. In the mean time great interest was made with the pro-consul to save his life; but the apostle earnestly begged of God, that he might then depart, and seal the truth of his religion with his blood. His prayers were heard, and he soon after expired on the last day of November, but in what year is not certain.

The cross on which he was fixed was made of two pieces of timber, crossing each other in the middle, in the shape of the letter X, (which has ever since been known by the name of *St. Andrew's Cross*) and to this he was fastened, not with nails, but cords, to make his death more painful and lingering.

His body being taken down from the cross, was decently and honorably interred by Maximilla, a lady of great quality and estate, and whom Nicephorus tells us was wife to the pro-consul. Constantine the Great afterwards removed his body to Constantinople, and buried it in the great church he had built to the honor of the apostles. This structure being taken down some hundred years after by the emperor Justinian, in order to be rebuilt, the body of St. Andrew was found in a wooden coffin, and again deposited in the same place it had been before, which was afterwards revered by all true professors of the Christian religion.

St. JAMES the Great.

This apostle was surnamed the Great, to distinguish him from that James (another of the apostles) who was bishop of Jerusalem. After the ascension of the Blessed Jesus he preached to the dispersed Jews; that is, to those converts who were dispersed after the death of Stephen. He first preached the Gospel in several parts of Judea and Samaria, after which he visited Spain, where he planted Christianity, and appointed some select disciples to perfect what he had begun.

After this he returned to Judea, where he continued preaching, in different parts, for some time, with great success; till at length Herod (who was a bigot to the Jewish religion, and desirous of acquiring the favor of the Jews) began a violent persecution against the Christians, and to such a degree did his zeal animate him, that, after a short trial, he ordered James to be put to death.

As he was led to the place of execution, the officer that guarded him to the tribunal, or rather his accuser, having been converted by that remarkable courage and constancy shewn by the apostle at the time of his trial, repented of what he had done, came and fell down at the apostle's feet, and heartily begged pardon for what he had said against him. The holy man, after recovering from the surprize, tenderly embraced him. *Peace, said he, my son, peace be to thee and the pardon of thy faults.* Upon which the officer publicly declared himself a christian, and both were beheaded at the same time.

Thus fell the great apostle St. James, taking cheerfully that cup of which he had long before told his Lord and Master he was both ready and willing to drink.

St. JOHN the EVANGELIST.

Though this apostle was by much the youngest of the whole, yet he was admitted into as great a share of his Master's confidence as any. He was one of those to whom our Lord communicated the most private passages of his life; one of those whom he took with him when he raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead; one of those to whom he gave a specimen of his divinity in his transfiguration on the mount; one of those who were present at his conference with Moses and Elijah, and heard that voice which declared him *the beloved Son of God*; and one of those who were companions in his solitude, most retired devotions, and bitter agonies in the garden.

These instances of particular favor our apostle endeavored, in some measure, to answer, by returns of particular kindness and constancy; for though he at first deserted his Master on his apprehension, yet he soon discovered the impropriety of his conduct; he therefore went back to seek his Saviour, confidently entered the high-priest's hall, followed our Lord through the several particulars of his trial, and at last waited on him at his execution, owning Him, as well as being owned by Him, in the midst of armed soldiers, and in the thickest crowds of his inveterate enemies. Here it was that our Great Redeemer committed to his care his sorrowful and disconsolate mother with his dying breath. And certainly our Blessed Lord could not have given a more honorable testimony of his particular kindness and respect to John, than by leaving his own mother to his trust and care, and substituting him to supply that duty he himself paid her while he resided in this vale of sorrow.

When the apostles made a division of the provinces among them after our Saviour's ascension into heaven, in order to circulate the doctrine of their Lord and Master, that of Asia fell to the share of St. John, though he did not immediately enter upon his charge, but continued at

Jerusalem till the death of the Blessed Virgin, which happened about fifteen years after our Lord's ascension.

After being thus released from the trust committed to his care by his dying Master, he went into Asia, and industriously applied himself to the propagation of Christianity, preaching where the Gospel had not then been known, and confirming it where it was already planted. Many churches of note and eminence were founded by him, particularly those of Smyrna,* Philadelphia, Lao-

* Some of the fathers of the church relate the following very singular circumstance, in which St. John was materially concerned: Being in the Christian church at Smyrna, he beheld a comely young man among the congregation. As he was particularly struck with his appearance, he fervently recommended him to the bishop of Smyrna, in the name of Christ. St. John went to Ephesus, and the bishop taking home the young man, instructed him in every Christian duty, and made him a pastor. The youth, however, falling into bad company, grew debauched, associated with thieves, and became the captain of a band of robbers. When St. John came again to Smyrna, he enquired after the young man; and was told by the bishop that he was dead.—“Dead, (said he) of what disease did he die?” To which the bishop replied, with tears, “He is dead to God, has turned not only libertine but a thief, and has committed many robberies and murders in the neighboring mountains, where he commands a most desperate gang.” The apostle was greatly afflicted at this intelligence, but immediately ordered a horse and a guide to conduct him to the mountains. Arriving at a very desolate part, he was suddenly surrounded by a detachment of the robbers, who were roaming after prey. “This is the very thing I wanted, said St. John, very calmly, shew me the way to your captain; 'tis with him I have business.” And by his venerable appearance, for the saint was now upwards of ninety years of age, they immediately complied, and treated him with a peculiar degree of reverence, for which they could not account. When the captain of the robbers first saw him, he darted a fierce look at him, but in a few minutes recollecting the holy apostle, he changed color, was filled with confusion, and so overwhelmed with shame, that he hastily fled. The aged apostle followed as quick as possible, and called to him in these soothing words: “Stay, my son, why do you fly from your father, who loves you? Let not an armed man fly from one that is unarmed, a young man from an old man.—Have pity upon me, son;—fear not, there is yet hope of salvation; I will answer for thee to Christ, I will die for thee, as Christ died for us all; I will, if occasion requires, give my life for thee.—Believe me, it is Christ himself that hath sent me.” On hearing these words, the astonished robber stopped—dropped his weapons, stood mute for

dicea, and others; but his chief place of residence was at Ephesus, where St. Paul had founded a church, and constituted Timothy bishop.

After John had spent several years at Ephesus, an accusation was laid against him before the emperor Domitian (who had then began a persecution against the Christians) as being an asserter of false doctrine and impiety, and a public subverter of the religion of the empire. In consequence of this, and in conformity to the orders of Domitian, the pro-consul of Ephesus sent him bound to Rome, where he met with that treatment, which might have been expected from so barbarous a prince, being thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil. But the Almighty, who reserved him for farther service in the vineyard of his son, restrained the heat, as he did in the fiery furnace of old, and delivered him from this seemingly unavoidable destruction. And surely one would have thought that so miraculous a deliverance might have been sufficient to have persuaded any rational man, that the religion he taught was from God, and that he was protected from danger by the hand of Omnipotence. But miracles themselves were not sufficient to convince this cruel emperor, or abate his fury. He ordered St. John to be transported to a disconsolate island in the Archipelago, called Patmos, where he continued several years instructing the poor inhabitants in the knowledge of the Christian faith; and here, about the end of Domitian's reign, he wrote his book of Revelations, exhibiting by

some time, and at length bursting into tears, he ran and embraced the apostle, but at the same time covered his right hand which had committed murder, that it should not touch the holy man. St. John, however, told him, that if he sincerely repented, Christ would pardon him, pointed out several texts of scripture to confirm what he said, prayed for him heartily, and even kissed his murdering hand, which he assured him would be forgiven on his real repentance. The robber now became a second time a convert, but with better success than at first, for he continued steadfast in his faith, and in the practice of every virtue till his death. Another advantage accrued from his second conversion; his companions, and associates in wickedness, struck by his example, and persuaded by his discourses, reformed their lives, embraced the Christian faith, and became useful members of society.

visions, and prophetic representations, the state and condition of Christianity that would take place in the future periods and ages of the church.

On the death of Domitian, and the succession of Narva (who repealed all the odious acts of his predecessors, and by public edicts recalled those whom the fury of Domitian had banished) St. John returned to Asia, and again fixed his residence at Ephesus, on account of Timothy their bishop having some time before been put to death by the people of that city. Here, with the assistance of seven other bishops, he took upon himself the government of the large diocese of Asia Minor, and disposed of the clergy in the best manner he could, spending his time in an indefatigable execution of his charge, travelling from one part to another, and instructing the people in the principles of that holy religion he was sent to propagate.

In this manner did John continue to spend his time till death put a period to his labors, which happened in the beginning of the reign of the emperor Trajan. His remains were deposited in the city of Ephesus, where several of the fathers observe, that his tomb, in their time, was remaining in a church, which was built to his honor, and called by his name. He was the only apostle who escaped a violent death; notwithstanding which he is deemed a martyr, on account of his having undergone the mode of an execution, though it did not take effect. He lived the longest of any of the apostles, being near an hundred years of age at the time of his death; and the church commemorates the 27th day of December to his memory.

St. John, having been brought up to the business of a fisherman, never received a liberal education; but what was wanting from human art was abundantly supplied by the excellent constitution of his mind, and that fulness of Divine grace with which he was adorned. His humility was admirable, always studiously concealing whatever tended to his own honor. In his epistles he never styles himself either Apostle or Evangelist; the title of *presbyter*, or *elder*, is all he assumes, and probably as much in regard to his age as his office. In his Gospel,

when he speaks of *the disciple whom Jesus loved*, he conceals his own name, leaving the reader to discover who he meant. He practised charity to the utmost extent, and affectionately recommended it to all mankind. This (and the love of our neighbor) is the great vein that runs through all his writings, more especially his Epistles, wherein he urges it as the great and peculiar law of Christianity, and without which all pretensions to our Blessed Saviour are vain and frivolous; useless and insignificant. When age and the infirmities of nature had rendered him so weak, that he was unable to preach to the people any longer, he was led at every public meeting, to the church at Ephesus, where he generally addressed himself to the people in these words: *Little children, love one another*. When his hearers, tired with the constant repetition of the same thing, asked him the reason of it, he told them, that to love one another was the command of our Blessed Saviour.

The greatest instance of our apostle's care for the souls of men, is displayed in the inimitable writings he left to posterity. The first of which in point of time, though placed last in the sacred canon, is his Apocalypse, or book of revelations, which he wrote during his banishment in the island of Patmos.

Next to the Apocalypse, in order of time, are his three epistles, the first of which is catholic, calculated for all times and places, containing the most excellent rules for the conduct of a Christian life, pressing to holiness and pureness of manners, and not to be satisfied with a naked and empty profession of religion, not to be led away with the crafty insinuation of seducers, and cautioning men against the poisonous principles and practices of the Gnostics. The apostle here, according to his usual modesty, conceals his name, it being of more consequence to a wise man what is *said* than who *says it*. It appears from St. Augustine, that this Epistle was anciently inscribed to the Parthians, because, in all probability, St. John preached the Gospel in Parthia. The other two Epistles are but short, and directed to particular persons: the one to a woman of honorable quality, encouraging her and her children to charity, to perseverance in good

works, and to shew no countenance to false teachers and deceivers. The other Epistle is directed to the charitable and hospitable Gaius, the kindest friend, and the most courteous entertainer of all indigent Christians.

Before he undertook the task of writing his Gospel, he caused a general fast to be kept in all the churches throughout Asia, to implore the blessing of heaven on so great and momentous an undertaking. When this was done he set about the work, and completed it in so excellent and sublime a manner, that the ancients generally compared him to an eagle soaring aloft among the clouds, whither the meek eye of man was not able to follow him.

St. Paul, in speaking of the writings of this apostle, says, "Among all the evangelical writers, none are like St. John for the sublimity of his speech, and the height of his discourses, which are beyond any man's capacity fully to reach and comprehend." This is corroborated by Epiphanius, who says, "St. John, by a loftiness and speech peculiar to himself, acquaints us, as it were out of the clouds and dark recesses of wisdom, with the Divine doctrine of the Son of God."

Such is the character given of the writings of this great apostle and evangelist, who was honored with the endearing title of being the beloved disciple of the Son of God; a writer so profound as to deserve, by way of eminence, the character of *St. John the Divine*.

St. PHILIP.

In the distribution made by the apostles of the several regions of the world in which they were to preach the Gospel after our Lord's ascension, the Upper Asia fell to Philip, where he labored with the most indefatigable diligence to propagate the doctrine of his Master in those parts. From the constancy and power of his preaching, and the efficacy of his miracles, he gained numerous converts, whom he baptized in the Christian faith, curing at once their bodies of infirmities and distempers, and their souls of errors and idolatry. Here he continued a considerable time, and, before he left the place, settled the churches, and appointed guides and ministers over those whom he had converted.

After Philip had, for several years, successfully exercised his apostolic office in Upper Asia, he went to Hierapolis in Phrygia, a city remarkably rich and populous, but at the same time over-run with the most enormous idolatry. Philip was greatly grieved to see the people so wretchedly enslaved by error and superstition: he therefore repeatedly offered up his prayers to heaven in their behalf, till, by his prayers, and often calling on the name of Christ, he procured the death, or at least the vanishing, of a dragon, or enormous serpent, to which they paid adoration.

Having thus demolished their deity, Philip clearly demonstrated to them how ridiculous and unjust it was to pay divine honors to such odious creatures: he told them that God alone was to be worshipped as the great parent of all the world, who, in the beginning, made men after his glorious image, and when fallen from that innocent and happy state, sent his own Son into the world to redeem them. That, in order to perform this glorious work, he died on the cross, and rose again from the dead, and at the end of the world would come again to raise all the sons of men from the chambers of the dust, and either sentence them to everlasting punishment, or reward them with everlasting felicity.

This discourse roused them from their lethargy; inso-much that great numbers, being ashamed of their idolatry, immediately forsook it, and embraced the doctrine of the Gospel. But the success attending Philip's endeavors proved fatal to him. The magistrates were so incensed at his having obtained such a number of converts that they resolved to put an effectual stop to his proceedings. They accordingly ordered him to be seized, and thrown into prison, from whence, after being severely scourged, he was led to execution, and put to death, the manner of which, according to some, was, by being hanged against a pillar, and, according to others, by crucifixion.

As soon as he was dead, his body was taken down by Bartholomew, his fellow-laborer in the Gospel, and Mariamne his sister, the constant companion of his travels, and decently interred in a private place near the city;

both of whom, for performing this friendly office, barely escaped with their lives.

The martyrdom of St. Philip happened about eight years after that of St. James the Great; and his name, together with that of St. James the Less, is commemorated on the first of May.

St. BARTHOLOMEW.

This apostle is mentioned among the immediate disciples of our Lord under the appellation of Bartholomew, though it is evident, from divers passages in scripture, that he was also called Nathaniel.*

After our Lord's ascension into heaven, Bartholomew visited different parts of the world, in order to propagate the Gospel of his Master, and at length penetrated as far as the Hither India. Here he remained a considerable time, and then went to Hierapolis in Phrygia, where he labored (in conjunction with Philip) to plant Christianity in those parts; and to convince the blind idolaters of the evil of their ways, and direct them in the paths which lead to eternal salvation. This enraging the bigotted magistrates, they sentenced Bartholomew to death, and

* That Nathaniel and Bartholomew were only two names for one and the same person, the one his proper, and the other his relative name, is beyond all doubt; but then the question is, upon what account it was, that he had his relative name conferred on him. That several sects in the Jewish church, denominated themselves from some famous person of that nation (as the Essenes did from Enoch, and the Sadducees from Sadoc) cannot be denied; and therefore, if we may suppose that there were others, who called themselves Tholmæans, from Tholmai, scholar of Heber, the ancient master of the Hebrews, who flourished in Debir and Hebron, it will be no hard matter to make Nathaniel of this order and institution, and thereupon to give him the name of Bartholomew, i. e. a scholar of the Tholmæans, and so create him (as he is said to have been) a doctor of the Jewish law. But an easier explanation of this matter will appear from the following observations. That, as the first syllable of his name signifies a Son, the word Bar-tholomew will import no more, than the Son of Tholomew, or Tholmai, which was no uncommon name among the Jews. And, that it was an usual thing among them, for the son thus to derive his name, is evident from the instance of Bar-timæus, which is interpreted the Son of Timæus, Mark x. 46, and that of Bar-jona, Matth. xvi. 17. which St. John makes the same with Simon, son of Jonas, John, xxi. 15.

he was accordingly fastened to a cross; but their consciences staring them in their faces for the iniquity they were about to commit, they ordered him to be taken down, and set at liberty.

In consequence of this our apostle left Hierapolis, and went to Lycaonia, where he obtained a great number of converts, whom he instructed and trained up in the principles of the Christian religion. From Lycaonia he went to Albania, a city on the Caspian Sea, a place miserably over-run with idolatry, from which he labored hard to reclaim the people. But his endeavors to *turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God*, instead of proving effectual, only procured his destruction. The magistrates were so incensed against him, that they prevailed on the governor to order him to be put to death, which was accordingly done with the most distinguished cruelty. It is the general opinion of most writers, that he was first severely beaten with sticks, then crucified, afterwards flayed while still alive, and, lastly, that his head was severed from his body. The anniversary of his martyrdom is kept on the 24th of August, the day on which he cheerfully resigned himself in defence of the doctrine of his great Lord and Master.

St. MATTHEW.

During the first eight years after our Blessed Lord's ascension into heaven, Matthew continued to preach the Gospel with great assiduity in different parts of Judea; after which he left the country of Palestine in order to convert the Gentile world. But before his departure, at the earnest solicitation of the Jewish converts in Judea, he wrote the History of the life and actions of the Blessed Jesus; which he left among them as a standing monument of what he had so often delivered to them in his sermons.

After Matthew left Judea, he travelled into various parts, but the particular places he visited are not certainly known. However, after laboring indefatigably in the vineyard of his Master, he suffered martyrdom at a city called Nadabar in Ethiopia; but the particular manner of

his death is not certainly known, though it is the general conceived opinion that he was slain with an halbert. His martyrdom is commemorated by the church on the 21st day of September.

St. Matthew was a remarkable instance of the power of religion, in bringing men to a proper temper of mind. If we reflect upon his circumstances while he continued a stranger to the great Redeemer of mankind, we shall find that the love of the world had possessed his heart. But notwithstanding this, no sooner did Christ call him, than he abandoned, without the least scruple or hesitation, all his riches; nay, he not only renounced his lucrative trade, but ran the greatest hazards of displeasing the masters who employed him, for quitting their service without giving them the least notice, and leaving his accounts in confusion. Had our Blessed Saviour appeared as a secular prince, clothed with temporal power and authority, it would have been no wonder for him to have gone over to his service; but when he appeared under all the circumstances of poverty, when he seemed to promise his followers nothing but misery and sufferings, in this life, and to propose no other rewards than the invisible encouragements of another world, his change appears truly wonderful and surprizing—but Divine grace can subdue all opposition.

His contempt of the world was fully manifested in his exemplary temperance and abstemiousness from all delights and pleasures; insomuch, that he even refused the ordinary conveniencies and accommodations of life. He was remarkably modest in the opinion he entertained of himself, always giving the preference to others, even though their abilities were not so conspicuous as his own. The rest of the evangelists are careful to mention the honor of his apostleship, but speak of his former sordid, dishonest, and disgraceful course of life, only under the name of Levi; while he himself sets it down with all its circumstances, under his own proper and common name. A conduct which at once commends the prudence and candor of the apostle, and suggests to us this useful reflection, That the greatest sinners are not excluded from Divine grace; nor can any, if penitent, have just reason

to despair, when publicans and sinners find mercy at the throne of grace.

The Gospel which St. Matthew wrote at the intreaty of the Jewish converts, before he left Judea, was penned in the Hebrew language, but soon after translated into Greek by one of his disciples. After the Greek translation was admitted, the Hebrew copy was chiefly owned and used by the Nazaræi, a middle sect between Jews and Christians; with the former they adhered to the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, and with the latter they believed in Christ, and embraced his religion; and hence this Gospel has been styled *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*, and *The Gospel of the Nazarenes*.

St. THOMAS.

The apostle Thomas, after our Lord's ascension, continued to preach the Gospel in various parts of Judea; till at length, being interrupted by the dispersion of the Christian church in Jerusalem, he repaired into Parthia, the province assigned him for his ministry. He afterwards preached the Gospel to the Medes, Persians, Carmans, Hyrcani, Bractarians, and the neighboring nations. During his preaching in Persia, he is said to have met with the magi, or wise men, who had taken that long journey at our Saviour's birth to worship him, whom he baptized, and took with him, as his companions and assistants in propagating the Gospel.

Leaving Persia he travelled into Ethiopia, preaching the glad tidings of the Gospel, healing the sick, and working other miracles, to prove he had his commission from on high.

After travelling through these countries, he entered India, and went first to Socotora, an island in the Arabian sea, and then to Cranganor, from whence, having converted many from the error of their ways, he travelled further into the east. Having successfully preached the Gospel here, he returned back to the kingdom of Coromandel, where at Malipur, the metropolis of the kingdom, not far from the mouth of the Ganges, he began to erect a place for Divine worship, but was interrupted by

the idolatrous priests, and Sagamo, prince of the country. However, after he had performed several miracles, he was suffered to proceed in the work, and Sagamo himself embraced the Christian faith, whose example was soon followed by great numbers of his friends and subjects.

This remarkable success alarmed the Brachmans, who plainly perceived that their religion would be soon extirpated unless some method could be found of putting a stop to the progress of Christianity: they therefore resolved to put the apostle to death. At a small distance from the city was a tomb, whither St. Thomas often retired for private devotion: hither the Brachmans and their armed followers pursued him, and while he was at prayer, they first threw at him a shower of darts, after which one of the priests ran him through the body with a lance. His corpse was taken up by his disciples, and buried in the church he had caused to be erected, and which was afterwards improved into a fabric of very great magnificence. His martyrdom is commemorated on the 21st of December.

St. Chrysostom says, that St. Thomas, who at first was the weakest and most incredulous of all the apostles, became, through Christ's condescension to satisfy his scruples, and the power of the Divine grace, the most active and invincible of them all; travelling over most parts of the world, and living without fear in the midst of barbarous nations, through the efficacy of that Almighty power, which can make the weakest vessels to perform acts of the greatest difficulty and moment.

St. SIMON, commonly called the ZEALOT.

This apostle, in the catalogue of our Lord's chosen disciples, is stiled *Simon the Canaanite*, from whence some are of opinion that he was born at Cana in Galilee; and it is generally thought that he was the bridegroom mentioned by St. John at whose marriage our Blessed Saviour turned the water into wine.

The name of this apostle is derived from the Hebrew word *knah* which signifies *zeal*, and denotes a warm and

sprightly disposition. He did not, however, acquire this name from his ardent affection to his Master, and the desire of advancing his religion in the world, but from his zealous attachment to a particular sect of religion before he became acquainted with his great Lord and Master.

In order to explain this matter more clearly to the understanding of our readers, it is necessary to observe, that as there were several sects and parties among the Jews, so there was one, either a distinct sect, or at least a branch of the Pharisees, called the sect of the Zealots. This sect took upon them to inflict punishments in extraordinary cases; and that not only by the connivance, but with the leave both of the rulers and people, till, in process of time, their zeal degenerated into all kinds of licentiousness and wild extravagance; and they not only became the pests of the commonwealth in their own territories, but were likewise hated by the people of those parts which belonged to the Romans. They were continually urging the people to shake off the Roman yoke and assert their natural liberty, taking care, when they had thrown all things into confusion, to make their own advantage of the consequences arising therefrom. Josephus gives a very long and particular account of them, throughout the whole of which he repeatedly represents them as the great plague of the Jewish nation. Various attempts were made, especially by Ananas the high-priest, to reduce them to order, and oblige them to observe the rules of sobriety; but all endeavors proved ineffectual. They continued their violent proceedings, and, joining with the Idumeans, committed every kind of outrage. They broke into the sanctuary, slew the priests themselves before the altar, and filled the streets of Jerusalem with tumults, rapine and blood. Nay, when Jerusalem was closely besieged by the Roman army, they continued their detestable proceedings, creating fresh tumults and factions, and were indeed the principal cause of the ill success of the Jews in that fatal war.

This is a true account of the sect of the Zealots; though, whatever St. Simon was before, we have no reason to suspect but that after his conversion he was very zealous for the honor of his Master, and considered all those who

were enemies to Christ as enemies to himself, however near they might be to him in any natural relation. As he was very exact in all the practical duties of the Christian religion, so he shewed a very serious and pious indignation towards those who professed religion, and a faith in Christ with their mouths, but dishonored their sacred profession by their irregular and vicious lives, as many of the first professing Christians really did.

St. Simon continued in communion with the rest of the apostles and disciples at Jerusalem; and at the feast of Pentecost received the same miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; so that he was qualified with the rest of his brethren for the apostolic office. In propagating the Gospel of the Son of God, we cannot doubt of his exercising his gifts with the same zeal and fidelity, as his fellow apostles, though in what part of the world is uncertain; some say he went into Egypt, Cyrene and Africa, preaching the Gospel to the inhabitants of those remote and barbarous countries; and others add, that after he had passed through those burning wastes, he preached the Gospel to the inhabitants of the western parts, and even in Britain; where, having converted great multitudes, and sustained the greatest hardships and persecutions, he was at last crucified, and buried in some part of that island; but the exact place where is unknown. The church, joining him with St. Jude, commemorate his memory on the 23th of October.

St. JUDE.

It is very observable of this apostle, that the Evangelists commonly call him, not Jude, but either Thaddæus or Labbæus; the reason of which, in all human probability, is from the particular dislike they had to the name which was so nearly similar to that of the base and perfidious Judas Iscariot, who treacherously sold and betrayed his Master.

Jude was brother to James the Less, afterwards bishop of Jerusalem, being the son of Joseph by a former wife. It is not known when or by what means he became a disciple of our Blessed Saviour, there not being any thing

said of him, till we find him in the catalogue of the twelve apostles; nor afterwards till Christ's Last Supper, when discoursing with them about his departure, and comforting them with a promise, that he would return to them again, meaning after his resurrection from the dead.

The sacred records are so very short in their accounts of this apostle, that we must be beholden to other ecclesiastical writers, for information relative to his conduct after the ascension of our Blessed Lord into heaven. Paulinus tells us, that the part which fell to his share in the apostolic division of the provinces, was Lybia, but he does not tell us whether it was the Cyrenian Lybia, which is thought to have received the Gospel from St. Mark, or the more southern parts of Africa. But however that be, in his first setting out to preach the Gospel, he travelled up and down Judea and Galilee; then through Samaria into Idumea, and to the cities of Arabia and the neighboring countries, and afterwards to Syria and Mesopotamia. Nicephorus adds, that he came at last to Edessa, where Abagarus governed, and where Thaddeus, one of the seventy, had already sown the seeds of the Gospel. Here he perfected what the other had begun; and having by his sermons and miracles established the religion of Jesus, he died in peace; but others say that he was slain at Berites, and honorably buried there. The writers of the Latin church are unanimous in declaring, that he travelled into Persia, where, after great success in his apostolical ministry for many years, he was at last, for his freely and openly reproving the superstitious rites and customs of the Magi, cruelly put to death.

St. Jude wrote only one epistle, which is placed the last of those seven, stiled catholic, in the sacred canon. It has no particular inscription, as the other six have, but is thought to have been primarily intended for the Christian Jews in their several dispersions, as were the epistles of the apostle Peter. In it he informs them, "that he at first intended to have wrote to them concerning the *common* *salvation*, in order to confirm them in their belief; but, finding the doctrine of Christ attacked on all sides by heretics, he thought it more necessary to exhort them

“ to stand up manfully in defence of the *faith once delivered to the saints*, and to oppose those *false teachers*, who so earnestly labored to corrupt them; and that they might know these the better, he describes them in their proper colors, and foretels their future, if not impending danger; but, at the same time, he endeavors to exhort them, by all gentle methods to save them, and to take them *out of the fire* into which their own folly had cast them.”

It was some time before this epistle was generally received in the church. The author indeed, like St. James, St. John, and sometimes St. Paul, does not call himself an apostle, but only *the servant of Christ*. But he has added what is equivalent, *Jude the brother of James*, a character which can only belong to himself; and surely the humility of a follower of Christ should be no objection to his writings.

St. MATTHIAS.

Matthias was one of the seventy disciples whom our Blessed Lord made choice of to assist him in the discharge of his public ministry. After his death Matthias was elected into the apostleship, to supply the place of Judas, who was so struck with remorse at having betrayed his Master, as to put a period to his own existence.

After our Lord's ascension into heaven, Matthias spent the first year of his ministry in Judea, where he was so successful as to bring over a prodigious number of people to the Christian faith. From Judea he travelled into other countries, and, proceeding eastward, came at length to Ethiopia. Here he likewise made many converts, but the inhabitants in general being of a fierce and untractable temper, resolved to take away his life, which they effected by first stoning him, and then severing his head from his body. The anniversary of his martyrdom is kept in the Christian church on the 24th of February.

St. MARK.

In the dispersion of the apostles for propagating the Gospel in different parts of the world, after our Lord's

ascension into heaven, St. Mark was, by Peter, sent into Egypt, where he soon planted a church in Alexandria, the metropolis; and such was his success, that he converted prodigious multitudes of people, both men and women, to the Christian religion.

St. Mark did not confine himself to Alexandria, and the oriental parts of Egypt, but removed westward to Lybia, passing through the countries of Marmarcia, Pentapolis, and others adjacent, where, though the people were both barbarous in their manners, and idolatrous in their worship, yet by his preaching and miracles he prevailed on them to embrace the tenets of the gospel; nor did he leave them till he had confirmed them in the faith.

After this long tour he returned to Alexandria, where he preached with the greatest freedom, ordered and disposed of the affairs of the church, and wisely provided for a succession, by constituting governors and pastors of it. But the restless enemy of the souls of men would not suffer our apostle to continue in peace and quietness, for while he was assiduously laboring in the vineyard of his Master, the idolatrous inhabitants, about the time of Easter, when they were celebrating the solemnities of Serapis, tumultuously seized him; and, binding his feet with cords, dragged him through the streets, and over the most craggy places, to the Bucelus, a precipice near the sea, leaving him there in a lonesome prison, for that night; but his great and beloved Master appeared to him in a vision, comforting and encouraging him, under the ruins of his shattered body.

Early the next morning the tragedy began afresh; and they dragged him about in the same cruel and barbarous manner, till he expired. But their malice did not end with his death; for they burnt his mangled body after they had so inhumanly deprived it of life; but the Christians gathered up his bones and ashes, and decently interred them near the place where he used to preach. His remains were afterwards, with great pomp, removed from Alexandria to Venice, where they were religiously honored, and he was adopted the titular saint and patron of that state.

He suffered martyrdom on the 25th of April, but the year is not absolutely known; the most probable opinion is, that it happened about the end of the reign of Nero.

