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THE
1777
PRACTICAL EXPOSITOR:

OR, AN
E X P O S I T I O N
OF THE
N E W T E S T A M E N T,

IN THE FORM OF A
P A R A P H R A S E ;
WITH OCCASIONAL NOTES IN THEIR PROPER PLACES
FOR FURTHER EXPLICATION,

A N D
SERIOUS RECOLLECTIONS AT THE CLOSE OF EVERY CHAPTER.
TO WHICH IS ADDED,
AN ALPHABETICAL TABLE OF THE PRINCIPAL THINGS CONTAINED
IN THE PARAPHRASE, ESPECIALLY IN THE NOTES.

For the Use of the FAMILY and CLOSET.

BY JOHN GUYSE, D. D.

THE FIFTH EDITION.
VOL. II.
CONTAINING THE
EVANGELISTS LUKE AND JOHN.

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A PRACTICAL E X P O S I T I O N

OF THE E V A N G E L I S T L U K E,

IN THE FORM OF A P A R A P H R A S E.

C H A P. I.

The preface to this gospel, 1,—4. The conception and office of John the Baptist, 5,—25.; and of Christ, 26,—38. The interview between the Virgin and Elifabeth, 39,—45. The Virgin's song of praise, 46,—56. The birth and circumcision of John the Baptist, 57,—66. Zacharias's song of praise, 67,—79. John's infancy, 80.

TEXT.

FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word;

3 It seemed good to

PARAPHRASE.

WHEREAS * several persons have, either from a principle of piety, or from curiosity, undertaken to draw up narratives of the birth, life, doctrines and death, resurrection and ascension, of our Lord Jesus Christ, which are firmly believed by his disciples upon the fullest evidence;

2 And as these are points of the utmost consequence, which have been mostly written, and are generally believed, according to the faithful and well-attested reports that have been made by those who were, from first to last, the constant attendants of his ministry; and so were ear-witnesses of his doctrine, and eye-witnesses of the miracles which confirmed it; and were sent forth by Jesus himself, as his apostles, to preach the gospel;

3 I also, most noble † *Theophilus* ||, having sought after,

N O T E S.

* As *Matthew* wrote from his own knowledge, and *John* wrote after *Luke*; the *many* here spoken of seem plainly to refer to some histories that were drawn up by honest, though uninspired men, according to the best informations they could get, but are long since lost.

† *Theophilus* signifies a lover of God: And that this was not a term, importing merely any of that character; but that

it was the real name of a certain person to whom the evangelist wrote, appears from its being used in the singular number here, and in *Acts* i. 1. and that with the title of *most noble*, or *most excellent*, just in the same manner as it is applied to *Felix* and *Festus*, *Acts* xxiv. 3. and xxvi. 25.

|| Παρκολουθειν. The word here used, is to follow after, and to attain:

to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

5 **T**HERE was, in the days of Herod the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments & ordinances of the Lord blameless.

after, and obtained an exact knowledge of all these things, from their very beginning, not only by tradition, but likewise by such a divine influence, from above *, as preserves me from mistakes about them, thought proper to write (καθεξής) a connected and particular account of them, to rectify the errors of those who have proceeded upon hearsay :

4 This I have done, that you may have such an information as is certainly to be depended upon, of the true state of those important affairs into which (καταρχηθης) you have already been initiated, as catechumens use to be, in order to your being still better acquainted with them, and confirmed in them.

5 **T**O begin then with a short account of *John the Baptist*, the forerunner of our Lord, which will naturally lead us on to the history of Christ himself: There was in the reign of *Herod the Great*, who held the kingdom of *Judea* by deputation from the *Roman* emperor, a certain priest, *Zacharias* by name, who, being of the family of *Abia*, was one of those that were to officiate in the eighth of the twenty-four courses, into which the family of *Aaron* was divided in *David's* time: (1 *Chron.* xxiv. 7,—19.) And the name of his wife was *Elisabeth*, who was likewise a descendent from *Aaron*.

6 As to the character and circumstances of these two persons, both of them were eminent for religion, not in appearance only, but in a sincere conscientious regard to God, as sensible of their being always under his eye; and in the account of God himself, who accepted them as righteous in his sight: And this was clearly manifested by the tenor of their lives, they

being

N O T E S.

And, when it is applied to the mind, it signifies (συνενοι) to *perceive* and *understand*, or to *follow* a speaker with *attention* and *understanding*; and thus it seems to be taken in 1 *Tim.* iv. 6. and 2 *Tim.* iii. 10. Our evangelist, therefore, might use this word to intimate, that he sought after and attained divine guidance (αυθεν) from above, and then followed it, with exact attention and care, in composing his history.

* As this adverb (αυθεν) properly signifies *from above*, and is often used in that sense in the New Testament, and is a different word from *απαρχης*, which is justly rendered (ver. 2.) *from the beginning*; and as some well-meaning persons had made historical collections of Christ's discourses, as well as of his works, and of other facts, barely from their memo-

ries, as they had heard them from eye and ear-witnesses; why may we not suppose that our evangelist, to recommend his account to *Theophilus* as what might *certainly* be depended upon, alleged that he was under divine influence, to secure him from mistakes in his narrative of things, which he himself had not seen or heard immediately from Christ himself? This seems to be of no small weight to assure one of (την ασφαλειαν) *the certainty* of his account, since, otherwise, he might be liable to mistakes in it, as well as other uninspired men, whose writings he had taken notice of, ver. 1. But I have likewise brought into the paraphrase another interpretation of the word αυθεν, as signifying *from the beginning*, that the reader may chuse for himself.

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being strict observers of all natural duties of piety and morality, and of all positive institutions, in their behaviour toward God and man; so that they allowed themselves in no known sin, and none could charge them with any remarkable defects.

7 And they had no child, because that *Elisabeth* was barren; and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

7 And though they were persons of such excellent characters, they had been denied the blessing of children: For *Elisabeth* had been barren, like *Sarah* the wife of *Abraham*, all the days of her youth; and now both the husband and wife were so far advanced in years, as to be past hope of having any child in the common course of nature.

8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God, in the order of his course,

8, 9 But, (*και*) to shew how good God is to them that wait upon him, and to awaken a peculiar attention to one extraordinary birth, which was designed to lead the way to another still more miraculous, while *Zacharias*, according to the course of his family, was discharging the priestly office in the sanctuary, that part of the service, which fell to his share in the usual way of determining it by lot, was to burn incense in the holy place:

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

10 And all the people at the same time stood without *, silently offering up their prayers, that they might ascend with the smoke of the incense, which was typical of the intercession of Christ.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without, at the time of incense.

11 At this very time he saw an angel of God, appearing in an illustrious form, and in a standing posture, on the north-side of the altar of incense, which was called the right side of the house, (*Ezek. x. 3.*) and was on the priest's right hand, as he stood ministering with his face toward the west †, where was the holy of holies.

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

12 And as soon as *Zacharias* had this glorious sight, the extraordinary appearance, and the weakness of human nature, together with a consciousness of his own guilt and unworthiness, struck him at first with terror, as such visions are apt to do the holiest men upon earth, while they know not what may be their meaning.

12 And when *Zacharias* saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel accosted him in a friendly manner, to compose his mind, and encourage his attention, and his hope, saying, *Zacharias*, let no fears distract or distress your heart, as if I were come to hurt

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, *Zacharias*: for thy prayer

N O T E S.

* There seems to be an allusion to this custom, in *Rev. viii. 1.*—4.

† The entrance into the temple was at the east end; and they who went in to officiate and pray toward the holy oracle, had their faces toward the west. On the contrary, idolatrous worshippers were

represented, as standing *between the porch and the altar, with their backs toward the temple, and their faces toward the east, and worshipping the sun toward the east*, *Ezek. viii. 16.* *Vid. Seld. de Synedr. lib. iii. cap. xvi. sect. 1.*

er is heard; and thy wife Elifabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink: and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

16 And many of the children of Israel shall be turned to the Lord their God.

17 And he shall go

hurt you, or to be a messenger of evil tidings, while you are ministering before the Lord, and I appear in his house. My errand is of the joyful kind: For God has accepted and answered your prayers, for all *Israel*, relating to the coming of the Messiah, who will quickly appear; and he has heard the petitions which you have often put up for yourself; in so much that *Elifabeth* your wife shall conceive and bring forth a son to you, who shall call his name *John* *.

14 And the birth of this child shall be matter of great joy to you and yours, not barely because he is given in your old age, beyond all expectation, after you had been so many years childless; but principally on account of his extraordinary qualifications, work, and character; and this shall be the cause of great gladness to many others, who shall reap its happy consequences.

15 For though he will not be great in the world's account, with respect to parentage, titles of honour, external appearances, or manner of life; yet he shall be a truly great man, and highly honoured of God; great in his contempt of this world, in his office and endowments, and in his faithfulness, usefulness, and labours: And, like a *Nazarite*, entirely devoted to the Lord and to his service, he shall drink no spirituous liquors, but lead an abstemious life; yea, he shall be early filled with such influences from the Holy Ghost, that an extraordinary impression shall cause him to leap, even in his mother's womb, at the tidings of the Saviour; (ver. 41,—44.) and, from his childhood up, holiness and purity of life, and remarkable gifts and graces of the Spirit, shall appear in him.

16 He shall likewise, by his doctrine and example, be an happy instrument, in the hand of the Spirit, for turning many from their iniquities, and from their false opinions and dependences, to the Messiah, that they may believe in him, who is the Lord their God.

17 And in order hereunto, he shall be † the Messiah's

N O T E S.

* *John* signifies *the grace, or gift of God*. And as significative names were usually given to children, the angel's ordering this to be put upon the child might intimate, that he was given as a gracious answer of prayer; and that his character should correspond to his name, as he should be highly in favour with God, and endued with an abundance of grace; and as he should open the way to the most glorious dispensation of grace in the Messiah's kingdom: And so *Zacharias*'s former prayers for a child, and the

prayer which he, as the representative of the people, was probably putting up, at this very time, in the temple, for the appearing of the Messiah, would be remarkably answered in this birth of his forerunner.

† The only antecedent to the relative *him*, is, *the Lord their God*. And who was the Lord God of *Israel*, before whom *John* went, but the Lord Christ? He was the forerunner, not of God the Father, but of Christ? of whom *John* said, *He that cometh after me is preferred before*

go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

fish's forerunner; appearing just like *Elijah the Tishbite*, in his office-qualifications; in his garb and severity of manners; in his living much in the wilderness, and having heaven opened to him near *Jordan*; in his authority and faithfulness, zeal, fervour, and success; in the persecutions that he shall suffer for his integrity; and in his being filled with a divine spirit and power, as *Elijah* was in the worst of times, to bring about a reconciliation of young and old*, and of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to one another, and to the Lord; so that the most stubborn and rebellious shall be made wise to salvation, which is the truest wisdom, and is found in those only that are righteous before God. In a word, he shall be instrumental in making a people ready to receive the Lord, the Messiah, for whom they have been prepared in eternal counsels; and for whose coming *John's* ministry shall have prepared them, by convincing them of sin, and of their need of such a Saviour, by removing their prejudices against him, by raising their expectations of him, and at last by shewing him to *Israel*.

18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

18 Then *Zacharias*, in the unbelieving workings of his own heart, asked the angel, By what token shall I be satisfied that the great and unlikely thing you speak of shall certainly come to pass? For it appears altogether incredible to me, because my wife has not only been barren all her days hitherto, but both she and I are now so very old, that, according to the course of nature, it is impossible for us to have a child.

19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee.

19 The angel replied, Do you question the truth of this, and want a sign to prove it? My appearing to you in this manner, and in this holy place, is sufficient to confirm it: For I am *Gabriel*, a chief among the holy angels, who stand continually in the presence of God to receive and execute his orders; as I was dispatched with a gracious message to *Daniel*,

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N O T E S.

fore me, for he was before me; and I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, John i. 15, 23. He was sent to prepare Christ's way before him, and was that *Elias* who should go before the Messiah, as our Lord himself has explained it, *Mat.* xi. 13, 14. and xvii. 10,—13. See the note on *Mat.* xi. 10.

* *Ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίας πατέρων πρὸς τέκνα*, may be rendered, to turn the hearts of the fathers with the children: And Dr. Lightfoot observes, that, in the writings of the prophets, the church of the Gen-

tiles are spoken of as children to the Jewish church, particularly in *Ihu.* liv. 5, 6, 13. & *Is.* 4, 5, 9. & *Lxii.* 5. & *Lxvi.* 12. Accordingly *Gentile* publicans and soldiers, as well as *Jews*, came to *John's* baptism, chap. iii. 12, 14.—And as *ἠσκησάμενος*, prepared, is a participle of the preter tense, it may at least as well refer to what God had done, as to what *John* should do, in preparing a people for Christ; and, taking *Κύριον* for the the ablative case, the sense will be, a people prepared by the Lord. I have therefore included all these senses in the paraphrase.

and to shew thee these glad tidings.

20 And behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

23 And it came to pass, that as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days, his wife Elizabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away

concerning the Messiah, *about the time of the evening oblation*; (Dan. ix. 21.) so I am now sent, by God's special command, to bring these joyful tidings to you.

20 And since you require a further sign to assure you of the truth of what I say, you shall have a very awful one, which shall be a just punishment of your present unbelief, and a preface of God's silencing the Levitical priesthood, as well as a merciful support and confirmation of your future faith: Behold, you shall instantly be struck dumb, and from this time forward not be able to open your mouth more, till the child I speak of shall be born; because you distrusted the power and goodness of God, as if he could not, or would not, perform this his promise by me, which, in due time, shall certainly be accomplished.

21 While these things detained Zacharias longer than ordinary, the people continued waiting at the door for his return, to dismiss them with the blessing, as usual, in the name of the Lord; and they were surprised to find that he spent so much time in the temple.

22 At length he came out; and they perceiving that he was not able to pronounce the blessing upon them, thought something extraordinary had happened, and soon understood that he had seen a vision whilst he was in the holy place; for he intimated this by making some awful signs, he continuing to be both deaf and dumb*.

23 Now when he had staid out the days of his ministration for offering incense, (which, notwithstanding his being deaf and dumb, he could easily go on with) according to the order of his course, he returned to his own family in the country.

24, 25 And soon afterwards his wife Elizabeth conceived, according to the promise; who, finding herself to be with child, retired from company for five months, that she might avoid the danger of contracting ceremonial uncleanness, while she was breeding a *Nazarite*; (ver. 15.) and that she might not seem to boast of the high honour God had done her, nor be troubled with the discourse and remarks of people about it; but principally that she might have the better opportunity for daily rejoicing in her own soul, and blessing God for his wonderful favour, in looking with such unexpected mercy upon her, to take away
the

N O T E.

Κωφός signifies *deaf*, as well as *dumb*: And it seems plain that he was as unable to hear, as he was to speak; for his friends were forced to make signs to him, that he might understand them, ver. 62.

way my reproach among men.

26 And, in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear

the reproach of barrenness, even in her old age, and to give her such an extraordinary son as should be the forerunner of the Messiah himself.

26, 27 Then in the sixth month after she had conceived, the angel *Gabriel*, who had appeared and carried good tidings to *Zacharias* in the temple, (ver. 19.) was again sent from God to a city of the *Lower Galilee* †, called *Nazareth*, to a certain pure virgin there, whose name was *Mary*, and who was contracted ‖ to one *Joseph* a carpenter, he, as well as she, being lineally descended from the royal family of *David* *, which at this time was reduced to a very low state in *Israel*.

28 And the angel of the Lord, appearing to the virgin in a glorious form, saluted her in a set of friendly and admiring compellations ‡, saying, All joy and peace, happiness and safety, be unto thee! God has graciously accepted thee, and will bestow a peculiar honour upon thee; the Lord is especially present with thee, to do a great and wonderful thing in and by thee; and thou shalt be accounted, through all generations, the happiest of women that ever lived upon earth.

29 At this extraordinary appearance and salutation of the angel, *Mary* was much amazed, and perplexed in spirit, being at a loss to know whether she were not under some delusion; or, if not, what might be the particular blessedness referred to, in such a general pompous way of expressing it.

30 But while she was thus musing, with humble confusion in her own mind, the angel, to compose,

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N O T E S.

† The *Pharisees* pretended that no prophet arose out of *Galilee*, John vii. 52. But Dr. *Lightfoot* observes, that the prophet *Jonah* was of *Galilee*, and that the prophets *Elijah* and *Elisha* were very conversant there.