His Gospel, the only writing he left behind him, was written at the intreaty and earnest desire of the converts at Rome, who, not content with having heard St. Peter preach, pressed St. Mark, his disciple, to commit to writing an historical account of what he had delivered to them, which he performed with equal faithfulness and brevity, and being perused and approved by St. Peter, it was commanded to be publicly read in their assemblies. It was frequently stiled St. Peter's gospel, not because he dictated it to St. Mark, but because the latter composed it from the accounts St. Peter usually delivered in his discourse to the people. And this is probably the reason of what St. Chrysostom observes, that in his stile and manner of expression he delights to imitate St. Peter, representing a great deal in a few words.

St. LUKE.

The Evangelist St. Luke was a native of Antioch in Syria, and by profession a physician; and it is the general opinion of most ancient historians, that he was also well acquainted with the art of painting.

After our Lord's ascension into heaven, he spent a great part of his time with St. Paul, whom he accompanied to various places, and greatly assisted in bringing over proselytes to the Christian faith. This so endeared him to that apostle, that he seems delighted with owning him for his fellow-laborer, and in calling him *the beloved physician*, and the *brother whose praise is in the Gospel*.

St. Luke preached the Gospel with great success in a variety of places, independent of his assisting St. Paul. He travelled into different parts of Egypt and Greece, in the latter of which countries the idolatrous priests were so incensed against him that they put him to death, which they effected by hanging him on the branch of an olive tree. The anniversary of his martyrdom is held on the 18th of October.

St. Luke wrote two books for the use of the church; namely, his Gospel, and the Acts of the Apostles. Both

these he dedicated to Theophilus, which many of the ancients suppose to be a feigned name, denoting a lover of God, a title common to all sincere Christians. But others think it was a real person, because the title of *most excellent* is attributed to him; which was the usual form of address, in those times, to princes and other distinguished characters.

His Gospel contains the principal Transactions of the Life of our Blessed Redeemer; and in his Acts of the Apostles (which it is probable he wrote at Rome about the time of Paul's imprisonment) are recorded the most material actions of the principal apostles, especially St. Paul, whose activity in the cause of Christ made him bear a very great part in the labors of his Master; and St. Luke, being almost his constant attendant, and privy to his most intimate transactions, was consequently capable of giving a more full and satisfactory account of them than any other of the apostles.

In both these treatises his manner of writing is exact and accurate; his stile noble and elegant, sublime and lofty, and yet clear and perspicuous, flowing with an easy and natural grace and sweetness, admirably adapted to an historical design. In short, as an historian he was faithful in his relations, and elegant in his writings; as a minister, careful and diligent for the good of souls; as a Christian, devout and pious; and to crown all the rest, he laid down his life in testimony of the gospel he had both preached and published to the world.

St. BARNABAS.

After our Lord's ascension into heaven, Barnabas continued, for a considerable time, with St. Paul, being his constant attendant wherever he went. He travelled with him to a great variety of places in different parts of the world, and was of the most infinite service in helping him to propagate the Gospel of his great Lord and Master. At length, however, a dispute arose between them while they were at Antioch, the issue of which was, that Barnabas left Paul at Antioch, and retired to Cyprus, his native country.

After this separation from St. Paul the sacred writings give us no account of St. Barnabas; nor are the ecclesiastical writers agreed among themselves with regard to the actions of our apostle, after his sailing for Cyprus. This, however, seems to be certain, that he did not spend the whole remainder of his life in that island, but visited different parts of the world, preaching the glad tidings of the Gospel, healing the sick, and working other miracles among the Gentiles. After long and painful travels, attended with different degrees of success in different places, he returned to Cyprus, his native country, where he suffered martyrdom in the following manner: Certain Jews coming from Syria and Salamis, where Barnabas was then preaching the Gospel, being highly exasperated at his extraordinary success, fell upon him as he was disputing in the synagogue, dragged him out, and, after the most inhuman tortures, stoned him to death. His kinsman, John Mark, who was a spectator of this barbarous action, privately interred his body in a cave; where it remained till the time of the emperor Zeno, in the year of Christ 485, when it was discovered, with St. Matthew's gospel in Hebrew, written with his own hand, lying on his breast.

The anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Barnabas is kept on the 11th of June.

TIMOTHY.

This great assertor of the cause of Christ was a disciple of St. Paul, and born at Lystra in Lycaonia. His father was a Gentile, but his mother was a Jewess. Her name was Eurice, and that of his grand mother, Lais. These particulars are taken notice of, because St. Paul commends their piety and the good education which they had given Timothy.

When St. Paul came to Derbe and Lystra, about the year of Christ 51 or 52, the brethren gave such an advantageous testimony of the merit and good disposition of Timothy, that the apostle took him with him, in order to assist him in propagating the doctrine of his Great Lord and Master. Timothy applied himself to labor

with St. Paul in the business of the Gospel, and did him very important services, through the whole course of his preaching. St. Paul calls him not only his dearly beloved son, but also his brother, the companion of his labors, and a man of God.

This holy disciple accompanied St. Paul to Macedonia, to Philippi, to Thessalonica, to Berea; and when the apostle went from Berea, he left Timothy and Silas there, to confirm the converts. When he came to Athens, he sent for Timothy to come thither to him; and when he was come, and had given him an account of the churches of Macedonia, St. Paul sent him back to Thessalonica, from whence he afterwards returned with Silas, and came to St. Paul at Corinth. There he continued with him for some time, and the apostle mentions him with Silas, at the beginning of the two epistles which he then wrote to the Thessalonians.

Some years after this, St. Paul sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia; and gave Timothy orders to call at Corinth, to refresh the minds of the Corinthians, with regard to the truths which he had inculcated in them. Some time after, writing to the same Corinthians, he recommends them to take care of Timothy, and send him back in peace; after which Timothy returned to St. Paul into Asia, who there stayed for him. They went together into Macedonia; and the apostle puts Timothy's name with his own, before the second Epistle to the Corinthians, which he wrote to them from Macedonia, about the middle of the year of Christ 57. And he sends his recommendations to the Romans in the letter which he wrote from Corinth the same year.

When St. Paul returned from Rome, in 61, he left Timothy at Ephesus to take care of that church of which he was the first bishop, as he is recognized by the council of Chalcedon. St. Paul wrote to him from Macedonia the first of the two letters which are addressed to him. He recommends him to be more moderate in his austerities, and to drink a little wine, because of the weakness of his stomach, and his frequent infirmities. After the apostle came to Rome in the year 65, being then very near his death, he wrote to him his second letter, which

is full of marks of kindness and tenderness for this his dear disciple; and which is justly looked upon as the last will of St. Paul. He desires him to come to Rome to him before winter, and bring with him several things which he had left at Troas. If Timothy went to Rome, as it is probable he did, he must have been an eye-witness of the martyrdom of Paul, which happened in the year of Christ 60.

After Timothy had visited Paul at Rome he returned to Ephesus, where he continued to govern the church as its bishop, without the least interruption, for a considerable time, till at length he fell a victim to the malice of the Pagans, who were his most inveterate enemies. These heathens made a great feast, in the celebration of which, they carried in procession the images of their idols, being all masked, and armed with clubs, and other offensive weapons. Timothy, seeing the procession, was so irritated at their idolatry and superstition, that he rushed in among them in order to stop their proceedings; upon which they immediately fell upon him, and, with their clubs, beat him in so unmerciful a manner, that he soon expired. They left the body on the spot where they had murdered him, which was removed from thence by some of his disciples, and decently interred on the top of a mountain at a small distance from the city. The Greeks commemorate his martyrdom on the 22d of January, the day on which it is generally supposed he gave up his life in defence of the doctrine he had long labored to propagate; and during which time he had brought over great numbers of people to embrace the truth of the Christian religion.

TITUS.

Titus was a native of Greece, and a Gentile by birth; but was converted to the Christian faith by the apostle Paul, who, in consequence of his strict adherence to the doctrine of Christ, calls him his son. St. Jerome tells us that he was St. Paul's interpreter; and that, probably, because he might write what Paul dictated, or translate into Greek what he had written in Latin.

Soon after the conversion of Titus, the apostle Paul took him with him to Jerusalem, which was at the time when he went thither about deciding the dispute then in agitation relative to the converted Gentiles being made subject to the ceremonies of the Mosaic law. On their arrival there some of the people were desirous that Titus should be circumcised; but this was not only refused by Titus, but totally objected to by Paul.

After this controversy was ended at Jerusalem, Paul sent Titus from thence to Coriuth, in order to adjust some disputes which had taken place in the church of that city. Titus was received by the people with the greatest marks of respect; and, from the various discourses he preached on the occasion, was so successful as effectually to discharge the business on which he was sent.

After staying some time at Corinth, Titus went from thence into Macedonia, in order to inform Paul of the state of the church in that city. Paul was well pleased with the account he gave, and the success of his embassy; and intending himself to go to Corinth, desired Titus to return thither, to make some necessary preparations previous to his departure for that city. Titus readily undertook the journey, and immediately set off, carrying with him St. Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians.

Titus was made bishop of the island of Crete about the 63d year after Christ, when St. Paul was obliged to quit that island, in order to take care of the other churches. The following year Paul wrote him to desire, that as soon as he should have sent Tychicus to him for supplying his place in Crete, he would come to him to Nicopolis in Epirus, where the apostle intended to pass his winter.

The subject of this Epistle is to represent to Titus what are the qualities that a bishop should be endued with. As the principal function which Titus was to exercise in the isle of Crete was to ordain priests and bishops, it was highly incumbent on him to make a discreet choice. The apostle also gives him a sketch of the advice and instructions which he was to propound to all sorts of persons: to the aged, both men and women; to young people of each sex; to slaves or servants. He ex-

horts him to keep a strict eye over the Cretans; and to reprove them with severity, as being a people addicted to lying, wickedness, idleness and gluttony. And as many Jews were in the churches of Crete, he exhorts Titus to oppose their vain traditions and Jewish fables; and at the same time to shew them that the observation of the law ceremonies is no longer necessary; that the distinction of meat is abolished; and that every thing is pure and clean to those that are so themselves: he puts him in mind of exhorting the faithful to be obedient to temporal power; to avoid disputes, quarrels and slander; to apply themselves to honest callings; and to shun the company of a heretic, after the first and second admonition.

Titus was deputed to preach the Gospel in Dalmatia, where he was situated when the apostle wrote his second epistle to Timothy. He afterwards returned into Crete; from which it is said, he propagated the Gospel into the neighboring islands. He died at the age of 94, and was buried in Crete. The Greeks keep his festival on the 25th of August, and the Latins on the 4th of January.

JOHN MARK.

John Mark, cousin to St. Barnabas, and a disciple of his, was the son of a Christian woman, named Mary, who had a house in Jerusalem, where the apostles and the faithful generally used to meet. Here they were at prayers in the night, when St. Peter, who was delivered out of prison by the angel, came and knocked at the door; and in this house the celebrated church of Sion was said to have been afterwards established.

John Mark, whom some very improperly confound with the Evangelist St. Mark, adhered to St. Paul and St. Barnabas, and followed them in their return to Antioch. He continued in their company and service till they came to Perga, in Pamphylia; but then seeing that they were undertaking a longer journey, he left them and returned to Jerusalem. This happened in the year 45 of the common era.

Some years after, that is to say in the year 51, Paul and Barnabas preparing to return into Asia, in order to visit the churches, which they had formed there, the lat-

ter was of opinion, that John should accompany them in this journey; but Paul would not consent to it: upon which occasion these two apostles separated. Paul went to Asia, and Barnabas with John Mark, to the isle of Cyprus. What John Mark did after this journey we do not know, till we find him at Rome in the year 63, performing signal services for St. Paul, during his imprisonment.

The apostle speaks advantageously of him in his epistle to the Colossians, *Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, saluteth you. If he cometh unto you, receive him.* He makes mention of him again in his epistle to Philemon, written in the year 63; at which time he was with St. Paul at Rome; but in the year 65 he was with Timothy in Asia. And St. Paul writing to Timothy, desires him to bring Marcus to Rome; adding that he was useful to him for the ministry of the Gospel.

In the Greek and Latin churches, the festival of John Mark is kept on the 27th of September. Some say that he was bishop of Biblis, in Phœnicia. The Greeks give him the title of apostle; and say that the sick were cured by his shadow only. It is very probable that he died at Ephesus, where his tomb was very much celebrated and resorted to. He is sometimes called simply John, or Mark. The year of his death we are strangers to; and shall not collect all that is said of him in apocryphal and uncertain authors.

CLEMENT.

Clement is mentioned by St. Paul, in his epistle to the Philippians, where the apostle says that Clement's name is written in the book of life. The generality of the fathers, and other interpreters, make no question but that this is the same Clement who succeeded St. Paul, after Linus and Anaclet, in the government of the church of Rome; and this seems to be intimated, when in the office for St. Clement's day, that church appoints this part of the Epistle to the Philippians to be read.

We find several things relating to Clement's life, in the recognitions and constitutions called apostolic; but as those works are not all looked upon as authentic, though

there may be truths in some of them derived from the tradition of the first ages, little stress is to be laid upon their testimony. St. Chrysostom thinks that Clement, mentioned by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians, was one of the apostle's constant fellow-travellers. Irenæus, Origin, Clemens of Alexandria, and others of the ancients assert, that Clement was a disciple of the apostles; that he had seen them, and heard their instructions. St. Epiphanius, Jerome, Rufinus, Bede, and some others, were of opinion, that as the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul could not be continually at Rome, by reason of the frequent journies which they were obliged to make to other places, and it was not proper that the city of Rome should be without a bishop, there was a necessity to supply the want of them by establishing Linus, Anaclet, and Clement there. The constitutions inform us, that Linus was ordained by St. Paul; Tertullian and Epiphanius say, that St. Peter ordained Clement. Rufinus tells us that this apostle chose St. Clement for his successor. But Epiphanius believes, that after he had been made bishop of Rome by St. Peter, he refused to exercise his office, till after the death of Linus and Anaclet, he was obliged to take upon him the care of the church; and this is the most generally received opinion. St. Peter's immediate successor was Linus; Linus was succeeded by Anaclet; and Anaclet by Clement, in the year of Christ ninety-one, which was the tenth of the reign of Domitian.

During his government over the church of Rome, that of Corinth was disturbed by a spirit of division, upon which Clement wrote a long letter to the Corinthians, which is still extant, and was so much esteemed by the ancients, that they read it publicly in many churches; and some have been inclined to range it among the canonical writings.

In what manner Clement conducted himself, and how he escaped the general persecution under the emperor Domitian, we have not any certain accounts; but we are very well assured that he lived to the third year of the emperor Trajan, which is the hundredth of the Christian era. His festival is set down by Bede, and all the Latin Martyrologists, on the 23d of November; and the Greeks

honor him on the 24th and 25th of the same month. Rufinus and pope Zozimus, give him the title of Martyr; and the Roman church, in its canon, places him among the saints who have sacrificed their lives in the cause of Christ.

Thus have we given the most ample account of the followers of the Blessed Jesus; the persons who spread, and caused to be spread, the light of the Gospel over the whole world, removed the veil of ignorance and superstition drawn over the kingdoms of the earth, and taught us the method of attaining eternal happiness in the courts of the New Jerusalem.

May we all follow their glorious examples! May we imitate their faith, their piety, their charity, and their love! Then shall we *pass through things temporal in such a manner, that we shall finally gain the things eternal*, and, through the merits of an all-perfect Redeemer, be admitted as worthy guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Behold the Glories of the Lamb!
Amidst his Father's throne;
Prepare new honors for his name,
And songs before unknown.

Let elders worship at his feet,
The church adore around,
With vials full of odors sweet,
And harps of sweeter sound.

Those are the prayers of the saints,
And these the hymns they raise:
JESUS is kind to our complaints,
He loves to hear our praise.

Now to the Lamb that once was slain
Be endless blessings paid;
Salvation, Glory, Joy remain
For ever on thy head.

Thou hast redeemed our souls with blood,
Hast set the prisoners free;
Hast made us kings and priests to God,
And we shall reign with thee.

The worlds of nature and of grace
Are put beneath thy power;
Then shorten these delaying days,
And bring the promised hour.

APPENDIX
TO THE
HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE.

CONTAINING VARIOUS PARTICULARS NECESSARY TO ILLUSTRATE AND
ELUCIDATE THE SACRED WRITINGS CONTAINED BOTH IN THE
OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.

CHAP. I.

*On the Connection of the Old and New Testament, or General
Agreement of the Sacred Writers; with a summary View
of the great Truth of Divine Revelation.*

THE Sacred Volume, which we call the BIBLE, is not a book compiled by a single author, nor by many persons in conjunction in the same age, in which there would be no difficulty in forming a consistent composition, nor would it be any wonder to find the various parts in a just and close connection. But the scriptures were done by several hands, in very different conditions of life, and in very distant ages, at which distinct and separate periods the world must have put on a new face, and men must have had different interests to pursue.

David wrote about 400 years after Moses, and Isaiah about 250 years after David; and Matthew more than 700 after Isaiah: and yet these authors, with all the other prophets and apostles, write in perfect harmony, confirming the authority of their predecessors, laboring to reduce

the people to the observance of their instructions, and loudly exclaiming against their neglect and contempt of them, and denouncing the severest judgments upon such as should continue disobedient.

This was the principal work of the prophets in a long succession; and it is well known that our Lord came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil, that is, to vindicate and illustrate their meaning, to complete what was imperfect, and to answer the highest ends of what was typical and figurative.

As the writers, therefore, of the Holy Scriptures are all in perfect connection and harmony together, mutually confirming the doctrine and testimony of each other, and concurring to establish the very same religious truths and principles, it is an undeniable proof that all derive their instructions from the same fountain, namely, the wisdom of God, and were, indeed, under the direction and illumination of his Spirit.

The Christian faith is, and for many years has been, embraced in all those numerous and distant lands which once composed the Roman empire, and even in countries far beyond the utmost bounds thereof. In all these spacious regions, the Christian faith, in one form or other, has been professed; and baptism and the Lord's Supper have been administered, in a succession of ages, both of which institutions were handed down to us from the mouth of our Blessed Redeemer, by his holy apostles and evangelists.

No fact can be more evident than this; and from our Lord and his apostles, the Gospel spread over the greatest part of the known world, which before its publication was universally involved in idolatry, established by long custom and human laws, strongly defended by all the power and learning of the world, by all the zeal of superstition, by all the blindness of profound ignorance, and by all the incorrigible perverseness of corrupt and dissolute manners; a complication of causes which would for ever bid defiance to any philosophy or wisdom of the few that can be supposed to obtain a better sense in the midst of universal darkness and depravity. But the Gospel gained a most complete and extensive victory over

all these, demolished the idols of the heathen world, and every where erected the trophies of a conquering Jesus.

Now this surprizing change, which is evident to all mankind, could have been effected by no other means whatever, but by a Divine and supernatural influence. It is true indeed, that, by human power and policy, great revolutions have been brought about in all ages and parts of the world; and therefore we do not wonder at the circulation of the Mahometan or Turkish religion, as it was propagated by the sword, under a mighty warrior and politician, who by ravage, bloodshed and desolation, conquered many nations and kingdoms, laid the foundation of a potent and spacious empire; and thus by violence opened a way for the reception and extensive profession of his newly devised religion. But the religion of Jesus was triumphant, not only without the aid of human power or policy, but even in direct opposition to it. The plain fact is this :

A person, about thirty years of age, called Jesus, brought up in the most humble situation of life, without the least human interest or influence, begins to preach repentance among the Jews, the most superstitious and bigotted people in the world; declares himself the Son of God, gathers a few disciples, persons in the same humble and mean condition with himself, fishermen, publicans and such like, and sends them about preaching, what he called the Gospel, and Kingdom of God. He himself was despised by the superstitious, and greatly opposed and harrassed by men of power and learning. However, he preached for more than three years; when they caught him and crucified him as an infamous malefactor.

This direful event, he plainly foresaw and foretold; but, not the least discouraged by the prospect, he commanded his disciples to go and preach his Gospel over all the world; promising that after his death he would assist them with power from heaven, in virtue of which they should certainly succeed. They believed him; they set out; they preached up their crucified Master, as the Lord and Saviour of all mankind; and, which is very strange, under the conduct and influence of a Master,

who was dead to the world, and gone to another state! They prevailed; and in spite of the fury of the multitude, the most inveterate prejudices of the whole world, the zeal of superstition, the hatred of the Jews, the contempt of the Greeks, the power of the Romans, the pride of philosophers, and the policy of statesmen, their doctrine, like the sun, almost at once, enlightened the whole system of pagan idolatry and religion, and advanced into the darkest and remotest corners of the earth.

Of this we, in this Christian age, are living monuments and proofs; many of us, it is to be hoped, have received the Gospel; we own it a glorious and a shining light; we have renounced the idolatry and vain conversation of our ancient predecessors; we confess and own the crucified Jesus, our King and Head, and hope for eternal life and salvation through him.

From all this it is clearly evident that Jesus was really the Son of God, that he actually rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and that from thence he sent his disciples the aids and powers which he had promised, and which were so far above all that is human, that they carried their own evidence along with them, and rendered their doctrine so surprizingly successful.

As Jesus did not send his disciples to preach to all the world till after his death; and as he then did actually furnish them with all miraculous powers to render their doctrine effectual; this is the most convincing proof that the doctrine was Divine, and that he himself was actually gone to heaven, and took up his residence at the right hand of Him who sent him into the world for the redemption of lost mankind.

It is therefore certain, beyond all doubt, that Jesus Christ was sent from heaven to reveal the gospel to the world. As we are from hence very certain, that we have in our hands the writings of the apostles, we may be sure that they contain a revelation from heaven, or that doctrine, which Christ received from God his Father, and delivered to his disciples. If so, then the writings of the Old Testament are also the word of God, because Christ and his apostles declare them to be such; therefore all scripture is given by inspiration.

The same thing may be proved by the long train of miraculous operations, which could be effected only by Divine power, and which were wrought in confirmation of the mission of the prophets and apostles: as also from the spirit of prophecy, predicting future events at a great distance of time, which no human sagacity could possibly foresee, and yet were actually fulfilled in correspondence to the prediction. One instance of this is particularly evident in the present state and condition of the Jews; of whom it was foretold that, for their disobedience, they should become a dispersed people, and despised throughout the face of the earth.

Our Lord, contrary to all human probability, while he was on earth, foretold the destruction of the Jewish temple and polity, and their dispersion among all nations, which was actually accomplished in about forty years after.

In this dispersed state they have now continued above seventeen hundred years in great numbers, and in great ignominy and contempt, and yet quite distinct and separate from the people among whom they live.

This is a sufficient demonstration, that the wisdom which formed them into a peculiar people, as they have been almost ever since the deluge, is not human but Divine; for no human wisdom or power could ever form, or ever execute, so vast, so extensive a design. It must be the wisdom and power of that God alone, who is the same in every age, and who in every age has exercised a singular providence over his peculiar people, the descendants of Abraham, his servant.

Thus, the present state and being of the Jews is a very public and standing evidence of the truth of revelation, in two respects:

First, with regard to their long dispersion through most parts of the earth, and the various calamities they have suffered therein. And secondly, with respect to their being preserved as a distinct and separate body; both of which circumstances plainly shew us, that it was the will of Divine providence to preserve the Jewish nation in their dispersion, and to preserve them a distinct and separate people, in order to their future restoration.

We, and many other nations at this day, see these predictions verified in the present state of the Jews, who have been so long, and still are so miraculously preserved, separate from all other people.

Now this is a standing miracle, a wonderful work of Divine providence, and as strong a proof of revelation, as if we were to see the dead, every year rise out of their graves, in confirmation of it; for we have still among us, after so long a time, and so many various revolutions in human affairs, the peculiar people, whom God, above three thousand years ago, separated unto himself: the very people who are the principal subject of revelation, and who are said there to be the principal objects of his providence, and we see them at this day to be so in a very surprizing manner.

Therefore in their present state we may plainly read the ancient promise made to Abraham, the head and root of the nation, the many wonderful works wrought for them from first to last, and the truth of prophetic predictions; in the present state of the Jews, we may read the truth of the Gospel, for the rejection of which, God rejected them, and scattered them over the face of the earth.

In short, we are certain there were such a people as the Jews, to whom God delivered the revelation of his will in ancient time, for the descendants of these very people exist among us at this day.

We are sure the numerous predictions of Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament, relating to the Jews, are true; for we see them made good in their present state; and therefore we may be assured that the holy scriptures are given by inspiration from God; for only the spirit of God could foretel such events, and the same spirit which foretold these events, spake by the prophets and apostles, and inspired them with all that Divine wisdom and knowledge which we find in all their writings.

We might add the long apostacy and general corruption of the profession of Christianity, so plainly foretold, and under such express and particular characters, in the apostolic writings. This all the world may see has been abundantly fulfilled in the church of Rome.

Now, only the spirit of God could foresee that such a distant and deplorable state of things, which no human probability could have conjectured, would have arisen out of the pure and heavenly doctrine of Christ. But the spirit which predicted this event, is the very same which was poured out upon the apostles, and enlightened their minds with the knowledge of the Gospel; therefore the Apostles, who wrote the New Testament, had the spirit of God, and were enlightened by it.

By these arguments, we are pointing out the only fountain of life and happiness, a mine more valuable than of gold and precious stones; a plentiful magazine of heavenly and everlasting wealth, an inexhaustable fund of solid comfort and peace, the holy scriptures, the word of the everlasting God; a treasure of more immense value, than any which we have in our possession, if we are wise to make a right improvement of it.

But the connection and harmony of the sacred writings will receive a farther illustration, if we trace the Divine dispensations called in the same, the *Ways* and *Works* of God.

The *ways of God* frequently signify the rules of life, which he hath given us to observe, Ps. cxix. 3. *They also do no iniquity; they walk in his ways; that is, in the law of the Lord.*

The *Works of God* may signify, the mere operations and productions of his power; but both these words have a more restricted and emphatical signification. A *way* signifies also a course of action, a custom, constitution, or institution, which any person or number of persons form to themselves. Prov. viii. 22. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old.* Prov. xii. 26. *The way of the wicked (their course of action) seduceth them.*

Hence *ways* and *works* signify the appointments, constitutions, or dispensations of God, by which we are to understand, the methods devised and carried on by the wisdom and goodness of God, to discover or shew himself, his nature and will, his beneficence and justice, to the minds of his reasonable creatures, for their instruction,

discipline and reformation in order to promote their happiness.

These are the great ends of the Divine dispensations, as set forth to us, in the sacred word, which uniformly tends to promote the same; and these are the principal points to be attended to in the explication of them.

The great God, for ever to be adored, hath actually given existence to a world of human beings such as we are. He therefore is our father, and we are his offspring, whom he hath created in love, that in a right use of the means he hath graciously afforded us, we might be qualified for honor and immortality in the heavenly world.

This seems to be the highest design the Divine goodness can form, and the highest excellency to which our nature can attain. This may be considered as the basis of all the Divine dispensations from the beginning of the world; for unless heavenly dispositions are implanted in our minds, we cannot be qualified for honor and enjoyment. It is therefore becoming the father of our spirits, and suitable to the nature of our capacities and circumstances, that proper means be provided for our instruction and discipline.

For instance. As God is not the object of any of our senses, and can be seen only by our understandings, it is proper that he should set before us, in the frame and furniture of the world, such visible and various displays of his being, power, wisdom, justice, and kind regard, as may engage our attention, discover his eternal Godhead, and lead us to the acknowledgment, adoration, love, and dutiful obedience to our Creator, father and benefactor.

These are the works, the dispensations, or constitutions of nature, whereby the Almighty, as in a glass, has discovered himself to the thoughts and eyes of his creatures here below.

But besides the constitution of universal nature, there are a variety of dispensations, which are more immediately relative to mankind; as the being born of parents to supply the several generations of the world, whence result sundry relations and duties; the being sustained by food; covered and sheltered by clothes and habitations; healed by physicians; taught by the learned and skilful;

the infirmities, appetites and passions of our constitution; the forming societies for mutual help and commerce; the institution of government, or the subordination of some to the authority of others, for preserving good order, for the protection of virtue, and punishment of vice.

Add to these, wars, pestilence, famine, earthquakes, and such like events; all these may be reckoned among the Divine appointments or dispensations, some for the exercise of our rational faculties in right action; and some for discipline, correction and reformation.

By these ways or dispensations, which in scripture are considered as the great hinges of Divine providence, on which his dealings with mankind have turned; or as the principal events, by which the great purposes and counsels of God's will have been executed, are chiefly to be attended unto; because right conceptions of these, under their circumstances and connexions, will greatly contribute to the explaining of scripture Divinity, and demonstrating the harmony and agreement of sacred writ.

Let us therefore take a general survey of them.

First, the Creation of the World, as already considered.

Secondly, the Formation of Man, after the image of God.

Thirdly, Man being subjected to trial, in order to prove his obedience, yielded to temptation; sinned, and so became liable to the threatening of eternal death. But,

Fourthly, God, not willing to destroy his creature, was graciously pleased, in his infinite mercy and goodness, to introduce a new dispensation of grace in the hands of an all-glorious Mediator; at the same time subjecting the human race to a laborious life, to diseases and death temporal; and thus in great goodness, to subdue the fleshly principle, to shew the atrocious nature of sin, and by setting forth the pride, vanity, and self-sufficiency of the creature, turn his regard more steadily to the all-sufficient Creator.

But men multiplying in the earth, abused the goodness of God, and in about 1656 years time became so wicked, that *all flesh had corrupted his way, and the earth was filled with violence.* In order to purge the world from in-

iquity, and to recover it to a state of righteousness, God was pleased, by a deluge of water, to destroy that wicked generation, preserving the only family that remained uncorrupt in the old world, in order to propagate piety and obedience in the new. At the same time, and for the same good purposes, he reduced human life into much narrower bounds.

Not long after the deluge, to prevent a second general corruption, God introduced another dispensation by confounding the language of mankind; which divided the world into several distinct societies, and consequently kept them under a stricter government, and better preserved their liberties, than if the world had been one great empire.

Thus the outrage of violence and rapine was, in a great measure, cured. But notwithstanding this, mankind fell into a different iniquity, namely, that of idolatry, whereby, within 400 years after the flood, the worship and knowledge of the only true God was in danger of being utterly lost. To prevent this, the Divine wisdom formed a new dispensation by calling Abraham from among his idolatrous kindred, and constituting his family the standard of Divine knowledge.

To them he spoke and revealed himself at sundry times, and in divers manners, and separated them from the rest of the world, by peculiar laws, and religious ceremonies, to secure them from the idolatrous practices of their neighbors. Thus they became God's peculiar people, being distinguished above all other nations, and to this day, blessed be God, we experience the happy effects of so singular a distinction, and owe to it both our Bible, and the very being of a Gospel church.

The family of Abraham, by the Divine direction, was led into Egypt; and when they had been there, under grievous oppression, 215 years, and were grown numerous enough to be a nation, God set himself at the head of them, as their King; and in a country much esteemed for learning and arts, whither men of genius and curiosity resorted from all other parts; upon this stage, so proper because public, God, as the King of Israel, combatted the king of Egypt and his fictitious gods, and displayed his

infinitely superior power both to destroy and save, by many plagues inflicted upon the land of Egypt, and by bringing out the Israelites in opposition to all the force of the king, and settling them, after they had been sufficiently disciplined in the wilderness, in the land of Canaan.