‖ It was customary among the *Jews*, for persons that married, to enter into mutual contract, in the presence of witnesses, some time before they came together; and as Christ was to be born of a pure virgin, so the wisdom of God ordered it to be of one espoused, that, for the honour of marriage, and preventing reproach, he might have a legal, though not a natural father, according to the flesh.

* As Christ was to be of the seed of *David*; so both *Joseph* and *Mary* were of the house of *David*: But as *Mary's* being of that family was the most direct proof that Christ really was of the seed of *David*, some critics have observed that

here is a transposition of the words, as is usual in many other cases; and that they might be rendered thus, *a virgin of the house of David, espoused to a man whose name was Joseph*; or the words after, *a virgin* may be read in a parenthesis, and so the connection of the rest lies easy and plain, *a virgin of the house of David*.

‡ *Hail* is the salutation used by our Lord to the women after his resurrection: (*Mat.* xxviii. 9.) *Thou art highly favoured, or hast found favour with God*. ver. 30. is no more than was said of *Noah*, *Moses*, *David*, and the people of *Israel*: *The Lord is with thee*, was said to *Gideon*: (*Judg.* vi. 12.) And, *blessed shall she be above women*, was said of *Isaël*. (*Judg.* v. 24.) There is, therefore, no room for the *Papish* pretence of adoration of the Virgin in this salutation, which has no appearance of a prayer, or of worship offered to her.

Fear not, Mary : for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest : and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man ?

encourage, and satisfy her, proceeded in his message, saying, *Mary*, be not surprised, or afraid, at what you have seen and heard ; for you are in high favour with God, who designs to honour you above all women.

31 And observe, Thou art the virgin prophesied of, (*Isa.* vii. 14.) † who, continuing so to be, shalt conceive in thy womb, and in due time be delivered of, a Son ; and shalt call his name *Jesus*, to intimate that he shall be a much more eminent Saviour than *Joshua* of old, or any other of *Israel's* deliverers, who were types of him.

32 He shall be of matchless dignity and glory, in his person and office, qualifications and performances, and in the account of God, angels, and men : He shall be justly called the Son of the Most High, as partaker of the same nature with his heavenly Father ; and God himself will set him up, as Messiah the King, in his holy hill of *Sion*, which was typified by *David's* throne, that all the magnificent things of his kingdom may, in a high and spiritual sense, be fulfilled in that which shall be erected by this descendant from him.

33 And as the *Idumeans* and other nations, that were brought under *David's* dominion, and incorporated with the people of *Israel*, were reckoned to his kingdom ; so all God's peculiar people among * *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, that shall be brought to the obedience of faith, and ingrafted into the church of *Israel*, shall be reckoned to the kingdom of the Messiah, in which he shall reign over them for ever : His kingdom shall not be temporal, and subject to a dissolution, as *David's* was, and as all earthly dominions are ; but it shall continue immoveable through all generations, in that peculiar form of administration which he shall set up, in this world, and shall abide in a still more glorious form to all eternity in the next.

34 Then *Mary* replied to the angel, not in a way of diffidence †, as *Zacharias* had done about the birth of his son *John*, but in a way of modest, humble admiration and inquiry, for further instruction, By what means, or by what wonderful act of God's power, shall this be brought to pass, since I am really a virgin ?

35 In

N O T E S.

† It is evident by her answer, verse 34. that she understood the angel to mean, that she should conceive this Son while she continued a virgin.

* The term *Jacob* being here used instead of *Israel*, and the reign of *Jacob* being said to be for ever under the gospel-eræ, intimates that Christ's kingdom

was to include *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*.

† There does not appear to have been any sinful temper of mind in this inquiry ; for the Virgin neither asked a sign to confirm what the angel had said, nor did he give her any rebuke, as we find in *Zacharias's* case, ver. 18.

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.

36 And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the

35 In answer to which, the angel said, This amazing effect shall be produced by the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit, who moved upon the face of the waters in the first formation of the world, and by whom † the almighty power of God shall now again be exerted in *creating this new thing in the earth*, by a secret operation upon thee: And therefore the fruit of thy body, which thou shalt bring forth, shall be formed in this miraculous manner out of thy flesh, that it may not come under the ordinary law of generation, to involve it in the common apostasy of mankind under *Adam* their public head; and as that holy individual of human nature shall have its personal subsistence only in union with the eternal Son of God †, it shall be called by his name.

36 And for the further confirmation of your faith herein, observe what a wonderful thing God has already done upon one of your own relations: Your kinswoman on your mother's side *, *Elisabeth* by name, has miraculously and unexpectedly conceived a son in her old age, a son who is to *go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias*: (ver. 17.) And, though she never bore a child before, she is now six months gone with this; so that the signs of her pregnancy are by this time visible: The same power therefore will cause you also, though continuing a virgin, to conceive and bring forth a Son.

37 For this is as possible to God as that: It is the power of the Highest that I told you shall come upon you for this purpose, and nothing can be too hard for God to do; he, having undertaken and promised, will perform it.

38 Then *Mary*, with great humility, faith, and reverence, replied, Behold, here am I before the Lord as his servant; let him do with me what seems good in his sight: I am amazed that all this grace should be shewn to me, who am unworthy of the least of his mercies; but since God is pleased to condescend

N O T E S.

† The power of God was put forth by why his entire Person, or why his *human nature*, as in personal union with the divine, should be called the Son of God.

* Though *Elisabeth* was of the house of *Aaron*, and *Mary* of the house of *David*, by their fathers side, they might be related by their mothers; for the law (*Numb.* xxxvi. 8, 9.) only forbade heiresses marrying into another tribe; and as the families of *David* and of *Levi* often intermarried, Providence ordered that the mother of our Lord should be a-kin to *Aaron's* family, that royalty and priesthood might unite in him.

‡ It seems most natural to understand this, as assigning the reason, not why Christ, considered merely as God, but

the angel departed from her.

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste, into a city of Judæa;

40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elifabeth.

41 And it came to pass, that when Elifabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb: and Elifabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

descend so far as to distinguish me by such a signal act of favour, I thankfully accept it, rejoice in it, and humbly depend † upon his power, faithfulness, and goodness, to perform it, according to the word which thou hast told me from the Lord. Hereupon the angel, having dispatched his message, returned back to heaven.

39 Soon after this, the virgin took a long journey of some scores of miles, with all convenient speed, to a certain city ‡, which lay in the mountainous parts of *Judea*, where *Zacharias* and *Elifabeth* dwelt, that she might further satisfy herself concerning the truth of what the angel had told her about *Elifabeth's* being with child, and might have the opportunity of comparing notes, and rejoicing with her, and of improving the advantages of retirement for devotion in the family of such a religious priest.

40 And coming into *Zacharias's* house, who was deaf and dumb, she, applying to *Elifabeth*, congratulated her being with child, though so far advanced in years; telling her, at the same time, of the vision which she herself had seen, and of what the angel had said to her.

41 No sooner did *Elifabeth* hear this salutation of *Mary*, but the child, by a divine impress upon it, made an uncommon, lively, springing motion within her, like one that leaped for joy; and *Elifabeth* herself was, at the same instant, filled with a prophetic afflatus of the Spirit of God.

42 And she, turning to *Mary*, lifted up her voice, saying, in a transport of joy, O happy, thrice happy creature! what an honour has God put upon you! I have indeed been highly favoured beyond my desert; but never was any woman upon earth blessed like you, whom God, in the riches of his mercy, has singled out to be the mother of the great and glorious Messiah, in whom all nations shall be blessed, and who shall be blessed in himself, and be exalted in blessings and praises for evermore.

43 And how can I sufficiently prize and admire the honour done to me, that I should have a visit from the mother of the Messiah, who is my Lord, and the great Lord of all! Why is this further crowning favour added to that which has lately been

shewn

N O T E S.

† It seems by no means improbable but that this time of the Virgin's humble faith, consent, approbation, and expectation, might be the very time of the Holy Ghost's coming upon her, and of her conceiving by his power.

‡ It is very likely that this was *Hebron*, because that city was situated in the hill-country of *Judea*, and was given to the house of *Aaron*, for an inheritance, *Josh. xxi. 10, 11.*

shewn to so unworthy an handmaid as I am? It fills me with wonder and transport to think of it :

44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation founded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaid: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

49 For he that is

44 For, surprising as it may seem to hear me say it, the very child I am big with was so affected with your salutation, that, as soon as you began speak, I perfectly felt it leap within me, as if it really knew that the Saviour's birth would soon succeed its own, and that I had then the honour of a visit from the happy woman who should bear and bring him forth.

45 And as for you, who, like a true daughter of *Abraham*, staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, you are blessed indeed, and a happy instrument of the greatest blessedness to others; for he is faithful who has promised, and the wonderful things, which you have been assured of from the Lord, shall certainly come to pass, according to his word, and according to your faith.

46 *Mary*, being greatly encouraged and confirmed by the things she now heard, was likewise filled with holy ecstasy; and, the Spirit of God coming upon her, as well as *Elizabeth*, she broke out into this praising song: All the powers of my soul are united in exalting and adoring the greatness and the goodness of the Lord, which he has manifested to me;

47 And my heart exults and triumphs in Jesus, the Son of the Highest, in whom I believe * as my own God and Saviour, Who will bring redemption to his unworthy handmaid, together with those that are looking for it in *Israel*.

48 For (*επεβλεψεν επι την ταπεινωσιν*) he has stooped so low as to look with amazing compassion on his poor contemptible servant, whose person and family were sunk into the utmost obscurity and contempt. Instead of his taking birth from some great and noble parentage, he, in his mere good pleasure and matchless grace, has chosen to confer this singular honour upon me: For many in the present, and through all succeeding ages to the end of the world, shall rise up, and count me happy in myself, through faith in him for my own salvation; and an highly favoured instrument of blessings to them, by being the mother of whom their Saviour was born.

49 For the God, whose power is infinite, has done won-

N O T E.

* Here, and in the next verse, the Virgin seems to turn her thoughts to Christ himself, who was to be born of her, calling him her God and Saviour, because the angel told her that he should be the Son of the Highest, whose name should be *Jesus*, the Saviour; and she rejoiced in hope

of her own everlasting salvation through faith in him, which is a blessing common to all true believers, more than in being his mother after the flesh, which was an honour peculiar to her; because, without the first, she must have been for ever miserable, notwithstanding the last.

is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.

50 And his mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation.

51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance

wonderful things, beyond expectation and expression, and beyond all thought; he has magnified his sovereign and almighty grace to me, for his own glory, whose name is holy and reverend in itself, in this and all his manifestations, ways, and works, and in the eyes of saints and angels: As such let it be solemnly adored and praised for ever.

50 And this is but a just acknowledgment of him, the riches of whose free and tender mercy, especially in the incarnation of his own Son, are extended not to me only † but likewise to all who worship and serve him with reverence and godly-fear; and that from fathers to children, and from age to age, till time shall be no more.

51 His way herein is like those methods of providence, in which he exerts remarkable acts of the exceeding greatness of his power for the help of his people, and the confusion of his enemies; as in former dispensations, so likewise in this, he abases the haughty in all their schemes, and chuses the weak things of this world to confound the mighty.

52 He who humbled the pride of *Egypt*, *Assyria*, and *Babylon*, and pulled down *Pharaoh*, *Sennacherib*, and *Nebuchadnezzar*, from their thrones, and raised up others in their stead; and who, in his holy providence, brings some low, and lifts others up: (1 Sam. ii. 7, 8.) He, in the dispensations of his grace, humbles proud, self-righteous, and self-sufficient sinners; destroys their refuge of lies, and breaks to pieces their vain-confidence; and he revives the hearts of the humble and contrite ones, and puts the highest honour upon them.

53 He has granted the desire of such as see their need of a Saviour, are earnest in their inquiries after him, and cannot be satisfied without him; and has enriched them with the best of blessings: And, on the other hand, he has rejected those that are full of themselves, that boast of riches in their own merit, or in the good opinion of others, or in having the treasures of this world, and take up their rest in these things, as if they needed nothing more to make them happy; he has denied them the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom.

54, 55 And, as to God's own peculiar people, the *Jews*, he has in all ages past been particularly gracious to them in many extraordinary preservations and deliverances; and now, when they were sunk into

N O T E.

† Here the Virgin begins to carry her thoughts, like one of a public spirit, to an extensive view of the spiritual benefits that were to be brought into others by the Messiah, who should be born of her.

brance of *his* mercy;

55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

57 Now *Elisabeth's* full time came, that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him *Zacharias*, after the name of his father.

60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called *John*.

the grossest darkness and corruptions in doctrine and practice, he is seasonably raising up a Deliverer from their ignorance and error, sin and ruin: And this he doth merely for his mercy's sake, which at first induced him to make them his people; and to promise several of our fathers, and particularly *Abraham*, that *in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed*; which good word shall be fulfilled, as it was designed, not only to *Abraham* himself, but to all his spiritual seed, first among the *Jews*, and afterwards among the *Gentiles*, through all ages in this world, and for ever in the world to come.

56 Thus *Mary* sang the praises of God on account of the Messiah who should be born of her: And when she had spent about three months, rejoicing and blessing God, with her cousin *Elisabeth*, till she was thoroughly assured * by facts that God was fulfilling his word to herself, she went back to her own home.

57 Now when *Elisabeth's* reckoning was out, answerable to the full time that women usually go with child, she was brought to bed of a son, according to God's promise by the angel, to her husband.

58 The tidings of this were soon spread abroad among her acquaintance and relations, who heard how God (*εμεγαλυνε*) had magnified his mercy, in taking away her former grievance, and putting a signal honour upon her, and that in old age, by giving her a son out of the common course of nature, from whom great things might be expected; and they came to visit and congratulate her upon this joyful occasion.

59 And when, on the eighth day from his birth, they came to his circumcision, according to God's appointment in the law; as it was customary to name the child at that solemnity, because it was at the circumcision of the father of the faithful that God styled him *Abraham*, (*Gen. xvii. 5, &c.*) the company generally agreed that it would be proper to call this son *Zacharias*, in honour of his own father's name.

60 But (*και*) *Elisabeth* replied, "No, no, that must not be his name; it shall be *John*", as she knew † God had appointed it to be.

61 Her

N O T E S.

* It is probable that the Virgin found herself to be with child before she left *Elisabeth*; and some suppose that she staid with her till she saw her delivered of *John the Baptist*, though, for the sake of finishing the account here given of *Mary*, the evangelist mentioned her departure before *Elisabeth's* delivery: But

it is more generally thought, that *Mary* only staid till *Elisabeth's* reckoning was very near out; and then returned home, to avoid the company that would come to *Zacharias's* house at so remarkable a birth as that of *John*.

† She knew this, as she did that her son should be a *Nazarite*, (*ver. 15.*) either

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing-table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judea.

66 And all they that had heard them, laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be!

61 Her friends, surprised to hear her so earnest, and so peremptory in insisting on this, expostulated with her, saying, What a strange fancy is yours! We cannot imagine what you mean by it, since there is none of this name among all your relations: If therefore you will not admit him to be called *Zacharias*; surely, in respect to your own family, you should think of some other name that is found among your near of kin †.

62 At last, to end the dispute, they made signs, as well as they could, to let *Zacharias*, the child's father, know what they were talking about, he being deaf; and to desire that, as the right lay in him, so he would signify his own mind, as to the name that should be given to his son.

63 Then he, being dumb, as well as deaf; made signs to them to give him a writing-book; and, having received it, set down these words, according to the order of the angel, (ver. 13.) "His name is *John*:" At which all the company were amazed, not knowing what had passed between the angel and him.

64 And the time being now expired, till which he was to continue dumb for his former diffidence, (ver. 20.) God immediately restored to him the use of his speech; and his tongue, which had been so long silenced, was set at liberty, and employed in shewing forth the praises of the Lord, by thankful acknowledgments of his great goodness in giving him this son, and by humble confession of the iniquity and of the just punishment of his own unbelief.

65 Now the report of this birth, and of the miraculous circumstances relating to it, was soon spread in the neighbourhood round about, and became the subject of serious conversation in all places through the mountainous parts, called the hill-country of *Judea*, the people being generally filled with astonishment and awful reverence when they talked or thought about it.