Here God set up his peculiar kingdom amongst them, and they alone of all the nations of the earth were the subjects of it, and happy in its singular privileges and blessings; but at the same time were made sensible of various providential dispensations, the general rule of which was this: while they adhered to the worship of the true God, they were always prosperous; when they declined to idolatry, they were either oppressed at home, or carried captive into other countries.

The long captivity in Babylon was not only a punishment to the Jews, but also a method of publishing the knowledge of the true God over all the Babylonish empire, as appears evidently in the Book of Daniel.

The division of the Grecian empire, which put an end to the Persian, after the death of Alexander, caused a new dispersion of the Jews, especially in Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, and Lybia, where their synagogues were very common. Lastly, when they were subjected to the Roman power, their God and religion became more known all over the Roman empire.

Thus the way for the kingdom of the Messiah was gradually prepared; for though the knowledge of God received from the Jews, made no public reformation of pagan idolatry, yet it greatly disposed men to receive the Gospel, when it should be preached unto them. Some became Jews, many renounced idolatry, and worshipped no other but the living and true God, who, in the Acts of the Apostles, are called *devout proselytes, Greeks, those that feared God.*

Thus have we, in a concise manner, traced things from the beginning of the world to the coming of Christ, who came in the fulness of time, for he came as soon as God, by the various methods of his providence, had prepared the world to receive him. When God had made ready a people prepared for him, then Christ came, and fully explained the nature, laws, extent, and glory of the

kingdom of God, and fulfilled the great and most excellent design of Divine wisdom, by giving himself a sacrifice and propitiation for the sins of the world.

Then the great mystery of God, the calling of other nations, besides the Jews, into his kingdom and church, was opened, and made manifest by the preaching of the Gospel. For this purpose, he sent out his apostles, furnished with proper powers and credentials, especially the gift of tongues, whereby they were enabled to communicate the wonderful things of God to people of different countries; and by this means, the glad tidings of salvation, and the glorious lights and privileges of the Gospel, have reached even unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

But as Christ came to restore, to explain, and, by the most glorious promises, to enforce the law of nations; and consequently as his design was to erect an universal religion, which should be recommended to all people, and which therefore was to interfere with no political establishments, but should leave them, in every country, just as it found them, teaching the nations to observe the will of God as contained in his sacred word, in the hope of eternal life: upon this grand, noble, and extensive plan, the Jewish polity would be sunk to a level with all other national governments; and the Jew on account of any prior, national advantages, would have no more claim to the blessings and privileges of the kingdom of God, than any of the Gentiles or nations, who in any of the most barbarous and despised parts of the earth should receive the faith of the Gospel: for in the Christian religion *there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Sycthian, bond nor free; but Christ, that is, the faith and obedience, or true religion, which Christ taught, is all, and in all.* Col. iii. 11. Thus the Jew is fallen by that very method of Divine wisdom and grace, which brought salvation to other nations. Thus the *diminishing of the Jews, is the riches of the world, and the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world.* Rom. xi. 12, 15. or the opening a door for the whole world, to come into the peculiar kingdom of God. This is the idea we ought to have of the rejection of the

Jews. The grace of God was, and is still, as free to them as to other people, and the same benefits will arise to them, if they quit their long established obstinacy, and embrace the doctrine of Christ.

Soon after the publication of the Gospel, their polity and civil constitution (which otherwise would have remained in full force, and have obliged them to obey its laws, as much as the constitutions of other kingdoms of the world obliged their respective subjects) were quite overthrown by the destruction of the temple, and the expulsion of the Jews out of the land of Canaan, which they have not been able to recover, but remain dispersed over the face of the whole earth to this day. Thus the Gospel dispensation was erected, and spread and prevailed throughout the world.

Some time after the establishment of the Gospel, a grand apostacy and corruption of religion took place in the Christian church, which was predicted by the apostles, and at large foretold in the book of the Revelation.

After the apostles were removed out of the world, it pleased God to leave some of the professors of the Gospel, in matters of religion, to their own ignorance, passions and prejudices.

Thus the Christian faith by degrees was depraved, till the *man of sin* (that is the church of Rome) arose, a tyrannical, usurped power, domineering over, and imposing upon conscience, forbidding the use of understanding, and intoxicating the inhabitants of the earth with false and delusive learning, worldly pomp and splendor, and cruel persecution of the truth.

This was to be a long and severe trial of the faith and patience of the saints. In the times of this sad dispensation, it is certain, we are now living; but we hope towards the latter end of it. Through the whole course of it, God hath variously appeared, both in wrath against the corrupters and persecutors of religion; and in mercy for the comfort and support of those who have labored under their oppression.

This persecution continued with great severity for a long course of time, till at length the morning of reformation appeared in our happy land, which for some cen-

tures had been gradually advancing, and still continues to advance towards the perfect day; for a spirit of religious liberty, which hath been long oppressed, revives and gains strength; the scriptures are more carefully studied; ecclesiastical persecution and tyranny, under every form, more generally detested; and things seem to have a tendency towards love, unity and concord, the most perfect state of religion in this world.

This must afford satisfaction to every good man who will cheerfully join his endeavors to bring on the next glorious dispensation, which we have in prospect, when the mystery of God, with regard to the aforesaid corrupt state of religion, shall be finished, when Babylon, in all its principles and powers, shall fall; and when the holy city, the new Jerusalem, shall be fully established.

Thus have we endeavored to give a sketch of the works of God from the beginning of the world; and very beautiful and surprizing would the whole appear, could we see them in a full and clear light, as they are held forth to our view in the sacred writings, of the harmony and agreement of which they are, among other considerations, an undoubted evidence.

As scripture is the best explication of scripture, we shall make some general remarks, founded on the same, which will greatly assist our conceptions of, and enquiries into these very important points.

All the Divine dispensations are agreeable to the most perfect rules of righteousness and truth. Nothing false, unjust, or injurious, can be charged on the ways and works of God; for *all God's ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he.* Deut. xxxii. 4. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* Psal. cxlv. 17.

The ways of God are not to be considered as the effects of necessity, as if the end proposed could not possibly have been gained by other means; but as the result of choice, or Divine wisdom, preferring such particular methods to any other, as best adapted to our circumstances, and as the most likely to make mankind wise and happy.

For instance, it is by the dispensation of God, that our present life is sustained by food; not because it is impossible we should live in any other way, for the Almighty could sustain us in perfect health by an act of his own immediate power. Again, our food is produced by the influence of the sun, by rain, the fertility of the ground: not because food could not be otherwise produced, for God could by an immediate act of his own power, create food for us every day, as he did for the Israelites in the wilderness; but this method of sustaining our lives is a continuance of Divine wisdom, to shew himself to our understandings, and to exercise our industry in providing a subsistence, and to be mutually helpful to each other. Hence the works of God, in scripture, are assigned to his wisdom. See Psal. civ. 24. Prov. viii. 24.

All the dispensations of God are calculated to promote obedience to his holy will; or to promote holiness of heart and life. This is the line which runs through the whole; for, however our circumstances may differ from those of our first parents, the end of our being is the same as theirs, and we, as well as they, are upon trial, that we by grace may have habits of holiness confirmed in us, and be fitted for eternal life, which is the inheritance of those that are sanctified.

Though it is a melancholy reflection to consider, how the wickedness of men hath from time to time abused the patience of God, yet it must give pleasure to observe, how his goodness hath applied various remedies to prevent or heal the corruptions of mankind.

In whatever way they have gone astray from him, his wisdom has never been at a loss to find out the most proper expedients to reclaim them. His gracious design is evidently to save a sinful world, and to carry religion both in its personal influences, and general prevalence, to the highest perfection our present condition will admit.

The scripture dispensations were severally adapted to the different capacities and improvements, as also to the moral state and circumstances, of mankind. The several ages may be compared to the several stages of human life, infancy, youth, manhood and old age.

Now, as man under due culture gradually improves in knowledge and wisdom, from infancy to old age, so we may conceive of the world, as gradually improving in mental and religious attainments under several Divine dispensations: which dispensations have in every period been suitable to the improvements in knowledge, which then subsisted in the world.

Adam, when created, may be considered as a child without knowledge, learning and experience, and therefore the dispensation he was under was very different from that which we are under, who enjoy the benefit and light of so many preceding dispensations.

Thus mankind, reflecting upon preceding dispensations, will be admonished and directed to reform old errors and corruptions; and thus, even the monstrous apostacy of the church of Rome, may serve to introduce and establish the most perfect state of Christianity, that we expect will succeed the dispensation under which we live.

All God's dispensations have a practical tendency, or direct to holiness or obedience to his law; and he has always provided sufficient support for integrity and virtue. The sincere and upright, who chuse the way of truth, or turn from sin unto righteousness, the righteous and merciful God will never forsake. They make a wise improvement of his dispensations; and under all trials and afflictions, he will guide and support them; and their path shall be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world, saith the apostle James. Then all God's works were formed and planned in his counsels, and lay under his eye in one comprehensive view, and therefore must be perfectly consistent.

One uniform method must be laid, and one even thread of design must run through the whole. They are not the result of sudden incoherent thoughts, but a well-digested plan, formed upon the justest principles by him, who seeth all his works from the beginning to the end. Whence it follows, that if we do not discern one coherent design in the Divine dispensations; or if we make any

one part clash with the rest, we may be sure we do not understand them.

Goodness was the principle of creation. God made man because he delighted to communicate being and happiness. Consequently goodness and fatherly love, which was the beginning and foundation of God's works, must run equally through them all, from first to last.

Previous notice was given of some of the principal dispensations, either for warning, or to prepare men for the reception of them.

The deluge was preached by Noah one hundred and twenty years before it came to pass.

The Jewish dispensation was predicted to Abraham four hundred and thirty years before-hand.

Jeremiah foretold the Babylonish captivity, and Paul and John at large predicted and described the grand apostacy.

But the coming of the Messiah and the Gospel dispensation run through the whole, from the beginning to the end, in a less or greater degree of light; and it was fitting that this, which is the chief of God's works, should receive the highest testimony from prophecy; therefore it was fit it should not be introduced, till it had received that evidence, which in scripture is called the *fulness of time*. Gal. iv. 4.

The dispensations of God are intended for our study and contemplation; and it is a singular advantage to form right notions of them, because they will enlarge our conceptions of God, and influence our dispositions towards him.

If we judge truly of God's works, we shall have honorable ideas of the Divine agent. His wisdom, his goodness and truth, will stand in a fair light, and we shall confess him infinitely worthy of our highest regard. Then we shall think of God with admiration, pleasure and delight. Ps. xcii. 4. *Thou Lord hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands.*

But if we form such conceptions of the ways of God, as represent them to be arbitrary and tyrannical, inconsistent with all our notions of justice and goodness, the

effect of sovereign will, without either reason or love, he must stand before our thoughts in the most frightful colors. The most horrid gloom will be drawn over the perfections of the best of beings, our minds will be filled with darkness and dread; and if we worship him at all, our worship and obedience will not be the free and generous duty of sons; but the joyless, constrained drudgery of slaves.

It must be remembered, that the works of God are unsearchable, and past finding out to perfection. *O Lord, how great are thy works, and thy thoughts are very deep!* Ps. xciii. 5. From a just sense of the unfathomable nature of the Divine dispensation, the apostle concludes a discourse upon the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, with this solemn exclamation, *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments; And his ways past finding out.* Rom. xi. 33.

It becomes us to admire and adore the counsels of infinite wisdom, and to acquiesce, where we cannot gain a full knowledge of them. We cannot comprehend the ways of God in their full extent, in all their largest views, and remotest connections. He therefore that is wise, will not cavil at them, nor foolishly endeavor to pry into them, beyond the bounds of revelation, and of human understanding.

Under all our present darkness, and under every dispensation, an honest heart, sincerely desirous to know the truth, will be seriously inquisitive after it, meekly submissive to what God hath revealed and commanded; willing to work together with him; and patiently persevere in well-doing. Such a temper, and such a conduct, is the best and safest guide under every dispensation, will enable us to follow God, to comply with every design of his providence, to overcome in every hour of trial, and will lead us to eternal life.

For this reason, then, it is not only our duty, but will be the most evident testimony we can give of our wisdom, frequently to read and meditate on the BIBLE, that our minds being well furnished with heavenly knowledge,

and our hearts tinctured with a Divine spirit, we may be prepared for glory, honor and immortality.

How shall the young secure their hearts,
And guard their lives from sin?
Thy word, O Lord, doth rules impart,
To keep the conscience clean.

When once it enters to the mind,
It spreads such light abroad,
The meanest souls instruction find,
And raise their thoughts to God.

'Tis like the sun, an heavenly light,
That guides us all the day;
And through the dangers of the night,
A lamp to lead our way.

Thy word is everlasting truth,
How pure is every page!
Thy Holy Book shall guide our youth,
And well support our age.

CHAP. II.

*On the Necessity of an extraordinary Revelation from God,
as deduced from the depraved State of Human Nature.*

IN the preceding chapter we have endeavored to demonstrate the great and close connection there is between the Old and New Testament, or harmony and agreement of the sacred writers; which we have done by producing various proofs and arguments drawn from the state, circumstances, and conditions of the writers, the nature of their subjects and the Divine dispensations in general, and subjoined such remarks as may tend to instruct and improve the serious Christian in the knowledge of his holy profession. We shall, therefore, as a necessary companion to the foregoing, point out, in this chapter, the necessity of an extraordinary revelation from

God, as deduced from the depraved state of human nature.

The scriptures, as contained in the Bible, are the word of God; they are the language and address of the Universal Father to his children in this world, whom he addresses in the character of Sovereign Lord of the universe, and strictly enjoins to obey his voice. The scriptures are given *by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.* 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Mankind, in a faithful use of their natural powers, might know God. *Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them, for the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,* Rom. i. 19. So that even the heathens, who have no other rule than the light of nature, it might reasonably be thought could not be totally ignorant of the wise dispensations of Providence.

But how much mankind, in all ages, have abused and misapplied their understandings, is notoriously evident, and therefore it must be clear how much they stand in need of an extraordinary revelation to correct their errors, to reduce them to the obedience of God, and to secure them from relapsing into idolatry, and apostacy from him.

No book certainly can contain more evident marks of such Revelation than the Scriptures, eminently so called, of which we are happily possessed. In them we have the fullest and clearest account of the nature and perfection of God, beyond what the world at best could have attained to, and far beyond what could, in the ordinary course of things, have been, by any other means, preserved through succeeding generations.

In the scriptures, as in a durable storehouse, not to be demolished by time, we have the most noble discoveries of the nature and perfection of God, as he is our Maker, our Father, Owner, Ruler, and daily Benefactor; as he is glorious in all his attributes, as he is infinite, and independent, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, knowledge, wisdom and power, as perfectly holy, good, righteous and true.

These glories of his Divine nature are described, not in the way of philosophical dissertations; not by a series of abstract reasoning, which are of no use to the bulk of mankind, who have but little leisure, and perhaps less inclination to attend to the curious and abstruse deductions of reason; not thus are the glories of the Divine nature delineated in scripture, but exhibited in a long, easy and intelligible series of facts and events, wherein God hath manifested his goodness, wisdom, power and justice, from the beginning of the world.

In this way the mind, with very little labor of thought, is at once convinced of the being and perfections of God, and struck with admiration, reverence, love, and those other affections, which the knowledge of God should produce in us.

In the scriptures, God appears not only in every view that the most profound philosophy can discover, but also in a practical light. We are there taught, that great as he is in himself, he is our God and Father, that he hath from his own immensity of being, given us being; that he constantly regards us, interests himself in our affairs, is concerned for our welfare; that our safety is in his favor, and that in his favor, and under his protection, we are infinitely safe and happy; that we are accountable to him for our actions; that we are continually under his eye; that he hath taken us into the nearest relation to himself, and that in order to promote our future and eternal happiness, he hath carried on various dispensations from the beginning of the world to the present time.

Thus we not only, in the easiest and clearest way, learn the perfections of scripture, but we learn them in a manner the most proper and powerful to engage and unite our hearts to God, and cause us to consider ourselves infinitely interested in his attributes and perfections.

In the scriptures we may not only with ease learn our duty in the fullest extent, but at the same time, by the numerous examples of pious men in all ages, we may see that it is practicable, and may see how to engage in it. By reading the scriptures, we may discern the reasonableness and the beauty of holiness, and also be furnished with the strongest arguments and motives to embrace it

and to persevere therein. We are also assured in sacred writ of the Divine aid and assistance in our duties, trials and temptations; of the Divine consolation and encouragement in all our troubles and distresses; and if, through the Divine grace, we persevere in faith and holiness, of everlasting glory in the realms of bliss.

In this sacred treasure we have the truest and most effectual rules, whereby to form our lives; not simple propositions, not mere lectures of dull morality, but instructions intermixed with the promise of a Divine power to work mightily in us, and lead us to a Divine life and spiritual nature.

Here religion appears in all its truth, lustre, sweetness and majesty. Here it is arrayed in all its charms, not as a sour, severe, morose, gloomy principle, forbidding enjoyment, and the parent only of sorrow, horror and despair; but as our life, our glory, our peace, our joy, as giving us the truest relish and enjoyment of life, as the source of the most solid pleasure and comfort, uniting us to God, as lodging us for ever in the arms of Almighty love and goodness, as leading to and preparing us for endless joy and pleasure at his right hand.

As to sin and wickedness, philosophers have said much concerning the odious nature of vice, that it is evil, and the worst of evils, that is the disease and deformity of the mind, pernicious to the health of the body, and ruinous to the worldly interest.

Their reflections were so far just; but they could only be comprehended by men of letters and study; the common people received little or no advantage from them; but in the scriptures, the meanest minds are favored with far better instructions than they could give.

There sin is not only set forth in all its odious colors, in all its pernicious effects, as to the present life, but its deadly nature is demonstrated as it stands in contrariety to God, as it is the transgression of his holy law, as it exposeth us to his displeasure, and is opposite to all the ends of our creation, and consequently as deserving of death.

In scripture we learn, that God will punish the impatient workers of iniquity with everlasting destruction, and

purge out of his kingdom every thing that offends. All this is so plainly and powerfully inculcated upon the mind, by many dreadful examples of the Divine vengeance upon ungodly men throughout the whole series of scripture history, by many express declarations of God's wrath, and so many exhortations of his goodness and mercy to turn from every evil way, that no one who carefully and seriously reads the scriptures, can miss, not only of seeing the evil, the irregularity and deformity of sin, but of having his mind affected with it, and being brought into the most settled detestation of it.

With regard to pardon of sin, the wisest of philosophers seem to have had little or no notion of it. They considered it very superficially, as repugnant to the Divine perfection, and, therefore, say little or nothing, whether God would be propitious to sinners, or in what way he would be pleased in his wisdom to pardon transgression.

Sacrifices were frequent among them; but they seem to have understood but little of their true nature and end, nor were at all solicitous to enquire into them. In fact they did not understand the true demerit of sin, and, therefore, of course must be in the dark as to the remission of it. But all these things are open and obvious to the weakest capacity, in scripture.

How much the world was in the dark about a future state, without a revelation, is well known; and how clearly the world to come is opened to us in the awful prospects of eternal happiness, or endless perdition, can be concealed from none who are ever so little acquainted with the Gospel of Christ.

These things duly attended to, will shew the precious value of the holy scriptures, that God's word is truth, and able to make us wise unto salvation, and further demonstrate that it is our duty to be frequently attentive in reading them.

Reading the scriptures is one of the first principles of our religion, as we are Christians; because our profession is built wholly upon the scriptures. The word of God is the guide of our actions. *It is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths*, Ps. cxix. 105. Should we not

then diligently study the word of God, that we may not wander from his commandments?

The word of God is the spring of all our hopes and comfort. There, and there alone, we have the rich and immense treasure of the Divine promises; and from thence alone, we can draw solid support and consolation, in a dark hour of trial and affliction.

In short, to all the valuable purposes of knowledge and life, the scriptures excel all human compositions whatever. The writings of men are but as the twinkling stars to that ocean of light, which is daily poured forth from the body of the sun. Of all the means of knowledge and wisdom in the world, none are to be compared with the word of God. We should, therefore, have our eyes intent upon the light, for God hath given us this invaluable treasure, the holy scriptures, that we should make them our study.

It must be carefully observed, that it is not enough to be frequently reading the scriptures, but that while we read, we should employ all our attention to understand them. The scripture may be understood, but evidently not in every degree by every man; for as there are various sorts and degrees of knowledge in scripture, some perhaps, at present, beyond the reach of any man that ever yet was in the world; and as there are men in various capacities and degrees of learning, so it is manifest, all men cannot attain to the same degree of understanding in Divine things; but there must necessarily be a great difference between the knowledge of one man and another in matters of faith and revelation.

This shews the absurdity of the popish scheme, which pretends to reduce the Christian faith in all its parts to a certain invariable standard, to which every man either with or without understanding, must conform.

This also shews, that notwithstanding it is our duty to communicate knowledge to one another, it is repugnant to the nature and design of Christianity, to quarrel with one another, or to be displeased, because we have not the same degree of understanding in matters of faith; because this, according to the present constitution of our

minds, and of the revelation God hath given us, equally understood by all, is absolutely impracticable.

But although the scriptures are not understood in every degree by every man, yet they may be understood by every man, so far as God requireth; that is, so far as he is capable of understanding them; for what a man can understand, he may understand, if he is not wanting to himself.

Further, those things in scripture which are of the highest importance, and conducive to eternal life and salvation, are easy to be understood, and, therefore, how perplexed soever other things may be, about which men have differed, and which men by their difference, have more perplexed; the grand principles of faith in Christ, and obedience to the rules of the Gospel are so evident, that any ordinary capacity may, with due care and attention, easily gain a complete knowledge of them.

The things chiefly to be understood in scripture, are Principles, or the grounds and reasons of things, and Precepts, which are the rules of duty; now if we mistake either, we shall throw all into confusion, our way will be all mist and clouds, that which should be light will be darkness, or, which is the same, a false light, to mislead us: that which should be our joy, will be heaviness; that which should be our comfort, and inspire cheerful hope, will be a dead weight to burthen our spirits and clog our course. Our path, which should be as the shining light, that shineth more and more, will be a gloomy, melancholy road, and we shall make our way with difficulty, because we want that true sense and knowledge of the ways and will of God, which is necessary to give life, comfort and vigor. Frightful images will terrify our consciences, and fill us with groundless fear. God will be described in a monstrous light, and all the ravishing glories of his truth, wisdom and love, which should powerfully draw our hearts to him, will be hid from our eyes. The lustre of redeeming grace will be eclipsed; some parts of religion will be superstitiously magnified, while others will be undervalued.

Further, if for want of due attention to the sense of scripture we mistake, or fall into error, we ought to be

sensible that religious error is of a far worse nature than any other; not only as it is an error in a matter of the greatest importance, but as it is of all others the most difficult to be corrected. Hence those grosser instances of persecution and bloodshed, which have indelibly stained the Christian name. Hence those wranglings, debates, heats and animosities, which have destroyed Christian societies. These things are the fruits of men's taking their religious principles upon trust, and not founding them on the scriptures studied and understood by themselves. Such contempt and neglect of the word of God, exposeth them to strong delusion, and such delusion leads them to fight in the dark for they know not what. Thus religion is corrupted, the corruption of it defended, and irreligion and infidelity propagated, even by those who profess themselves religious people.

By these unhappy means, what numbers in our land have been drawn into deism! And by these unhappy means (if the truth were known) religion appears but in a doubtful light to many, who seem to be strict professors of it; for where it is not received in the proper evidence, there cannot be a full and strong assent of faith; and no man can receive it in its proper evidence, who does not carefully endeavor to understand the scriptures.

Thus many who talk much of the word of God, and pretend a great reverence for it, may possibly at the last day, be ranked among the despisers of it; because although they have, perhaps, been frequently reading it, they never set themselves in good earnest to understand it, and so in effect might as well not have read it at all; for their reading it is only from a superstitious opinion, as Turks, Jews, and Papists turn over the books in reputation among them, not from a love of truth, or a desire of understanding truth; not to open their eyes, and to give them a more just and distinct view of the ways and dispensations of God; not to confirm and establish their minds in the faith of God, and of Christ: not for those purposes, it is much to be feared, are the scriptures read, but only in a customary, superstitious way, or at least very carelessly and superficially; and, therefore, there are so few professors of Christianity that grow in grace,

who rise in spiritual strength, peace, love and joy; because there are so few that grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. iii. 18.

Whatever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; for our instruction, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope, Rom. xv. 4. We have hope through that patience and comfort which is taught in the scriptures; but the grounds and reasons of that patience and comfort must be understood; otherwise we cannot establish in our minds a sure and solid hope.

Hence it is that the Christian hope, that faith and hope which overcometh the world, are so very rare; therefore, so few rejoice in hope, because so few understand the scriptures which are the ground and foundation of the true Christian hope.

Let it be remembered, that we shall have the benefit of the scriptures by studiously endeavoring to understand them, and then shall we learn, if we follow on, to know the Lord.

So far as we understand the word of truth, we shall be truly enlightened, our consciences will be rightly directed, and all our principles well established; we shall see its real value, and it will be proportionably esteemed; we shall taste its comforts, feel its power, be convinced of its Divine original, and it will be both pleasant and precious to us. The more we understand of the scriptures, with the greater pleasure we shall see the righteousness, wisdom, and goodness of all Divine dispensations, that all of them are adjusted and settled by the love of a father, and calculated to promote our happiness. This will draw our hearts to God, and shew us the propriety of acquiescing with the constitutions of his grace.

If we build upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, our faith will stand upon a sure bottom, and not upon the weak, precarious judgment of man; henceforth we shall be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, but shall by use have our senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Thus we shall grow up into Christ in all things, in knowledge, in faith, and in love. Thus we shall be root-

ed and grounded in love, in the love of God, of truth, and of our neighbor. The knowledge we gain, whether it be more or less, being drawn from the fountain, will compose our spirits, and incline us neither to despise the weakness of those that know less, nor reject the instructions of those that may know more than ourselves. These weighty considerations should engage us to read the scriptures, with all possible care and diligence; and to study them with an upright desire of gaining their true sense and meaning.

We all know how much men are at variance concerning the true sense and import of scripture, one affirming that this, another that that, is the precise meaning; but this variety of sentiments is permitted to teach us to practice charity towards one another, and should convince us that we ought not to resign our understanding to others, but be ultimately guided by the scriptures themselves.

Upon the whole, it is evident from the fallible state of human nature, the prevalence of human prejudices, the defects of human reason, and the proneness of mankind in general to sin and iniquity of every kind and degree, that a certain method of direction from the all-wise God is absolutely necessary to guide them into those paths that lead to the obedience of his will, and their own truest interest and happiness; it is also as evident, that the sacred scriptures of the Old and New Testament are entirely and fully conducive to those grand important purposes, being, as before observed, *given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

CHAP. III.

On the Authority and Excellency of the Scriptures, founded on the express and frequent Assertions of Moses, the Prophets and Apostles.

IT has been already observed, that a Divine revelation is perfectly consouant to the goodness and love of God, to the relation in which we stand to him, and the gracious purposes for which he has given us being. We have likewise endeavored to prove the expediency of Revelation from the depraved state of human nature, and shall now observe, that no books were ever more publicly, or more commonly known, being read and heard with the greatest reverence once a week, in both Jew and Christian assemblies, for a very long course of time; the Old Testament before the coming of our Lord, and the Old and New after his coming, to this very day. So that it is, in the nature of things, impossible that the holy scriptures should be adulterated; nor could any man, who was disposed to alter or corrupt them, promise himself success in an attempt, which must immediately be detected and confounded by thousands of copies every where dispersed, and constantly read before numerous assemblies in various languages of even more nations than ever composed the Roman empire in its largest extent.

Transcribers may, indeed, make literal mistakes, but those are easily corrected by a variety of manuscripts; and translators may differ in giving the literal sense of some words and phrases; but not so as to render the subjects and substance of the scriptures, either obscure or uncertain; for you may take any translation in any language, or done by any party among Christians, and you will find they all agree in the great doctrines of salvation, and the several laws and duties enjoined by the Divine command; though they may not render the letter of the text in the same words, nor with the same propriety of expression.

The more perfect and exact in every point any translation is, the better it is; but it is very certain, that all

things pertaining to the dispensations of God, his grace and promises, and our hopes and duty, have been preserved pure and entire in every translation, from the beginning to this day; and this is abundantly sufficient for our instruction, comfort, direction, and edification.

Persons in foreign commerce, who do not understand foreign languages, are obliged to carry it on by the help of translators; and if a letter in Italian, German, Spanish or French, was put into the hands of twenty translators, it is much if every translation would not differ more or less in some expressions, and yet they might all agree with respect to the sense of the merchant; and this being all his correspondent wants to understand, he will not think it worth his pains to enter into points, or a critical propriety of phrases, which have no reference to his business.

Just so it is with respect to the translation of the bible. In more than the space of an hundred years, learning may have received considerable improvements, and by that means some inaccuracies may be found in a translation, more than an hundred years old; but those who are disposed to believe the authenticity of scripture, may rest fully satisfied, that as our English translation is in itself, by far the most excellent book in our language, so it is a pure and plentiful fountain of Divine knowledge, giving a true, clear and full account of the Divine dispensations, and particularly of the Gospel of our salvation, insomuch, that whoever studies the same, studies the only way to eternal happiness.

Thus by shewing the sufficiency of the translation, which, thanks be to God, is in our hands, the way is prepared for advancing a few arguments to establish the authority and excellency of the scriptures, and to shew they were indeed given by inspiration of God, or that, in them, the holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy spirit.

We have sufficient reason to believe, that we have in our hands the very books that were written by Moses, by the prophets, and by the apostles of Christ. Now that those books were given by inspiration from God, or that the persons who wrote them have delivered to us what

they received from heaven, will appear from their own express and frequent assertions.

Moses and the prophets always declared they spake in the name of the Lord, and delivered to the people what they received in commission from him.

The apostles, likewise, assure us, that they were taught by Jesus Christ, the Son of God; were endued with the Spirit of God, and commissioned by him to preach the Gospel to all nations: and we have the utmost reason to believe that they have strictly told us the truth.

They appear to have been persons of the greatest characters for honor and probity. In the whole of their conduct we find the utmost integrity and disinterestedness, and in every part of their history and writings the utmost simplicity and impartiality.

We may carry this argument further, and set it in a still stronger light in the case of the prophets. It is certain that the prophets in a long series, one after another, gained no advantage from speaking in the name of the Lord; but on the other hand, that they incurred scorn and contempt from the generality of their countrymen. When they entered upon the ungrateful office, they renounced all worldly views, and were harassed and persecuted in proportion to their fidelity in executing their commission.

Now, there is nothing to be found in human nature, or in any state of things, that can be supposed to exist, that can possibly account for this conduct, but that they really had a Divine commission from God; and their writings prove they were men of good understanding, and of a sound and excellent judgment.

The force of this argument will be seen more evidently in the case of the apostles. No history in the world hath been better preserved than that of the New Testament; there we find that Jesus Christ had gathered, while he was upon earth, some hundreds of disciples, who all made profession of faith to him, immediately after his death, declaring that he was risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven. Particularly the apostles, with several others, went about preaching the Gospel, first in Judea, then in all parts of the Roman empire, persuading them to believe in Christ, affirming that he was the Son of

God, that all the wonderful works related of him were true, and that they had a commission from heaven to teach and propagate his religion every where, though they should every where meet with the most violent opposition and the cruellest treatment.

The apostles had an amazing knowledge of God, and the perfections of the Divine nature; they set the dispensations of his wisdom, and the grand design of his love in the clearest and most amiable light; they well understood the whole system of the Divine law as a perfect rule of practice, and fixed every branch of it upon a proper foundation. They were men of the most excellent and Divine spirit, next to their Lord and Master, that the world was ever acquainted with.

They were fully satisfied that what they reported was true, and they were perfectly capable of receiving the clearest evidence, and fullest satisfaction; what they reported was not a matter of mere opinion, as in the case of superstition, nor a warm suggestion, or secret impulse upon their minds, as in the case of enthusiasm, but a plain matter of fact. *We cannot (say they) but speak the things which we have seen and heard.* Acts iv. 10.

They were not things which they conceived or fancied, but which all of them, with great multitudes of people, had often and openly, for more than three years together, seen with their eyes, and heard with their ears; and that they were not mistaken or deceived, they were so fully satisfied, that they ventured all they had in the world, and even life itself, upon the truth of what they had heard and seen; consequently, their assurance must be to the highest and fullest degree of satisfaction, leaving no room for doubt or uncertainty.

It is certain the apostles, who were the familiar companions of our blessed Lord, had not the least scruple or difficulty concerning any thing related in the Gospel. They were fully convinced, perfectly assured, they saw Christ upon earth, that they conversed with him, that they heard the gracious words which proceeded from his mouth, that they saw him work miracles, that they beheld him crucified and dead, that they saw him alive again in a few days, that they heard him give them a

commission to preach the Gospel to all nations, and promise them success; that they actually saw him ascend up into heaven; that the Holy Ghost fell upon them on the day of Pentecost, and that by his influence they actually felt themselves endued with a new and miraculous power, which accompanied them during the course of their ministry; and to their being fully persuaded of the truth of these things, and to no other possible cause, can we assign their steady and zealous endeavors to publish and spread the Gospel.

Add to all this, that the apostles were amazingly successful in preaching the Gospel, amidst all the opposition with which they met, during the course of their ministry.

These men in private and humble life, these defenceless men, quite destitute of all worldly power and interest, only by the force of truth, the truth of the Gospel, which they preached, and the power which they received from their Master, after he ascended into heaven, encountered the fury of a bigotted and enraged multitude, and overcame the most inveterate prejudices.

Their doctrine had a most amazing effect and influence on the minds of multitudes, who, by the power of God, at their preaching, were daily added to the church.

These considerations, weighed together in an impartial balance, will sufficiently prove the authenticity of the apostles' mission and doctrine, that they received their commission and instruction from Jesus the eternal Son of God; and upon the grounds of this argument alone, the sincere believer may be fully convinced that the apostles were inspired by the spirit of God, and that they have in their writings infallibly delivered the truth, in all things pertaining to the Christian faith and doctrine.

If Jesus Christ came from the right hand of his Father to explain to us the Divine mind and will; if his apostles were taught by him, and after his ascension received the gifts of the Holy Ghost in a most miraculous manner, enabling them to perform wonders in confirmation of the doctrine they delivered; it certainly follows, that the books of Moses, and of the prophets, are undoubtedly the word of God; and that the sacred history may be depended on as a true account of things: for those books

are not only asserted by our Lord and his apostles, in general, to be the word of God, given by inspiration, and a true rule of knowledge, faith and doctrine; but particular passages are frequently produced in proof or confirmation of the doctrine they taught, and almost every single part of the history, from the beginning to the end, as of Adam, Enoch, Noah, the Deluge, Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham, the Israelites, and their miraculous deliverance from Egypt, and settlement in the Land of Canaan, and all the surprizing events in their history, are referred to as undeniably authentic.

What our Blessed Lord and his apostles have taught in the books of the New Testament, is certainly the truth, as they received it from God. Wherefore the scriptures of the Old Testament are also given by inspiration, and are a sacred repository of Divine knowledge, of undoubted credit and veracity; for our Lord and his apostles have represented and established them as such.

Therefore the frequent and express assertions of Moses, the prophets and apostles, taken in connection with their proper circumstances, is a proof of the truth of revelation, as it stands in the scriptures.

Thus we have endeavored to deduce the authority and excellence of the scriptures, as contained in the Holy Bible, and comprizing the books of the Old and New Testament, from the express, frequent and concurring declarations of their respective writers, viz. Moses, the prophets and apostles, and would subjoin this single remark for the comfort and edification of the pious Christian.

As you find, upon the strictest examination, an entire uniformity of doctrine, opinion and sentiment, concerning the great things of God in all the sacred writings, that they all represent the Divine nature in the same light: in short, as they all tend absolutely to lead us to the covenant of grace and the sufferings and atonement of Jesus Christ for life and salvation; let us not be wavering in our opinion, but steadfastly maintain the faith once delivered to the saints, ever remembering that He is faithful, who hath promised, and who has declared, that

heaven and earth may pass away, but not one jot or tittle of his word shall pass away.

CHAP. IV.

On the internal Worth and Excellency of the Scriptures, as containing the best Principles of Knowledge, Holiness and Comfort.

THE arguments we have already advanced are taken from the external evidence, that the scriptures are the word of God: we now proceed to consider their internal worth and excellency, which more fully and clearly demonstrates their Divine original, and falls in with the second part of our design, which was to state the use and importance of the holy scriptures.

Considering the sacred writings as a gift and blessing from God, the father of all light, and fountain of all good, for our improvement in knowledge and holiness, in order to our being advanced to eternal glory and happiness, we may in general conclude, that the scriptures are in worth and usefulness fully proportionable to the wisdom and goodness of the donor, and to the noble and beneficent end for which they are intended. They are a glorious display of heavenly light, irradiating the darkness of the world, which otherwise would have been involved in the blackest night of ignorance.

Let it be observed to the honor of the bible, that it is the book, which, under the Divine Providence, has preserved in the world, the knowledge of the only true God, which otherwise must have been lost and extinguished; for when God in his infinite wisdom was pleased to call Abraham, and separate his family to the purposes of revelation, idolatry, even in those early days, not long after the flood, was so far spread, that some of Abraham's family were idolaters, and served other gods.

So far indeed did the corruption of religion prevail, that all nations, losing the true idea of the great and

glorious Creator of heaven and earth, fell into the grossest idolatry and superstition, together with every abominable vice, except the nation of the Jews, who enjoyed the word and revelation of God ; and it was that very word and revelation after our Saviour came into the world, which enlightened the Gentiles, and so generally brought them over to the worship and obedience of the great Lord of the universe.

Under God, the scripture must be owned the instrumental cause of all the true religion that is to be found in the world, and it will be established more and more ; it will shine forth more and more ; it will be honored more and more, in the truth of its doctrines, in the wisdom of its precepts, in the accomplishment of its predictions and promises, and in the appearing of our Lord at the last day to receive in his joy all that know and obey the Gospel of his grace.

Thus much may be truly said of the usefulness of scripture in general, which gives it infinitely the preference to all books of mere human composition, as it has been the means of preserving in the world the grand principles of religion, the knowledge of the being and perfections of God, and of the true spiritual worship, which alone pleaseth him, and enobles, purifies and comforts our souls ; and just in proportion as the bible is received, esteemed and diligently studied, true religion has prevailed, and will always prevail and flourish. On the other hand, in proportion as the scriptures are unknown, neglected, abused and perverted ; ignorance, idolatry, irreligion, error, superstition and immorality, have and will spread their gloom, and more or less infect nations and particular persons.

The scriptures contain principles, which must be allowed to be of a superior and excellent kind. The best principles that can be found of knowledge, holiness and comfort. Here the mind expatiates in a boundless field of heavenly light, and clearly views the prospects of truth, where the eye of mere nature could never have penetrated. Here we see the being of God asserted, his nature and perfections, his glorious majesty and universal sovereignty described, with the justest propriety of senti-

ment, and the utmost elegance of language. A few sentences in this holy book will give us much clearer conceptions of God, than all the volumes of philosophy, written by strangers to revelation. Here we are taught the various dispensations of Divine wisdom and goodness, from the beginning of the world to this day, and even to the end of time.

Here we find a two-fold covenant; of works which threaten death to every transgressor; of grace which grants pardon and redemption to every believer, and promises all needful supplies to the humble and sincere.

Here we learn how God created a kingdom among the nations, or a peculiar congregation, to prevent the universal corruption of the world, and like a star in the firmament, to diffuse the light of Divine knowledge throughout the darkness of the earth.

At length we see the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, appear to take away sin, to bring in everlasting righteousness, or salvation, to illustrate the grace of God, and give the plainest explanation of his will and duty, to shew the future world in the clearest and most awful view, and to appoint the most powerful means to attract our hearts to God, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

In the scriptures the design of our present existence in this world is represented in a manner agreeable to the appearance of things, and the wisdom and goodness of God, not to be for enjoyment, but for trial, not to gain temporal pleasures or possessions, but to discipline our souls, and to prepare them for immortal glory and honor. In particular, the many afflictions incident to our frailty, are set in a true and encouraging light, as the discipline and correction of our heavenly father; not for our destruction, but for our improvement in holiness, to purify our spirits from sensuality, to draw our regard to things heavenly and eternal, to exercise our faith, hope, patience and every virtue, which is our real excellency, and best qualification for everlasting happiness.

In the scripture we find the best principles of holiness, or of that state of mind, whereby we are habitually devoted to God and truth. For there we are shewn the

nature and design of living, in a manner greatly superior to what we could have derived from our own reason and reflection. There we read, that we were formed in the image of God, inspired with understanding, raised greatly in our faculties above the rest of the creation, and made for ends proportionably great and noble; not for the mean purposes of time and sense, but for God; for his honor and favor, to shew forth his praise, and for ever enjoy his goodness. Every obligation resulting from this important consideration, even the gracious and excellent purposes of our being, is with the greatest propriety and force urged upon us.

In most parts of the holy scriptures, the love of God smiles upon us with an attractive and endearing aspect, to draw our affections to him, and to give a constancy and steadiness to our obedience in the midst of so many, and so strong temptations, when we know the necessity of trials, troubles and affliction of every kind, in this vale of tears, in order to prepare us for a residence in the heavenly mansions, where sorrow shall be no more, where all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and endless ages shall be spent in the uninterrupted fruition of such blessings as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

In the scripture we have the Divine displeasure against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, set upon its true foundation; the odious and pernicious nature of sin, which is in itself false and mischievous, the greatest evil in the universe, and that which alone can deprive us of happiness, and subject us to eternal misery.

In the word of God, his favor to pious persons is also set upon its proper foundation; the amiable and excellent nature of true holiness, which in itself is true and salutary, the greatest preparative for future glory, is represented in the most lively and engaging colors.

Here we are kindly encouraged by the Divine grace, to think of our ways, and by true repentance, to turn from whatever is repugnant to the obedience of God. Here we are directed frequently to examine our hearts, to banish thence every corrupt principle, and to keep the spring of action within us pure from any disorderly

thought and inclination; to guard our spirits with a watchful eye, from every impure motion and suggestion; to be vigilant against every temptation and assault of the grand enemy of souls, that we may keep ourselves undefiled in the ways of God.

Here we are instructed in the most perfect and reasonable sobriety, temperance and self-denial, and warned of the danger of every sensual snare and allurements. Here this perishing body, with whatever can delight and adorn it; here this present world, with whatever in it that can engage our affections and esteem, are fully exposed to the judgment and censure of reason, and manifestly shewn to be emptiness and vanity, infinitely below the excellence and worth of immortal spirits; and therefore unfit to be pursued at the expence of our present integrity, or future felicity.

In the holy scriptures we are taught the ordinances of religion, both public and private, in the conscientious use of which we shall grow into perfect men in Christ Jesus; particularly we are commanded to set apart a competent portion of our time every day, and to keep the sabbath holy every week; that by serious meditation upon God's word, and pouring out our hearts before him in prayer and thanksgiving, we may renew our spiritual strength; be more and more confirmed in the habits of holiness, and find ourselves still advancing nearer to heavenly perfection.

This sketch of the principles of holiness, to be derived from the scriptures, clearly prove their Divine original and excellence, as it sets them greatly above any thing human wisdom can discover or devise.

In the scriptures we also find the best principles of comfort and refreshment to the soul. How needful are such principles in a scene of afflictions, sin and weakness! In general, under how many amiable characters, under how many sweet encouragements, are we invited to put our trust in God; to look unto him, and make his name, his goodness and power, our refuge in every want, danger, difficulty and conflict? Being assured that he careth for us while we hope in him; and that He will never leave us nor forsake us! We are encouraged to

hold out unto the end; persuaded, that however He may permit our sufferings and griefs, He will never forget us, but will make all things, how bitter soever, work together for our good.

Heaven is at all times open to our complaints and supplications; and the throne of God, which is a throne of grace, is easy of access, to the breathings and desires of the penitent believing soul.

Thus we see the scriptures contain, beyond all dispute, the best principles of knowledge, of holiness and comfort. It is no less evident that they deliver the best precepts for directing all our actions, which may be reduced to three heads; our duty to God, to our neighbor, and to ourselves.

We are taught to worship God with a sincere admiration of his glory and perfections, with profound reverence of his greatness, with humble adoration of his sovereignty, with the highest love and esteem for his excellency and amiableness, with joy and gratitude for his goodness, and with a heart truly devoted to his honor and glory.

To our neighbor we are directed to perform not only justice, truth and equity, but also unfeigned charity, the most extensive kindness and benevolence.

To ourselves, we owe self-preservation and self-government; and the scriptures admonish us to take the wisest care of our being, by cultivating and guarding our minds, and by mortifying all inordinate affections and passions.

In short, all that our reason can find in the law or religion of nature, is most clearly and beautifully displayed to us by revelation, and moreover, the wisdom of God has not only perfected and supplied our deficiencies, but hath discovered to us the riches of goodness, knowledge and power, infinitely beyond what our natural faculties could ever have attained.

It is further evident, that the writings both of the Old and New Testament form a storehouse of the most sacred and useful knowledge, admirably adapted to the improvement of our minds in faith and holiness, and calculated, by a proper attention to them, to produce our future and eternal happiness.

Such is the intrinsic excellency of the Holy Scriptures, and such the benefits that will undoubtedly be received from them by those who strictly adhere to the Divine precepts contained therein. The good and pious Christian will be ever happy in the reflection of having so valuable a treasure in his hands, and, with the most distinguished satisfaction of mind, may thus address himself to the Great and beneficent Author :

Lord, I have made thy word my choice,
 My lasting heritage ;
 There shall my noblest powers rejoice,
 My warmest thoughts engage.

I'll read the histories of thy love,
 And keep thy laws in sight,
 While through thy promises I rove,
 With ever fresh delight.

'Tis a broad land of wealth unknown,
 Where springs of life arise,
 Seeds of immortal bliss are sown,
 And hidden glory lies.

The best relief that mourners have ;
 It makes our sorrows blest ;
 Our fairest hope beyond the grave,
 And our eternal rest.



CHAP. V.

Containing an Account of the final Destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, as foretold by our Blessed Redeemer a short time before his Death.

HAVING, in the preceding chapters, given an ample display of the great excellency of the Sacred Writings contained in the Old and New Testament, we shall, in this chapter, give a comprehensive detail of the dreadful and final destruction of the temple and city of

Jerusalem, which was foretold by our Blessed Redeemer a short time before his death.

At the time our Lord predicted this fatal catastrophe to the Jews, he likewise foretold, that it would be preceded by strange commotions and dreadful signs from heaven, such as had never before been seen. *Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.* Luke xxi. 10, 11.

That this part of the prediction was most amply fulfilled is evident from the relation given us by Josephus, the celebrated Jewish historian, who not only recites the strange prodigies which happened previous to the breaking out of the war, but likewise gives us a very particular account of the whole progress of it, from the first revolting of the Jews to the final destruction of the city and temple by Titus, son of the emperor Vespasian.

The prodigies, which preceded the war, as related by Josephus, are these:

A comet, which bore the resemblance of a sword, hung over the city of Jerusalem for the space of a whole year.

A short time before the revolt of the Jews, a most remarkable and extraordinary light was seen about the altar of the temple. It happened at the ninth hour of the night preceding the celebration of the feast of the pass-over, and continued about half an hour, giving a light equal to that of day. Ignorant persons considered this unusual and wonderful appearance as an happy omen; but those of superior judgment averred that it was a prediction of approaching war; and their opinion was fully confirmed by the event.

The eastern gate of the interior part of the temple was composed of solid brass, and was of such an immense weight, that it was the labor of twenty men to make it fast every night. It was secured with iron bolts and bars, which were let down into a large threshold, consisting of an entire stone. About the fifth hour of the night this gate opened without any human assistance, immediate notice of which being given to the officer on duty, he lost

no time in endeavoring to restore it to its former situation; but it was with the utmost difficulty that he accomplished it. There were likewise some ignorant people who deemed this to be a second good omen, insinuating that Providence had thereby set open a gate of blessings to the people; but persons of superior discernment were of a contrary opinion, and concluded that the opening of the gate predicted the success of the enemy, and destruction of the city.

A short time after the celebration of the feast of the passover, before the setting of the sun, the appearance of chariots and armed men were seen in the air, in various parts of the country, passing round the city among the clouds.

While the priests were going to perform the duties of their function, according to custom, in the inner temple, on the feast of Pentecost, they at first heard an indistinct murmuring, which was succeeded by a voice, repeating, in the most plain and earnest manner, these words, "Let us be gone, let us depart hence."

But the most extraordinary circumstance of the whole was this. Some time before the commencement of the war, and while the city appeared to be in the most perfect peace, and abounded in plenty, there came to the feast of tabernacles, a simple countryman, the son of one Ananias, who, without any previous intimation, exclaimed as follows: "A voice from the east; a voice from the west; a voice from the four quarters of the world; a voice to Jerusalem, and a voice to the temple; a voice to men and women newly married, and a voice to the nation at large." In this manner did he continue his exclamations, in various places through all the streets of the city; at which some persons of eminence in the city were so offended, that they ordered him to be apprehended, and severely whipped. This was accordingly done, but he bore his sufferings not only without complaint, but without saying a word in his own defence; and no sooner was his punishment ended, than he proceeded in his exclamations as before. By this time the magistrates were suspicious (and indeed, not without reason) that what he had said proceeded from the Divine impulse of a superior

power that influenced his words. In consequence of this they sent him to the governor of Judea, who directed that he should be whipped with the greatest severity. This order was so strictly obeyed, that his very bones were seen, notwithstanding which he neither wept nor supplicated, but, in a voice of mourning, between each stroke, exclaimed, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" From this very extraordinary behavior the governor was induced to interrogate him with respect to his character, and the places of his birth and residence, and what could prompt him to act as he had done. He would not, however, make any answer to either of these questions; upon which the governor found himself under the necessity of dismissing him, as a man out of his senses. From this period to the commencement of the war, he was never known either to visit or speak to any of the citizens, nor was he heard to say any other words than the melancholy sentence, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem." Those who daily punished him received no ill language from him; nor did those who fed him receive his thanks; but what he generally said to every one was, an ominous prediction. It was remarked that on public festivals he was more vociferous than at other times; and in the manner before-mentioned he continued for the space of more than three years; nor did his voice or strength appear to fail him till his predictions were verified by the siege of Jerusalem. As soon as this event took place, he went for the last time, on the wall of the city, and exclaimed with a more powerful voice than usual, "Woe, woe to this city, this temple, and this people;" and concluded his lamentation by saying, "Woe, woe, be to myself." He had no sooner spoken these words than, in the midst of these predictions, he was destroyed by a stone thrown from an engine.

Having thus mentioned the very singular prodigies which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, as related by Josephus, we shall now proceed to give an account of the circumstances which occasioned the war, together with its progress, which at length brought on the final ruin and destruction of the Jewish state.

The commencement of the war was occasioned, partly by the infamous behavior of Albinus the Roman gover-

nor of Judea, and partly by the refractoriness of many of the principal people of Jerusalem. Albinus was a man totally abandoned to every degree of vice. Avarice, corruption, extortion, oppression, public and private, were equally familiar to him. He accepted bribes in civil and personal causes, and oppressed the nation by the weight of arbitrary taxes. If any offender, however atrocious, convicted of robbery or assault by himself, or any other magistrate, was under sentence of the law, a friend and a bribe would ensure his liberty; and this governor never found any man guilty who had money to procure his innocence.

At this time there was a strong faction in Jerusalem, who, wishing for a change of government, the most opulent of them privately compounded with Albinus, in case any disturbance should happen. There was likewise a set of men who would not be easy while the state was at peace; and Albinus, engaged these in his interest. The leaders of these mutineers were each attended by daring fellows of their own turn of mind; but the governor was the most abandoned villain of the whole, and had guards always ready to execute his orders. The event proved that the injured did not dare to complain; those who were in any danger of losing part of their property were glad to compound to save the rest, and the receiver proved the worst of thieves. In short, there appeared to be no sense of honor remaining; and a new slavery seemed to be predicted from the number of tyrants then in power, through the land of Judea.

Such was the character, and such were the manners of Albinus, who, in a short time, was, by order of the emperor Nero, removed from his office, and Gessius Florus placed in his stead. This, however, was far from being an advantageous change for the Jews, Florus being so much more abandoned in his principles than the former, as not to admit even of the least comparison. Albinus was treacherous, but observed a secrecy in his crimes that had the appearance of modesty; but Florus was so consummate in his wickedness, that he boasted of his iniquitous behavior, and declared himself the general enemy of the nation. His conduct in the province he governed was

more like that of an executioner than a governor; for he treated all the people like criminals, and extended his rapine and tyranny beyond all bounds. He was equally devoid of compassion, and dead to all sense of honor; cruel to the unfortunate, and utterly abandoned in cases so enormous that impudence itself would blush at the recollection of them. He exceeded all the men of his time in making lies and imposition pass for truth; and was equally artful in discovering new modes of doing mischief. He gave such encouragement to the sons of rapine and plunder, that he might as well have proclaimed that every man was at liberty to seize whatever he could lay his hands on, provided that he himself obtained a share of the plunder. His avarice was carried to such an extravagant pitch, that the inhabitants of the province were reduced to degrees of poverty little short of starving; and many of them left the country in absolute want of the necessaries of life.

The daily oppressions of Florus on the people throughout the province of Judea irritated them to the most violent degree, and being fearful lest they should lay a complaint against him before the emperor, Florus, to avoid the consequences of such a proceeding, resolved to continue his oppressions till they should enter into open rebellion, whereby his villainous proceedings would be greatly lessened in the eyes of his master. This had the desired effect, for the factious party in Jerusalem, who for some time had been inclined to revolt, encouraging the greater part of the people of that city to oppose the measures of Florus, an insurrection took place, and a resolution was formed to oppose the Romans with all their might.

It happened at this time that King Agrippa was at Jerusalem, and being fearful of the dreadful consequences that were likely to ensue, he summoned the people together, and strongly exhorted them to desist from any violent proceedings, telling them that if they did, it must inevitably prove their destruction. He advised them to a patient submission to Florus, till another governor should be appointed by the emperor, who, in all probability, would remove the grievances under which they then labored. But this, instead of subsiding, only inflamed the

passions of the multitude, who not only made use of the most opprobrious language, but likewise mal-treated the king. In consequence of this Agrippa left Jerusalem, previous to which he dispatched messengers to Florus, who was then at Cesarea, informing him of the manner in which he had been treated, and requesting that he would immediately send a proper force to repel the insurgents.

No sooner had Agrippa left Jerusalem than the factious Jews began to carry their design into execution. To this purpose great numbers of them got privately into the Roman garrison called Massada, where they surprized the soldiers, every one of whom they put to death, and, in their stead, substituted a guard of their own people.

About this juncture there happened likewise another commotion in the temple of Jerusalem. A bold and factious young man, named Eleazar (son of the then high-priest) who was at that time a military officer, persuaded a number of his friends among the priests not to accept of any offering or sacrifice but from the Jews. This circumstance laid the foundation of a war with the Romans; for, in consequence of the request of Eleazar, when the sacrifices of Nero were presented, according to custom, to be offered up for the success of the people of Rome, they were rejected. So new and extraordinary a proceeding gave great offence to the high-priest and persons of distinction, who protested against it, and earnestly recommended the continuance of so reasonable a custom as that of offering prayers for princes and governors. But the insurgents, relying on the strength of their numbers, were obstinate for obedience to their orders; every one who wished for innovation was on their side, and they considered Eleazar, who was a man of courage, and in office, as the head of their party.

In consequence of the great obstinacy of the insurgents, the high-priest and most eminent of the Pharisees assembled together in order to deliberate on the most proper mode of proceeding at so critical a juncture, being apprehensive that if the tumult was not, by some means or other, suppressed, it must be attended with the most fatal consequences. Having consulted for some time, they at length resolved to try what could be done to appease the

passions of the multitude; and for this purpose they assembled the people before the brazen gate, on the inside of the temple towards the east. Here they represented to them the rashness of the enterprize in which they had engaged, and which would certainly involve their country in a ruinous war. They then adverted to the unreasonable ground of the dispute, and the evident injustice on which it was founded; they told them that their ancestors were so far from refusing or forbidding the oblations of strangers (which they would have deemed a kind of impiety) that they considered them, in some degree, as a part of their own worship. They likewise mentioned the presents which had, from time to time, been made by strangers to the temple, which were still preserved as ornaments in that sacred place, and in remembrance of those who gave them. They farther told them, that the provoking a war with the Romans would be at least disgraceful, if not ruinous, to Jerusalem; that new modes of religion would certainly be adopted, as nothing less could be expected by the interdiction of every sort of people, except Jews, from offering oblations and prayers to God in his holy temple. It was urged that this was such an inhuman injunction as could not be excused in the case of a private person; but that it was utterly unpardonable to extend it to the whole people of Rome, and, eventually, even excommunicating the emperor himself. It was asked what would be the consequence if such contempt should be returned, and those who had refused others the liberty of offering their prayers and oblations, should themselves be denied the privilege of public worship? They concluded with telling them, that if they persisted in their obstinacy, the city would be left void of discipline; and every ill consequence would certainly happen, unless they repented of all the uncharitable things they had done, and made satisfaction, before the emperor should be informed of their violent proceedings.

But all these circumstances were of none effect; the insurgents, who wished for war rather than peace, were determined to prosecute their design with the utmost vigor; and in this they were farther encouraged from the conduct

of the Levites, who quitted the altar, and joined themselves to their party.

The high-priest, and people of rank, finding the populace despised all obedience to law, and that themselves would probably be the first that would be censured by the Romans, consulted together what means were the most eligible to take in order to save themselves and country from destruction. After deliberating for some time on this head, they at length resolved to send deputies to Florus and Agrippa, representing the conduct of the people in its true light, and requesting them to send forces to Jerusalem, in order to put a speedy end to the rebellion.

The news of the insurrection at Jerusalem was highly agreeable to Florus, whose disposition led him to inflame, rather than endeavor to suppress the war. This was evidently evinced by his delay in giving an answer to the deputies, knowing thereby that it would afford the rebels an opportunity of augmenting their forces. On the contrary, Agrippa consulted only the general welfare, being desirous of doing all in his power to save both parties; and by this means to secure Jerusalem in the possession of the Jews, and bind the Jews in subjection to the Romans. To effect this he dispatched two thousand auxiliary horse to Jerusalem, under the command of Darius, a very able and experienced general. On their arrival at the city they were joined by the rulers and high-priest, together with the rest of the people who wished for peace. The insurgents had already possessed themselves of the temple and lower city; and therefore the royal troops immediately seized on the upper city, being resolved, if possible, to reduce the rebels to subjection. It was not long before a skirmish took place, and the combatants on both sides made use of their bows and arrows, with which they galled each other incessantly. The insurgents made their attacks in the most desperate manner; but the royal forces appeared to have a superior knowledge of the military art. The principal operation the latter had in view was to compel the sacrilegious faction to abandon the temple; while, on the contrary, Eleazar and his adherents labored with equal zeal, to get the upper town into their possession. The contest continued without intermission for

some days, in all which time, though there was a great slaughter on both sides, not the least advantage was obtained by either.

At length, however, the insurgents, being resolved to engage in the most hazardous enterprize, assaulted the king's troops with such violence as to throw them into the greatest confusion and disorder; and this advantage they improved to such a degree, that, equally overcome by superior numbers and more determined resolution, the royal troops were obliged to abandon the upper town, of which the rebels immediately possessed themselves, and thereby became masters of the whole city.

Elated with this success, the insurgents immediately repaired to the house of the high-priest, which they first plundered, and then reduced to ashes. This being done, they resolved, in the next place, to set fire to the offices of record, and consume both them and all their contents. As soon as this was known, the persons who had the care of those places were so terrified, that they immediately abandoned their trust, each man seeking his own security by flight; on which both offices and records were reduced to ashes.

The next day after the insurgents had committed these outrages, they made an attack on the castle of Antonia, and, after only two days resistance, made themselves masters of it, having done which, they burnt the castle, and put all the garrison to the sword. After this they proceeded to the palace, in which were the troops sent by Agrippa to suppress the insurrection: they immediately invested the place, and having divided themselves into four bodies, made an attempt to undermine the walls; while those within were under the necessity of remaining inactive, as their strength was insufficient for them to sally forth with any hopes of success. The assailants continued their operations with great resolution for several days, till at length the besieged, finding they must either fall by the sword, or be starved into compliance, deserted the place, and fled for security to the castles of Hippon, Phasaël and Mariamne. But no sooner had the soldiers quitted the place, than the rebels immediately broke in, and unmercifully put to death every person

they met with; having done which, they plundered the palace of all its valuable furniture, and concluded the outrage by setting fire to the camp.

While these things were transacting at Jerusalem, a most dreadful massacre took place in Cesarea, not less than 20,000 Jews being, at the instigation of Florus, put to death by the Romans in one day. This horrid slaughter so irritated the Jews, that they became universally outrageous, and dividing themselves into distinct bodies, dispersed into different parts, with a full resolution of seeking revenge on their enemies. They first laid waste a great number of villages in Syria, and then destroyed several principal cities, among which were Philadelphia, Gibonitis, Garasea, Pella, and Scythopolis. They then proceeded to Sebaste and Askalon, both of which places surrendered without opposition. Having effectually reduced these two fortresses, they next proceeded to Gaza, which they totally destroyed; and continuing their ravages, laid waste a great number of villages on the frontiers of Syria, putting to death all the inhabitants wherever they went.