66 And they, that heard of these strange things, took particular notice of them, revolved them in their own minds, treasured them up in their memories, and had high expectations of some very extraordinary consequence, saying in themselves, and one to another, What an uncommon man will this make!

Surely

N O T E S.

by information from *Zacharias* in writing, or by revelation to herself personally.

† It seems as if, for shewing honour to parents and near relations, it were then lately become a custom among the *Jews*,

as it is now-a-days amongst us, to call their children by their father's, or by some of their near kindred's names; but it was far from being so in ancienter times, as appears from the general, if not universal current of registers in the Old Testament.

be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David;

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began;

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.

72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant:

73 The oath which he swore to our father Abraham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies,

Surely he is designed for great work. And the providence and grace of God were remarkably seen, from his very infancy, in the continual care he took of him, and of all things relating to him, and in the holy qualities with which he endued him.

67 In the mean while, his father *Zacharias* was abundantly filled with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, by whose inspiration and suggestion he broke out, with holy rapture, into the following instructive and prophetic hymn of praise:

68 Glory, honour, and blessing, be ever ascribed to the only living and true God, who is *Israel's* covenant-God: For, though he seemed to neglect them for several ages past, he has now at length looked with compassion upon them, (*επιστηνυστατο*) and acted the kindest part toward them, in sending his angel with good tidings, in bringing the Messiah's forerunner into the world, and enabling the virgin *Mary* to conceive that glorious Person himself; and, by him, he is now about to ransom his peculiar people from the sin and misery, and every kind of bondage, into which they were fallen.

69 He, of his own mere love and grace, has provided, and is sending a mighty and royal Saviour of *David's* race, who, like an horn of honour, shall exalt us, and, like an horn of power, shall defend us from our enemies, and push them down to utter destruction.

70 All this is done according to the various promises, which he made by the ancient prophets, from the beginning of the world, through many generations afterwards, concerning the seed of the woman, who should be raised up, as the seed of *Abraham*, from the tribe of *Judah*, and family of *David*:

71 That we might be delivered from all our spiritual enemies, sin, Satan and the world, death and hell; and might be freed from the power of those that maliciously and inveterately opposed us, and would otherwise have for ever prevailed against us.

72, 73 This Saviour is now coming to fulfil God's promises of the Messiah, that mercy of mercies; and to make good his gracious, holy, and inviolable covenant to the children of promise; and particularly the oath (*Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18.*) by which he confirmed it to *Abraham* our father, and the father of all that believe:

74, 75 His great design in which was, that he would certainly, in due time, vouchsafe the favour to us, that being rescued, by the merit, might, and grace, of the promised Redeemer, out of the power of all our enemies, whether temporal or spiritual, we

mies, might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us,

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the sha-

might be at liberty for, and engaged in his service, and might be enabled to perform it, without distrustful slavish fear of God, or discouraging tormenting fear of our enemies themselves; and that we might persist in all the duties of piety, righteousness, and sobriety, as in his sight and presence, looking up to him for the seasonable aid which he sees we need, and walking in all good conscience before him, with constancy and steadfastness therein, to the end of our days.

76 And then, turning by way of *Apostrophe* to the infant, he went on, saying, Thou, my dear newborn son of mine old age, shalt hereafter be, and be generally owned to be, in a peculiar manner, the prophet * and forerunner of the Messiah, who will be God incarnate, || even the most high God. For thou shalt go before this great Lord, the Jehovah of *Israel*, to give notice of his appearance, and to put things into readiness for receiving him:

77 To give his chosen people the knowledge of salvation, not, as the *Jews* have generally expected, by their own personal performance of a legal righteousness; but by a free pardon, through that Saviour †, who is coming to *take away the sin of the world*: (John i. 29.)

78, 79 The original spring of which benefit lies in the mere, undeserved, and compassionate kindness (*σπλαγχνια ελεους*) of our God, answerable to the tender movings of a parent's bowels, in a way of pity toward his miserable children; by which Christ, (*ανατολη εξ υψους*) the rising Sun of righteousness, who is originally from above, sheds his enlightening, reviving, and saving beams, in his personal appearance and spi-

N O T E S.

* The spirit of prophecy had departed from *Israel* about three hundred years; but now began to return: *Zacharias* (as well as *Simeon*, *Anna*, and others) was acted by it, being filled with the Holy Ghost, ver. 67.; and, under his inspiration, he foretold concerning his son *John*, that he should be a prophet, and should be generally esteemed to be so, as he really was, by the common people. And though a prophet sometimes signifies, in scripture, only one who delivers the mind and will of God to others; yet *John* was, strictly speaking, a prophet, who foretold what Christ would do, as well as pointed him out to the people as already come among them, *Mat.* iii. 11, 12. and *John* i. 23, 27.

|| Christ being one in Godhead with, though distinct in personality from, the Father and Spirit, is *the most high God*

together with them: Hence he is called *the great God, even our Saviour*, Tit. ii. 13.; and *over all God blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5.; which amount to the character of *the Highest*, in distinction from all creatures. And it seems plain that it is he who is here styled the Highest: For as *Aaron* was *Moses'* prophet, *Exod.* vii. 1.; so *John* was, in a peculiar manner, Christ's prophet and forerunner, which *Zacharias* speaks of in the following words, with a plain reference to what the angel had said concerning him, ver. 16, 17. See the note there.

† Some by *salvation* here understand Jesus the Saviour, who is called *an Horn of salvation*, ver. 69. and *God's salvation*, chap. ii. 30. The latter part of the paraphrase refers to this sense of the word.

shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

spiritual influence, to expel not only the gloominess of Old-Testament types and figures, but likewise to diffuse light among heathen nations, who were involved in the thickest darkness of stupidity and idolatry; to irradiate the minds of those who by nature were overspread with the mists of ignorance, error, and wickedness; and to guide his people into the way which leads to peace with God and with one another, and to peace in their own souls, till they arrive at perfect and everlasting happiness.

80 In this manner *Zacharias* poured out his soul in joyful thanksgiving and praise: And his young child visibly increased, not only in bodily strength and stature, but also in the natural capacities, spiritual enlargements, holy fortitude, and religious endowments of his mind, from his youth up, like one highly favoured of God, and ripening apace for extraordinary service. And, as he was to shew an example of mortifiedness to this world, and of intimate communion with God, he usually, like a second *Elias*, resided in solitary places †, free from much company, till the time of God's appointment for his appearing publicly in his ministry, which, according to the law, (*Numb.* iv. 3.) was at about thirty years old.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

With what care and certainty are the great things of the gospel delivered to us! and with what a train of miracles was the incarnate God and Saviour ushered into the world, that the ancient prophecies concerning him, and his forerunner, might be punctually fulfilled! Nothing is too hard for the Lord to do; and unbelief will ever meet with a just rebuke. The age of miracles and prophecy now revived, to open a blessed dispensation of grace; and the same Spirit, who formed Christ's body in the womb, can form his image in our hearts, and turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. O with what reverence should we always think of Jesus, as the Son of God, and as the Lord our God; and of the Holy Ghost, as a divine person, who exerts the power of the Godhead!—Christ has a spiritual kingdom, which shall endure for ever; and all its great and glorious blessings take their rise from the riches of God's free and sovereign mercy, and are made effectual to us by his almighty power, and faithfulness to his own word, notwithstanding all our unworthiness. What a solid ground is this for faith! Its language is, Be it unto thy servant according to thy word; and its effects are, humility and admiration, joy and praise: Blessed are they who thus believe; for there shall be a performance of the things that are told them from the Lord. How should we rejoice, and

N O T E.

† As the gifts and graces of the Spirit, which *John* was filled with, set him above needing the advantages of a polite and learned education in the schools of the prophets, he dwelt in a wilderness, which is most generally thought to be that of *Ziph*, or that of *Maon*, where *Saul* pursued *David*, 1 Sam. xxiii. 24, 25. Though there were several country-towns and villages in these wildernesses, which were not far from *Hebron*, Josh. xv. 54, 55; yet as they were but thinly peopled,

they are called deserts. Now *John's* living in one or other of these, which lay the best part of an hundred miles from *Nazareth*, where Christ dwelt, was wisely ordered, by the providence of God, to prevent a personal acquaintance between them, till Jesus came to *John's* baptism, that so there might be no room for the least suspicion, as if they had contrived beforehand to bear an honourable testimony to each other. See *John* i. 32, 33, 34.

and sing for joy, like the *Virgin* and *Zacharias*, upon hearing of a Saviour born for us, and much more upon receiving him into our hearts! And with what pleasure should we reflect on the great salvation which he brings to others as well as ourselves! How happy is the state of true believers in the remission of their sins, in the audience of their prayers, and in deliverance from the power of all their enemies! But how miserable must the case of others be, who are still in the hands of those that hate them, and that mean nothing less than their eternal perdition! How earnestly then should sinners fly to Jesus for all salvation! And how concerned should his people be to give glory to God, by believing; to walk in all his ordinances and commandments blameless, and that particularly in the relation of husbands and wives; and to serve him with integrity, freedom, and delight, as under his eye, abounding therein yet more and more all their days! And when he calls any to peculiar service, as he did *John the Baptist*, they may depend upon his being with them to fit and furnish them for it. May we lay up all these things in our hearts, to raise our expectations and our praising songs! Blessed be God for his gracious visits by a Redeemer.

C H A P. II.

The birth of Christ at Bethlehem, 1,—7. It is notified to shepherds by an angel, and an heavenly host attends with songs of praise, 8,—14. The shepherds publish it abroad, 15,—20. He is circumcised and presented in the temple, 21,—24. Simeon's and Anna's prophecies of him, 25,—39. The state of his youth, and his dispute with the doctors in the temple, 40,—52.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

JESUS being conceived, and *John the Baptist* born, the providence of God so ordered it, that, about this time, *Augustus Cæsar*, the Roman emperor, published an edict, for taking an account of all the subjects of his empire, which was then in its highest glory, and was called the *whole world*, because it extended to the greatest part of the known and civilized nations; the design of which edict was, that a register might be made of their persons, families, qualities, possessions, and taxes issuable from them, and that answerable tributes might be paid to *Cæsar*.

2 (And this taxing was first made when

2 And this was done * at the time when *Cyrenius*, called by the *Romans Sulpicus Quirinius*, was, by

N O T E.

* It is most generally supposed that this taxing was first begun during *Cyrenius's* government of *Syria*: But as the words in the *Greek* (επισην νσημον:νον:ες Κυρηνιου) may be differently rendered, and *Josephus's* account does not agree with our translation of them, others think they should be read, *this taxing was made before Cyrenius was governor of Syria*: And others contend, that, even keeping to our translation, they relate, not to the time of the valuation or enrollment, but to the time of gathering

the taxes according to that valuation, which was twelve years afterwards; and by this time the *Jews* were not only a depending tributary province, but had likewise a *Roman* governor set over them; and so the great *Shiloh* came just at the time of the *sceptre's departing from Judah*, according to the prophecy in *Gen. xlix. 10.* See *Prideaux's Connect.* vol. ii. Svo. p. 652, &c. And the whole world being then in peace, that was a proper time for the birth of the Prince of Peace.

when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Beth-lehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David,)

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And, lo, the an-

by the imperial authority, prefect, or president of the province of *Syria*, inclusive of *Judea* as dependent upon it.

3 In obedience to this command, every man, who was absent from the city, where the head of his family was born, or had its principal residence, repaired thither, that he might be registered there.

4, 5 Now *Joseph*, the espoused husband of the virgin *Mary*, being, as well as she, descended from the royal line of *David*, set out with her from *Nazareth*, a city of *Galilee*, where they then dwelt; and went to a city of *Judea*, called *Bethlehem*, which was *David's* native place, (1 *Sam.* xvi. 1, 4.) that they might be enrolled among those of that family. And *Mary* was so big with the child she had conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, as to be near her time of delivery.

6 This order of the emperor *Augustus*, which was made only with political views, was wonderfully over-ruled, by the providence of God, to fulfil some, and clear up other prophecies, that related to, and were characteristic of, the Messiah, as he was to be of the tribe of *Judah*, and of the family of *David*, and to be born at *Bethlehem*: (Gen. xlix. 10. Isa. xi. 1.; and Micah v. 2.) For at the very time when both *Joseph* and *Mary* were, on this remarkable occasion, brought to *Bethlehem*, her reckoning was out.

7 And there she was brought to bed † of that Son, who, in his divine nature, was (πρωτοτοκος πρωτης κτισθως) *begotten before all creation*, (Col. i. 15.) and, in his human nature, was her first-born in such a manner, as to be, by way of eminence, holy to the Lord, and the Prophet, Priest, and King of his family, the Church: And when the mighty God, and everlasting Father, thus became an infant of days, so indigent were his parents, that his mother swathed him with such mean blankets and rollers as she could get, and made use of a stable for his chamber, and of a manger for his cradle, because, the city being then full of people, there was no room to be procured in the inn itself for a person of her poverty.

8 The time of this important birth was at that season of the year when shepherds were wont to lie abroad and watch their sheep all night; some of which were then in the fields near *Bethlehem*.

9 And, while they were employed in their lawful call-

N O T E.

† Christ being born at the time of this enrolling, was probably himself registered together with *Joseph* and *Mary*, as a subject of the *Roman* empire; and so was born in the form of a servant, and made under the imperial as well as divine law.

angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God
on

calling, observe what an honour God put upon them, rather than upon the chief priests and rulers, kings and nobles of the earth; and what an early intimation he herein gave, that Christ should not derive his authority from man, nor aim at a temporal kingdom! As *Jacob* and *Moses* had the visions of God while they were keeping their flocks; (*Gen.* xxxi. 11. and *Exod.* iii. 1, 2.) so * the angel of the Lord came down in a visible form from heaven, and, stopping his course in the air, (*επεστη*) stood over their heads, that they might see him; and, at the same time, a glorious brightness, the emblem of the divine presence, shone all around them; at which wonderful sight they, like mortal, though || good men, were filled with great surprize and fear.

10 Then, to relieve their labouring minds, and encourage an humble composure, confidence, and joy, the angel spoke comfortably to them, saying, Do not be dismayed or affrighted, as if any danger were at hand: For behold, I am come to tell you the best news, that ever reached the ears of the sinful sons of man; a matter of the greatest joy, not only to yourselves, but to many others with you; nor to the *Jews* only, but to the *Gentiles* also, even to people of all nations that shall hear and receive it.

11 For to you, the children of *Israel*, and of the fathers, to whom the promises were made; and to you, sinners, who need a Saviour, and must be forever undone without him; to you, in distinction from the fallen angels; to all and every one of you that shall believe in him, is the long looked for Messiah born, this very day, at *Bethlehem*, the city of *David*, (*1 Sam.* xvii. 12.) from which it was anciently prophesied (*Mic.* v. 2.) that he should arise, who is the anointed of God, *Sion's* King, and Lord of all.

12 And the sign by which ye may certainly distinguish the new-born Infant from all others, is this: Ye, going into the city, shall find him in the stable of an inn, wrapped about with swaddling cloaths, and lying in a manger.

13 Immediately upon the angel's delivering this joyful message, a great company of other celestial spirits attended him, to celebrate the praises of God, and congratulate the happiness of men, upon the incarnation of his Son, in the following lofty strains.

14 The glory of God is now displayed more than ever

N O T E S.

* This was probably the angel *Gabriel*, who before had appeared to *Zacharias* and to *Mary*.

|| These shepherds seems to have been religious men, that feared the Lord; for it is to such that God reveals his secrets, *Psal.* xxv. 14.

in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.

ever it was before: May all possible honours be ascribed to him, in the most exalted adorations, among his people in this world, and among saints and angels on high! The greatest prosperity and happiness is now brought to sinful men on earth*, and particularly to the objects of his peculiar love among them: May it spread far and wide in their reconciliation with God, with us, and with one another; and in the peace of their own souls, that enmity and discord, confusion and trouble, may no more be heard of among them! The most affecting instance of the mere good pleasure of God's goodness now breaks out toward the human race, in distinction from the angelic nature: May all desirable blessings spring from thence, and be communicated, to the glory of divine grace, in their salvation through the Messiah!

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

15 As soon as these glorious spirits had, in this manner, sung the praises of the Redeemer's birth, they returned to heaven; and the shepherds, believing what they had been hearing, communed with one another about it, saying, Come, let us go forward to *Bethlehem*, that we ourselves may see the blessed Saviour, who, God has told us, by an immediate express from himself, is so lately born there.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

16 Accordingly they hastened thither with all speed; and, following the directions of the angel, soon found out *Mary* and *Joseph*, with their Infant-Son lying in a manger, just as the heavenly messenger had represented the case.