On the other hand the Syrians wreaked their vengeance on all the Jews they could find, not only in country places, but in many principal cities throughout Syria, all of whom they put to the sword. In short, the whole country was in the most deplorable situation, there being, as it were, two armies in every city; nor was any safety to be expected for the one, but in the destruction of the other. In the city of Alexandria no less than 50,000 Jews were put to death by the Romans; and the only places in which the Jews escaped the general carnage were Sidon, Apamia and Antioch.

Cestius, the governor of Syria (who at this time resided at Antioch) observing the contempt in which the Jews were held throughout the whole province, resolved to take advantage of this circumstance, and prosecute the war against them with the utmost vigor. For this purpose he raised a considerable army, consisting of the whole twelfth legion which he commanded at Antioch; two thousand select men from the other legions, and four divisions of horse, exclusive of the royal auxiliaries,

which consisted of two thousand horse and three thousand foot, all armed with bows and arrows.

With this formidable army Cestius left Antioch, and proceeded towards Ptolemais, in his way to which he was joined by a great number of people from different parts of the country. The first material place he came to was Zabulon, (otherwise called Andron) the most defensible city of Galilee, and by which Judea was divided from Ptolemais. On his arrival at this place he found that it was amply stored with all kinds of provisions, but not a single person was to be seen in the town, the inhabitants having, on his approach, fled to the mountains for security. In consequence of this Cestius gave his soldiers permission to plunder the city; which being done, he ordered it to be burnt, and levelled with the ground. He then proceeded to several other places in the neighborhood of Zabulon, all of which he served in like manner, and then repaired to Ptolemais. On this occasion the Syrians were so anxious for obtaining of plunder, that they could not be prevailed on to retire in time; but many of them remained behind, and on the retreat of Cestius with the greater part of his forces, the Jews, taking courage, fell on the plunderers, and near two thousand of them were put to the sword.

After staying a short time at Ptolemais, Cestius proceeded to Cesarea, from whence he dispatched a division of his army to Joppa, with orders that if they could get an easy possession of the place, they should take it; but if they found that the inhabitants made preparations to defend it, they should, in that case, wait till the arrival of the rest of the army. The Romans, however, no sooner arrived at the place than they immediately laid siege to it, and, with very little difficulty, even made themselves masters of it. The inhabitants were so far from being able to resist the attack, that they had not even an opportunity of making their escape; so that the whole, both men, women and children, were put to the sword, the number amounting to not less than eight thousand. The Romans then plundered the city, and having reduced it to ashes, they returned to their general at Cesarea. In the mean time a body of Roman horse made similar de-

struction in the neighborhood of Cesarea, where they ravaged the country, killed great numbers of the inhabitants, took possession of their effects, and then burnt their towns to the ground.

From Cesarea Cestius departed with his army to Antipatris, on his arrival at which place he was informed that a great number of Jews had got into the tower of Aphec, whither he sent a number of his troops to rout them. The Jews, finding themselves totally unable to sustain the shock, abandoned the place to the Romans, who first stript it of every thing that was valuable, and then set fire to it; having done which they departed, but not without destroying several villages in its neighborhood, and putting such of the inhabitants as could not effect their escape to the sword.

Cestius proceeded with his army from Antipatris to Lydda, in which city he found no more than fifty men, all the rest being gone to Jerusalem, in order to be present at the celebration of the feast of tabernacles. The remaining fifty Cestius ordered to be put to death, which being done, he set fire to the town, and then proceeded by the way of Bethoron, to a place named Gabaoh, about fifty furlongs from Jerusalem, where he encamped his army.

The Jews, convinced of the great danger they were in, from the appearance of so formidable an army, laid aside their former scruples with regard to their sacred days, and applied themselves strictly to their arms. Imagining that their force was now sufficient to cope with the Romans, they made a desperate sally on the sabbath-day, regardless of their ancient prejudices, and, with a furious uproar, attacked the enemy. On the first charge they put the front of the Romans into great disorder, and penetrated so far into the main body of the army, that had it not been for a detachment of foot which remained entirely unbroken, and a party of horse that unexpectedly came to their relief, Cestius and his whole army would have been certainly cut to pieces. In this encounter four hundred of the Roman cavalry were slain, and one hundred and fifteen of the infantry; while of the Jews there fell a very small number. The main body of the Jews, retreat-

ing in good order, went back into the city; and in the mean time the Romans retired towards Bethoron. A strong party of the Jews, however, under the command of one Gioras, pursued the enemy, several of whom they killed: they likewise seized a number of carriages, and a quantity of baggage, which they found in the pursuit, all of which they conveyed safe to Jerusalem.

Cestius and his army remained in the field three days after this action, during which time a party of the Jews was stationed on the adjacent hills to watch his movements. On the fourth day Cestius advanced with his whole army, in a regular manner, to the borders of Jerusalem, where many of the people were so terrified by the faction, that they were afraid to take any step of consequence; while some of the principal promoters of the sedition were so alarmed at the conduct and discipline of the Romans on their march, that they retired from the extremities of the city, and took refuge in the temple. Cestius in his way to Jerusalem burnt Cenopolis, and a place which was denominated the wood-market. From thence he advanced to the upper town of the city, and pitched his camp at a small distance from the palace.

While Cestius was thus situated with his army, Ananus, and several other men among the Jews, called aloud to the Roman general, offering to open the gates to him; but either through diffidence or fear of their fidelity, he was so long in considering whether or not he should accept the offer, that he was at length restrained from it by the people, who were so irritated at Ananus and his companions, that they compelled them to retreat from the walls of the city, and retire to their own houses for protection.

After this the Jews, with a view of defending the walls of the city, repaired to the different turrets, and, for five successive days, defended them against all the efforts of the Romans, though they pushed the attack with the utmost impetuosity. On the sixth day Cestius made an assault on the north side of the temple, with a select force chosen from his troops and bowmen; but the Jews discharged such a violent quantity of shot and stones from the porch and galleries, that the Romans were not only

repeatedly compelled to retire from the severity of the charge, but, for a time, obliged to abandon the enterprize.

Being thus repulsed, the Romans, after some time, had recourse to the following singular invention. Those in front placing their bucklers against the wall of the city, and covering their heads and shoulders with them, those who stood next closed their bucklers to the former, till the whole body was covered, and made the appearance of a tortoise. The bucklers being thus conjoined were proof against all the darts and arrows of the enemy; so that the Romans had the opportunity of undermining the walls without being exposed to danger. The first thing they did was, to attempt setting fire to the gates of the temple, which circumstance so terrified the faction, that they considered themselves as ruined, and many absolutely abandoned the town; nor were the quiet party less elevated with joy than the rebels were depressed by despair.

While things were in this situation, the people demanded that the gates might be opened to Cestius, whom they considered in the light of a friend and preserver. This was a most favorable opportunity for Cestius, and had he maintained the siege only a short time longer, the whole town must have submitted. But, not considering the good disposition of the people in general, or reflecting on the despair into which the rebels were thrown, as if he had been infatuated, he suddenly drew off his men, and, contrary to all sense and reason, abandoned the siege, at a time when his prospects were better than they had been at any former period. The revolted were so much encouraged at this unexpected circumstance, that they attacked the rear of Cestius's army, and destroyed great numbers both of his cavalry and infantry. On the first night after Cestius retreated from the siege, he took up his residence in a camp which he had fortified at a place named Scopus; and on the following day he continued his march, but was closely pursued by the Jews, who annoyed him as he went, and destroyed a considerable number of his troops. On the whole, this was a very disastrous attack to the Romans, and attended with very little loss on the part of the Jews.

Cestius, having retreated as far as Gabaoh, there encamped with his army, and, during two days, employed his thoughts in what manner he should direct his future conduct. On the third day he found that the Jews were so greatly increased in numbers, that the whole face of the country was covered with them; and that should he continue any longer at Gabaoh, it must be attended with the most fatal consequences. He therefore issued orders that the army should be eased of all their incumbrances, that they might march with the greater expedition; he likewise directed that all the mules, asses, and other beasts of burden should be killed, except only as many as were necessary to carry such weapons and machines as might afterwards be wanted for their own defence.

In this situation the Roman army proceeded towards Bethoron, Cestius marching at their head. While they continued in the open country, they did not receive any interruption from the Jews; but as they advanced into hollow ways and defiles, the enemy, who closely pursued, charged them in front and rear, and discharging repeated volleys of arrows and darts, prodigious numbers of them were killed. The Romans, however, with great difficulty, got at length to Bethoron under cover of the night; upon which all the passes near that place were secured by the Jews, in order to prevent the retreat of their adversaries.

Cestius, finding in what a disagreeable manner he was surrounded, and that it would be impossible to retreat within sight of the enemy, devised a scheme to favor his escape. Having stationed four hundred of his troops on the tops of the houses, he ordered that they should act the part of centinels, calling as loud as they were able to the watches and guards, as if the army was still in its encampment. While this plan was going forward, Cestius collected his troops with which he left Bethoron, and continued to march with them during the whole course of the night. In the morning, when the Jews found that the place had been deserted by the main body of the army during the night, they were so enraged, that they immediately attacked the four hundred Romans who had acted as centinels, slew every one of them, and then instantly marched in pursuit of Cestius; but his

troops having obtained a whole night's march on them, and proceeded with the utmost rapidity on the following day, it was not possible to overtake them. Such were the hurry and confusion in which the Romans had fled, that they dropped by the way all their slings, machines, and other instruments for battery and attack; which being seized by the pursuers, they afterwards turned them to their own advantage. The Jews pursued their enemies as far as Antipatris; but finding it in vain to continue the pursuit, they carefully preserved the engines, stripped the dead, collected all the booty they could, and then returned towards Jerusalem, singing songs of triumph for so important a victory. In this contest there fell, of the Romans and their auxiliaries, three hundred and eighty cavalry, and not less than four thousand of the infantry.

Elated with this distinguished success, the Jews, on their return to Jerusalem, appointed one Joseph, the son of Gorion, a man of great eminence, together with the high-priest, as governors of the city. They likewise sent commanders into the different provinces of Judea and Galilee, in order to secure those places against the power of the Romans. Among others Joseph, or Josephus, (the celebrated Jewish historian) was sent to take upon him the government of Galilee, the principal towns in which he immediately ordered to be fortified, and every necessary preparation made for attacking the enemy, should they attempt to invade that province.

In the mean time, the emperor Nero, having received intelligence of the defeat of Cestius in Judea, was thrown into the utmost consternation; but he dissembled his fears, by ostentatiously asserting that it was owing to the misconduct of his general, and not to their own valor, that the Jews were indebted for victory; for he imagined that it would be derogatory to the sovereign state of the Roman empire, and to his superiority over other princes, to discover a concern at the common occurrences of life. During this contention between his fear and his pride, he industriously sought for a man qualified to assume the important task of chastising the revolted Jews, preserving the east in tranquility, and the allegiance of several other nations who had manifested a disposition to free them-

selves from the power of the Romans. On mature deliberation, Nero at length judged Vespasian to be the only man possessed of abilities adequate to the important enterprize. Vespasian was then arrived to an advanced age, and, from his early years, had been engaged in a continued succession of military exploits. From these considerations, together with his approved courage and fidelity, and his having sons for hostages of his loyalty, the emperor determined to appoint him to the command of his army in Syria.

In consequence of this resolution, Vespasian, having received his commission from Nero, which he accompanied with the strongest professions of friendship and fidelity, commanded his son Titus to lead the fifth and tenth legions into Alexandria, while himself departed from Achaia, and, crossing the Hellespont, proceeded by land into Syria, where he assembled all the Roman forces, and the auxiliaries which the princes of the adjoining places had gathered together.

In the mean time the Jews, being transported to the most excessive degree of extravagance by the conquest they had gained over the Roman army under the command of Cestius, determined to prosecute the war with the utmost vigor. Accordingly they formed their best troops into a body, and marched against the ancient city of Ascalon, with a resolution of attempting the reduction of that place, against the inhabitants of which they had the most implacable enmity. The Jewish army was under the command of Niger, of Perea, Silas, a Babylonian, and John, an Essene, who were men equally celebrated for valor and skill in the management of war.

Ascalon was surrounded by a wall of surprizing strength; but the whole garrison consisted only of a troop of cavalry and a company of foot, under the command of an officer named Anthony. The Jews, being impatient to encounter the Romans, marched with the utmost expedition, intending to attack them by surprize; but Anthony getting intelligence of their design, stationed his cavalry without the town, in order to repulse the enemy. The Roman forces were composed of veteran troops, completely armed, well disciplined, and perfectly obedient to order.

The Jews had the superiority in point of numbers; but they were indifferently equipped for, and by no means expert in the art of war, and the army consisted entirely of infantry. Anthony's troops received the first charge with great resolution: his horse broke the first ranks of the adverse army, which were immediately put to the rout: great numbers were crushed to death by their own people, and wherever they fled they were pursued by the Romans. The Jews exerted their utmost endeavors to rally their forces; but this was prevented by the Romans, who pursued the advantage they had gained till ten thousand of the enemy were slain, among whom were the two generals, John and Silas. Niger, the surviving general, with the rest of the Jews, most of whom were wounded, escaped to a town in Idumea, named Sabis.

The resolution of the Jews, however, was not abated by the terrible defeat they had sustained; but, founding their hopes of success on the recollection of former victories, they were animated to a more violent desire of revenge. They therefore collected together a much more numerous army than before, and determined to make a second attempt against Ascalon, notwithstanding their want of military skill and discipline, the fatal effects of which they had already experienced. But all their hopes were soon vanished; for being surprized by an ambush which Anthony had stationed in the way they were to pass, they were entirely routed, without being able to form themselves into the order of battle. Eight thousand Jews were slain on the spot; and the rest, with Niger their general, put to flight. Being closely pursued by the Romans, Niger sought refuge in a castle belonging to the village of Bezedel. This castle was supposed to be impregnable; and therefore as the only effectual means of destroying both Niger and the castle, the Romans set fire to it, after which they departed, triumphing in the idea that the leader of the Jews must inevitably perish in the flames. Niger, being sensible that this must be the case, if he continued in his station, threw himself from the top of the castle into a vault of considerable depth, where, after three days, he was found alive by his friends, who were searching for his remains, in order to give them in.

terment. This unexpected event transported the Jews from a state of despondency into the contrary extreme of joy; and the preservation of their general, whom they considered as an instrument essentially necessary in the prosecution of the war, they attributed to Divine interposition.

During these transactions Vespasian arrived with his army at Antioch, where king Agrippa, attended by his troops, was waiting to receive him. From hence he proceeded to Ptolemais, where the inhabitants of Sepphoris, a city in Galilee, had assembled on occasion of his expected arrival. These were a well-disposed people, and being conscious of the great power of the Romans, as well as desirous of making provision for their own safety, they acknowledged Cestius Gallus as their governor, previous to the arrival of Vespasian, binding themselves to act in perfect obedience to his commands, even against their own countrymen, and at the same time declaring their allegiance to the state of Rome. They received a garrison from Cestius Gallus, and solicited Vespasian to grant them a number of cavalry and infantry sufficient for their defence, in case they should be attacked by the Jews. Vespasian readily complied with this request; for Sepphoris being the most extensive and strongest city in Galilee, he judged it expedient to keep so important a place in a proper state of defence.

The number of troops granted by Vespasian to the people of Sepphoris were, a thousand cavalry and six thousand infantry, the whole of which were placed under the command of Placidus the tribune. After these troops had been drawn up on the great plain, the foot, for the security of the city, were quartered within the walls, and the horse were ordered into the camp. The Roman troops made daily excursions into the neighborhood, where they committed many acts of violence, and greatly incommoded Joseph (the governor of Galilee) and his friends. Not satisfied with ravaging the country, they made booty of whatever they could obtain from the towns, and treated the inhabitants with so much severity that they were under the necessity of remaining within the walls.

Matters being thus circumstanced, Joseph exerted his utmost efforts to make himself master of Sepphoris; but he found it so strongly fortified, that it appeared to be impregnable, and, despairing of success, either by stratagem or force, he abandoned all farther thoughts of the enterprize. This so irritated the Romans, that they subjected the people to the most terrible calamities of fire and sword, putting those who attempted resistance to instant death, reducing the rest to slavery, and making booty of all the property they could find.

In the mean time Titus repaired to his father Vespasian at Ptolemais, taking with him the fifth, tenth and fifteenth legions, which were reckoned to be the best disciplined and most courageous of the Roman troops. These were followed by a troop of horse from Cesarea, with a great number of auxiliaries, both horse and foot, from other places. The whole army amounted to sixty thousand, exclusive of the train of baggage, and a great number of domestics, most of whom, having been trained to the practice of war, were but little inferior to the soldiers in courage and dexterity.

During the time Vespasian was with his son Titus at Ptolemais, he ordered every necessary measure to be pursued for the proper regulation and supply of his army. In the mean time Placidus made an excursion into, and overran, the whole province of Judea, where he took a great number of prisoners, most of whom he put to death. These were people destitute of courage, but such as possessed a greater share of intrepidity made a courageous resistance, and secured themselves in the cities, and other places of strength, which had been fortified by Joseph. Placidus determined to direct his arms against those places where the Galileans had fled for sanctuary; and Jotapata being the strongest hold they possessed, he resolved that his first exploit should be to attempt the reduction of that place. The inhabitants of Jotapata, however, gaining intelligence of the design of Placidus, and that he was marching with all expedition against the place, sallied from the town, in order to give him battle. They attacked the Romans by surprize, and as the fate of their wives, children and country, depended on the

issue of the contest, they fought with the most astonishing bravery, and with such success, that they effectually repulsed the enemy, after which Placidus drew off his army.

Vespasian, having resolved to make an excursion into Galilee, issued marching orders to his troops, according to the military discipline of the Romans, and departing from Ptolemais, encamped his army on the frontiers of Galilee. He might, indeed, have advanced farther, but his stopping there was designed to strike a terror into the enemy by the formidable appearance of his army. In this conjecture he was not deceived, for the news of his approach threw the Jews into the greatest consternation; and Joseph's followers, who were encamped at some distance from Sepphoris, deserted their leader, even before the enemy came in sight. Being thus abandoned, and finding that the spirits of the Jews were entirely depressed, that the majority of his people had already joined the enemy, and that the rest seemed inclined to follow their example, he retreated to Tiberias, accompanied by a few of his people whom he could trust, and who still maintained their fidelity.

The first place Vespasian laid siege to after his arrival in Galilee, was the city of Gadara, which not having a sufficient number of inhabitants to defend it, he subdued, with very little difficulty, on the first assault. The natural enmity of the Romans against the Jews, together with a principle of revenge for their having defeated Cestius, induced them to put the inhabitants of the town promiscuously to the sword; and, not satisfied with setting fire to the conquered city, they burnt, and utterly laid waste, the neighboring small towns and villages, and subjected the inhabitants to slavery.

In the mean time Joseph (the leader of the Jews in Galilee) left Tiberias and retired to the strong city of Jotapata, which gave great encouragement to the Jews of that place. Joseph's retreat was soon made known to Vespasian by a deserter, who advised the besieging of Jotapata, observing that, if Joseph could be taken, the war must inevitably terminate to the disadvantage of the Jews. Pleased with this information, and hoping to get

into his power the person whom he considered as the most formidable of his enemies, Vespasian dispatched Placidus and Æbutius (the latter of whom was one of the most celebrated men of the army for bravery and military skill) with a thousand cavalry, commanding them to environ the city with the greatest expedition, and, if possible, prevent the escape of Joseph.

The next morning Vespasian issued orders for his whole army to march, and, in the afternoon of the same day, encamped about seven furlongs to the north of the city. The Romans being greatly fatigued by their march, did not attempt any thing till the next morning, when they began to assault the city, which was defended with great bravery. Vespasian ordered the bow-men and slingers to compel the Jews to desert the walls, while himself, with a body of infantry, began an assault from an eminence convenient for battering the place; but Joseph, at the head of the Jews, made so furious an attack on the enemy, that he compelled them to retreat.

The next day the besiegers renewed the assault, and in this action both parties displayed the most distinguished instances of valor. The Jews were encouraged by the undaunted firmness and resolution with which, contrary to the most sanguine expectations, they had sustained the first assault; and the shame of having been repulsed invigorated the spirits of the Romans. Notwithstanding the great danger and difficulty of the enterprize, the latter continued to pursue their attacks with the utmost vigor, while the Jews, regardless of their great numbers and strength, made frequent sallies against them with considerable advantage.

The city of Jotapata was situated on a rock, and utterly inaccessible, except on the north, where a part of it stood on the brow of a mountain. This quarter Joseph caused to be strongly fortified, thereby precluding the enemy from taking advantage of another mountain by which it was overlooked, and which, with the other mountains adjoining, so entirely enclosed the place, that it could only be seen at a very small distance.

After several days fruitless attempts, Vespasian, finding the place so admirably situated for defence, and that

he had to contend with an intrepid and determined enemy, assembled a council of his principal officers, in order to debate on the most proper means of obtaining a victory. The issue of this deliberation was, that a large terrace should be raised on that side of the city which appeared to be the least capable of resistance. Accordingly, the whole army was employed in the work, which they pursued with surprizing rapidity, and the utmost efforts of the Jews to oppose them proved ineffectual.

In the mean time Joseph ordered the wall of the city to be raised in proportion to the advancement of the enemy's works. The Jews, at first declined the undertaking, urging the impossibility of pursuing their business, as they should be continually exposed to the enemy. To remove these fears, Joseph suggested the following invention, as a defence against fire, stones and other weapons. He caused large stakes to be fixed in the ground, and raw hides of beasts to be stretched upon them, the yielding quality of which would prevent any material effect from the lances and stones, and at the same time their moisture would damp the fire of the enemy. The Jews, thinking themselves secure through Joseph's contrivance, continued indefatigably industrious in the work both night and day; and they soon erected a wall several cubits high, on which were formed towers and strong embattlements.

Vespasian now relinquished all hopes of subduing the place by storm; he therefore blocked it up, flattering himself with the expectation, that by cutting off all communication, the consequent necessities of the people would perform the business of the sword, or, at least, render them incapable of making any advantageous resistance. There was an abundant supply of corn and all other necessaries in the town, excepting water, which latter article they only received from the clouds, there being neither spring or fountain within the walls of the city. The prospect of a scarcity of water induced Joseph, who was determined not to abandon himself to despair, to limit each man to a daily allowance, in consequence of which a universal discontent prevailed among the people. This circumstance could not be concealed from the

Romans, who, from an adjacent hill, observed the people assembled to receive their respective portions, and were otherwise informed of the general discontent which had taken place on that occasion. Vespasian was in continual expectation of making himself master of the town; but Joseph, to convince him that he was not likely to succeed from their distress for want of water, hit upon the following stratagem: he caused great numbers of wet cloths to be hung upon the battlements, which were no sooner observed by the Romans, than they concluded a scarcity of water could not prevail in the town, as in that case they would hardly make use of such an article in so profuse a manner. In consequence of this, Vespasian no longer entertaining hopes that the enemy would surrender through want of the necessaries of life, had again recourse to arms. This proved a circumstance highly agreeable to the Jews, who, being reduced to the greatest distress, entertained the most terrible apprehensions of falling miserable sacrifices to famine, to which they infinitely preferred a glorious death in the field.

In the midst of this distress, Joseph recollected, that on the west side of the city, there was a hollow or gutter in a place so little frequented, that it was not likely to have been observed by the enemy. In consequence of this he sent messengers to the Jews without the city, requesting them to cause water and other necessaries to be conveyed to him through this passage, and, as a proper security to the messengers, he ordered them to be covered with hides of beasts, and to go on their hands and feet, that, in case of being observed by the watch, they might be mistaken for dogs and other animals.

This scheme had, for some time, the desired effect, and an intercourse was maintained between those without the city and those within, to the great satisfaction of the latter. But at length the Romans discovered the project, which they effectually destroyed by closely blocking up the passage, and thereby cutting off all communication whatever.

Joseph now perceived that it would be fruitless to attempt a longer defence of the city, and therefore he joined with several of the principal men in suggesting the means

of escape. The people, suspecting on what subject they were met to deliberate, repaired in great multitudes to Joseph, earnestly supplicating, that as he was the only man from whom they could expect relief, he would not desert them in their then extremity; observing, that while he was secure they could not despair of success, and declaring that they could not die more honorably than while acting in obedience to his commands. They told him that if it should prove their misfortune to fall into the power of the Romans, he would acquire the immortal fame of having equally scorned to fly from the enemy, or desert the people under his protection: that by leaving them he would manifest a conduct similar to that of a man taking upon him the command of a ship in temperate weather, and abandoning it in a storm: they likewise added, that after losing the only man in whom they could place a confidence of success, they could no longer cherish the hope of relieving their country.

Joseph, who was unwilling to have it believed that his intention was engrossed on the means of providing for his own safety, told them, that if they were compelled to surrender, his remaining with them could not possibly operate in their favor; whereas, if he obtained his liberty, he might be able to draw an army out of Galilee sufficiently early to raise the siege; and that his continuing in the city would be productive of unfortunate instead of happy consequences, since the expectation of making him a prisoner would induce the Romans to continue a vigorous prosecution of the siege, which they might probably decline if he could effect an escape.

But these arguments, instead of reconciling the multitude, rendered them still more importunate, and with the most bitter lamentations they urgently supplicated that he would still continue his protection to them. Impressed with tenderness and gratitude towards the people, Joseph considered that if he remained in the town, they would attribute his compliance with their request to the influence they had over him, and that if he persisted in a refusal, they might probably detain him by force; and therefore, resolved to share the common danger, he addressed them as follows: "My dear friends, and faithful

“ countrymen, the period is arrived, when we are required to exert our utmost bravery, since in that alone we can place our hopes of safety. If we lose our lives our reward will be a large share of honor, and our names will be endeared to the latest posterity.”

This address was received with universal satisfaction by the people, immediately after which Joseph, at the head of the most courageous of the Jews, assaulted the enemy's guards, whom he compelled to desert their trenches, and retreat to the camp.

Joseph and his army now defended themselves against the power of the Romans with the most astonishing power and resolution. This they continued to do for the space of forty days, when a deserter represented to Vespasian the state of the town, informing him that, through the loss of men, and the hard duty which the survivors were obliged incessantly to perform, the garrison was so reduced, that it must necessarily surrender to a vigorous attack, and more especially if advantage was to be taken of a favorable opportunity for making the assault by surprise. He likewise strongly advised the Roman general to attempt the enterprize before day-light, when the Jews would not be apprehensive of danger, and the vigilance of the guard abated by fatigue and an inclination to sleep.

Vespasian, being sensible that the Jews possessed a remarkable fidelity to each other, which the most excruciating torments could not force them to violate, was unwilling, at first, to put any confidence in what the deserter had related. He had been witness to a recent instance of the amazing constancy and resolution of the Jews, in the case of one of Joseph's people, who being made a prisoner, and interrogated respecting the state of the city, refused to divulge a single circumstance, and persisted in that resolution during the most excessive torments, and while he was undergoing the sentence of crucifixion. Considering, however, that the information of the deserter might possibly be founded in truth, and that no ill consequences were likely to ensue from his appearing to believe that to be the case, Vespasian ordered the man to be secured, and every necessary preparation to be made for the attack.

The Roman army began a silent march at an appointed hour of the night, which had been previously agreed upon agreeable to the plan laid down by the deserter. On their arrival at the walls of the town, finding the centinels asleep, they immediately dispatched them, and, without the least molestation, entered the city, followed by a large body of troops under the command of the tribune Placidus. Notwithstanding it was open day before the Romans gained possession of the fort, and made themselves masters of the town, the Jewish army was so exhausted and fatigued by incessant labor and watching, that they did not entertain the least idea of their danger till the enemy had actually gained their point; and even those who were awake were almost equal strangers to the misfortune, as they could not clearly distinguish objects on account of a thick fog, which then prevailed, and continued till the whole Roman army had gained admittance into the city.

The Romans, recollecting the sufferings they had undergone during the course of the siege, laid aside every sentiment of humanity and compassion towards the besieged. They threw many of the Jews from the top of the fort, who were instantly killed by the fall, and others, who had courage enough to make resistance, were either pressed to death by the immense crowds of the enemy, or forced down precipices, and killed by the ruins which fell from above. Such of the guards as first observed the city to be taken fled to a turret on the walls, where they were attacked by the enemy, against whom, for some time, they made a resolute defence. Being oppressed by numbers, they offered to capitulate; but their proposals were rejected, and the whole put to the sword. Every Jew, who was met by the Romans on that day, was put to instant death; and during some following days they carefully searched for such as had concealed themselves in private places, all of whom, except women and children, they destroyed. Having thus obtained a complete victory, Vespasian, after withdrawing his forces from the town, ordered the fortress to be burnt, which was accordingly done, and the whole city laid in ruins.

The Romans, induced partly by personal enmity, and partly by an officious zeal to ingratiate themselves into the favor of their general, assiduously employed themselves in searching every part of the adjoining country, in order to find out the leader of the Jews. It was Joseph's fortune to escape through the midst of his enemies, and to find a deep pit, having a passage leading to a spacious cavern, in which he discovered forty distinguished Jews who had there taken sanctuary, and were supplied with sufficient necessaries to last them several days. The enemy being in possession of the whole adjacent country, Joseph judged it unsafe to venture abroad by day, and therefore he left his retreat only by night, with a view of discovering if there remained any probability of effecting an escape; but finding the enemy exceeding vigilant, he repeatedly returned to the cavern despairing of success. On the third day he was betrayed by a woman, in consequence of which Vespasian dispatched Paulinus and Gallanicus, two tribunes, to the place where he was secreted, authorizing them to assure Joseph, that, on condition of leaving his retreat, he should meet with a kind and honorable reception. Joseph, conscious that the injuries the Romans had sustained at his hands entitled him to punishment rather than reward, thought it unsafe to rely on Vespasian's word of honor, and therefore he declined the proposal. In consequence of this Vespasian sent another tribune, named Nicanor, who had long been intimately acquainted with Joseph, and was, in fact, his most sincere friend. Nicanor forcibly expostulated with him on the impropriety of refusing to comply with Vespasian's request; he represented to him the generosity and benevolence of the Romans towards those they conquered: that so far from Vespasian's entertaining an enmity against him, he highly esteemed him as being a man of singular intrepidity, and possessed of other eminent virtues; and that the Roman general must indisputably have favorable views, since he condescended to propose terms to a man who was already subject to his power. "Can you imagine, said Nicanor, that Vespasian would employ a friend in an office of treachery; or that I would accept from him so dishonorable a commission?"

Notwithstanding these remonstrances, Joseph, for some time, declined a compliance; but at length, from the very forcible arguments and advice of Nicanor, he agreed to submit. In consequence of this, his companions instantly drew their swords, and threatened, if he surrendered to put him to death. Joseph, being apprehensive that they might carry their designs into execution, was desirous of avoiding so horrid an intention; to effect which he addressed them as follows: “Why, my good friends, do you suffer yourselves to be so far transported by the violence of passion, as to cherish the idea of separating the soul and body, which are so intimately united by nature? To fall by the hand of a victor in a war maintained according to the laws of arms is, without dispute, a glorious fate. I should make no greater difficulty of taking away my own life than of requesting a Roman to perform that office; but if the Romans are inclined to shew mercy to an enemy, will reason justify that enemy in having no mercy on himself? No death can be more honorable than that of the man who yields his life to the superior power of an adversary that means to deprive him of the inestimable blessing of liberty. But the Romans wish not our deaths; and all animosity should now cease; for the cause of our contention is at an end. The man who rejects life when his duty requires him to preserve it, is as pusillanimous as he who, in opposition to the dictates of honor, trembles to meet his fate. Is it not from the fear of death alone, that we hesitate to yield to the Romans? Shall we precipitate ourselves into certain destruction for the purpose of avoiding a threatened danger, which probably may not arrive? If you conceive that we ought to die to avoid slavery, I must request you to recollect, that we enjoy not liberty in the miserable situation to which we are now reduced. If you suppose him to be a brave man who deprives himself of life, I would ask what opinion you would form of the commander of a vessel who, during a calm, should sink his ship from an apprehension that a tempest might arise? The desire of preserving life is a principle implanted in the whole animal creation; and therefore to deprive ourselves of

“ existence is to violate the order of nature, and offer a
“ sacrilegious insult to God. If we desire to live, may
“ we not indulge that desire, since we have given exem-
“ plary proofs of our courage and virtue? But if we are
“ resolved to die, let us fall by the hands of our con-
“ querors. We shall have no cause for regret if the Ro-
“ mans prove treacherous; but on the contrary, we shall
“ resign our lives with pleasure, since we shall enjoy the
“ satisfaction of knowing that the perfidy of the enemy
“ must necessarily diminish the glory of their victory, and
“ render them infamous to the latest posterity.”

Joseph imagined that these arguments would have induced the Jews to relinquish the determination of putting an end to his life; but in this he found himself mistaken, for instead of appeasing, his address provoked them to the utmost extravagance of rage; they approached him with their swords drawn, upbraided him in the most severe terms as being of a contemptibly irresolute disposition, and threatened him with instant death. Thus situated, Joseph addressed his companions in the most soothing manner, which seldom fails to gain respect from those who have been accustomed to obey; he called one by his name, took another by the hand, and endeavored to engage the attention of the rest by arguments and such other means as he conceived to be best adapted for obtaining the end he had in view. Thus, by a singular address in applying to the various humors and dispositions of his companions, Joseph averted the danger that threatened him. The rage of the Jews subsided, their esteem and veneration for their general revived, and they freely gave him his liberty to act as he should think proper. Being thus relieved from the extremity to which he was reduced by the Romans on one hand, and by his own countrymen on the other, Joseph surrendered himself to Nicanor, who immediately conducted him to Vespasian.

The desire of seeing Joseph appear before the Roman general caused prodigious numbers of people to assemble, some of whom rejoiced to see that he was alive, while others vented menaces and the most bitter execrations against him. Those who were sufficiently near to observe his person, recollected the many extraordinary incidents

of his life, and reflecting on his then situation, were greatly astonished on the comparison. Notwithstanding the inveteracy which the Roman general had entertained against Joseph, they tenderly compassionated him in his captivity; but Titus was most particularly affected, for on account of his advanced age, and the unconquerable dignity of his mind in the most extreme dangers and distresses, he entertained a great veneration for Joseph, whose former elevated station and great exploits, together with the humiliating condition to which he was now reduced, he most seriously considered, and then proceeded to make some reflections on the chance of war, and the mutability of human affairs. Those who heard Titus adopted his sentiments; and he greatly contributed towards the preservation of Joseph, by influencing Vespasian in his favor.

Vespasian intimated his intentions of sending Joseph to Nero, and ordered him to be kept a close prisoner. In consequence of this Joseph requested to have an audience with Vespasian, which being granted, he was conducted to the general's apartment, from whence every person was dismissed, except Titus and two of his friends. In the presence of these Joseph, addressing himself to Vespasian, spoke as follows: "You see me here, sir, your
 " prisoner, and perhaps you consider me in no other
 " character; but believe me I am no less than a messenger sent by Providence to impart to you a matter of the
 " highest importance.* Had I not been charged with
 " this commission I should have acted consistent with the
 " character of a Jewish general, and have died rather
 " than have submitted to be made a prisoner. It is unnecessary to send me to Nero, since Vespasian is so
 " near succeeding to the empire, which, upon his decease,
 " will devolve on his son Titus. Let me be kept a pri-

* While Joseph was with his companions in the cavern, he had a most remarkable vision, in which were communicated to him the success and grandeur which the Romans should experience, and the miseries which should attend the Jews. It was likewise revealed to him that Vespasian should become emperor, and that himself should be the messenger of that intelligence; and this it was that made him so strenuous in requesting his companions to spare his life.

“soner, and guarded with unremitting circumspection; I
“only request to remain the prisoner of Vespasian, who,
“by the right of conquest, is become the master of my
“life and liberty, and will, in a short time, be advanced
“to the sovereignty of the Roman empire. If it shall
“hereafter appear that I have made use of any artifice to
“induce you to repose confidence in an impostor, you will
“perform an act of justice in subjecting me to the most
“severe and exemplary punishment.”

At first Vespasian considered Joseph's address as a mere fiction, contrived for the purpose of obtaining his favor; but experiencing certain indications, and finding them exactly correspond with what Joseph had related, his doubts gradually subsided, and he gave full confidence to the prediction. One of the persons who was permitted to be present at the interview, observed to Joseph, that since he pretended to a knowledge of future events, he requested to be informed by what means it happened that he remained ignorant of the destruction of Jotapata, and of his own captivity. To which Joseph replied, he had predicted to the inhabitants that the town would be conquered, and himself made a prisoner by the enemy. In consequence of this reply, Vespasian ordered a secret enquiry to be made among the Jewish prisoners relative to the truth of what he had asserted; this was accordingly done, and the Jews confirming every particular related by Joseph, the general was induced to judge more favorably of what he had foretold respecting himself.

Joseph continued to be guarded with the greatest circumspection; but the irksomeness of confinement was, in a great degree, mitigated by his being allowed every accommodation, and convenience, together with the particular respect and kindness which he received from Titus.

After the conquest of Jotapata, and the total destruction of that city, Vespasian repaired with his army to Cesarea, where he took up his winter quarters; but that he might not overburthen the inhabitants of that city, he sent the fifth and tenth legions to Scythopolis.

Early in the ensuing spring Vespasian renewed his operations against the Jews. He sent his son Titus at the head of a considerable army into one part of Judea,

whilst himself went into another; and between them they reduced the most principal places in that country, the inhabitants of some of which quietly submitted; but others, after holding out with the utmost resistance in their power, were conquered, and great numbers put to the sword.

After these conquests Vespasian returned to Cesarea, where he formed the resolution of laying siege to Jerusalem; but while he was making the necessary preparations for this purpose, he received an account of the death of Nero, after a reign of thirteen years and eight days. In consequence of this intelligence, Vespasian suspended his preparations for the expedition towards Jerusalem. Finding that Galba was destined to succeed to the empire, he thought it would not be a prudent measure to take so important a step without express orders for so doing. He therefore dispatched his son Titus to wait on Galba, at once to congratulate him on the succession to the empire, and to take his directions how to act in the then exigency of affairs. King Agrippa (who was at this time in Cesarea) being desirous to embark with Titus on this interesting occasion, they set sail in the same vessel; but while they were on their voyage (which was exceeding tedious owing to the contrariety of the wind) and near to Achaia, they received intelligence that Galba was slain, after having governed only seven months, and that Otho succeeded him, who reigned only three months. This change in affairs did not prevent Agrippa from prosecuting his journey from Achaia to Rome; but Titus sailed from thence to Syria, and proceeded with all expedition to his father at Cesarea.

A short time after the return of Titus to Cesarea, Vespasian received intelligence that a civil war had broke out in Rome, occasioned by Vitellius, a daring and enterprising man, who, on the death of Otho, had, with the assistance of a great body of German soldiers, possessed himself of the sovereignty of the empire. Vespasian was a man who had a just opinion of the respect that should be shewn to superiors, and was as well calculated to obey as to command; but notwithstanding this, he was greatly chagrined to acknowledge the supreme authority of him

who rather seized the empire as a plunder, than became possessed of it as an honor. In a word, this astonishing change in the public affairs affected him to such a degree, that he could no longer entertain any idea of prosecuting foreign wars, when his country at home was distracted by the most disagreeable circumstances. Yet, though his indignation on the one hand urged him to a speedy revenge, yet on the other he was deterred from putting his design into execution, by the consideration of the difficulties and hazards that would attend so long a journey in the midst of winter, besides the probability of many unexpected incidents which might happen before he could arrive in Italy.

While Vespasian was debating this subject in his mind, the officers of his army (all of whom were thoroughly acquainted with the revolutions which had taken place in Rome) associated together, and discoursed with the utmost freedom on the affairs of the state and government. Among other things they exclaimed most violently against the German soldiers, who were the protectors of Vitellius, ridiculing them as a band of dissolute and effeminate creatures, who would be afraid to face even the usual terrors of war. “ What (said they) shall people like these dispose of empires, or rather sell them to the highest bidder? Is it possible for them to imagine that we, who have undergone all the fatigue attending excessive labor, till we are grown old in the use of arms; that we will ever submit to be governed by an emperor chosen by them, when we have a prince of our own who is much more worthy of the government? Besides, if we omit the present opportunity of testifying our gratitude for the numerous obligations we owe to the generosity of Vespasian, it is not very probable that a similar prospect of paying him the proper compliment will ever again offer. Exclusive of these considerations, the personal merit of Vespasian hath as much better qualified him for the dignity of emperor than that of Vitellius, as our merits have qualified us for the choice, beyond that of those who have elected him. With regard to Vespasian, there can be no debate, or competition; for the senate and people of

“ Rome are entirely in his interest; nor would they even
“ listen to an insinuation of the licentiousness and de-
“ bauches of Vitellius being put in competition with the
“ modest and temperate behavior of Vespasian; for this,
“ in fact, would be to prefer an abandoned tyrant to a
“ humane prince. After all we have said, let it be con-
“ sidered what a ridiculous figure we should make, and
“ how egregiously we should be duped; we, who, of all
“ men living, have the greatest obligations to Vespasian,
“ if the senate themselves should elect him emperor, and
“ thus take out of our hands the merit of so distinguished
“ an action, while we are idly debating on the method of
“ proceeding in such an exigency.”

To this purpose was the conversation of the officers under Vespasian. Their first meetings were held in a secret manner; but having publicly declared their sentiments to the soldiers, all of whom agreed with them in opinion, they resolved to make choice of Vespasian as emperor, and entreated him to take under his protection an empire that was shaken to its foundation. Vespasian had, for a long time, been the support of the empire; but he was so far from being ambitious of the dignity of emperor, that he absolutely declined it, declaring that he chose rather to continue in that line of life to which he had been accustomed, than accept of the pomp and dignity to which he was invited. But the more desirous Vespasian was to avoid this compliment, the more earnestly did the people press his acceptance of it; till at length, on his repeated refusal, they advanced to him with drawn swords, and threatened his destruction if he any longer refused accepting an honor of which he was so deserving. Still, however, for a time, he refused; but at length yielded to an importunity that was not to be resisted.

The government of the empire was no sooner accepted by Vespasian, than Mucianus, and the other officers, joined with the whole body of the army in requesting that he would immediately march his forces against Vitellius; but Vespasian thought it would be most prudent first to bring over to his interest the people of Alexandria, by means of which he should obtain such

advantages as would not only secure himself, but, in all probability, crown his enterprize with success. Egypt, on account of the prodigious quantity of corn which it produced, was deemed one of the most important branches of the empire: wherefore Vespasian was of opinion that if he could but possess himself of that country, the people of Rome might be induced rather to expel Vitellius, than run the risk of starving if they refused so to do, which would be the natural consequence if they could not obtain proper assistance from Egypt.

These observations being highly approved of by the officers, Vespasian immediately wrote a letter to Tiberius, the then governor of Alexandria, informing him, that at the importunity of his soldiers he had been prevailed on to take the government into his own hands, and that he thought he could not act more prudently than to request the favor of his advice and assistance in the office of administration. Tiberius had no sooner read this letter than, with the utmost freedom and good-will, he took an oath of fidelity to Vespasian, and caused the like to be done by all the inhabitants of the city. This oath was taken with every possible demonstration of joy and esteem; for they were previously informed of the good intentions of the new emperor, and confided in his virtue and honor. Tiberius made a generous use of the power entrusted to him for the public welfare, and immediately began to make the necessary preparations for receiving Vespasian.

Intelligence of Vespasian's being advanced to the dignity of ruling the empire was propagated with the utmost speed through every part of the eastern country; and wherever this news arrived, it was so grateful to the people, that the inhabitants of the several cities kept a holiday on the occasion, and offered up their prayers that the reign of Vespasian might be long and happy. Several ambassadors, from Syria and other provinces, waited on Vespasian, with congratulatory addresses on his being appointed to the government of the empire. Among the rest was Mucianus, the governor of Syria, who gave him the utmost assurance of the loyalty and affection of the

people in general, which they had testified, by cheerfully taking the oath of fidelity to his person and authority.

These favorable circumstances struck a deep impression on the mind of Vespasian, who could not help seriously reflecting that they had less the appearance of being the work of chance, than the immediate effect of a disposing Providence; and he thought it appeared that he had not been raised to so distinguished an elevation by the power of fortune, but by Divine interposition. Reflecting on this subject there occurred to his mind several prophetic hints which had happened in the course of his life, all tending to the same end. Among the rest he could not but recur to the circumstance of Joseph, having, while he remained a prisoner, and during the life of Nero, called him by the title of emperor. This singular prediction had great influence on the mind of Vespasian, and the greater, because the party was still his prisoner: wherefore, sending for Mucianus, and others of his officers, he spoke to them of the singular courage and bravery of Joseph, and how gallantly he had behaved himself at the siege of Jotapata. After this he mentioned several other particulars respecting him, and at length adverted to the subject of his predictions: "Those (said he) I at first imagined to be nothing more than contrivances for his own preservation; but the event has proved that they were actually the result of Divine Providence: wherefore, my friends, it would be an indelible disgrace in me longer to detain, in the abject condition of a prisoner, the person who first declared to me the news of my advancement."

Having said this, Vespasian instantly sent for Joseph, and, in the presence of the company, restored him to his liberty. From this instance of gratitude in Vespasian, his officers formed the most favorable idea of their own situation, thinking that they, who were his faithful friends and servants, should experience every indulgence under so kind a master. During this scene Titus was present, who, in a most submissive manner, hinted to his father, that the single granting of liberty to Joseph was leaving the generosity of his plan incomplete: that his chains ought not only to be taken off, but broken, for if that was

not done, the dishonor of his imprisonment would remain with him, though his person was restored to liberty. Vespasian, coinciding in this opinion, gave immediate orders that his chains should be cut to pieces; which circumstance not only gave the most extensive freedom to Joseph, but so raised his reputation as a prophet, that every person was disposed to give credit to any of his future predictions in as full and ample a manner as they had done to what he had already foretold.

A general council was now held to consider the most proper measures to be taken in the then exigency of affairs, in which it was resolved that Titus should prosecute the war against the Jews, and that Vespasian should go to Alexandria, and use such methods as he thought advisable for suppressing the disturbances at Rome, occasioned by the usurper Vitellius.

On Vespasian's arrival at Alexandria he was received by the people of that city with the utmost demonstrations of joy; and measures were instantly concerted for reducing Vitellius, and quieting the disturbances which then took place at Rome. For this purpose he dispatched a considerable army of cavalry and foot, under the command of Mucianus, through Cappadocia and Phrygia, into Italy, being afraid to trust his troops by sea during the winter season.

In the mean time Antonius Primus (an excellent soldier who had been banished by Nero, but restored by Galba, a friend to Vespasian) marched at the head of the third legion to give battle to Vitellius, the latter of whom being informed of his intentions, sent a strong army, under the command of Cæcinna, to oppose him. As soon as Cæcinna met Antonius (which was on the confines of Italy) he was struck with terror at the numbers, order and discipline of his army. He was totally at a loss how to act: he did not dare to risk a battle, nor could he think of running away from them; and therefore, he chose rather to be considered as a deserter than a coward. Having assembled his centurions, tribunes, and all the rest of his officers, he exerted the utmost power of his oratory in a declaration of the different degrees of merit between Vespasian and Vitellius. The one he extolled

to the highest degree, and depreciated the character of the other; and all this with a fixed design to prevail on the soldiers of Vitellius to take part with Vespasian. The speech he made on this occasion was to this effect: " Vitellius possesses nothing more than the name of an emperor; whereas the claim of Vespasian is not only founded on the strictest equity, but his very person is stamped with the indubitable marks of the imperial character. Besides, the troops of Vespasian are so numerous and well-chosen, that it will be in vain for us to think of entering into a contest with him. This being the case, had we not better now act the same part, as of our own choice and free-will, that we shall otherwise be compelled to do through the force of mere necessity? While I say this, I am certain that Vespasian is able to carry his design into execution without our aid or assistance; but Vitellius, so far from being able to protect his adherents, is by no means in a condition to defend himself."

These arguments were urged with so much zeal, that Cæcinna obtained the point at which he labored, and prevailed on his troops to go over to Antonius. But on the following night Cæcinna's people, partly repenting of what they had done, and partly in fear of the consequence, in case Vitellius should prove successful in the contest, advanced in a rage, with drawn swords, to dispatch Cæcinna, which they would have certainly done, had not the tribunes strongly interposed in his favor. Hereupon, they desisted from taking away his life, but insisted that, as a traitor, he should be immediately sent in chains to Vitellius.

As soon as Antonius was informed of this event, he immediately went with a party to attack them as deserters. For some time they made a faint resistance, but receded on the first violent attack, and fled towards Cremona. Antonius, interposing with his cavalry between the fugitives and the town, and entirely surrounding them, destroyed great numbers on the spot, and pursuing the rest, put the whole to the sword, except their general Cæcinna, whom he set at liberty, and dispatched to Vespasian with an account of the victory.

After this defeat, Antonius marched with his army towards Rome, information of which being made known to Sabinus, the brother of Vespasian, he that same night assembled the city guards, and possessed himself of the capital. On the following day great numbers of persons, of distinguished rank, joined his party, among whom was Domitian, brother to Titus, and younger son to Vespasian.

Vitellius paid little regard to the proceedings of Antonius, the principal view of his resentment being directed towards Sabinus, and the other persons who had joined with him in the revolt; and being by nature of a savage and ferocious disposition, but particularly so to those of distinguished rank, he dispatched a body of his own troops to attack them. In this enterprize the most singular instances of bravery were displayed on both sides; but in the end, the troops of Vitellius became victorious. Domitian, and other Romans of the first rank, made their escape, but the greater part of the people were destroyed, and the victors, after plundering the temple of Janus, burnt it to the ground. With respect to Sabinus, he was made prisoner, and conducted to Vitellius, who ordered him immediately to be put to death.

The next day Antonius arrived with his army, when a desperate battle ensued between him and the troops of Vitellius. The forces of Antonius being divided, they engaged in three different parts of the city at the same time, and the contest was continued for that day without any material advantage on either side. Early the next morning Mucianus with his army entered Rome, and joining that of Antonius, the attack was renewed with the utmost vigor, and the troops of Vitellius being defeated were all put to the sword.

Thus was this mighty city taken, by her own natural subjects; and as it was fatal to many thousands, so likewise was it to Vitellius himself, whom the soldiers dragged out of his palace, (and without hearkening to any entreaties, binding his hands behind him, and throwing an halter about his neck) drew him into the public forum, through the main street called *Via Sacra*. As he went along they used the most opprobrious language, and

treated him with the greatest indignity they could project: they pelted him with dung and filth, and held the point of a sword under his chin to prevent his concealing his face. At length they conducted him to the common place of execution, where, with many blows and wounds, they dispatched him in the 56th year of his age, and after a short reign of only eight months. Having wreaked their vengeance thus, they dragged his body from the spot where they had killed him, and threw it into the river Tiber; after which they not only made his brother, and only son, but likewise all whom they met with of his party, victims to their resentment.

As soon as the fury of this carnage was over, the Roman senate assembled, and, with unanimous consent, not only declared Vespasian emperor, but conferred the title of Cæsar upon his two sons, Titus and Domitian; nominating the former to be consul with his father for the ensuing year, and the latter to be prætor with consular power. They likewise rewarded Mucianus and Antonius, with several others, for contributing to this happy revolution; and dispatched couriers to Vespasian at Alexandria, to tender him their homage and obedience, and to desire his speedy return to Rome. On this occasion the people made two festivals, one for their deliverance from the tyranny of Vitellius, and the other for the happy advancement of Vespasian to the government of the empire.—But it is now time to return to Titus.

Before Vespasian left Judea, he, by the advice of his council, committed the management of the war against the Jews to his son Titus, well knowing his extraordinary valor and skill for such an undertaking. Himself had reduced most of the country, except Jerusalem; but Jerusalem was the capital city, fortified with three walls on every side, except where it was fenced with deep vallies, having the castle of Antonia, the temple, the palace of Acra, the towers on Mount Sion, and several other places almost impregnable; so that great consultation, and a preparation of many materials, were required to carry on such a siege.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem had been, for a long time, in the most distressed situation, owing to the several par-

ties and factions which had taken possession of different parts of the city, and were not only murdering each other, but, in their rage and madness, destroyed such a quantity of provisions as might have served the city for several months.

Jerusalem was involved in these sad circumstances, when Titus, with a powerful army, and all kinds of warlike engines approached, and sat down within six or seven furlongs of the city, a little before the feast of the passover. By these means he shut up an infinite number of people who had come from all parts to that solemnity, which, in a short time, occasioned a great consumption of their provisions.

On the first appearance of so formidable an army, the several factions unanimously agreed to oppose it; in consequence of which they sallied out with great resolution and fury, and putting the Romans to disorder, obliged them to abandon their camp, and fly to the mountains. But the Jews were at last repulsed, and driven into the city by Titus, who particularly distinguished himself as a courageous and expert warrior.

When Titus had properly placed his engines (which was not done without great opposition) he battered the outward walls, and, on the third day of May, making a breach, entered, and took possession of the northern quarter of the city, as far as the castle of Antonia, and the valley of Kedron. Having done this, he gave the besieged all possible assurances of pardon and civil treatment if they would but submit; but they judging his offer to be the effect of cowardice, refused to accept of any terms or conditions whatever.

On the fifth day after this Titus broke through the second wall, and though the besieged made several sallies, and drove him out again, yet he recovered the place, and possessed himself of the lower city.

Though Titus was now thoroughly convinced, in his own mind, that he could by force of arms, easily make a complete conquest of the city, yet he was willing, if possible, to effect it without any farther loss of blood. He therefore, in the first place, sent a messenger to the Jews, requesting that they would have so much regard to their

own interest as to surrender a place, of which he could, at any time, make himself master. But this not answering his wishes, he dispatched Joseph to them, thinking that when they were addressed by their own countrymen, and in a language familiar to them, it might probably be attended with success. In conformity to the directions given by Titus, Joseph first walked through several parts of the city, after which, stopping on an elevated spot, within the hearing of the enemy, he addressed them in words to this effect: “ Countrymen and friends, it is
“ my earnest request, that if you have any esteem for
“ your lives and liberties, any veneration for your city,
“ your temple and your country, you will, on the present
“ occasion, give a proper testimony of your sensibility, and
“ learn, even from strangers and enemies, to have a proper
“ regard to your own interest. You may have observed,
“ that the Romans entertain so great a veneration for
“ sacred things, that they make a scruple of seizing any
“ thing that is holy; and this they do, though they never
“ presumed to have any share, concern or interest in your
“ communion: whereas you, on the contrary, instead of
“ protecting the religion in which you were educated,
“ seem conspiring to complete its destruction. Are you
“ not by this time convinced that, your fortresses being
“ beaten down, and a great part of your walls left in a
“ defenceless condition, your weakness is sufficiently ex-
“ posed, and that it is an absolute impossibility to sup-
“ port yourselves much longer against so formidable a
“ power as that with which you have to contend. It is
“ true, that engaging in the cause of liberty is a glorious
“ task, provided it be undertaken before that liberty is
“ likely to be lost or forfeited; but when the latter is the
“ case, it is idle to think of attempting to throw it off,
“ and all further endeavors will rather tend to produce
“ a disgraceful death, than give the opportunity of pre-
“ serving a life of honorable freedom. A state of bondage
“ to a master whom a man of honor would blush to ac-
“ knowledge his superior, is indeed a scandalous state;
“ but submission to a people whose authority is ac-
“ knowledged by the whole world, is by no means dis-
“ graceful. Conscious of this truth, your ancestors, who

“ were more wise and powerful than you are, were in-
“ duced to pay allegiance to the Romans, which they
“ certainly would not have done had they not been fully
“ convinced that it was the will of Providence they
“ should submit. But wherefore would you any longer
“ continue a contest that is, in effect, already decided?
“ For if your walls were yet perfect, and the siege ac-
“ tually raised, so long as the Romans resolved not to
“ quit the place, you must soon be starved into sub-
“ mission. Famine has already made great havoc among
“ you, and the calamity will daily encrease, as there is
“ no guarding against the consequence of the severities
“ of hunger. It will therefore well become you to recol-
“ lect yourselves, and take advice while it may be ser-
“ viceable to you. The Romans are of a liberal disposi-
“ tion, and will be ready to forgive all that is past, if you
“ do not continue to exasperate them till forgiveness
“ would look like weakness. But if you resist till they
“ storm the city, instead of mercy, you will fatally ex-
“ perience their resentment from the point of the sword.”

These friendly admonitions made not the least im-
pression on the perverse Jews, who instead of paying at-
tention to them, treated Joseph with the utmost contempt,
and, had he not been properly guarded, would have put
him to death. In consequence of this, Titus resolved to
proceed with the utmost severity against them. Accord-
ingly, when any fled from the city (which great numbers
were constrained to do on account of the want of pro-
visions) they were no sooner taken than Titus ordered
them to be scourged and crucified. This, however, he did
not do from motives of cruelty, but with a view of striking
terror in the multitude, in hopes that they would the
sooner give up all opposition, and surrender themselves
to the superior force of his arms.

Finding every method ineffectual to bring the Jews to
submission, Titus, on the 12th of May, began four mounts
for his battering-rams, two near the castle of Antonia,
where he was in hopes of taking the temple, and two near
the monument of John the high-priest, where he supposed
he might, without much difficulty, break into the upper
city. But in two bold sallies the besieged ruined and de-

stroyed the mounts, and, having burnt several battering-rams, and other engines, pressed forward, and broke into the very camp of the Romans. At length they were repulsed by Titus, who (in a council of war) resolved to surround the whole city with a wall, or intrenchment, to hinder the flight of the besieged, and to prevent all relief from coming into the city, thereby strictly verifying the words of our Blessed Redeemer, *The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee and compass thee around, and keep thee in on every side*, Luke xix. 43.

This work was executed with such astonishing celerity, that the whole was finished within the space of a few days. But it made no impression on the besieged, notwithstanding the famine began to rage with the most horrid violence, and such a mortality ensued, that within the space of three months no less than 115,080 carcasses of the poorer sort were carried to be buried at the public charge, 600,000 were thrown out at the gates; and when the number of dead bodies increased to such a degree that they had no place to bury them, they gathered them together in the largest houses adjoining, and there shut them up.

All this time the famine increased to such a degree, that wives took the meat out of their husbands' mouths, children from their parents, and mothers from their children: old men were driven from their meat as persons of no use, and young men tortured to confess where their provisions lay; sinks and holes were continually raked to find offal for food, and the very soldiers (who were the last that would want) began to eat girdles, shoes, hay and other articles; and, what was worst of all, and the most shocking to human nature, a woman of quality even boiled her own child with an intent to eat it. This act appeared so detestable in the eyes of Titus, that (after having repeatedly offered peace and pardon to the Jews if they would submit, and as often received a denial) he publicly declared "that he would bury the
" abominable crime in the ruins of their country, and not
" suffer the sun to shine upon that city, whose mothers
" eat their own children, and whose fathers, no less cul-

“ pable, did, by their obstinacy, reduce them to such an
“ extremity.”

With this resolution he ordered all the groves to be cut down within a considerable distance of the city, and causing more mounts to be raised, on the first of July he began to batter the wall of Antonia, and, on the fifth, entered the castle by force, and pursued the flying Jews even to the temple. Both Titus and Josephus again exhorted them to surrender, but all to no purpose: they absolutely refused every accommodation, and even boasted, that, rather than submit, they would glory in enduring the worst of miseries. Titus, hearing this, in order to make an easy ascent to the temple, ordered the fortress of Antonia to be razed to the ground, and having seized the north and west porticos, or cloysters, of the outward range of the temple, he set them on fire, as the Jews did other porticos, to hinder the Romans from making their approaches.

On the eighth day of August Titus, perceiving that the walls of the inner temple were too strong for the battering-rams, and that the foundation of the gates could not be undermined, was obliged to set fire to them, yet still with an intent, if possible, to save the temple itself; but it so fell out that, on the tenth, a certain soldier, contrary to the command of the general, cast a flaming firebrand through the golden window into the chambers and buildings on the north side, which immediately set them on fire. The utmost endeavors were used to prevent the fatal effects of this proceeding, but to no purpose. The flames spread throughout the whole fabric, and soon consumed the most beautiful structure that ever was erected; while the Roman soldiers, pursuing their victory with the most imaginable fury and revenge, cut to pieces every person they found about the temple, and then set fire to the rest of the buildings.

During this state of general confusion, those who were the chiefs in the sedition, found means to retire to the upper and strongest part of the city, called Sion, situated upon a steep rock, where they endeavored to defend themselves to the last. But Titus, having raised his batteries, and made a breach in the wall, they lost all their

courage, abandoned the 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 (two principal ringleaders of their different factions) were dragged out, and the former condemned to perpetual imprisonment, whilst the latter was preserved to grace the victor's triumph.

The Romans, having now gained the walls, and, with shouts of joy, placed their colors upon the towers, broke loose all over the city, and ranged up and down the streets, killing all that fell in their way without distinction, till the passages were filled up with the carcasses, and the channels of the city ran down with blood, as if it had been to quench the fire, which was become, as it were, one general conflagration.

To this fatal end was the famous city of Jerusalem, after a siege of above five months, reduced, in the second year of Vespasian's reign, and thirty-eight years after our Lord's crucifixion. In this siege it was computed that 1,100,000 perished, and 97,000 were taken captives, besides 237,490 (according to Josephus) who fell in the wars which preceded it.