17 And, when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

17 And, their faith being hereby further confirmed, they were so full of joy, that they could not hold their peace; but took all opportunities, wherever they came, to publish the vision, and the declaration and song of the angels, which they had been favoured with, as also what they themselves had seen at *Bethlehem*, relating to this child.

18 And all they that heard it, wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

18 And all that heard the shepherds account of these things were greatly amazed, and at a loss to know what to make of it: They could not think it likely that such a sort of plain, honest, undesigning men should form the story, and go about to impose it on the world; and could not but know that their testimony was strengthened by the general expectation at that time of the Messiah's appearing, and by the then prevailing notion that his birth would be at *Bethlehem*: (Mat. ii. 4, 5.) And yet it

N O T E.

* As this verse may be considered under the form of a declaration, and of a wish; and as, in the last clause, the *Alexandrian*, and several other copies, read

εὐδοκίας, according to which the rendering may be, *Peace among the men of his good-will*. I have taken all these senses into the paraphrase. *Vid. Mill. Nov. Test. in loc.*

it was wonderful in their esteem, that he should be born of such mean parents, and in such despicable circumstances; and that persons of such low figure, as these shepherds, should be the men to whom God sent an angel to reveal it.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

19 But *Mary*, the mother of *Jesus*, believed as well as wondered at these things; and, for the strengthening of her faith, and expectation of what might further appear, she carefully observed and seriously reflected upon them, comparing what the angel had said to the shepherds, and the shepherds to her, with what she before had heard from *Gabriel*, and from *Zacharias* and *Elisabeth*; though, to prevent an appearance of vain-glory, she kept them mostly to herself.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

20 And the shepherds returned to the duties of their civil station, with the high praises of God in their hearts and mouths: They admired and adored his infinite love and grace to man, and his affecting condescension in honouring themselves, in so extraordinary a manner, with the first notices of it; they gave glory to God for all that they had heard and seen at *Bethlehem*, as well as in the fields, and for the exact correspondence which they found between facts and the angel's words.

21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called *JESUS*, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

21 Now, on the eighth day after the birth of this child, (see the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 63.) his parents took care to have him circumcised according to God's command: (*Gen.* xvii. 8, 9.) Which painful ordinance he was brought under, not because he, who was holy in his birth, needed, like other children, to be cleansed from original sin; but that he might appear in the likeness of sinful flesh, and be visibly made under the law by a sacred rite, which obliged him to keep the whole law; as also that he might be owned to be the seed of *Abraham*, and a member of the *Jewish* church; might wear the badge of the children of God, and put an honour upon the solemn covenant-dedication of the infant-seed of God's professing people to him: And, at his circumcision, his parents, according to custom, publicly declared his name to be *Jesus*, as the angel ordered him to be called, at his appearing first to *Mary* before the conception, and afterwards to *Joseph* before the birth, of the child. (*Chap.* i. 31. and *Mat.* i. 21.)

22 And when the days of her purification

22 And forty days after his birth, which was the time appointed in *Moses's* law for † the purification of

N O T E.

† Some good copies read it (*αὐτῶν*) *sin for us*, he came under the legal ordinance for purification, like other children, as if he had been a sinner. *Vid.* *Mill. in loc.*
 sin of his own, yet, as he was to be made

22 purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord,

23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord,)

24 And to offer a sacrifice, according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when

of the mother of a male child, (*Lev. xii. 2, 3, 4.*) his parents brought him to Jerusalem, that they might present him in the temple before the Lord, by which all righteousness early began to be fulfilled in him.

23 This was done in obedience to the law, (*Exod. xiii. 2.*) where God ordered that all the first-born of Israel should be consecrated to him, in commemoration and thankful acknowledgment of his having delivered theirs, when those of the Egyptians were slain by the destroying angel: (*Numb. iii. 13.*) Accordingly Jesus, who is the first-born among many brethren, was presented in the temple, as Mary's first-born †, that he might be deemed holy to the Lord.

24 At the same time his mother likewise offered the sacrifice appointed in the law of God for her purification: And as her husband and she were too poor to afford a lamb and a dove, which were required of those that were able, she, as was allowed in case of poverty, (*Lev. xii. 6, 7, 8.*) offered a couple of turtle-doves, or young pigeons; one for a burnt-offering, in testimony of her thankfulness; and the other for a sin-offering, in testimony of her sinfulness, and unworthiness of the mercy she had received; and both together, to make a typical atonement for her.

25 While Jesus appeared in all these circumstances of meanness in the temple, observe the honour which, at the same time, was put upon him: There was in Jerusalem, a noted man, named Simeon, who was a person of great integrity and devotion, strictly just toward men, and eminently religious toward God; and who believed, and was daily looking for an accomplishment of, the promises concerning the Messiah, the hope of whom was the joy of the faithful in Israel, and whose appearing would bring to them the richest consolations: And the Holy Ghost came upon this holy man, in a way of extraordinary revelation and prophetic impulse;

26 And he was divinely warned (*νεχρηματισμενον*) by the inspiration of the Spirit, that the joyful, long-looked for day of God's Messiah's appearing, was so nigh at hand, that, old as he was, his own eyes should behold him before he died †.

27 Accordingly, at the very time when Joseph, the reputed father, and Mary, the real mother of Jesus, brought him into the temple, to present him to

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the

N O T E S.

† Christ's birth being expressed by his opening the womb, shews that he was born of the Virgin in the usual way of women's bringing forth children, what-
 ever some of the ancients vainly imagined to the contrary.
 † Seeing death is a Hebraism for dying, Psa. lxxxix. 48.

when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

23 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word :

* 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation :

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people :

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things

the Lord, according to the legal custom before-mentioned, (ver. 22.) this *Simeon* came thither likewise, by the suggestion of the Spirit of God.

28 And, as soon as he saw the Infant, it being revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that this was the Lord's Christ, his heart leaped for joy ; and, in holy transport, he caught the dear Saviour in his arms, and, embracing him †, adored, and magnified, and gave thanks to God for him, in the following song of praise :

29 Now, Lord, I have done with the present life, thou having given me the utmost that my heart could wish for in it : And, as this performance of thy promise, about seeing the Messiah, is an intimation * that the time of my departure is at hand, I am ready to die at thy command ; and it is with the greatest satisfaction that I leave the Saviour in this world, and hope to meet him with rich advantage in a better.

30 For I am highly favoured beyond all the prophets and holy men that have ever gone before me ; their predictions are now accomplished, and thy gracious promise particularly to me, thy unworthy fervent, is fulfilled ; these mortal eyes of mine have been blessed with the sight of him, who is the sum and substance, and the author and giver, of all the salvation which thou hast promised to bestow through him ;

31 Whom thou hast provided in thy eternal counsels, and now sent into the world, and for whom thou hast prepared a body, that he may appear with open evidence and effectual operation as a Redeemer among all nations whatsoever.

32 Thou hast given him to be a light to the Gentiles, who have, in all ages, sat in darkness ; and to restore the preserved of Israel, who were sunk into great degeneracy ; (*Isa.* xlix. 6.) yea, and to bring the highest honour to thine ancient people the Jews, as he derives his birth from them, will personally converse with, preach, and do his mighty deeds, and begin his saving work first among them, and will afterwards send out his gospel from them for the conversion of others ; and in him shall all the true seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. (*Isa.* xlv. 25.)

33 In this manner *Simeon* celebrated the praises of God, giving free vent to his sacred joy at the sight of the Messiah : And both *Joseph*, and *Mary* his mother,

N O T E S.

† Some suppose that *Simeon* was a priest, and that he took Jesus in his arms to perform the priest's part in presenting him to the Lord.

* *Simeon* seemed to understand, that

what was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost, ver. 26. carried this meaning, That, as soon as he should have seen the Lord's Christ, he should die ; and he was willing to have it so.

things which were spoken of him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

36 And there was one Anna a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser; she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity:

37 And she was a widow of about four-

ther, reflecting on this, together with what they had seen and heard before concerning him, stood amazed at the remarkable concurrence of such magnificent testimonies to the great and glorious things that were to be done by him.

34 And while they were filled with delightful wonder, *Simeon* congratulated their happiness, and begged of God to bless them, on account of their relation to Jesus; and, particularly addressing himself to the virgin *Mary*, he said, Observe, this very child is ordained of God, and brought into the world, to be eventually an occasion of stumbling and falling to many *Israelites*, as was prophesied of him: (*Isa.* viii. 14, 15, 18.) But the direct and principal design of God in sending him, is to raise up many others of them, and even of those that at first stumbled at him, to spiritual life and happiness, through faith in him here, and to eternal glory hereafter: Many also shall fall, in a temporal sense, by outward troubles and disgraces for his sake; and shall rise, in a spiritual sense, by the inward consolations and spiritual honours that he will bestow upon them: And he shall appear in such wonderfully mean and suffering circumstances, that many will speak with bitter enmity, blasphemy, and revilings against him.

35 Yea, so inveterate will their prejudices and cruelties be against him, that you, who have the honour of being his mother after the flesh, shall suffer as much anguish and pain, as if your heart were thrust through with a sword, on account of the shocking things which you shall be eye and ear-witness of, as done and said against him, and by means of the persecutions which you shall suffer for his sake, because of your relation to him, and profession of him †; all which will come to pass for the discovery of many hypocrites and sincere believers, that it may be clearly seen who are for him, and shall be saved; and who are against him, and shall be lost for ever.

36 There was likewise one *Anna*, who was endued with the spirit of prophecy; she was the daughter of *Phanuel*, of the tribe of *Asher*, and a very old woman, who had been married only to one husband, and lived in a state of wedlock but seven years from her virginity to her widowhood.

37 The age of this widow was about eighty-four years: And though she was so old, yet such were her uncommon piety and devotion, that she constantly attended the worship of God at the temple, morning and

N O T E.

Epiphanius, as is usually observed, says, that *Mary* herself suffered martyrdom for Christ, *Vid. lib. iii. Hæres. xxxviii.*

fourſcore and four years: which departed not from the temple, but ſerved God with faſtings and prayers night and day.

38 And ſhe, coming in that inſtant, gave thanks likewiſe unto the Lord, and ſpoke of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jeruſalem.

39 And when they had performed all things, according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

40 And the child grew, and waxed ſtrong in ſpirit, filled with wiſdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

41 Now his parents went to Jeruſalem every year at the feaſt of the paſſover.

and evening, and on all occaſions; and was very frequent in ſolemn faſtings and prayer, to as great a degree, as the frailty of human nature, at her advanced years, could be ſuppoſed to admit of.

38 This holy woman coming into the temple, as well as *Simeon*, at the very time when Jeſus was brought thither; and ſhe, by the inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, knowing him to be the Meſſiah, heartily bleſſed God for him, and talked of him to all her religious acquaintance in *Jeruſalem*, who were waiting with faith, hope, and longing deſire for the ſalvation which they were then expecting would ſoon be brought to his people by the great Redeemer.

39 When every thing relating to Chriſt and his mother had been done at *Jeruſalem*, as the law required in their circumſtances, they, together with the reputed father *Joſeph*, returned in due time † to *Nazareth* in *Galilee*, which was the town of their uſual reſidence.

40 And the child Jeſus increaſed in bodily ſtrength and ſtature; and || the natural powers of his human mind daily improved, with his advancing years, as they do in other children, only with abundantly more ſtrength and vigour; and together with the enlargement of theſe, he was viſibly enriched, every day more and more, in an extraordinary manner, with divine wiſdom, free from all mixture of folly or error, by the irradiating light of the indwelling God-head, which gradually opened itſelf in him, and filled him with every grace, far beyond one of his age †, and highly recommended him to the favour of God.

41 Now as, at the paſſover, all the males of *Iſrael* were obliged, by the law, to appear annually before the Lord at *Jeruſalem*, *Joſeph* conſtantly went up thither; and *Mary*, in the greatneſs of her piety, attended him every year on thoſe ſolemn occaſions, to celebrate that great feſtival there.

42 And

N O T E S.

† *Luke* paſſes over *Joſeph's* flight with Jeſus and his mother into *Egypt*, which we have an account of, *Mat. ii.* and which, as is generally ſuppoſed, took up better than two years before their return to *Nazareth*.

|| His waxing ſtrong in ſpirit, ſeems to relate to the natural improvements of his human ſoul; and the following expreſſions more immediately reſpect his extraordinary ſpiritual endowments, which I take to have proceeded rather from the power of the indwelling Godhead, which was perſonally united with the Man Jeſus, than from the gifts of the Holy

Ghoſt; becauſe it is never ſaid of him, as of *John the Baptiſt*, (ch. i. 15.) that he ſhould be filled with the Holy Ghoſt, even from his mother's womb; nor is any mention made of Chriſt's being filled with the Holy Ghoſt, till his baptiſm, when he entered upon the public diſcharge of the office for which his Father ſent him.

† *Χαρις*, grace, ſometimes ſignifies an excellent internal quality; and at others the favour of God: And in both theſe ſenſes it is applied to Chriſt, *John i. 14.* and *Luke ii. 52.*

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46 And it came to pass, that, after three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

42 And when Jesus came to be twelve years old, * his parents took him along with them to *Jerusalem*, that he, together with them, might attend the usual rites and ordinances of that religious feast.

43 And when they had continued there the full length of the appointed time, till all the worship belonging to that solemnity was over, his parents set out for their journey back again to *Nazareth*; but Jesus himself staid still at *Jerusalem*. to manifest something of the glory which was afterwards to be more fully revealed in him; *Joseph*, and *Mary*, his mother, knowing nothing of the matter.

44 But, as great companies used to travel together in their return home, they concluded that he was among some of their relations or acquaintance, though not present with themselves †, and so were easy till they had gone a day's journey; when, neither seeing nor hearing any thing of him, they began to be in great pain about him, and to inquire after him among all the companies with whom they thought he might most probably associate.

45 And when, upon inquiry, they found their mistake, and knew not what was become of their dear child, from whom they justly expected the best of blessings to themselves and to *Israel*, they, full of frights and fears, hastened back again with all possible speed to *Jerusalem*, to make the strictest search after him.

46 Here likewise they sought for him in vain, till the third day, (see the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 63.) when, to the joy of their hearts, they found him in an apartment of the temple where the doctors used to discuss matters relating to the law; and there, though but twelve years old, he was sitting among them, and shewing his great modesty in hearing their debates, and his extraordinary wisdom in proposing questions to them, and in answering such as they put to him:

47 In so much that all the audience were exceedingly amazed at the manner of his talking, which was not like a child, but like one who had the wisdom of God in him; something of his divinity displaying itself on this occasion, in such a surprising manner, that he outshone all the rabbies themselves in the sagacity and prudence of his questions and replies.

48 And

N O T E S.

* At this age, the *Jerwish* doctors say, Persons were obliged to do the duties of adult church-membership.

† Or, the men and women travelling

mostly in distinct companies, his mother might think that he was with his father, and his father that he was with his mother.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father and I have sought thee forrowing.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

50 And they understood not the saying, which he spake unto them.

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

48 And when his parents found him thus employed, and admired, among such company, they were amazed to think what early appearances here were of the great things that they had reason to expect from what they before had heard and seen concerning him: And as *Joseph*, being only his father-in-law, might not think proper to chide him, his mother, taking him aside, expostulated with him after the following tender manner: Ah, my dear son! why didst thou stay behind thy father and me, without our knowledge or consent, to put us into such a terrible fright about thee? O! think of the distress this has cost us: Our minds have been day after day upon the rack, ever since we missed thee; and we have been diligently searching among all our kindred and acquaintance for thee, with a thousand fears lest some dreadful mischief had come to thee: How couldst thou give us an occasion of so much grief and trouble?

49 Jesus replied, in a way of dutiful respect to his supposed father, as well as to his real mother, How comes it to pass that, after all which has been told you about me, ye should so little consider my having a Father in heaven, whom I must prefer to all earthly parents, and who has sent me on special business into the world, which I must attend to? Where was your faith, that ye should be so painfully solicitous in your seeking after me? and where could you so reasonably expect to find me, as in my heavenly Father's own house, and employed in his affairs?

50 And yet they did not take in his meaning, about the spiritual nature of his work, since, according to the prevailing notions of that day about the Messiah, and according to the declaration of the angel, that he should have the throne of *David* his father, (chap. i. 32.) they expected it would have lain rather among the princes and rulers of this world, than among the doctors in the temple.

51 When by this answer he had plainly intimated that he, as the Son of God, might justly claim the liberty he had taken without their leave, he, nevertheless, to shew that he was really a man, who came to perform the obedience belonging to every relation of life into which he was cast, readily returned to live with them at *Nazareth*, in a private and obscure manner †, till about the thirtieth year of his age; (chap.

N O T E.

† *Justin Martyr* tells us, that he worked at his father's trade, as a carpenter, in making ploughs, and yokes for oxen: Thereby shewing forth the righteousness, meaning of private life, and teaching us not to be idle. *Dial. cum Tryph. p. 316.*

And God was so highly honoured by Christ's faithfully discharging the duties of so mean and obscure a station, that he reckoned it a part of the righteousness by which he justifies them that believe in Jesus.

(chap. iii. 23.) and cheerfully submitted to their commands in every instance of filial duty. In the meanwhile, his mother carefully treasured up all these remarkable occurrences in her memory; and often reflected seriously upon them, in hopes of understanding them better in time to come.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

52 And as Jesus grew up in bodily stature, he all along remarkably increased in extraordinary attainments of divine and spiritual, as well as of natural wisdom and understanding, as fast as his human soul was capable of them, and in his acceptableness to God, and to those men that had opportunity of being acquainted with his holy and amiable qualifications.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

Who that duly considers *Augustus's* decree, and the great purposes answered by it, without any design in him to accomplish ancient prophecies, in proof that our Jesus is the true Messiah, can doubt of God's foreknowledge and government of the free actions of men? And O how glorious is the salvation brought in by Jesus Christ! how honourable to God, how full of grace and peace to the men of his good-will! How delightful are the tidings of it in the gospel! and what high praises are due to God on its account! How cheerfully should we embrace the dear Saviour; and how cordially believe in him, and recommend him to others! How great is the consolation that such shall find in him; and how willing must it make them to die, and go to heaven, and leave this world of sin and sorrow behind them, under Christ's care and influence to reform and bless it, in hopes of being with him to behold his glory! And how, after his example, may God be glorified in the meanest business of private life! But, alas! how many are there that only wonder at these things: And how many that stumble at them to their own perdition! Happy souls, who, after they have fallen, rise again by faith in a Redeemer!—How evidently did the characters of the true God and true man, constituted of a human, improving soul, as well as body, early appear in our blessed Lord! How deep was his abasement in fulfilling all righteousness, that he might be a Saviour to us! And yet what signal honours were put upon him, amidst all his humiliation!—How beautiful is the character of a truly religious man, whilst he is just as well as devout, and is constantly looking for complete redemption by Jesus Christ! To exemplify this amiable character, under the power of divine grace, our children should be early brought under the seal of the covenant, and devoted to the Lord; young people should aim at an imitation of Jesus, in filial duty, and in an increase with all the increases of God, which are acceptable to him, and render them lovely in the eyes of men; married persons should conscientiously imitate *Joseph* and *Mary*; women, after child-birth, should offer public as well as private thanksgivings to God; and all of us, whether young or old, or whatever may be our places and relations in life, should stately attend the ordinances of divine worship, as opportunities offer, whatsoever charge or pains it may cost us: And if we would find Christ in them, we should seek him, forrowing for sin, and for our former neglects of him, and be very solicitous in our inquiries after him; should seek him in all places, and particularly at his house, where it may be most likely to meet with him; and should not give over till we find him. May we keep all these things in our hearts! And may the grace of God be upon us!

C H A P. III.

The general design of the baptism and ministry of John, 1,—9. His particular instructions to the common people, publicans, and soldiers, 10,—14. His account of the approach of Christ, 15,—18. His imprisonment by Herod, 19, 20. Christ's baptism, 21, 22. And his pedigree from Adam, 23,—38.

TEXT.

NOW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness.

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins;

PARAPHRASE.

NOW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, who was the third of the Roman Cæsars; when, with respect to the civil affairs of the Jews, Pontius Pilate was, under the emperor, governor of Judea; and Herod, one of the sons of Herod the Great, was † ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip had the dominion of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias had that of Abylene; and when with respect to the Jewish religious affairs, Annas and Caiaphas shared in the administration that belonged to the office of the high priest ‡: At this time John the Baptist, the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth, having till then led a retired life in an obscure village in the wilderness, received a commission immediately from God; the word of the Lord coming to him, as it had formerly done to the prophets of old, to enter upon his public ministry, and preach the doctrines which God revealed to him.

3 Accordingly, beginning his ministry, and exercising it for a while, in the wilderness of Judea, (Mat. iii. 1.) he afterwards went further into all parts of the country which lay about Jordan; and, preaching the necessity of repentance to a corrupt, degenerate age, he called upon them that should make a profession

N O T E S.

† The last three of these rulers were called *tetrarchs*, either because each of them had under his government a fourth part of the dominions of Herod the Great; or because theirs was the fourth rank of Roman governors, the first of which was the *emperor*, the next a *proconsul*, who had the government of a province, the third a *king*, and the fourth a *tetrarch*. See *Lightfoot on the place*.

‡ The sceptre was now departed from Judah, which had lately been made a province to the Roman empire; and all things were out of course among the Jews: High-priests were, contrary to the law of God, frequently chosen among them, or imposed by imperial authority upon them, as is intimated, *John xi. 51.*

and xviii. 13. where it is said, *Caiaphas was high-priest that year in which Christ was crucified*; and such as had once borne that office ever afterwards retained the name. Some suppose that Annas and Caiaphas were alternately employed in executing that function year after year, or that one was the deputy of the other: But perhaps Annas represented Moses, as the *nasi*, prince, head, or president of the sanhedrim; and Caiaphas represented Aaron, as the proper high-priest; and, as appears from *John xviii. 13, 24.* both these continued in their office till the death of Christ. This therefore was the proper time for the great *Shiloh*, the Restorer of Israel, to come into the world.

feffion of it, to be baptized in the name of the approaching Messiah, as the sign and seal of their obtaining, through faith in him, the forgiveness of all their sins, which, by their baptism, they were obliged to repent of. (*Acts* xix. 4. See the note on *Mat.* iii. 2.)

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 *John* did this, according to the prophecy, (*Isa.* xl. 3, 4, 5.) where he is spoken of as one who should lift up his voice aloud in the desert, to proclaim the coming of the Messiah, and to act the part of his forerunner, saying, in allusion to the custom of harbingers, that used to go before their princes, and give orders to clear and level the roads, and to cut strait paths through wild and desolate places, for their triumphal entries, "Let all obstructions that lie in your depraved hearts and lives, give way to the Lord Christ, the Jehovah of *Israel*, who is just ready to appear among you, that he may have free access to your faith, and may be received in such a manner as is suitable to his gracious and holy design." (See the note on *Mat.* xi. 10.)

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;

5 And, for their encouragement, *John* told them, that wherever Christ should exert his power and grace, humble souls should be exalted, and proud and lofty hearts subdued; perverse tempers and dispositions should be regulated, and rough spirits smoothed; and sinners of all ranks and characters should be effectually wrought upon, reclaimed, and turned to the Lord.

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

6 And as the glory of the Lord should be revealed in a more illustrious manner than ever before; so persons of all nations, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, should know and enjoy that great and glorious salvation which God was then bringing into the world by Jesus Christ.

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

7 When, in the course of *John's* ministry, vast numbers, and among them many of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees* flocked to his baptism; (*Mat.* iii. 7. see the note there) he, knowing their several characters, addressed them in the following manner: O generation of men, which, for subtilty, venom, and mischief, are the seed of the old serpent the devil; Who could have expected that such as you, who either think yourselves righteous enough already, or make a jest of all religion, should ever take upon you obligations to repent, and fly by faith to the approaching Saviour for the remission of sins, and deliverance from the wrath to come? What is your motive or design herein? But remember I now tell you, that, unless ye unfeignedly turn from every false way to him, the vengeance of God will certainly come in a little time upon you, to your utter ruin as a nation in this world,

8 Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance; and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

9 And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

11 He answereth, and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

world, and upon every one of you personally to your everlasting perdition in the next.

8 If therefore ye profess to repent, and turn to God through the promised Seed, see that ye give good proof of your sincerity therein, by the humble and holy obedience of your hearts and lives; and let none of you go about to evade my solemn admonitions, or to bolster yourselves up with presumptuous hopes of happiness and safety because of your peculiar covenant-privileges, as the descendants of *Abraham*: For if ye go on in your sins, and reject the expected Messiah, I assure you that God will utterly cast you off, and shew his almighty power in raising up a spiritual seed to *Abraham*, who shall be blessed with him, through faith in Christ, from among the *Gentiles*, such as these *Roman* foldiers and publicans, (ver. 12, 14.) though, in your account, they are as unlikely to be made alive to God, and taken into his favour, as the very stones under your feet.

9 And as an ax, levelled at the root of a tree, threatens immediate destruction; and barren trees, after all means, have been ineffectual to make them fruitful, are cut down and burnt: So God's hand is now lifted up, just ready to strike, for the many provocations that have been offered him; and if any of you reject the last and most endearing methods and overtures of his grace, and bring forth no good fruit by those means, ye will speedily be cut off in his great righteousness, and consumed by his wrath.

10 And while the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, through the pride of merit on one hand, and of reason on the other, seemed to be altogether unmoved by the engaging and the awful things that *John* said to them, many of the common people were struck with convictions of their sin and danger; which put them upon serious inquiry, saying, What are the fruits meet for repentance † that we should bring forth?

11 *John* replied, To evidence the sincerity of your repentance, shew compassion to the poor, by distributing out of your conveniences for the relief of their necessities: As for instance, Let him who, having two coats, can do very well with one, give the other to some miserable object that wants necessary cloathing; and let him who has food enough and to spare, give some of it to such as are ready to perish with hunger. This will be a good sign that your hearts are turned

from

N O T E.

† *John* had said, ver. 8. ποιησατε εν καρπῳ, &c. "Do therefore, or produce fruits meet for repentance;" and, in exact correspondence to this expression, the people ask, τι εν ποιησομεν, "What therefore shall we do, or what fruits are we to produce meet for repentance?"

from the love of this world, and from sinful and luxurious indulgences, to the love of God, and of your neighbour.

12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

12 Then the collectors of taxes, being under the like convictions, came to be baptized of him, and asked the same question, relating to themselves, saying, Pray, master, what are the particular fruits of repentance that we should produce?

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

13 To these he answered, Rectify the abuses of your office; do the duty of your places, with mercy, and with faithfulnes between the government and the subject; and do not add to the people's burden by extorting or insisting on more from them than is due to *Cæsar*, or by taking bribes to increase your own wealth: This is the proper fruit of repentance in those that have been hard-hearted, covetous, and oppressive.

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

14 Some of the soldiers likewise, coming to *John's* baptism, asked him, What are the special things to be done by us to shew the truth of our repentance? He replied, The best proof ye can give of it is to abandon the vices that persons of your calling are most incident to: As for instance, Do not be intolent and outrageous, by huffing and frightening, or plundering and abusing, the people; or by breaking, instead of keeping, the peace: Never misrepresent your fellow-soldiers to their officers, or other subjects to the government, either to gratify a malicious blood-thirsty temper, or to extort money from them: And never murmur at your lawful pay, nor be mutinous about it, nor want to add to it by any undue means; but live contentedly upon the public allowance. Thus he advised every one to take a conscientious care about keeping himself from his own iniquity.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of *John*, whether he were the Christ or not;

15 And there being, at this time, a general expectation of the Messiah's appearing; the extraordinary strain of gravity, piety, and authority, which ran through *John's* ministry and behaviour, put the people upon thinking whether this person himself were not he whom they were looking for.

16 *John* answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but One might-

16 *John*, observing this, took the utmost care to undeceive them, saying, I am only come as the forerunner of the Messiah, to preach the doctrine of repentance, and remission of sins through faith in him; and to turn you over to him, by baptizing you † with

N O T E.

† Some suppose that the words *John* and so it was baptizing them into the used, in applying the water, were these: faith of Christ, for the remission of sins, *I baptize you with water; but a mightier than I cometh, who shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire;* *Acts* xix. 4.

mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

18 And many other things, in his exhortation, preached, he unto the people.

19 But Herod the tetrarch, being re-

with water: But the Christ of God, who is just ready to appear, is infinitely superior to me, in his person, and in the excellence and efficacy of his qualifications, office, and works; so that I think myself unworthy of the honour of even carrying his shoes after him, (*Mat.* iii. 11.) or untying and taking them off from his feet: He will baptize † some of you with the gifts and graces of his Holy Spirit which he will shed down upon you in a visible appearance of fire; (*Acts* ii. 3.) and which will be as much more powerful and penetrating, in its operation for spiritual and holy purposes, than my baptism, as fire is than water, in an external application of them to the body. (See the note on *Mat.* iii. 6.)

17 And as a husbandman separates wheat from the chaff, which lay mixed together on the floor, by shaking and winnowing it in a fan; and lays up the wheat in his granary, but throws the chaff into the fire: So Christ will make a thorough search into, and an exact separation between true believers and hypocritical professors in the visible church, by his word, Spirit, and providence here, and at death and judgment hereafter; and he will preserve the righteous from the forest tribulations on earth, and receive them to his everlasting kingdom in heaven; but will execute destructive judgments on the wicked in this world, and cast them into everlasting burnings in the next.

18 This is a brief specimen of *John's* ministry, in which he added many other particulars suitable to his character as the forerunner of our Lord, preaching to the people the glad tidings of the gospel, (*εὐηγγελίζετο τον λαον*) by Jesus Christ, whom he pointed out to them, with a serious application to their minds and consciences, in the exhortations he gave them.

19 But at length, after having preached about a year and half ||, he, not fearing the face of any man, dealt

N O T E S.

† It is not the common Christian baptism, but Christ's own baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with fire, that *John* here opposes to his own baptism: For *John's*, and the Christian baptism, abating the different forms of expression used in them severally, were, for substance, the same, both in the element, and in the signification of the ordinance; only one was baptizing them into the faith of him who was to come, and the other into the faith of him who is come. And these apostles whom Christ called during *John's* ministry, had no other baptism with water than that of *John*; since Christ him-

self administered water-baptism to none, *John* iv. 2. and there is no appearance of their baptizing one another.

|| Dr *Lightfoot* says it was about twenty months; and that *John* was kept in prison some months above a year, before he was put to death: But the evangelist mentions these things here in few words, that he might afterwards go on with the history of Christ, without interruption, from his baptism; though *John* continued preaching about a year after he had baptized Christ, before his own imprisonment.

reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 Now, when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove, upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which

dealt very plainly with *Herod*, the governor of *Galilee*, about all his beloved vices, and particularly his sin of adultery and, incest in marrying *Herodias*, his brother *Philip's* wife, while *Philip* himself was still living, and after he had children by her †.

20 *Herod* was so exasperated at this close and home reproof, that though he had sometimes heard *John* with pleasure, and had a secret veneration for him, as a good and holy man; yet to get rid of such an impartial monitor, and to gratify *Herodias*, he added this horrid wickedness to all the rest, that he clapped him up in prison, and, after a considerable time, was prevailed upon to take away his life.

21 Now, to return: While crowds of people came to *John*, and he had baptized them, Jesus himself, though he needed not, like others, to be baptized into the faith of the Messiah, or with a baptism of repentance, yet resolving to fulfil all righteousness, and to sanctify this ordinance, and enter himself into the Christian-church by it, as he had been entered, in his infancy, into that of the *Jews* by circumcision, he also was baptized by *John*; and immediately, thereupon, betaking himself to prayer, there was a visible opening of the firmament:

22 And, in answer to his prayer, the Holy Ghost descended from thence in the appearance of a luminous body, which came down hovering like a dove, (see the note on *Mat.* iii. 16.) till it rested upon his head, to intimate his being then anointed with his Spirit for his office; and, at the same time, an audible voice was directed to him from God the Father, saying, Thou art my dear and eternal Son, in whose person and office, my soul delights, and in whom I think with pleasure of my great design of saving all that I have given to thee. (See the note on *Mat.* iii. 17.)