The greater part of the buildings in the city being consumed by fire, and the soldiers having neither rapine or object left for their rage and indignation to work upon, Titus ordered them to lay the remaining parts of the city

* This John was the son of one Levi, and one of the principal men belonging to the city of Gichala. When Titus laid siege to that place, John, under pretence of surrendering it, made his escape, and went, with a party of men, to Jerusalem, where, joining with the Zealots, and being naturally a crafty man, eloquent in speech, and ambitious beyond measure, he soon began to assume a sovereign power over the rest, and became the commander of one faction, as Simon, the son of Gioras, did of another. Simon, having gathered together great numbers of robbers and murderers, went into the mountainous parts of the country, reduced all Idumea, and some places in Judea; after which he encamped near Jerusalem, and was at length let in by the citizens to defend them against John, who, at the head of the Zealots, did many cruel and tyrannical actions. So that Simon and his army were in the city, while John and his adherents were in the temple, fighting and destroying one another, even while the enemy was at the walls.

and temple level with the ground: which order was so punctually executed that (except three towers, which, for their strength and beauty, were left as monuments to posterity of the once magnificence of the city) the whole was laid so flat, that, when the Romans left the place, it looked as if it had never been inhabited.

While these things were transacting at Jerusalem, Vespasian, who entered upon the government in the 59th year of his age, was received at Rome with all imaginable joy and triumph by the people. They considered him as the only person whose virtues and excellencies could recover the languishing state of the empire: nor were they mistaken, for he began immediately to act in conformity to what they had expected, by administering justice, and reforming the laws and customs of Rome, honorably rewarding those who had served him, and pardoning his adversaries with the most singular clemency.

In the mean time the news of the conquest of Jerusalem reached Rome, which occasioned the greatest rejoicings in that city, the people universally proclaiming the praises of Titus, who had shewn himself so expert a soldier and commander; and in consequence of this a triumph was decreed both for him and his father, the latter having conducted the beginning of the war with no less eclat than the former had finished it.

When Titus returned to Rome he was received with the universal applause of the people, and, within a few days after, both the father and son entered upon their triumph, which was more solemn and magnificent than had ever before been seen in Rome. Among other rich and glorious spoils were great quantities of gold taken out of the temple, and the body of the Jewish law, which were exhibited to the view of the people. This was the first time that Rome ever saw the father and son triumph together; and as Vespasian built a new temple to Peace, wherein he deposited most of the Jewish spoils, so Titus had a triumphal arch of great beauty and magnificence erected to his honor, whereon were inscribed all his noble exploits against the Jews, and which (as a lasting monument of the impiety and perverseness of that nation) remains almost entire to this day.

With respect to Joseph, (or Josephus) after the destruction of Jerusalem, Titus took him with him to Rome, where Vespasian shewed him great respect, and (as himself tells us in his life) lodged him in his own house, made him a free citizen of Rome, assigned him a pension, gave him lands in Judea, and above all, ordered him a public statue. These favors Titus, when he came to the empire, increased, and, in honor of him, had his *History of the Wars of the Jews*,* which was then finished, deposited in the public library.

Such was the end of the once famous city of Jerusalem, and such the end of the Jewish polity; from which time those obstinate and perverse people were no longer a nation, but have ever since been dispersed and despised throughout the whole face of the earth.

CHAP. VI.

Containing some general Observations on the strict Fulfilment of our Blessed Saviour's Prophecies relative to the Destruction of Jerusalem, and the final End of the Jewish Polity.

AS our Blessed Saviour had long been the great object of prophecy, so likewise was he a most illustrious prophet himself; as he excelled in all other spiritual gifts and graces, so was he eminent also, and gave ample proof of his Divine commission by his prophecies as well as his

* This History is a continued account of the Jewish affairs, from the taking of Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes, down to the utter ruin of it by Titus; but the most considerable and valuable part of it is that of the six last years, where he describes the last Jewish wars, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the miseries of his countrymen, in the most lively and affecting manner. Besides this, Josephus wrote another history, entitled, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, which was finished in the 13th year of Domitian, and a great part of which is taken from the books of the Old Testament. He likewise wrote an account of his own life, two treatises against Apion, and one concerning the martyrdom of the Maccabees, which Erasmus justly stiles a master-piece of its kind.

miracles. He foretold not only his own passion, death and resurrection, but also the manner and circumstances that attended them. He foretold that his apostles should be endowed with power from on high to speak with new tongues, and to work miracles; that they should go forth into all nations, and publish the glad tidings of the Gospel unto the different parts of the earth. He foretold the persecutions and sufferings which his disciples should undergo, as also the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles; that the number of his disciples, from small beginnings, should increase wonderfully, as a little seed groweth into a tree, and a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump; and that his church should be so founded upon a rock, that it should stand for ever, and all the powers of hell should not prevail against it. At the time these prophecies were delivered, most of them appeared contrary to all human apprehension, and were certainly impossible to be foreseen by human prudence, or effected by human power; and he must be thoroughly acquainted with the hearts of men, and with the direction and disposition of future events, who could foretel them with such certainty and exactness.

But none of our Saviour's prophecies are more remarkable than those relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, which were delivered above forty years before they were to take effect; and as no prophecies whatever were more punctually fulfilled, so they claim our most serious attention, being a thorough confirmation of what has been before asserted, as well as an undeniable testimony of the truth of Divine revelation.

In particularizing the most material passages wherein our Blessed Lord predicted the destruction of Jerusalem, and the final overthrow of the Jewish polity, we shall begin with the following: *And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the Mountains.* Luke xxi. 20, 21. This, saith our Blessed Saviour, *is the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, in the ninth and eleventh chapters.* The Roman army is called the *abomination*, on account of its ensigus and images being highly offensive to the

Jews. St. Chrysostom informs us that every idol, and every image of a man, was called *an abomination* among the Jews. For this reason (as Josephus informs us) the principal Jews earnestly entreated Vitellius, governor of Syria, when he was conducting his army through Judea against Aretas king of the Arabians, to lead it another way; and he greatly obliged them by complying with their request. We farther learn from Josephus, that after Jerusalem was taken, the Romans placed their ensigns on the ruins of the temple, opposite the eastern gate, and there sacrificed to them. The Roman army is, therefore, properly called *the abomination*, and *the abomination of desolation*, as it was to desolate and lay waste Jerusalem; and this army is called by St. Matthew *standing in the holy place*, the city, and such a compass of ground about it, being accounted holy.

When, therefore (according to the prophecy) the Roman army shall advance to besiege Jerusalem, then let those who are in Judea consult their own safety, and fly into the mountains. This counsel was wisely remembered, and afterwards put in practice by the Christians. When Cestius Gallus went with his army against Jerusalem, great numbers of people imagining it would soon be taken, fled from the city; and when Vespasian was drawing his forces towards Jerusalem, a prodigious multitude fled from Jericho into the mountainous country for security. It is probable there were some Christians among these; but we learn most certainly from ecclesiastical historians, that all who believed in Christ then left Jerusalem, and removed to Pella, and other places beyond the river Jordan; so that they all marvellously escaped the general destruction of their country. Of such a signal service was this caution of our Blessed Saviour to true believers.

After this our Lord prosecutes the subject in these words: *Let him which is on the house top not come down to take any thing out of his house*, Mark xiii. 17. The houses of the Jews, as well as those of the ancient Greeks and Romans, were flat on the top for them to walk upon; and had usually stairs on the outside, by which they might ascend and descend without coming into the house.

In the eastern walled cities these flat roofed houses usually formed continued terraces from one end of the city to the other, which terraces terminated at the gates. He therefore who is walking and regaling himself, let him not come down to take any thing out of his house; but let him pursue his course along the tops of the houses, and escape out of the city gate as fast as he possibly can. *Neither let him that is in the field return back to take his clothes,* verse 18. Our Saviour makes use of these expressions to intimate that their flight must be very sudden; and the Christians escaping just as they did was the more providential, because afterwards all means of getting out of the city was prevented.

And woe unto them that are with child, and unto them that give suck in those days, Mark xiii. 19. For neither will such persons be in a condition to fly, neither will they well be able to endure the distress and hardships of a siege. This woe was sufficiently fulfilled in the cruel slaughters which were made both of the women and children, and particularly in that grievous famine which so miserably afflicted Jerusalem during the siege. The circumstance of the woman's boiling her own child for sustenance (as mentioned in the last chapter) struck a general horror among the people, and they were pronounced blessed who died before they had heard or seen such great evils. So true also was what our Saviour declared on another occasion, when the women were bewailing, and lamenting him, as he was led to execution: *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us,* Luke xxiii. 28, &c. These were proverbial expressions to signify their desire of any shelter or refuge; and so very desirous were they of hiding themselves, that some thousands of them crept into the common sewers, and there miserably perished, or were dragged out to slaughter.

Our Blessed Lord having warned his disciples to fly as soon as they saw Jerusalem besieged by the Romans,

next assigns the reason for his giving them this caution: *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be*, Matth. xxiv. 21. Indeed, all history cannot furnish us with a parallel to the calamities and miseries of the Jews; rapine and murder, famine and pestilence within; fire and sword, and all the terrors of war, without. Our Saviour wept at the foresight of these calamities, and it is almost impossible for persons of any humanity to read the relation of them without being so affected, as to weep likewise.

The reason assigned by St. Luke for our Lord's cautioning his disciples to fly when they should see Jerusalem besieged by the Romans, is expressed in these words: *For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled*, Luke xxi. 22. *These be the days of vengeance*, wherein the calamities foretold by Moses, Joel, Daniel and other prophets, as well as those predicted by our Saviour, shall meet as in one common centre, and be fulfilled with aggravation on this generation. The words, *These be the days of vengeance*, may be likewise taken in another sense, as if the Divine vengeance had certain periods and revolutions, and the same days were fatal to the Jews, and destined to their destruction; for it is very memorable, and matter of just admiration, that (according to Josephus) the temple was burnt by the Romans on the very same day of the month as it had been before by the Babylonians.

The calamities during the siege were so severe that, like fire, they must, in time, have consumed all, and left nothing for themselves to do. *And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved*. If these wars and desolations were to continue, none of the Jews would escape destruction, but would be all cut off, root and branch. If the Romans had gone on with their persecution, the whole nation of the Jews would certainly, in a little time, have been extirpated. *But for the elect's sake* (that is, for the sake of the Christian Jews) *whom he hath chosen, the Lord hath shortened the days*, Mark xiii. 20. *The elect* is a well known appellation in scripture and antiquity for the Christians; and the

Christian Jews, partly through the fury of the Zealots on one hand, and the hatred of the Romans on the other, and partly through the difficulty of subsisting in the mountains without houses or provisions, would, in all probability, have been almost all destroyed, either by the sword or by famine, if the days had not been shortened.

But providentially the days were shortened. Titus himself was desirous of putting a speedy end to the siege, having Rome, and the riches and the pleasures there, before his eyes. The besieged, too, helped to shorten the days by their divisions and mutual slaughters, and by fatally deserting their strongest holds, where they could never have been taken by force, but by famine alone. By these means *the days were shortened*; and indeed otherwise Jerusalem could never have been taken in so short a time, so well fortified as it was, and so well fitted to sustain a longer siege. The enemy without could hardly ever have prevailed but for the factions and seditions within. Titus himself could not but ascribe his success to God, as he was viewing the fortifications, after the city was taken. His words to his friends were very remarkable. "We have fought (said he) with God on our side; and it is God who hath pulled the Jews out of their strong holds; for what could the hands of men or machines have done against these towers?" God, therefore, in the opinion of Titus, as well as of St. Mark, *shortened the days*. After the destruction of Jerusalem, God likewise inclined the heart of Titus to take some pity on the remnant of the Jews, and to restrain the nations from exercising the cruelty that they would otherwise have exercised towards them. At Antioch particularly (where the disciples were first called Christians) the senate and people earnestly importuned him to expel the Jews out of the city; but he prudently answered, that their country being laid waste, there was no place that could receive them. They then requested him to deprive the Jews of their remaining privileges, but those he permitted them to enjoy as before. Thus *for the elect's sake those days of persecution were shortened*.

In another part of this remarkable prophecy our Blessed Lord says: *And they shall fall by the edge of the*

sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, Luke xxi. 24. The number of those who fell by the edge of the sword was, indeed, very great, the whole amounting to no less than eleven hundred thousand. But besides these, others were also to be led away captive into all nations; and of these the number taken in the whole war amounted to ninety-seven thousand, many of whom were sent to the works in Egypt, and others sold as slaves. Thus were the Jews miserably tormented, and distributed over the Roman provinces, and are they not still distressed and dispersed over all the nations of the earth?

As the Jews were to be led away captive into all nations, so Jerusalem was to be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And accordingly Jerusalem hath never since been in the possession of the Jews, but hath constantly been in subjection to some other nation, as first to the Romans, afterwards to the Saracens, then to the Franks, then to the Mamalucs, and now to the Turks.

Thus have the Jews, for upwards of seventeen hundred years, been a standing monument of the truth of Christ's prediction, being dispersed over the face of the whole earth, and their country groaning under the yoke of foreign lords and conquerors. And at this day there is no reason to doubt but they will continue in the same state, nor ever recover their native country, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, that is, until they shall be again restored to the Divine favor; or, as St. Paul expresses it, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved, and become again the people of God, Rom. xi. 25, 26.

When we consider with what amazing exactness these prophecies of our Blessed Saviour have been fulfilled, and how unlikely they were to happen at the time they were predicted, we cannot help being astonished at, though at the same time we are led to admire, such wonderful incidents. It appears, indeed, next to impossible, that any man should duly consider these prophecies, with the exact completion of them, without being confirmed in the

faith of the Christian religion. Can any stronger proof be given of a Divine revelation, or the spirit of prophecy, than the examples now before us, wherein so many contingencies, which human wisdom or prudence could never foresee, are so particularly foretold, and so punctually accomplished? At the time when our Lord pronounced these prophecies, the Roman governor resided at Jerusalem, and had a force sufficient to keep the people in obedience; and could human prudence foresee that the people of that city, as well as those of the country, would revolt and rebel against the Romans? Could human prudence foresee famines and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places? Could human prudence foresee such an utter destruction of Jerusalem, with all the circumstances which preceded and followed it? It was never the custom of the Romans absolutely to ruin any of their provinces. It was, therefore, improbable, that such a thing should happen, and still more improbable that it should happen under the humane and generous Titus, who was, indeed, as he was justly called, *the love and delight of mankind*.

It has been observed by some that the other predictions of holy writ are figurative and obscure, but the like observations cannot be made with respect to the prophecies of our Saviour, they being delivered in the most simple, plain, and intelligible terms. It is allowed, indeed, that some of those prophecies are taken from Moses and Daniel, and our Saviour, prophecying of the same events, hath applied some of the same images and expressions; but this is the highest commendation that can be given to his predictions. He hath built upon the foundation of the inspired writers before him; but what a superstructure hath he raised? He hath acted in this case, as in every other, like one who came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them. He hath manifested himself to be a true prophet, by his exact interpretation and application of other prophets. He is also much more particular and circumstantial than either Moses or Daniel. In several instances his prophecies are entirely new, and properly his own; besides which he uses greater precision

in fixing and confining the time to that very generation which was to fulfil the accomplishment of his prophecy.

For the completion of these prophecies the persons seem to have been wonderfully raised up, and preserved by Divine Providence. Vespasian was promoted from obscurity; and though feared and hated by Nero, yet was preferred by him, and singled out as the only general among the Romans who was most capable of undertaking such a war. He had subdued the greater part of Judea, when he was advanced to the empire, and he was happy in putting an end to the civil wars, and to the other troubles and calamities of the state. He therefore commissioned his son Titus to prosecute the wars against the Jews, the commencement of which had nearly proved fatal to him. While he was taking a view of the city, he was surrounded by the enemy, and nothing less was expected than that he would be either slain or taken prisoner; but he resolutely broke through the midst of them, and though unarmed, yet arrived safe at his own camp. Josephus himself was also no less wonderfully preserved than Titus, the one (as it may reasonably be thought) to destroy the city, and the other to record its destruction.

The calamities which attended the Jews during the siege, and at the destruction of Jerusalem, were the greatest ever known; and what heinous sin was it that could bring down such heavy judgments on the Jewish church and nation? No other reason can be given so equally just as that assigned in the scripture, namely, their crucifying the Lord of Glory, which is thus expressed by St. Paul: *They both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and persecuted the apostles, and so filled up their sins, and wrath came upon them to the uttermost.* 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. This has been always considered as the most capital sin of the Jewish nation; and we shall find, upon reflection, some correspondence between their crime and their punishment. They put Jesus to death when the nation was assembled to celebrate the passover; and at that feast likewise Titus shut them up within the walls of the city. The rejection of the true Messiah was their crime, and the destruction that took place in consequence thereof was their punishment.

They sold and bought Jesus as a slave; and they themselves were afterwards sold and bought as slaves at the lowest prices. They preferred a robber and murderer to Jesus, whom they crucified between two thieves; and they themselves were afterwards infested with bands of thieves and robbers. They crucified Jesus before the walls of Jerusalem, and they themselves were crucified in such numbers, that it is said room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses for the bodies. When, therefore, we consider these things together, we cannot help clearly seeing in what a strict manner was fulfilled the imprecation of the Jews themselves, at the time when Pilate acquitted himself of being accessory to our Saviour's death, *His blood be on us and on our children*, Matth. xxvii. 25.

From these and many other instances which have been taken notice of in a former part of our work, relative to prophecies and their completions, we may be fully assured of the great truth of Divine revelation. *No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation*, or the suggestion of any man's own spirit or fancy; *for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*, 2 Pet. i, 20, 21.

In the prophecies we see instances of things, which could no way depend on human conjecture, foretold with the greatest clearness, and fulfilled hundreds of years after with the greatest exactness. Nay, we see some of them, which were delivered above three thousand years ago, fulfilling at this very time; and cities, countries and kingdoms in the very same condition, and with the very same circumstances, as the prophets had foretold. This is proving our religion, in some measure, by ocular demonstration: it is not *walking by faith* only, but also by *sight*.

The prophecies, though written by different men in different ages, have yet a visible connection and dependency, an entire harmony and agreement one with another. At the same time that there is such perfect harmony, there is also great variety; and the same things are foretold by different prophets in a different manner and with different circumstances; and the latter

usually improve upon the former. They are all excellent in their various kinds; and we may observe the beauty and sublimity of the stile and diction of the prophets, even from those quotations which have been made from their writings. Indeed, they are truly deserving the most serious perusal and meditation, not only considered as prophets, but considered even as authors, for their noble images and descriptions, their instructive precepts, and their pathetic exhortations.

Time, that takes away something from the evidence of other writers, is still adding something to the credit and authority of the prophets. Future ages will comprehend more than the present, as the present understands more than the past; and the perfect accomplishment will produce a perfect knowledge of all the prophecies.

Those who attempt to explain the prophecies should be possessed of a competent knowledge of history sacred and profane, ancient and modern. Prophecy is, as we may say, history anticipated and contracted; history is prophecy accomplished and extended; and the prophecies of scripture contain the fate of the most considerable nations, and the substance of the most memorable transactions in the world from the earliest to the latest times.

If to the prophecies we add the miracles, so salutary and beneficial, so publicly wrought, and so credibly attested, above any other matters of fact whatever, by those who were eye-witnesses of them, and sealed the truth of their testimony with their blood; if to these external confirmations we add likewise the internal excellence of Christianity, the goodness of the doctrine itself, so moral, so perfect, so divine, and the purity and perfection of its motives and sanctions, above any other system of morality or religion in the world: if we seriously consider and compare all these things together, it is almost impossible not to feel conviction, and to cry out, as Thomas did after handling our Saviour, *My Lord, and my God!* John xx. 28. This is only one argument out of many, that there must be a divine revelation, if there is any truth in prophecy; and there must be truth in prophecy, as we have shewn in several instances, and might shew in several more, if there is any dependence upon the testimony of

others, or upon our own senses, upon what we read in books, or upon what we see in the world.

Some men are apt to think, that if they could but see a miracle wrought in favor of religion, they would resign all their scruples, believe without doubt, and obey without reserve. The very thing that such desire they have. We have the greatest and most striking of miracles in the series of scripture prophecy accomplished, as we see, in the present state of almost all nations, such as the Africans, the Egyptians, the Arabians, the Turks, the Jews, the Papists, &c. And this is not a transient miracle, ceasing almost as soon as performed; but is permanent, and continued through the course of many generations. It is not a miracle delivered only on the report of others, but is subject to our own inspection and examination. It is not a miracle represented only before a certain number of witnesses, but is open to the observation and contemplation of all mankind; and after so many ages, is still growing, still improving to future times. What stronger miracle, therefore, can be required for our conviction? or what will avail if this be not effectual? What can be plainer? We see, or may see, with our own eyes, the scripture prophecies accomplished; and if the scripture prophecies are accomplished, the scripture must be the word of God; and if the scripture is the word of God, the Christian religion must be the only one that can lead to eternal happiness.

For the encouragement of all let it be remembered, that *he who receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward, Matth. x. 41. Wherefore, quench not the spirit; despise not prophesying; prove all things, hold fast that which is good. 1 Thess. v. 19, &c.*

Among the various prophecies foretold by our Blessed Redeemer, exclusive of those concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, there are none more conspicuous than those relative to the propagation of his Gospel, and the persecution his disciples should undergo while employed in that great and beneficial undertaking. These predictions were fulfilled in the most strict and ample manner. The Christian religion was soon spread through the greatest

parts of Europe, Asia and Africa, and was established not only in cities and populous places, but even in towns and country villages. The metropolitan cities were all under bishops of the greatest eminence and piety, many of whom, as our Blessed Lord had predicted, were persecuted and suffered martyrdom for the glorious cause they had undertaken. They resolutely withstood every kind of oppression inflicted on them, and by their perseverance the Gospel increased and flourished in the most extensive manner. That they suffered great persecutions for the cause of their Divine Master will appear from the following table, which contains an account of the state of the five great churches, called apostolical, during the three first centuries after the death of our Blessed Redeemer.



A Brief Chronological Catalogue of the APOSTLES and their Successors, who founded and presided over the Five Grand Apostolical Churches of ANTIOCH, ROME, JERUSALEM, BYZANTIUM, or CONSTANTINOPLE, and ALEXANDRIA.

ANTIOCH.

IT is generally acknowledged, even by the Romish writers, that a church was founded here by St. Peter some considerable time before that at Rome; and here it was that the venerable name of Christians first commenced. The fathers in the council at Constantinople under Nectarius, in their Synodicon to them at Rome, style the church of Antioch, *The most ancient, and truly apostolical*; and St. Chrysostom, *The head of the whole world*. The succession of its bishops till the time of Constantine was as follows:

I. St. Peter the apostle, who governed this church at least seven years.

II. Evodius, who sate 23 years. In his time the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch.

III. Ignatius. After presiding near forty years over this church, he was carried out of Syria to Rome, and there thrown to wild beasts in the theatre, Ann. Chr. 110. Trajan 11.

IV. Heron. He was bishop 20 years. To him succeeded

V. Cornelius, who kept the place 13 years.

VI. Eros, 26, or, (as Eusebius says) 24 years.

VII. Theophilus, 13, a man of great parts and learning; many of his works were extant in Eusebius's time, and some of them we still have at this day.

VIII. Maximus, 13. He dying, the next chosen was

IX. Serapio, 25. Many of his works are mentioned by Eusebius and St. Hierom. To him succeeded

X. Asclepiades, a man of great worth and eminency, and invincible constancy in the time of persecution; he continued in his see 9 years.

XI. Philotus, 8.

XII. Zebinus, or Zebennus, 6 years.

XIII. Babylas, 13. After many conflicts and sufferings for the faith, he received the crown of martyrdom under Decius, who commanded his chains to be buried with him.

XIV. Fabias, or, (as the patriarch Nicephorus calls him) Flavius, possessed the chair 9 years. He was succeeded by

XV. Demetrianus, who (according to Eusebius) held the see 8 years.

XVI. Paulus Samosetanus sate in the chair 8 years, when, for his unepiscopal manners and practices, his unsound dogmata and principles, and especially his mean and unworthy opinions concerning our Saviour, he was condemned and deposed by a synod at Antioch, whose determination is at large extant in Eusebius.

XVII. Domnus succeeded in his place. He was constituted and ordained to the place by the fathers of that synod, who farther gave him this honorable character, that he was a man endued with all episcopal virtues and ornaments. Eusebius makes him to have sat 6, but Nicephorus only 2 years.

XVIII. Timæus. He sate in the chair 10 years.

XIX. Cyrillus, who presided over that church in the account of Nicephorus 15, of Eusebius 24 years.

XX. Tyrænnus. He sate 13 years. In his time began the tenth persecution under Dioclesian, which raged with great severity.

XXI. Vatalis, 6.

XXII. Philogonius 5, succeeded by

XXIII. Paulinus, or, as Nicephorus calls him, Paulus, who, after five years, was deposed and driven out by the prevalency of the Adrian faction.

XXIV. Eustathius, formerly bishop of Beræa, a learned man, and of great note and eminency in the council of Nice, the first general council, summoned by Constantine the Great, after he had restored peace and prosperity to the church.

ROME.

THE foundation of this church is, with just reason, equally attributed to Peter and Paul, the one as apostle of the circumcision preaching to the Jews, while the other probably as the apostle of the uncircumcision preached to the Gentiles. Its bishops succeeded in the following order:

I. St. Peter and Paul, who both suffered martyrdom under Nero.

II. Linus, the son of Herculanus, a Tuscan. He is mentioned by St. Paul, and sate between 11 and 12 years.

III. Cletus, or Anacletus, or Anancletus, supposed by many to be the same person; (though others who reckon Anacletus, a Greek, born at Athens, make them distinct, whom yet we have left out, not being mentioned by Eusebius) a Roman, the son of Æmilianus, sate 9, though others say but two years.

IV. Clemens, a Roman, born in Mount Cælius, the son of Paustinus, near a-kin, say some, to the emperor. He was condemned to dig in the marble quarries near the Euxine sea, and by the command of Trajan thrown into the sea, with an anchor about his neck. He was bishop of Rome 9 years and 4 months.

V. Euaristus, by birth a Greek, but his father a Jew of Bethlehem. He is said to have been crowned with martyrdom the last year of Trajan, in the ninth of his bishopric, or, as others say, the thirteenth.

VI. Alexander, a Roman, though young in years, was grave in his manners and conversation. He sate 10 years and 7 months, and died a martyr.

VII. Xystus, or Sixtus, a Roman. He was martyred in the 10th year of his bishopric, and buried in the Vatican.

VIII. Telesphorus, a Greek, succeeded. Justin the martyr flourished in his time. He died a martyr, having sate 11 years and 3 months; 10 years 8 months, say others; and was buried near St. Peter in the Vatican.

IX. Hyginus, the son of an Athenian philosopher, was advanced to the chair under Antonius Pius. He sate 4 years, Eusebius says 8.

X. Pius, an Italian, born at Aquileia; he died after being bishop 11 years and 4 months; according to Eusebius, 15 years.

XI. Anicetus, born in Syria. He is said after 9, or, as others, 11 years, to have suffered martyrdom, and was buried in the Via Appia, in the cemetery of Callistus. In his time Polycarp went to Rome.

XII. Sotea, or, as Nicephorus calls him, Soterichus, was a Campanian, the son of Concordius. There was an intercourse of letters between him and Dionysius, bishop of Corinth. He died after he had sate 9 years, or, as Eusebius reckons, 7.

XIII. Eleutherius, born at Nicopolis in Greece. To him Lucius king of Britain sent a letter and an embassy. He sate 15 years, died ann. Chr. 186, and was buried in the Vatican.

XIV. Victor, an African, the son of Felix, a man of a furious and intemperate spirit, as appeared from his passionate proceedings in the controversy about the observation of Easter. He was bishop 10 years.

XV. Zephyrinus, a Roman, succeeded, and possessed the chair 8 years. He was a pious and learned man.

XVI. Callistus, or Calixtus, the son of Domitius, a Roman; a prudent and modest man. He suffered much

in the persecution under Alexander Severus, under whom he became a martyr; being thrown into a well by the procurement of Ulpian the great lawyer, but severe enemy to Christians. He sate 6 years; and though he made a cemetery, called after his own name, yet he was buried in that of Calepodius, in the Appian way.

XVII. Urbanus, the son of Pontianus, a Roman, after 4, or, as some, 6 years, suffered martyrdom for the faith. Eusebius has 5; S. Hierome in his translation 9. He was buried in Pretextatus's cemetery in the Appian way.

XVIII. Pontianus, the son of Calphurnius, a Roman; for his bold reproving the Roman idolatry he was banished into the island of Sardinia, where he died. He was bishop about 3 or 4 years; or, as Eusebius says, 5 years.

XIX. Anteros, a Greek, the son of Romulus. He died after he had kept his place one month; though others, without reason, make him to have lived in it many years, and was buried in the cemetery of Callistus.

XX. Fabianus, a Roman, was unexpectedly chosen bishop, while several others being in competition, a pigeon suddenly descended, and sate upon his head. He died a martyr after 14 years, and was buried in the same place with his predecessor.

XXI. Cornelius, a Roman. He opposed and condemned Novatian. Frequent letters passed between him and Cyprian. After somewhat more than two years, he was cruelly whipped, and then beheaded, and was buried in a vault within the grange of Lucina, near the Appian way.

XXII. Lucius, a Roman, sate 2, or as others, 3 years. He suffered martyrdom by the command of Valerian, and was buried in Castellus's cemetery.

XXIII. Stephenus, a Roman, the son of Julius. Great contests were between him and Cyprian, about re-baptizing those who had been baptized by heretics. He was beheaded after he sate about 2 or 3 years, though others say 7, and was buried with his predecessor.

XXIV. Xystus, a Greek, formerly a philosopher of Athens. After 1, or as others compute, 2 years and 10 months, he suffered martyrdom.

XXV. Dionysius, a monk; made bishop. In the judgment of Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, a truly learned and admirable person. The time of his presidency is uncertainly assigned, 6, 9, 10, 11. Eusebius extends it to 12 years.

XXVI. Felix, a Roman. He suffered about the fourth or fifth year of his episcopacy, and was buried in the Aurelian way, in a cemetery of his own, two miles from Rome.

XXVII. Eutychianus, a Tuscan, a man exceedingly careful of the burial of martyrs, after one year's space was himself crowned with martyrdom.

XXVIII. Caius, as Eusebius calls him Gaianus, a Dalmatian, kinsman to the emperor Dioclesian, and in the persecution under him became a martyr. He sate 11 years, some say longer. Eusebius 15 years. He was beheaded, and buried in the cemetery of Callistus.

XXIX. Marcellinus, a Roman. Through fear of torment he sacrificed to the gods, but recovering himself, died a martyr, after he had sate 8 or 9 years. He was beheaded, and buried in the cemetery of Priscilla, in the Salarian way. To him succeeded

XXX. Marcellus, a Roman. He was condemned by Maxentius the tyrant to keep beasts in a stable, which yet he performed with his prayers and exercises of devotion. He died after 5 years and 6 months, and was buried in the cemetery of Priscilla.

XXXI. Eusebius, a Greek, the son of a physician. He suffered much under the tyranny of Maxentius. He sate 6 years, and was buried in the Appian way, near Callistus's cemetery.

XXXII. Miltiades, an African. He might be a confessor under Maxentius, but could not be a martyr under Maximinus, as some report. He sate 3 or 4, though others say but two years, and was buried in the cemetery of Callistus.