23 Jesus was about thirty years old when he was baptized, and thus distinctly and miraculously owned and sealed by his Father and the Holy Ghost, in order to his entering upon his public ministry: And his genealogy, according to the flesh, by his mother's side ‡, reckoning upwards to the first man *Adam*, to shew

N O T E S.

† See *Whitby* on *Mat.* xiv. 3.

‡ As *Matthew* gives us Christ's legal and royal line from his father-in-law *Joseph*, who descended by his own father *Jacob* from *Solomon*, the son and successor of *David* to his throne: So *Luke* seems to give us Christ's natural line, as the seed of the woman, from his mother *Mary*, who, as some have taken notice,

the talmud says, was the daughter of *Heli*; and so descended from *Nathan*, another of the sons of *David*. But as the families of women were not enrolled under their names, or reckoned as distinct families in *Israel*: So this account is copied out, according to the custom of the *Jews*, from one of their authentic genealogies, under the husband's name; which

which was *the son* of *Heli*,

shew that he is the promised seed of the woman who should break the serpent's head, stands thus: Jesus being the real son of the virgin *Mary*, and being born after her espousal to *Joseph*, he thereby became the son-in-law of *Joseph*; and *Joseph*, by his marriage with *Mary*, was the legal son of *Heli*, her own father.

24 Which was *the son* of *Matthat*, which was *the son* of *Levi*, which was *the son* of *Melchi*, which was *the son* of *Janna*, which was *the son* of *Joseph*,

24 This *Heli* was naturally descended from *Matthat*, *Matthat* from *Levi*, *Levi* from *Melchi*, *Melchi* from *Janna*, *Janna* from *Joseph*,

25 Which was *the son* of *Mattathias*, which was *the son* of *Amos*, which was *the son* of *Naum*, which was *the son* of *Efli*, which was *the son* of *Nagge*,

25 *Joseph* from *Mattathias*, *Mattathias* from *Amos*, *Amos* from *Naum*, *Naum* from *Efli*, *Efli* from *Nagge*,

26 Which was *the son* of *Maath*, which was *the son* of *Mattathias*, which was *the son* of *Semei*, which was *the son* of *Joseph*, which was *the son* of *Juda*,

26 *Nagge* from *Maath*, *Maath* from *Mattathias*, *Mattathias* from *Semei*, *Semei* from *Joseph*, *Joseph* from *Juda*,

27 Which was *the son* of *Joanna*, which was *the son* of *Rhesa*, which was *the son* of *Zorobabel*, which was *the son* of *Salathiel*, which was *the son* of *Neri*,

27 *Juda* from *Joanna*, *Joanna* from *Rhesa*, *Rhesa* from *Zorobabel*, *Zorobabel* from *Salathiel*, *Salathiel* from *Neri*,

28 Which was *the son* of *Melchi*, which was *the son* of *Addi*, which was *the son* of *Cosam*, which was *the son* of *Elmodam*, which was *the son* of *Er*,

28 *Neri* from *Melchi*, *Melchi* from *Addi*, *Addi* from *Cosam*, *Cosam* from *Elmodam*, *Elmodam* from *Er*,

29 Which was *the*

29 *Er* from *Jose*, *Jose* from *Eliezer*, *Eliezer* from

N O T E.

which is the reason why *Mary* is not mentioned, though, strictly speaking, it seems to be Christ's genealogy by her: For as *Joseph's* natural father was *Jacob*, (*Mat. i. 15.*) he was only the son-in-law of *Heli*, *Mary's* father; and it may be observed that the words $\omega\varsigma \epsilon\gamma\omicron\kappa$

$\mu\iota\beta\iota\omicron$, which we render, *as was supposed*, rather signify, referring to the genealogy, *ut lege sancitum est*, as it was legally settled, or was found on record. He that would see other representations of these things, may consult *Grotius*, *Lightfoot*, and *Whitby*.

the son of Jole, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi,

from *Jorim, Jorim from Matthat, Matthat from Levi,*

30 Which was *the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim,*

30 *Levi from Simeon, Simeon from Juda, Juda from Joseph, Joseph from Jonan, Jonan from Eliakim,*

31 Which was *the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David,*

31 *Eliakim from Melea, Melea from Menan, Menan from Mattatha, Mattatha from Nathan, Nathan from David,*

32 Which was *the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson,*

32 *David from Jesse, Jesse from Obed, Obed from Booz, Booz from Salmon, Salmon from Naasson,*

33 Which was *the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda,*

33 *Naasson from Aminadab, Aminadab from Aram, Aram from Esrom, Esrom from Phares, Phares from Judah,*

34 Which was *the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor,*

34 *Judah from Jacob, Jacob from Isaac, Isaac from Abraham, Abraham from Thara, Thara from Nachor,*

35 Which was *the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala,*

35 *Nachor from Saruch, Saruch from Ragau, Ragau from Phalec, Phalec from Heber, Heber from Sala,*

36 Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech,

37 Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan,

38 Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.

36 *Sala from Cainan †, Cainan from Arphaxad, Arphaxad from Sem, Sem from Noe, Noe from Lamech,*

37 *Lamech from Mathusala, Mathusala from Enoch, Enoch from Jared, Jared from Maleleel, Maleleel from Cainan,*

38 *Cainan from Enos, Enos from Seth, and Seth was descended from Adam, who was, by creation, the Son of God.*

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

The great *Sibiloh*, who, according to ancient predictions, was to be the seed of the woman after the flesh, has certainly been ushered into the world, under a divine character, by his forerunner *John the Baptist*, and by the witness from heaven that was given from the eternal Father and his Spirit, in a miraculous manner, to Christ as the Son of God, and a distinct Person in the Godhead. How inferior are the best of men to him? And O what an honour is it, and how sensible should we be of our utter unworthiness, to be employed even in the meanest services for him! How should every heart be opened to receive him; and how affecting is the motive to repentance, taken from the grace brought in by the gospel for the remission of sins, that all sorts of sinners, even *Gentiles* themselves, may see the salvation of God! Where this grace prevails, it rectifies the disorders, and levels the mountains of opposition, that lie in sinners hearts; who, whatever their character may be, have need to flee unto Jesus for an escape from the wrath to come: And where there is repentance unto life, it usually begins with the sins that we are most addicted to; and is discovered by a departure from them, as fruit meet for repentance. Though external privileges and divine ordinances are to be prized and improved according to the circumstances of things; yet they, of themselves, can be of no saving advantage to us; and therefore are not to be rested in: For whatsoever our pretences and vain confidences may be, if we bring not forth good fruit, destruction will be unavoidable: And while many think well of themselves; and, depending upon outward privileges, miscarry, to their eternal perdition; how often doth the almighty power of God raise up monuments of his sovereign grace, from among the most unlikely sinners, to his everlasting praise! But alas, how mixed and imperfect is the state of the church in this world! However, a clean-

N O T E .

† This *Cainan* is found only in the septuagint; and our evangelist writing most immediately for the use of the *Hebraistic Jews*, who chiefly used that translation, might insert *Cainan*, as he met with it there, or in some other public records then in being. But all the other names, from *Abraham* back to *Adam*, are found also in the *Hebrew* of the Old Testament, in the like order as

Luke has placed them; and all the names from *David* back to *Abraham* are the very same as are mentioned in *Matthew's* genealogy. See the notes on *Mat. i.* But the learned *Bochart* supposes that some transcriber might insert *Cainan* here by mistake; and vindicates the sacred canon, even on that supposition. *Vid. Geogr. Sacr. p. i. l. ii. c. xiii.*

•sing and separating time will come, to the joy of the faint, and the terror of the hypocrite and sinner; and a man, whose heart is carnal, may be evidently discerned, even now, by his flinching, and being enraged at faithful reproofs for beloved sins; though sometimes, like *Herod*, he may have a secret veneration for godly ministers, and may hear them gladly.

C H A P. IV.

Christ's temptation and fasting, 1,—13. His entrance on his public ministry, 14, 15. His preaching at Nazareth, where the people wonder, and yet generally despise him for the meanness of his parentage, 16,—30. At Capernaum, where he casts out a devil, and heals Peter's mother-in-law, and many sick people, 31,—41. And his preaching in several other places, 42,—44.

TEXT.

AND Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

PARAPHRASE.

JESUS being solemnly anointed for his mediatorial office, at his baptism, by an unmeasurable effusion of the Holy Ghost, retired in the fulness of the Spirit, and by his immediate suggestion, from *Jordan* to a very † desert place; that, like a servant devoted to his Father's work, he might give himself to fasting and prayer, as a proper preparation for it, and that, like a champion, he might enter the field of battle, and might signally overcome the evil-one.

2 There he continued for forty days together, praying to his heavenly Father, and conflicting with, and vanquishing various temptations which the devil offered to him: And all that time he was miraculously supported without eating or drinking any thing; but at the close of those days, he, being truly a man, was hungry.

3 Hereupon Satan, taking the advantage of his fainting circumstances in a barren wilderness; said to him, If you are indeed the Son of God, as was lately declared at *Jordan*, I challenge you to prove it by turning this stone which I present to you, or any others now before you, into bread, that you may not suffer to the utmost extremity, and even perish with hunger.

4 But since complying with this demand would have looked as if our Lord were impatient of hunger, and distrustful of his Father's love and care; or as if he would set up for acting separately from him, and independently on him; he replied, It is written, with relation to *Israel's* hunger in the wilderness,

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† Some suppose that this was in the wilderness of *Judea*; and others that it was in the great desert of *Horeb*, or *Sinai*, where *Israel* were tried forty years, and *Moses* and *Elijah* fasted forty days.

(Deut. viii. 3.) that the life of man is not sustained merely by natural food, but by the all-governing, influential Providence of God, which commands a blessing upon it, and can preserve life, either by providing extraordinary means, or by its own immediate power, when ordinary means fail; and that therefore man ought to trust in him for all necessary supplies, in the way of duty, according to his word.

5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

5 Satan having been defeated in his attempt to ensnare our Lord by *the lust of the flesh*, tried whether he could not prevail upon him *by the lust of the eye*; and therefore, carrying † him up to the top of an exceeding high mountain, he, like the prince of the power of the air, instantly formed, in the valleys round about, a representation of all the grandeur of this world, as in a large landskip, containing an appearance of states and kingdoms, courts and palaces, and the like.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it.

6 And together with this representation he said, Behold the riches and delights, the honours and powers, that are found among the kingdoms of this world! All these charming possessions are entirely at my disposal; for they are committed to my order and management, and I bestow them on whomsoever I please.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

7 If therefore you will but for once pay religious homage to me as to the deputed god of this world, I will immediately transfer the whole of my power over them, and property in them, to you.

8 And Jesus answered, and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

8 But Jesus rejected this assault, not by urging, as he justly might, that Satan was a liar, and an infamous enemy to God, and therefore unworthy of such homage; but by saying with the utmost indignation, Away with all this insolence, I cannot suffer your thus invading the divine prerogative: For the eternal and unchangeable rule of worship, to the exclusion of all mere creatures, is established in what is written, (Deut. vi. 13, 14. and x. 20.) which plainly carries this sense, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

9 And he brought him to Je-

9 As Christ could no more be seduced by the lust of the eye than of the flesh, the devil accosted him with

N O T E.

† This temptation is placed after that relating to Christ's casting himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, in Mat. iv. And the order in which *Matthew* has placed them seems to be the true order in which they occurred: For he plainly methodized them by the particles *then*, (ver. 5.) and *again*, (ver. 8.); and adds, at the conclusion of the tempta-

tion, about Christ's casting himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, that *then* the devil left him, (ver. 11.) But our evangelist has not thus distinguished them; having neglected the order, as of no importance to the history; or perhaps inverted it for some particular reasons, for which see *Lightfoot* on the place.

Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence :

with another temptation suited to work upon *the pride of life*: Accordingly our Lord, going with him to *Jerusalem*, permitted his setting him, in a very frightful and dangerous height, upon one of the wings or turrets of the temple, (see the note on *Mat. iv. 5.*) and then Satan, having no power to thrust him down from thence, said to him, If you are indeed the Son of God, you may be sure of your Father's protection, especially at this sacred place, where he is more remarkably present than any where else upon earth, and where angels attend to do his will: Throw yourself therefore headlong down from hence; and let that noble exploit prove either your own divine power, or the care of your pretended Father to preserve you from hurt.

10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee.

10, 11 For, since you appeal to the scripture, I will appeal to it likewise to prove that this is a reasonable demand, and that if your pretensions are just, you can run no risk by complying with it: For it is written of the Messiah, (*Psal. xci. 11, 12.*) *God shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus answering, said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

12 But Jesus replied, This presumptuous proceeding would be going out of the way of duty, and so would be none of my ways, in which protection is promised, or is to be expected; but would contradict another scripture, where it is said, (*Deut. vi. 16.*) *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*; which plainly intimates that dangerous hazards are not to be run, nor extraordinary methods to be tried, without necessity; and that God has not promised miracles for the preservation of any, when it may be had in the ordinary course of providence. (See the note on *Mat. iv. 7.*)

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

13 In this manner Christ effectually refuted all the temptations of the devil; and when Satan had tried his utmost, and found himself shamefully baffled in every attempt, he left him for the present, resolving to try afterwards to do that by his instruments, and by violence, which he could not do by fraud himself.

14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

14 Then Jesus returned like a victorious champion into *Galilee*, under the powerful anointing of the Holy Ghost; and entered upon his public ministry, which soon spread his fame through all the country.

15 And he taught in their syn-

15 And the reason of this was, because he preached in the synagogues, wherever he came, with such majesty and authority, and confirmed his doctrine by such great and merciful miracles, that the people were universally struck with wonder and pleasure,

synagogues, being glorified of all.

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias: and, when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised;

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the

sure, and could not but think and speak of him with honour and applause.

16 After he had been some time in other parts of Galilee, he went to Nazareth, where he had mostly resided in the days of his minority; and, upon coming hither, he resorted, as usual, to the synagogue on the Sabbath-day: And being a member of that congregation †, by virtue of his having constantly joined in worship with them during his former residence there, he stood up to read some section of the holy scripture, as was customarily done on the Sabbath-days. (*Acts* xiii. 14, 15.)

17 And, as every book of the law, and of the greater prophets, was a single roll of parchment by itself; that which ‡ the minister of the congregation put into his hands, and part of which was to be read that day, was the prophecy of *Isaiab*: Then Christ, unrolling the parchment, fixed upon a passage relating to himself, (*chap.* lxi. 1, 2.) which in sense, and mostly according to the septuagint, ran thus || :

18, 19 *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

20 When our Lord had read these words, he, rolling up the volume again, returned it to the public minister from whom he received it; and then § sat down to preach: And as the fame of his being an extraordinary prophet had by this time reached Nazareth, all the people looked intently toward him, expecting that he would explain what he had read, and earnestly wishing to hear what he would say on so remarkable a text.

21 Here-

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† We do not find that Christ ever read the scripture in any other synagogue but this at Nazareth; the reason of which seems to be, because he was not a member of those congregations, but only of this: And the Jewish writers tell us, that none but a member of the synagogue might read there. But his great reputation as a prophet, and the various miracles he wrought to confirm it, procured him admission to preach in any synagogue wherever he went.

‡ The minister of the synagogue, says Dr. Lightfoot, was called the angel of the church, the bishop, or overseer, who

prayed publicly, took care of the reading of the law, and sometimes preached, &c. See *Hebr.* and *Talm. Exercit.* on *Mat.* iv. 23.

|| Whether this was the section which was, in course, to be read that day, or whether our Lord purposely turned to it for the subject of his designed discourse, is uncertain.

§ The Jewish doctors used to stand up when they read the scriptures, and to sit down when they taught the people: Accordingly our Lord read standing, and preached sitting.

the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

21 Hereupon he began his discourse, in which he said, The prophetic words I have been reading are at this very time fulfilled in myself, and in what ye shall now hear from me. I, who was filled with the Holy Ghost at my baptism, am come, with a commission from my Father, to publish the glad tidings of salvation, and effectually evangelize the poor of this world, and the poor in spirit, who are emptied of themselves; to succour, heal, and save souls that are wounded and distressed in reflections on their own unworthiness and vileness, guilt and danger; to bring redemption to those that were in bondage under the law, and under the power of sin and Satan; to open the eyes of their understandings that were spiritually blind, as well as to restore sight to them that were corporally blind; and to set the oppressed free from all their legal yokes and their bondage of spirit, by which they were brought into as miserable a condition as persons † that are galled and bruised with fetters and chains: In a word, I am sent to proclaim a most joyful and glorious jubilee * by the gospel of salvation, that sinners may have free remission of all their penal obligations to divine justice in the forgiveness of their sins, may be delivered from all their miseries, and may be restored to the divine favour, and to the forfeited inheritance of eternal life.