XXXIII. Silvester, a Roman. He was elected into the place, ann. Chr. 314, fetched from the mountain Soracte, whither he had fled for fear of the persecution. He was highly in favor with Constantine the Great. He sate 23, Nicephorus says 28 years.

JERUSALEM.

THE church of Jerusalem may in some sense be said to have been founded by our Lord himself, as it was for some time cultivated and improved by the ministry of the whole college of apostles. The bishops of it were as follow :

I. St. James the Less, constituted bishop by the apostles. He was thrown off the temple, and knocked on the head with a fuller's club.

II. Simeon, the son of Cleopas, brother to Joseph. He sate in this chair 23 years, and suffered martyrdom in the reign of Trajan, in the one hundred and twentieth year of his age.

III. Justus succeeded in his room, and sate 6 years.

IV. Zacheus, or, as Nicephorus the patriarch calls him, Zacharias 4.

V. Tobias; to him after 4 years succeeded

VI. Benjamin, who sate 2 years.

VII. John who continued the same space.

VIII. Matthias, or Matthæus, 2 years.

IX. Philippus, 1 year: next came

X. Seneca, who sate 4 years.

XI. Justus, 4.

XII. Levy, or Lebes, 2.

XIII. Ephrem, or Ephres, or, as Epiphanius stiles him, Vaphrés, 2.

XIV. Joseph, 2.

XV. Judas, 2. Most of these bishops we may observe to have held their office but a short time, following one another with a very quick succession. This doubtless was in a great measure owing to the turbulent and unquiet humor of the Jewish nation, frequently rebelling against the Roman powers, whereby they provoked them to fall heavy upon them, and cut off all that came in their way, making no distinction between the obstinate Jews and those who had become Christian converts. Hitherto the bishops of Jerusalem had successively been of the circumcision, the church there having been entirely made up of Jewish converts. But after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews being dispersed into other countries, the

Gentiles were admitted not only into the body of the church, but even into the episcopal chair. The first whereof was

XVI. Marcus, who sate 8 years.

XVII. Cassianus, 8.

XVIII. Publius, 5.

XIX. Maximus, 4.

XX. Julianus, 2.

XXI. Caianus, 3.

XXII. Symmachus, 2.

XXIII. Caius, 3.

XXIV. Julianus, 4.

XXV. Elias, 2. We find not this bishop mentioned by Eusebius; but he is recorded by Nicephorus, of Constantinople.

XXVI. Capito, 4.

XXVII. Maximus, 4.

XXVIII. Antoninus, 5.

XXIX. Valens, 3.

XXX. Dulicianus, 2.

XXXI. Narcissus, 4. He was a man of eminent piety, famous for the great miracles which he wrought; but not being able to bear the aspersions which some unjustly cast upon him, he left his church, and retired into the deserts and solitudes. In his absence was chosen

XXXII. Dius, who sate 8 years. After him,

XXXIII. Germania, 4.

XXXIV. Gordius, 5. In his time Narcissus, as one from the dead, returned from his solitudes, and was importuned by the people again to take the government of the church upon him, being highly revered by them, for his strict and philosophical course of life. And in this second administration he continued 10 years, suffering martyrdom when he was near 120 years old. To relieve the infirmities of his great age they took in to be his colleague

XXXV. Alexander, formerly bishop in Cappadocia, who at that time had out of devotion taken a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He was an eminent confessor, and after having sate 15 years, died in prison under the Decian persecution. By him Origen was ordained presbyter.

He was a great patron of learning as well as religion, and a studious preserver of the records of the church. He erected a library at Jerusalem, which he especially furnished with the writings and epistles of ecclesiastical persons; and out of this treasury it was that Eusebius borrowed a great part of his materials for the composing of his history.

XXXVI. Mazabanes, 9 years.

XXXVII. Hymenæus, 23.

XXXVIII. Zabdas, 10.

XXXIX. Hermon 9. He was, as Eusebius tells us, the last bishop of this see, before that fatal persecution that raged even in his time.

XL. Macarius, ordained ann. Chr. 315. He was present in the great Nicene council. He sate, says Nicephorus of Constantinople, 20 years; but St. Hierom allows him a much longer time.

BYZANTIUM, AFTERWARDS CALLED CONSTANTINOPLE.

THAT this church was first founded by St. Andrew, is incontestible. The succession of its bishops was as follows:

I. St. Andrew the apostle. He was crucified at Patræ in Achaia.

II. Stachys, whom St. Paul calls his beloved Stachys, ordained bishop by St. Andrew. He sate 16 years.

III. Onesimus, 14.

IV. Polycarpus, 17.

V. Plutarchus, 16.

VI. Sedicio, 9.

VII. Diogenes, 15.

VIII. Eleutherus, 7.

IX. Felix, 5.

X. Polycarpus, 17.

XI. Athenodorus, 4. He erected a church called Elea, afterwards much beautified and enlarged by Constantine the Great.

XII. Euzoius, 16.

XIII. Laurentius, 11 years and 6 months.

XIV. Alypius, 13.

XV. Pertinax, a man of consular dignity. He built another church near the sea-side, which he called Peace. He sate 19 years, and was succeeded by

XVI. Olympianus, 11.

XVII. Marcus, 13.

XVIII. Cyriacus, or Cyrillianus, 16.

XIX. Constantinus, 7. In the first year of his bishopric he built a church in the north part of the city, which he dedicated to the honor of Euphemia the martyr, who had suffered in that place. In this oratory he spent the remainder of his life, quitting his episcopal chair to

XX. Titus, who sate 35 years and six months. After him came

XXI. Dometius, brother (as we are told) to the emperor Probus. He was bishop 21 years and six months.

XXII. Probus succeeded his father Dometius, and sate 12 years. As after him

XXIII. Metrophanes, his brother, who governed that church 10 years. And in his time it was that Constantine translated the imperial court hither, enlarged and adorned it, called it after his own name, and made it the seat of the empire.

XXIV. Alexander succeeded: a man of great piety and integrity, zealous and constant in maintaining the truth against the blasphemies of Arius.

ALEXANDRIA.

The foundations of this church were laid, and a great part of its superstructure raised, by S. Mark. Its bishops and governors are thus recorded:

I. S. Mark the evangelist, who was martyred. Nicephorus of Constantinople makes him to sit 2 years.

II. Anianus, charactered by Eusebius, a man beloved of God, and admirable in all things. He ruled in that office 22 years.

III. Avilius, or as Eusebius, 13.

IV. Cerdo succeeded about the first year of Trajan. He sate 10 years.

V. Primus, 12.

VI. Justus, or Justinus, 10.

VII. Eumenes, 10. S. Hierom in his translation calls him Hymenæus.

VIII. Marcus, or Marcianus, 13.

IX. Caladion, 10.

X. Agrippinus, 14.

XI. Julianus, 15.

XII. Demetrius, 21. He was a man of great zeal and piety, and underwent many troubles in the persecution at Alexandria. He was at first a great friend to Origen, but afterwards became his enemy, laying some irregularities to his charge: partly out of emulation at the great reputation which Origen had gained in the world; partly, in that Origen had suffered himself to be ordained presbyter by two other bishops, Alexander bishop of Jerusalem, and Theoctistus of Cesarea.

XIII. Heraclius, a man of philosophical genius, educated under the institution of Origen. On the death of Demetrius he was advanced to the government of the church, the care whereof he took for 16 years.

XIV. Dionysius, 17. He was one of the most eminent bishops of his time. In the persecution under Decius he was banished first to Taposiries, a little town between Alexandria and Canopus; then to Cephro, and other places in the deserts of Lybia. But a large account of his own and other sufferings, with various transactions of those times, we have out of his letters yet extant in Eusebius. He died in the twelfth year of the emperor Gallienus.

XV. Maximus. Of a presbyter he was made bishop of Alexandria, and sate in that chair 18 years.

XVI. Thomas, 37, or according to S. Hierom's version of Eusebius, 19. To him succeeded

XVII. Petrus, 12. He began his office three years before the last persecution. He was a man of infinite strictness and accuracy, and of indefatigable industry for the good of the church. He suffered in the ninth year of

the persecution, with the loss of his head, gaining the crown of martyrdom; after whose death came in Constantine the Great, turning the black and dismal scene of things into a state of calmness and serenity.

XVIII. Achilles, 9. By him Arius, upon his submission, was ordained presbyter.

XIX. Alexander, 23. Under him Arius began more openly to propagate his heresy at Alexandria, who was thereupon excommunicated and thrust out by Alexander, and shortly after condemned by the fathers of the council of Nice.

Remarks on the conduct of the Jews in professing idolatry at one period, and opposing it at another.

IT has been very justly asked by some, why the Jews, in the course of the various revolutions that took place among them, should, at one period, so attach themselves to idolatry, and at another so strongly oppose the professors of it, of which we have so many instances in the Sacred Writings. As, therefore, it has been our fixed attention to remove every difficulty through the course of our work; so we shall endeavor to remove this, which will certainly appear manifest to all from the following observations:

First, What reason or reasons can be assigned, why the children of Israel under the old Testament dispensation, often worshipped the idols of the Heathen nations; although they knew it to be contrary to the law of that God who convinced them of his power by the wonderful miracles he frequently wrought before their eyes?

This is a question of a very important nature, and being properly considered, will throw a considerable light on the scripture history. The Jewish state differed from all others in the world, for, as a Theocracy, it was under the immediate government and protection of the great Jehovah; God was the author of their laws, both

with respect to civil policy and religion. The deistical writers have asserted that the law of Moses did not teach the social duties; but this is an accusation not supported by the slightest proof, but actually contradicted by the ten commandments, and every part of the Old Testament. The precepts of the Jewish law were every way consistent with the Divine perfections, and suitable to the state of man in his fallen nature.

They enjoined the worship of one holy, wise and powerful God, and strictly prohibited the adoration of images. —They commanded every person to speak of the name of God with reverence, and to pay a proper regard to the times and places set apart for his worship; the duty of children to their parents was enforced with promises of long life and prosperity; murder, adultery, theft and perjury were all strictly forbidden under the severest penalties; and that nothing might be wanting to make the law of God resemble its Divine author, it reached to the most inmost recesses of the heart, and struck at the first motion of corruption; namely, covetousness. Such was the nature of the holy law which God delivered to the Jews; and that its precepts might not escape their memories, he wrought the most wonderful miracles, which in all respects were contrary to the course of nature, that they might remain inexcusable, if they worshipped the idols of the Heathens.

But such is the corruptness of human nature, that notwithstanding all these miracles, and the continual interposition of Jehovah in their favor, yet they often forsook the God of their salvation, and worshipped the idols of those nations, who, for their many abominations, had been driven from the land of Canaan, to make room for their establishment.

The children of Israel remained captive in Egypt above two hundred and thirty years, during which time it is probable they forgot the knowledge of the true God; and although Moses delivered to them the most Divine precepts, yet we do not find they had any fixed place of worship, till Solomon built the temple as a sacred structure, where expiation for sin was to be made by sacrifices, and to Jerusalem the people resorted in crowds, three

times every year. But during the intervals between those periods, few of them being able to read, not having places to meet in, where persons properly qualified might read and expound the law to them, they frequently forgot its Divine precepts; and the religion of the idolatrous Heathens laying no restraint on their corrupt inclinations, they forsook the law of God, and forgot or despised the wonderful works he had shewn to them, and done for them.

Jehovah, as the God of mercy, never forgot the promise he made to their pious progenitors, and therefore he bore with many of their provocations; but as his judgments, though often slow, are always sure, he suffered the king of Babylon to lead them into captivity, who dispersed them throughout his dominions, and they remained in a state of slavery full seventy years. The many afflictions they suffered made them sensible of their former ingratitude to their Divine benefactor, and filled them with an earnest desire to return to their own country. See Psalm cxxxvii.

Secondly. What reasons can be assigned, why, after their return from the Babylonish captivity, they had such an aversion to the religion of the neighboring nations, that they cheerfully submitted to the most cruel tortures, rather than defile themselves with the worship of idols, even after miracles had ceased?

The subject matter of this question has been but little attended to, and yet there is no great difficulty in giving it a proper solution; part of which will rest on human testimony, but the whole will be supported from different passages in the New-Testament.

While the Jews remained captives beyond the river Euphrates, they had many opportunities of making themselves acquainted with the forms observed by the ancient Magi, (a set of learned Heathens who met at stated times to instruct the people in the principles of their religion) which made them familiar with all their doctrines and practices. There is great reason to believe that this gave a new form to the Jewish worship, for although they never adopted the sentiments of the Magi, yet they profited in consequence of imitating their

examples. When the temple was rebuilt at Jerusalem, those who returned from the captivity were in a very unsettled state; they were surrounded by powerful enemies, and therefore that they might be instructed in the principles of the law, and preserved from relapsing into idolatry, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel, and the rest of their leaders, ordered that places of public worship should be established in every part of the land, which were called synagogues. These buildings were constructed in such a manner, that a veil of curtain divided the men from the women; a practice which seems to have taken place in all ages in the East.

It was in these places that the people met on the sabbath; not to sacrifice, because that could not be done any where but in the temple at Jerusalem; but for this purpose, that a person properly qualified might read a part of the law, after which some one or more of the most aged and experienced expounded the meaning to the people. The rest of their worship consisted in prayers and hymns, and the whole concluded with an earnest address to the deity, that he would send the Messiah to deliver them from the power of their enemies: the judgments of God on their ancestors for disobedience were always repeated to the people; and to induce them to obedience, they were taught to believe that the Messiah would soon comfort them with his presence. At first these exhortations were plain, simple, and unaffected, but in time they became extremely pernicious to the morals of the people; for the Rabbies, whose business it was to expound the law, put many false glosses upon the text, and set up their vain traditions, as of equal authority with the word of God, *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* See *Mark* vii. 7 and 13.

That the Jews were in a great measure ignorant of their own law, before they were carried captive into Babylon, will appear plain, when we consider that in the reign of Josiah a copy of the law was found in the temple, but few of the people remembered to have read it; it is probable this was a copy of the five books of Moses, which explains the ten precepts of the law, and not the precepts themselves, because these were gotten by heart

by the children. So much were the people of Israel affected with this discovery, that their pious king rent his clothes in token of humility, and ordered a fast to be kept throughout the nation. See *2 Chron.* xxxiv. 15—19.

It was otherwise when our Saviour came in the flesh, for the Jews were so far from being ignorant of their law, that they disputed concerning many passages in it; and so well were they acquainted with the prophecies, that when Herod asked them where the Messiah was to be born, they told him, without the least hesitation, in Bethlehem of Judea. See *Matthew* ii. 5.

The Jews in every town and district were invited by the elders to become members of the synagogue; which invitation every person was at liberty to comply with or reject; if he rejected the invitation, he had then no right to any of the pecuniary emoluments given at stated times to the poor; but that did not by any means exclude him from attending the sacrifices in the temple at Jerusalem: on the other hand, if he complied with the invitation, he was then obliged to submit to the laws of the Synagogue, otherwise he was excluded.

Thirdly, we have no account in sacred scripture, of the return of the ten tribes which were carried captive by the king of Assyria. See *2 Kings*, xvii. 6. It may therefore be asked, whether those people called Jews in the New Testament, were the descendants of the twelve patriarchs, or only of Judah and Benjamin?

This question requires some attention, and therefore we shall consider it with care and deliberation:

The children of Israel were never called Jews till they went into captivity; and probably this name was first given them by the Babylonians, for the following reasons, First, the regal dignity was inherent in the tribe of Judah, and although that of Benjamin was carried into captivity, yet that being smaller than the other, both went under one name. Secondly, the ten tribes spoke the same language as the others; they were of the same original; the same manners and customs were peculiar to all, and therefore nothing can be more probable, than that the people of Babylon would call the whole of these people by one and the same name.

Zecharias, the father of John the Baptist, was a priest of the course of Abia, and all the priests were of the tribe of Levi, and his wife expressly called the daughter of Aaron. See *Luke* i. 5. The apostle Paul tells us, that he was of the tribe of Benjamin, for he was born in Tarsus, which belonged to that tribe. See *Acts* xxi. 39. But to carry the argument still further, the same Apostle, speaking in his defence before king Agrippa, says, “and now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.” See *Acts* xxvi. 6—7. Thus it appears that the children of Israel in general were called Jews, and that some out of each tribe returned from the captivity.

There is no doubt but many of the ten tribes married and continued in Babylon, Assyria, Persia, and Media; and this has given rise to a notion embraced by the modern Jews, that there is still a great nation of their people inhabiting an extensive country, beyond the river Euphrates, and that they will return and join the rest of their brethren at Jerusalem, at the coming of the Messiah. But where is this country? what traveller either ancient or modern, has taken the least notice of it? One Benjamin of Toledo, a Jew, who travelled into the East, in the twelfth century, knew nothing of it; and, indeed, there is the greatest reason to believe that the whole is no more than a fiction invented by their rabbies to delude the people.

From what has been said, it naturally follows, First, that the Jews relapsed so often into idolatry before the captivity because they had no fixed place to meet on the sabbath, to hear the law read and explained; for reading is the life and soul of religion, especially when the bulk of the people are little acquainted with literature; we may add further, that the religion of the Heathens, or rather their idolatry, was of too alluring a nature not to captivate the passions of men naturally hard-hearted and disobedient, and who had not properly considered the power of that God, who had wrought the greatest miracles in their favor, for the Jews were in all ages a stiff-necked,

rebellious people. The precepts contained in the law which God gave to Moses were pure and holy; they were calculated to prevent the people of Israel from abusing themselves by mixing with the Heathens; in whose temples the grossest, the most shameful and unnatural abominations were committed. Nay, even those crimes which sink the human creation beneath the beasts that perish, were considered as virtues, and therefore we need not wonder that the Jews should so frequently become idolaters.

Secondly, when the children of Israel had been trained in the school of affliction, and brought to a sense of their duty, they found it necessary to have places established, for reading, and expounding the law. This was what preserved them from returning to idolatry; for however gross their vices might have been, after their return from captivity, yet neither in the New Testament, nor in Josephus, do we read that they worshipped the idols of the Heathens. Nay, Josephus relates many sufferings inflicted upon those distressed people, because they would not sacrifice unto idols.

Thirdly, it is plain, that many out of each tribe returned from the captivity, for although they were called by the common name of Jews, yet they still kept up the distinction both of their tribes and families. Thus much with respect to the three questions proposed, and we doubt not but the answers will be satisfactory. We shall now conclude, with an hearty prayer to God for the conversion of the Jews, and the union of all those who profess the doctrine of the Blessed Jesus.

O LORD, the Father of mercies, let not thine indignation always burn against thy ancient people, nor cast them off forever. Though the blood of thy dear son our Blessed Saviour lies heavy upon them, and hitherto thou hast hardened their hearts, yet be pleased, of thine infinite mercy, to open their eyes, soften their hearts, and cause them to mourn over him whom their forefathers pierced. Cause them to understand those Sacred Oracles which thou didst commit to their keeping: that our Saviour, who hath long since been a light to lighten the

Gentiles, may, in thy due time, be the glory of thy people Israel; that so there may be but one sheepfold, as there is but one shepherd. For the speeding of their conversion, be pleased to compose the many differences that subsist among Christians, and so unite them together, that their examples may no longer discourage, but may incite thy once chosen people to embrace our Lord and Saviour, and his blessed doctrine. Cause thy truth, O Lord, to shine forth gloriously and triumphantly, as the sun at noon-day; and let it dispel the thick mist of darkness and error that hath overspread so many nations of the world. Set up thy pure worship, and thine own institutions in all parts; and throw down idolatry and false worship, wherever it prevails. Break the yoke of oppression and violence, and rebuke the spirit of profaneness, impiety, intemperance and ungodliness; and let holiness, righteousness, brotherly kindness, and charity, prevail wherever the Gospel of Christ is owned and professed. Unite all Christians in those things which are the main fundamental principles of the Christian religion, and give them charity and mutual forbearance of each other in less important matters. Let those who name the name of Christ make conscience to depart from all iniquity, and live as become his disciples and servants. Grant this, O Lord, for thy own great mercies' and our dear Saviour's merits' sake; to whom with Thyself, and Holy Spirit, be all Honor, Glory, Praise, Thanksgiving, and sincere Obedience, rendered now, and for evermore. Amen.

GLORY BE TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, ON EARTH
PEACE, GOOD-WILL TOWARDS MEN.

.....
END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.
.....

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Jews in favor of our Lord. The people are enraged against him, and insist upon his being put to death, in consequence of which Pilate, to excite their pity, and obviate their request of having him put to death, orders him to be scourged. The people are still resolute, upon which Pilate uses farther endeavors to appease their wrath, but without effect, and is at length obliged to comply with their unjust and severe demands. Our Blessed Lord is conducted to Mount Calvary, and there ignominiously crucified between two notorious malefactors. Is reviled and ill-treated by several of the spectators. Strange phenomena appear during the time of his being fastened on the cross. Our Lord, after being some time on the cross, calls upon his heavenly Father, and then gives up the ghost.

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verses with Peter. He appears to his apostles for the last time, and after some conversation, and bestowing on them his benediction, visibly ascends into heaven.

PART II.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.—FROM PAGE 97, TO PAGE 120.

After our Lord's ascension into heaven the apostles return to Jerusalem, and elect Matthias into their number. They are all filled with the Holy Ghost. The Jews are surprized at the event, and some of them endeavor to turn it into ridicule; but Peter confutes their calumny, and, by an admirable speech on the occasion, makes many converts. Peter performs a miracle, and makes another speech to the people, which proves highly successful to the propagation of the gospel. At the instigation of the rulers of the Jews, the twelve apostles are committed to prison, and taken before the Sanhedrim; but, after an unanswerable vindication of their conduct, are dismissed. The punishment of Ananias and Sapphira. Peter cures many people of different infirmities. The apostles are again committed to prison, but released in the night by an angel from heaven. They, however, go before the Sanhedrim, and are sentenced to be scourged. They elect seven deacons as stewards of the public stock for the relief of the distressed. Stephen, one of the new-elected deacons, is accused of blasphemy, and taken before the Sanhedrim. He vindicates himself before his judges, and boldly accuses the Jews of being more impious than their ancestors. The Jews are so enraged at this, that they unmercifully drag him out of the city, and stone him to death. Saul, a young man of Cilicia, is particularly active in the death of Stephen, and, at his instigation, most of the Christian converts are compelled to leave Jerusalem,

CHAPTER II.—FROM PAGE 120, TO PAGE 130.

Philip, the deacon, preaches the Gospel in Samaria with great success. One Simon, a magician, pretending to become a convert, is baptized by Philip. The apostles, hearing of Philip's success in Samaria, send Peter and John thither to confirm his doctrine. Simon the magician offers the apostles money to invest him with the power of working miracles;

but Peter, knowing the iniquity of his heart, instead of complying with his request, severely rebukes him. Peter and John return to Jerusalem. Philip converts an eunuch belonging to the queen of Ethiopia. The miraculous conversion of Saul, the great persecutor of the proselytes in Judea. He preaches the Gospel at Damascus, for which the inhabitants seek his life, but he happily makes his escape. He goes to Jerusalem and is kindly received by the apostles. Proceeds from thence to Tarsus, and preaches the Gospel in Cilicia and Syria. Peter visits various parts of Judea, Galilee and Samaria. Cures one Æneas of a paralytic disorder, and raises a dead woman to life at Joppa. Is sent for by Cornelius, a Roman officer, whom he converts, with several other Gentiles. He returns to Jerusalem, and is censured by the Jewish converts there, for his familiarity with the Gentiles. He justifies his conduct on this head, and acquits himself with satisfaction to his hearers.

CHAPTER III.—FROM PAGE 130, TO PAGE 149.

Barnabas and Saul preach with great success at Antioch. Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great, persecutes the Christians, and orders James (the brother of John) to be put to death. He casts Peter into prison, from whence he is miraculously released by an angel. The miserable death of Agrippa. Saul and Barnabas preach the Gospel in Cyprus, where they convert the governor; and Saul changes his name to that of Paul. They go from Cyprus to Perga, Pisidia, and Lystra. At the latter place Paul cures a lame man, from which incident he and Barnabas are reputed as Gods. Paul is stoned, but revives and returns to Antioch. He and Barnabas go from thence to Jerusalem, in order to settle a matter of controversy relative to circumcision. They return to Antioch, where he reproves Peter for the impropriety of his conduct. Paul and Barnabas disagree, part, and go different ways.

CHAPTER IV.—FROM PAGE 149, TO PAGE 166.

Paul travels through various countries, accompanied by Silas and Timothy. They go to Philippi, where Paul ejects a spirit of divination, for which he and Silas are first scourged, and then put in prison, but afterwards honorably dismissed. Paul meets with great opposition at Thessalonica, upon which he goes to Berea, and from thence to Athens, where he preaches and disputes with the people of that city. He

goes from Athens to Corinth, from whence he writes his first epistle to the Thessalonians. Makes some converts, but is greatly opposed by the Jews. Writes his second epistle to the Thessalonians. Goes from Corinth to Ephesus, and, after staying there a short time, proceeds to Jerusalem, in order to celebrate the feast of the Passover. Returns from thence to Ephesus, where he baptizes several converts, confers on them the spirit of the Holy Ghost, and performs many astonishing miracles. Seven brothers, who are exorcists, attempt to imitate Paul, but are severely punished for their presumption. The travels of Peter, with the contents of his first Epistle to the converted Jews.

CHAPTER V.—FROM PAGE 166, TO PAGE 185.

Paul forms a resolution of leaving Ephesus, but, before his departure, receives advice of the misconduct of the converts at Corinth, in consequence of which he writes his first Epistle to the Corinthians. He likewise, on a like complaint, writes his Epistle to the Galatians. A great tumult happens at Ephesus, occasioned by one Demetrius, a silversmith; but is at length suppressed by the judicious conduct of the Recorder of the city. Paul, after appointing Timothy bishop of Ephesus, leaves that city, and goes to Macedonia, from whence he writes his second Epistle to the Corinthians. He leaves Macedonia, and goes to Corinth, from whence he writes his Epistle to the Romans. Returns from Corinth to Macedonia, and performs a singular miracle at Troas. Goes from Troas to Miletus, where he gives the Ephesian clergy his pastoral charge. Proceeds from Miletus to Jerusalem, where he is apprehended by the Jews. Claudius Lysias, commander of the Roman garrison in the castle of Antonia, interposes in his behalf. Paul escapes scourging, and happily eludes the malice of the Jews.

CHAPTER VI.—FROM PAGE 185, TO PAGE 203.

Paul is taken before Felix, and acquits himself of the accusation laid against him by Tertullus, one of his principal enemies. Felix is terrified at the force of his arguments. Paul is taken before Festus (the successor of Felix) and after answering the accusation laid against him by the Jews, makes an appeal unto Cæsar. He boldly defends himself and the Christian cause, before Festus and king Agrippa. Is sent to Rome by Sea, in the way to which he is shipwrecked, and cast upon the island of Miletus, where he

performs several astonishing miracles. He is conducted from thence to Rome, where he is received with the most distinguished respect by the Christians in that city. He confers with the chief of the Jews, to whom he preaches the doctrine of the Gospel with different success. Writes an Epistle to Philemon, a person of distinction at Colosse. Sends Epistles to the Philippians, Ephesians and Colossians. The Epistle of James to the dispersed Tribes, with an account of the sufferings and martyrdom of that apostle.

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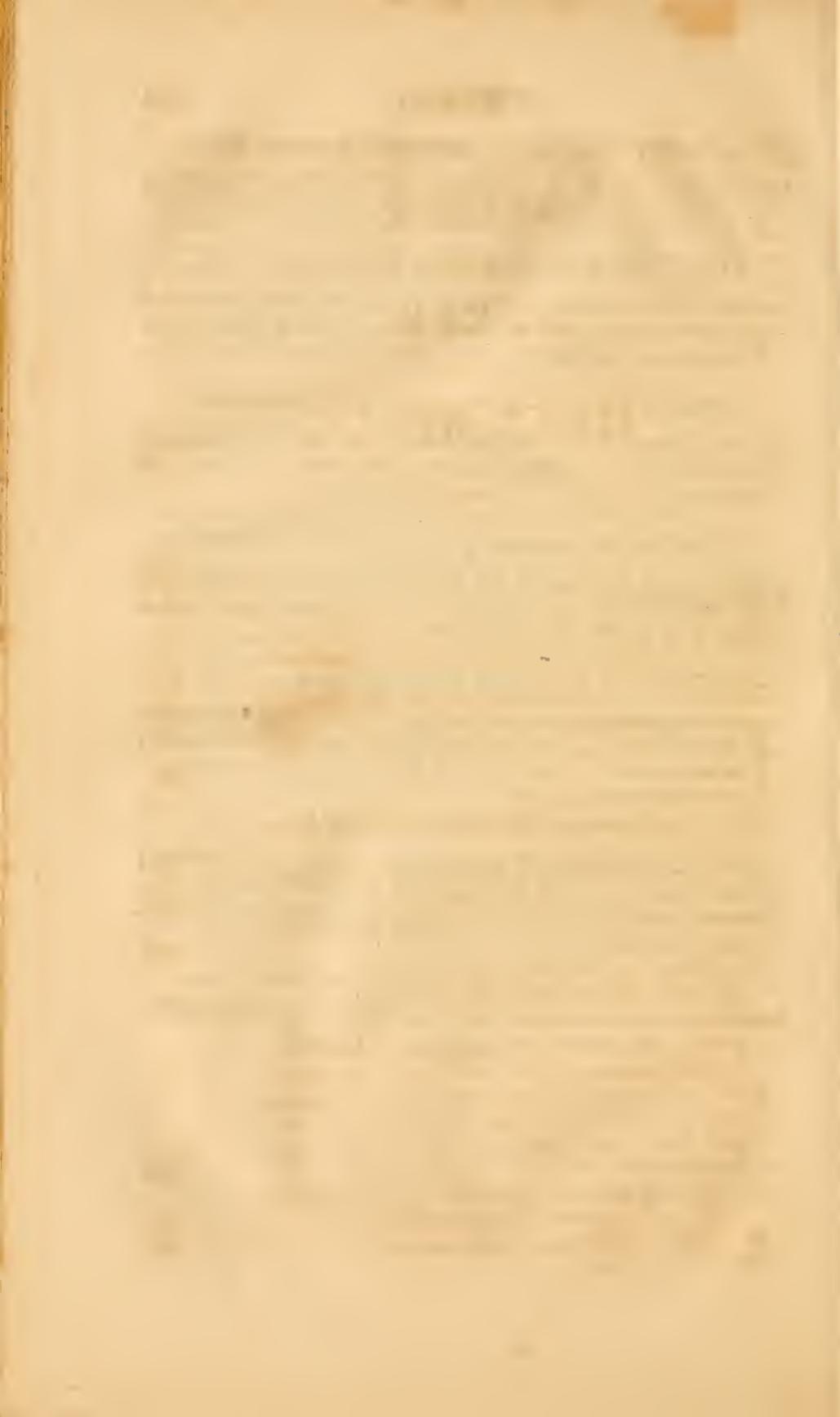
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