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

22 And the words which he spoke upon this occasion were so full of majesty and grace, that all the people in the synagogue were struck with wonder and astonishment, to hear one, who had not been educated in the schools of the prophets, talk at this uncommon rate: And yet the generality of them cavilled at him, saying, by way of contempt and reproach, Is not this the son of *Joseph*, the poor carpenter, who was brought up with him? (See the note on chap. ii. 51.)

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, *Physician, heal thyself*: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

23 Jesus therefore, knowing their prejudices against him, said to them, Though your own consciences tell you, that my doctrine speaks surprisingly good and excellent things; yet your unbelieving hearts are objecting, and turning an old proverb against me, saying, "*Physician, heal thyself*: As it is reported that you have done wonderful works in other places, and particularly at *Capernaum* §, we insist

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† Here is a beautiful gradation, in allusion to the miserable state of such captives as were not only cast into prison, but, like *Zedekiah*, had their eyes put out, and were bound with chains and loaded with irons, (2 *Kings* xxv. 7.)

* This has a manifest reference to the great year of jubilee, which was a joyful

year to servants and debtors, and to them that had mortgaged their estates, who, at the return of the fiftieth year, were set free; liberty being then proclaimed through all the land of *Israel*, *Levit.* xxv. 8,—17.

§ This intimates, that Christ had been for some time preaching and working miracles

sit upon it, that, if you are able, you heal our sick, our lame, and our blind, here at home, among your own kindred and acquaintance, otherwise we will not regard you."

24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

24 But I assuredly tell you, that were I to work ever so great or many miracles among you, ye would not believe: For your objection against me on account of my being the son of *Joseph*, verifies another old observation, That a teacher sent from God is not ordinarily so well thought of, or received among his own neighbours, as among strangers: The meanness of his family, and the low circumstances in which he all along lived among them, bring his office into contempt; and it becomes a matter of envy, that he who, in private life, stood on a level with, or was below themselves, should wear the superior character of a prophet to them. It is therefore much fitter for me to perform my miracles in other places, than among a people whose prejudices will not give way to conviction.

25 But I tell you of a truth, Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Serepta, a city of

25, 26 Besides, God uses a holy sovereignty in the dispensations of his favour, not as man judges to be most likely, but as seems good in his sight: Thus in the days of *Elijah* the prophet, there was a great drought for three years and a half together †, which occasioned a distressing famine upon the earth; and though at that time there were many necessitous widows in the kingdom of *Israel*, and even at *Jerusalem* itself, yet it is certain matter of fact, that *Elijah* was sent for the relief of none of them, but only of a poor widow, who lived at *Sarepta*, a *Gentile* town which lay within the borders of *Sidon* ‡.

27 There

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acles in other places before he came to *Nazareth*.

† An account of this famine we have at large, 1 *Kings* xvii. 8. & xviii.; and the apostle *James* refers to it, chap. v. 17. But in 1 *Kings* xviii. 1. it is said, that the word of the Lord came to *Elijah* in the third year, saying, Go shew thyself to *Ahab*, and I will send rain upon the earth: And yet Christ says, the heaven was shut up three years and six months; and the apostle *James*, that it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. To reconcile this, we are to observe, that the third year, in which God spake to *Elijah* about sending rain, is to be reckoned, not from the beginning of the drought, but from the time when *Elijah* began to sojourn with the widow of *Sarepta*; and that a year of drought had preceded, whilst he dwelt

at the brook *Cberith*, and was fed by the ravens there; and after a while, or at the end of days, (*מקצ ימים*) which, in that language, often signifies the end of a year, the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land, 1 *Kings* xvii. 1.—7. So that, putting the time all together, it was in the fourth year, from the beginning of the drought, that God spake to *Elijah* of sending rain; and this is determined by Christ, and the apostle *James*, to be three years and a half, or six months.

‡ *Sidon* was a *Gentile* city, out of the borders of the land of *Israel*. God sent *Elijah* thither, who, in the *Greeks*, is called *Elias*, and so made him a prophet of the *Gentiles*, the first that ever went among them: And when our Lord himself went among the *Gentiles*, it was into the coast of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, Mat. xv.

of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elifeus the prophet: and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill; (whereon their city was built,) that they might cast him down headlong.

30 But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way.

31 And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath-days.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

27 There were likewise many leprous persons in the land of *Judea*, in the days of *Elisha*, (whose name, in the *Greek*, is *Elifeus*;) and yet none of them were cured by means of that prophet: But (*ἡ μὴ*) *Naaman* the *Syrian* was healed, (2 *Kings* v. 8,—14.) though he was so far from being an *Israelite*, that he was of a nation which were not only strangers, but enemies to *Israel*, and to their God. If therefore I chuse to display my glory and shew mercy among *Israelites*, in distant parts, rather than among my own townsmen, neighbours, and acquaintance; yea, were I to do this even among the *Gentiles* themselves, rather than among the *Jews*; there is no more reason to cavil at me for it, than there was of old at *Elijah* and *Elisha*, and the dispensation of providence by them, for relieving necessitous and diseased *Gentiles*, rather than *Israelites* that were in like miserable circumstances.

28 As soon as our Lord had said these things in the synagogue, and thereby suggested as if the people of that town were unworthy of his favour, and the *Gentiles* themselves should be made partakers of it; they who but just before bore him witness, and wondered at his gracious words, (ver. 22.) were generally filled with the utmost indignation and rage against him:

29 And, in the heat of their fury, they tumultuously broke up the assembly all at once, and thrust him, not only out of the synagogue, but of *Nazareth* itself; and, hurrying him away to the brow of the hill on which the town stood, they attempted to dispatch him, by throwing him down the precipice, though he had lived so many years unblameably among them.

30 But, as his time for dying was not yet come, and this was not that sort of death which he was to suffer, he miraculously sprang away from them before they were aware, leaving them to the dreadful consequences of their outrage against him.

31 And he removed from thence to dwell at *Capernaum*, another town in *Galilee*; and preached in their synagogue on the Sabbath-days.

32 And his doctrine, together with his gracious and authoritative manner of delivering and confirming it, was so striking, that the people could not but stand amazed at it; for it was attended with divine and powerful evidence.

33, 34 And

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27. to shew mercy to a poor woman, as *Elijah* had done before to a poor widow, therein giving a specimen of the mercy designed for the *Gentiles*.

33 And in the synagogue there was a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,

34 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the holy One of God.

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And, when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

38 And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house;

33, 34 And among other wonderful works which he wrought to confirm it there, the following instance was very remarkable. One Sabbath-day, whilst he was preaching in the synagogue, there was a certain man possessed of the devil, that wicked spirit, who was so full of enmity to Christ, so afraid of his power, and so enraged against his gospel, that he spoke in or by the man, crying out with great vehemence, and with an audible voice, in the name of himself and his associates, O thou Jesus of *Nazareth*, pray give us no disturbance; thy proper business lies with men, and not with us, who desire to have nothing to do with thee; surely the time is not yet come for thee to destroy our dominion, or to torment us: Alas! I dread contending with thee; for I know that thou art the Son of God †, holy in thy nature and design.

35 But Jesus, refusing to receive testimony from the devil, severely checked him; and, with sovereign and awful authority, commanded him to be silent, and to quit possession of the man. Hereupon Satan was instantly forced to retire; and though, to shew his rage and reluctance at parting, he threw the poor creature into violent convulsions before all the company, and left him like one dead; yet he immediately recovered, by which it appeared that he had received no manner of hurt.

36 And the people seeing that Christ wrought so great and undeniable a miracle, in such a godlike manner, were extremely surpris'd at it, saying within themselves, and one to another, What an astonishing word is this! Who ever saw or heard any thing like it? For he only speaks, and it is done; such power and authority go forth with his word, that even the infernal wicked spirits are forced to submit to his absolute command, and to do as he orders them.

37 And the report of this amazing cure was soon spread abroad, and gave him a vast reputation, far and wide; so that the whole country rung with his praises.

38 Now as soon as Jesus had publicly wrought this miracle in the synagogue, he retired from thence to *Simon Peter's* house, whose habitation was in this town; * and his wife's mother being at that time dan-

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† This confession of Christ was either extorted from the devil by the terror he was in, or else he made it with a design of paying such a public compliment to Christ, as might render his character suspected among the *Jews*; and it is probable that the *Pharisees* took occasion, from the devils owning him, to reproach him as if

he cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils, Mat. xii. 24.

* This evidently confutes the *Papish* notion of the celibacy of the clergy: For the apostle *Peter* himself had a wife, whose mother lay sick at his house; and here it was that our Lord probably dwelt.

house; and Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose, and ministered unto them.

40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them unto him: and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them, suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

42 And when it was day, he departed, and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him,

dangerously sick of a fever, her friends, encouraged by what he had just before done in the synagogue, acquainted him with her threatening case, and earnestly entreated him to shew his power and goodness in healing her.

39 They no sooner asked, but received: Jesus, in the greatness of his compassion, went into the room where she lay; and, as he stood looking upon her, he, like the sovereign Lord of all, without any ceremony, or application to his Father, commanded the fever to depart from her, and took it off, to the perfect recovery of her health and strength all at once: And, as an evidence of this, she presently got out of bed, went about the business of the house, and did what was requisite for the entertainment of our blessed Lord and the company.

40 Then, as soon as the sun was set, at which time the Sabbath was over, all the people thereabouts, who had any sick relations or friends, brought them to Jesus, that he might heal them, whatsoever their diseases were; the *Pharisees* having suggested, that it was unlawful for them to carry their sick to him, or indeed for him to heal them, on the Sabbath-day: And so great were his power and mercy, that as fast as they came, he, by a bare touch, without the use of any means, instantly healed them all, of what kind or degree soever their sicknesses were: Not one of them went away without a cure.

41 There were likewise many brought to him, out of whom, in the same sovereign way, he cast out evil spirits barely by his word of command; and, upon their taking leave of the possessed persons, they made hideous outcries, saying, Ah, we find that thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God! But, as their testimony was of no advantage to him, he commanded them to be silent, and would not suffer them to publish who he was; for they indeed certainly knew him to be the true Messiah.

42 And the next morning †, before day-light appeared, he arose, and retired to a solitary place, that he might have an opportunity for secret prayer: (*Mark* i. 35.) But as soon as the people missed him, they carefully searched after him till they found him; and, when they came to him, they were very urgent in their

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† In *Mark* i. 35. it is said, that *in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out*. But he might rise before, and yet not go out till it was day; or as *Dr Lightfoot* reconciles these accounts, Though the natural day of the *Jews* began from sun-setting; yet they

also made the midnight a distinctive period, to part between day and day; so that they reckoned up till midnight for the day that was past, and reckoned down from midnight, for the morning of the following day.

him, that he should not depart from them.

43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also : for therefore am I sent.

44 And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

their intreaties, that he would please to honour and bless them with a constant abode in their city and neighbourhood.

43 But ($\delta\epsilon$) he told them, that whatsoever might be their ends in this request, he could not grant it, consistently with his great design of preaching the gospel of the kingdom in one place as well as another, saying, My ministry is not to be confined to *Capernaum*, but I must preach the glad tidings of salvation to other cities as well as yours ; for so the commission runs, which I have received of my Father.

44 Accordingly, taking his leave of them for the present, he travelled about from town to town, through all *Galilee*, preaching in their synagogues wherever he came, and confirming his excellent doctrine by his beneficent and wonderful works. (*Mark* i. 39.)

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How often do the greatest temptations succeed the highest testimonies of God's love ! As soon as our blessed Lord himself had been owned from heaven as the Son of God, and filled with his Spirit, he was tempted, like as we are, yet without sin ; but came off with triumph, that he might be able to succour them that are tempted. When Satan, taking the advantage of necessitous and dangerous circumstances, put him upon first distrustful, and then presuming upon, the providence and promises of God ; and when he grew so insolent as to offer him the possession and the government of the world, upon condition of his paying religious worship to him as God's delegate, which is due to none but God himself ; Christ defeated all his assaults by the sword of the Spirit ; thereby setting us an example, and shewing us the way to resist and overcome every temptation through him that loved us. — O what dreadful work has sin made ! It has turned once good and holy angels into malicious and unclean spirits ; has perverted human nature, and subjected it to the devil's cruel tyranny ; has introduced all the diseases and miseries that afflict mankind ; and has brought our dear and blessed Saviour into all the humbling and suffering circumstances that he endured in our world. But what a gracious, suitable, and almighty Saviour have we ! He is the sovereign Lord of life and death, of devils and men ; and, by virtue of the office to which his Father has appointed him, he is the deliverer of miserable captives, and the great physician of soul and body, who can easily heal the distempers of both, by his word, and the divine energy that attends it : And he exerts his power and grace on the most unlikely, and the most unworthy, as seems good in his sight. How excellent is his doctrine ! how laborious and diligent was he in preaching it, especially on the Sabbath-days ! and how gloriously did he confirm it, without the least room for suspicion of fraud ! But, alas, how few are savingly wrought upon and converted by it ! And how many are there that get no further than the very devils themselves in their faith concerning him as the Son of God, and the true Messiah ; or than the people that heard his preaching, and saw his miracles with attention and wonder, and bore witness to his gracious words, and yet immediately were filled with prejudices and envy, turned head against him, and sought to destroy him ! But no designs against his life could prosper, till he had fulfilled his ministry, and the time was come for him to resign it.

C H A P. V.

Christ preaches out of Peter's ship, 1,—3. His intimation of the success of Peter's and his partner's ministry, by a miraculous draught of fishes, 4,—11. He heals a leper, 12,—15. Retires for prayer, and returns to preaching, 16, 17. Cures a man sick of the palsy, 18,—26. Calls Levi and converses with publicans, 27,—32. And vindicates his disciples for not fasting in those days, 33,—39.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, that as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennefareth.

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake; but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him, that he would thrust out a little from the land: and he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night,

PARAPHRASE.

NOW while Jesus continued in Galilee, he was so acceptable to the common people, that they flocked and crowded in vast multitudes about him, to hear him preach the gospel of salvation, which was indeed the word of God: And, as the synagogues were not large enough to contain them, he went to the shore of the sea of Tiberias, which is called the lake of Gennefareth.

2 And there he saw two fishing-boats lying near the shore; but the servants that belonged to them*, and had been fishing a great while to no purpose, were gone out of them to wash and cleanse their nets.

3 In the mean time our Lord, to avoid the inconvenience of being crowded by the multitude, and of having his voice drowned, went into one of the boats, particularly Simon's, whom Christ named Peter; (*John* i. 42.) and, meeting with him there, he courteously entreated him to put off to a small distance from the land; which being done, Jesus, without regarding any distinction of places for religious worship, sat down in the vessel, and preached from thence to the people as they were standing on the shore.

4 And, when he had finished his discourse, he desired Simon to steer still further to a deeper part of the lake, and there to drop his nets for fish; thereby designing to manifest his own power and goodness, and to give a lively emblem of the wonderful success which his servants should have in the work of the ministry under his command and influence.

5 But (*καὶ*) Simon, not knowing Christ's intention, said to him, Sir, I doubt it will be lost labour; for we have been fishing all night, and taken a deal of pains already without any success: However, in obedience

N O T E.

* Some suppose that these fishermen were Simon and Andrew, who were said to be casting their net into the sea. (*Mat.* iv. 18. and *Mark* i. 16.) If so, it seems to

have been to wash the net after fishing: But I rather take this to relate to the servants washing the nets, while Simon and Andrew remained in the boat.

night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless, at thy word, I will let down the net.

6 And, when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10 And so was also James and John the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou

bedience to your command, and in hope that it may not be altogether in vain, I and my men, weary as we are, will make another trial.

6 Then they let down their net; and Christ, as sovereign Lord of the seas as well as of the dry land, made it well worth their while to observe his orders, he bringing together a prodigious number of fishes by his own influence upon them; so that the men immediately inclosed such a vast multitude, that the net began to tear by means of their bulk and struggling.

7 Hereupon, their partners being in the other boat, at a considerable distance out of call, they made signals for them to come with all speed to their assistance in drawing up the net: And they coming, helped them to manage it in such a manner, that they caught fishes enough to load both the boats with them, and even to overload them, so that they were in danger of sinking by the great weight of their cargo.

8 This was, in all the circumstances of it, such an unexpected display of divine knowledge and dominion, that when *Simon*, who was likewise called *Peter*, saw it, he threw himself down at Christ's feet: And instead of suing for pardoning and sanctifying grace to deliver him from the guilt and power of his sins, as he ought, and certainly would, had he then clearly understood on what a saving design Jesus came into the world; he, on the other hand, full of awful confusion and fear, as even good men used to be at any uncommon appearance of the divine presence, humbly besought him, saying, Lord, I beg that thou wouldst please to withdraw from me, and go out of my boat; for I am a sinful wretch, utterly unworthy and unable to stand in thy presence, and to converse with thee.

9 For he having used to fish in that sea many years, and never seen or heard of any thing like the success which ensued upon his obeying Christ's word, was struck with exceeding great amazement, as were also all the men in the boat with him, at the vast shoal which they so miraculously caught at one draught, after they had been toiling all night before to no manner of purpose.

10 *James* likewise and *John*, the two sons of *Zebedee*, who belonged to the other boat, and were partners with *Simon* in the fishing-trade, were much astonished at this event: And, to relieve them, Jesus, instead of taking *Simon*, as he justly might, at his word, spoke in a kind, meek, and encouraging manner to him, saying, Let not your fear and surprize thus overwhelm you, and make you rashly wish for

thou shalt catch men.

my absence, as if I were an enemy : What I have now done is an act of miraculous goodness, as well as power ; and I have further designs of much greater favour to you. As now you have caught a great multitude of fishes, by letting down your net at my order ; so I intend, from this time forward, to make you a minister and an apostle ; and by preaching the gospel, according to my command, and under my influence, you shall be as remarkably successful † in a better sort of fishing for the souls of men, that they may be drawn to me, and so may be brought out of a state of sin and misery into a state of salvation.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

11 In like manner he spoke to *Andrew*, *Simon's* brother, who was with him in the boat ; and soon after to *James* and *John*, who were in the other vessel, and whom Jesus afterward met ashore, (*Mat.* iv. 18, —22.) and his word went with such power to their hearts, that instead of going to make their market, they, amidst the greatest flush of prosperity in their fishing-trade, immediately threw up that employment, and all their worldly interests with it, and from that time forward constantly attended him as his disciples. (See the note on *Mark* i. 18.)

12 And it came pass, when he was in a certain city, behold, a man full of leprosy : who, seeing Jesus, fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

12 And while Jesus was travelling through *Galilee* with these disciples, as he was one day entering into a certain city ‡, behold, a man all over-spread with a leprosy, seeing him, fell prostrate before him, and humbly intreated him with great earnestness and importunity, saying, Lord, my case is very miserable and dangerous, past hope of relief by human means ; but I firmly believe, that, if thou pleasest, thou canst easily cleanse and heal me ; and, as I have heard of thy pity to others, I throw myself at thy foot for mercy.

13 And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will ; be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

13 Hereupon Jesus stretching forth his hand, laid it upon him, as a prophet might do on a leper ; and at the same time to shew that his will is no more to be distrusted than his power, he, like the sovereign Lord of all, said in an authoritative manner, “I will ; be thou cleansed.” And at that very instant, the man was perfectly cured of his leprosy, according to his faith in the *power* of Christ, and even beyond his faith in his *will*.

14 And he charged him to tell no man,

14 And Jesus peremptorily commanded him not to publish abroad what he had done : But, says he, go

N O T E S.

† This was remarkably fulfilled in the conversion of 3000 by means of *Peter's* first sermon after Christ's resurrection, (*Acts* ii. 41.)

‡ This was *Capernaum*, and Christ had

not yet entered into the city, as appears from *Mat.* viii. 1.—6. Accordingly the preposition *ν* may be rendered *at*, or *by*, as the preposition *ב* in the Hebrew is,

Job. v. 13. and x. 11.

man, but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

15 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

16 And he withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed.

17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

18 And behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him.

19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him down through the

go directly to a priest, whose office it is to judge of leprogies, and whether persons are cleansed from them or not, (*Lev. xiii. 2.*) and offer yourself to his examination, that he may pronounce you clean; and then perform the rites, which in that case are required by the law of *Moses*, in acknowledgment of your purification, (*Lev. xiv. 4,—7.*) that the most obstinate of the *Jews* may have a legal conviction of your being really cleansed, and of my divine power in healing you; and that none may object against me, as if I disregarded God's law.

15 But the man was so full of joy and ecstasy, and so desirous to spread the praises of his gracious benefactor, that seeming to forget himself, or not to understand the design of Christ's charge, he could not tell how to hold his peace: And Jesus became so very famous by this means, that prodigious multitudes flocked after him, to hear his excellent discourses, and to have their diseases healed.

16 And, the crowd being so great and continual, he privately retired, as he was often obliged to do, to some solitary place in the wilderness, that he might have opportunity to refresh himself, and to spend time alone in solemn prayer.

17 A while after this, he returned again to *Capernaum*; and one day, whilst he was preaching there in a house, (*Mark ii. 1.*) several of the *Pharisees* and *scribes*, the most captious of all the *Jews*, were sitting to hear him, that they, like spies, might seek occasions of quarrelling with him. For this purpose they came together from all parts; some from several towns and cities of *Galilee*, others from *Judea*, and others as far as from *Jerusalem* itself: And, in the presence of all these, the power of the Lord Jesus exerted itself in the miraculous cures of many that were sick of various distempers.

18 Among the rest, there was an astonishing instance. A certain man, being grievously afflicted with the palsy, was so very weak as to be brought in a couch, or bed, upon the shoulders of four of his friends, (*Mark ii. 3.*) who endeavoured to get him into the room where Jesus was, and lay him at his feet for a cure:

19 And when, after much striving, they found that all their attempts to carry him in at the door were in vain, because of the throng of people before it, they found means of getting up, on the outside of the house, to its flat roof; and there, breaking open a trap-door, they let him down, as he lay in his bed, into the very room where Jesus was preaching to the people. (See the note on *Mark ii. 4.*)

the tiling with *his* couch, into the midst before Jesus.

20 And, when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

23 Whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Rise up and walk?

24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise,

20 As soon as the man was in this manner laid at his feet, Jesus observing the greatness of the paralytic's faith, as well as of those that brought him, put a public honour upon it, saying to him with great tenderness, affection and authority, to shew his power and will to heal him, Son, your sins are pardoned; and you may confidently expect their penal effect, in your grievous distemper, to be removed.

21 The *scribes* and *Pharisees* hearing him pronounce the remission of this man's sins, in such a sovereign and absolute way, were filled with prejudices and envy against him, and reasoned in their own minds about it after this manner: Who does this man pretend to be, that he dares assume to himself, in this blasphemous style, the unalienable prerogative of Deity? For who but the great God himself, against whom all sins are committed, can have such absolute power to forgive them?

22 But Christ, being as privy to all their secret thoughts and whisperings, as if they had spoke them out, replied, Why do ye argue at this perverse and injurious rate, and entertain evil surmises against me, as if I were a blasphemer, on this account? I will put what I have said upon a fair trial, whether I am possessed of this peculiar property of God or not.

23 Is it not as much the prerogative of God †, merely by a sovereign absolute word of command, to restore this extremely weak paralytic to perfect health in an instant, as it is to forgive his sins? If I have power in myself to do one, is not that an evident proof of my authority to do the other likewise? Nay, if I blasphemed in what I said, would God ever suffer me to confirm it, by enabling this man to rise up immediately, and to walk away with full strength and vigour?

24 Now that ye may be plainly convinced, that I, who appear among you under the character of the Messiah, am indeed a divine person, and have power, even whilst I am here on earth, to pardon sin, I will give you a clear demonstration of it, by instantly removing this man's distemper, which (as all diseases are) is the fruit of sin: And then, turning to the sick man,

N O T E.

† If, as some pretend, Christ meant no more when he said, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*, than when he said, *Rise up and walk*, his question would seem to be very trifling, as amounting to no more than this, "Which is easier? to heal the man, or to heal him? To do what I mean under one of these forms of expression, or to do the same thing that I mean under

the other? To take off the palsy as the temporal punishment of his sin, or to cure it?" And as a proper forgiveness, with respect to the eternal punishment of sin, is ascribed to Christ, *Acts* vii. 60. and *Col.* iii. 13.; so it is here plainly distinguished from his healing the palsy; and the Pharisees evidently understood it in that manner. See the note on *Mat.* ix. 2.

rise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.

25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

27 And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom : and he said unto him, Follow me.

28 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

29 And Levi made him a great feast in his own house : and there was a great company of publicans, and of others that sat down with them.

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against

man, he spoke to him, with all the majesty and authority of a God, in the following manner : I absolutely command you to get up, and, in the presence of all this people, to carry home your bed.

25 And, at this word of command, the man was all at once restored to the perfect use of his limbs, and got up immediately in the sight of all then present ; and, as if nothing had ailed him, carried home the bed, on which he lay sick before, rejoicing and blessing God for the wonderful cure that was so suddenly and effectually wrought upon him.

26 Yea, all the common people likewise, though they had not just conceptions of Christ's acting by a divine power inherent in himself, were struck with the greatest astonishment, and ascribed glory to God for sending him among them ; and, at the same time, they were possessed with an awful reverence and dread, like persons apprehensive that the divine presence was in a sort of visible manner among them : And, upon the whole, they cried out, Such mighty works, and such a sovereign way of performing them, as we have seen to-day, are very surprising indeed, far beyond all that was ever seen or heard of before.

27 After this our Lord went out of *Capernaum* again : And as he was walking near the sea of *Galilee*, (Mark ii. 13.) he saw one *Levi*, who was also called *Matthew*, sitting at his office to receive the toll for goods which were carried over that sea : And Christ, preventing him with his loving-kindness, said, Come along with me, and I will make you an instrument of gathering the noblest tributes of praise and glory to God.

28 And these words were set home with such divine energy, that, without conferring with flesh and blood, he immediately obeyed the heavenly call, threw up his commission as a publican, quitted his great and exorbitant gains, and became a sincere disciple of Christ, accompanying him wherever he went.

29 And *Matthew's* soul was so inflamed with love to Christ, that he took an opportunity, being rich, to invite him and his disciples to a liberal entertainment at his own house : (*Mat.* ix. 9, 10.) And there he got together a great number of tax-gatherers, and others of his former companions, who were persons of ill repute among the people, to take part of the feast, that they might converse with Jesus, and be in the way of finding grace, as well as himself.

30 But some of the envious and hypocritical *scribes* and *Pharisees* observing this, were highly offended ; and, not daring to attack our Lord himself,

gainst his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

self, muttered to his disciples, hoping to prejudice them against him for it, saying, How shameful is this in your master, to bring you into company, and cause you, together with himself, to eat and drink so familiarly with such wicked wretches as these publicans, and the rest of the profligate sinners that are with him.

31 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician: but they that are sick.

31 Jesus knowing this, (for nothing could be hid from him) took up the argument; and, answering for his disciples, said, My conversing with this sort of men is not to approve of, or encourage them in, but to turn them from their iniquities: I go among them, as a physician does among his patients, to recover and heal them; and every one knows that a physician's work lies, not among the healthy, or such as think themselves so well as to have no occasion for him, but among those that are sick, and would be glad of his help.

32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

32 Accordingly my business, in coming into the world, is not to bring such to repentance as never sinned, if there were any of that character upon earth; nor can I reasonably hope for success in this work among those who are as conceited of their own righteousness as if they had no sin: But I am come to recover those sinners, and the chief among them, whose consciences convict them as transgressors, and who see and feel their spiritual sickness and danger, and are sensible that they need a cure. This sufficiently justifies my admitting the worst of men into my company, in order to their conversion and salvation.

33 And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

33 About this time some of *John's* disciples, (*Mat. ix. 14.*) being egged on by the *Pharisees*, took occasion to object against the more social and less austere way of living, which Christ allowed to his followers, than they themselves practised, saying to him, How comes it to pass, that while we, the disciples of *John the Baptist*, that unquestionably good and holy man; and while the *Pharisees*, who profess the strictest sanctity, are often engaged in days of solemn fasting and prayer, (see the note on *Mark ii. 18.*) your disciples nevertheless live more at large, and neglect these pious, humbling, and self-mortifying duties?

34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

34 Jesus, in reply, intimated to them, that every thing is beautiful in its season, saying, How unsuitable and improper would it be for the friends of a bridegroom, who are called to rejoice with him in the festivals of a wedding, to give themselves up, at that very time, to the austerities of fasting? As therefore your master, *John* himself, has truly called me the bridegroom of the church, (*John iii. 29.*)

it would be very unseasonable and unbecoming for my disciples to spend their time in fasting and mourning, whilst I am personally present with them.

35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

35 But it will not be long before I, with whom they now rejoice as with a bridegroom, shall be removed from them by death, and shall leave them exposed to many trials and dangers, which will furnish proper occasions for days of humiliation and fasting, with prayer.

36 And he spake also a parable unto them, No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old: if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old.

36 And still further to illustrate the matter, he added the following similitudes: As no one of common sense would go about to mend an old rotten garment with a piece of new strong cloth; or if any should be so imprudent as to attempt it, the strength of the new cloth would, upon every stretch, occasion a still greater breach in the old coat, and the new and old stuff would appear to be very improperly put together: (see the note on *Mat. ix. 16.*) So it would be utterly incongruous for my disciples to damp their rejoicings, in my presence, by the severities of abundant fastings.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

37 And as no prudent man fills old leathern bottles (see the note on *Mark ii. 22.*) with new and spirituous wine; if he should, the briskness of the wine would endanger the bursting of the bottles, and the loss of both: So my disciples being but weak and tender, and unaccustomed to fasting, they having been only publicans and fishermen, and being not yet thoroughly settled in their principles about the nature of my kingdom; it would be too great a burden and discouragement for them, to be put all at once upon severe abstinences and mortifications.

38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.

38 But as it is apparently best to put new fermenting wine into new bottles, which are ordinarily the strongest, and by that means both are most likely to be secured: So it is most suitable to my wisdom, tenderness and care, not to over-load my disciples, but to proportion their work and difficulties to their light and strength, and to the circumstances of things; and this makes all agreeable.

39 No man also, having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

39 And, to use a proverbial expression upon this occasion, As no person, who understands good wine, and has been used to that which is old, is presently brought to relish that which is new, but prefers the old to it: So the life and power of religion is, to experienced Christians, like old wine, vastly preferable, in their esteem, to all the noise and shew of bodily services, which are like the bouncing and frothing of new wine; and whatever advantage there may be in strict and frequent fastings, as subservient to self-denial, and a mortification of the flesh; yet these will

not be easily relished by such as have been always used to a freer way of living, till by degrees the soul finds the benefit of these duties, and they become familiar to it by practice.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How vile do we appear in our own eyes, when we see ourselves in the light of Christ's glory, who, like the God of nature, commanded the watery tribe to come into Peter's net, as an emblem of his powerful grace in gathering souls to himself, by the ministry of the gospel! But if we have right thoughts of him, as a Saviour, under our sense of sinfulness and unworthiness, we shall see a necessity of drawing near by faith to him, instead of desiring him to depart from us. To them that believe, he will grant remission of sins, and deliverance from all their dreadful effects: And how should our obtaining this mercy fill us with the highest rejoicing, thankfulness, and praise! If Jesus, seeing our faith, says to any of us, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," no powers of hell or earth can reverse the blessed sentence; and if he speaks to the heart, it readily yields to his command, who came to call the chief of sinners to repentance, and to bring salvation to them from all their iniquities and distresses. And O how abundant is his grace to repenting and believing souls! He takes them into a marriage-relation to himself, in which all their joys and griefs depend upon his presence with them, or his withdrawals from them: But he will never utterly leave nor forsake them; he will always espouse their cause, help them over their difficulties, proportion their work to their strength, and by degrees familiarize to them the most humbling and self-denying duties. And though days of fasting and prayer are not unnecessarily, much less superstitiously, to be multiplied; yet times of great affliction and trial are proper occasions for them; and Christ will incline and enable his disciples to perform those duties, in their season, to rich advantage.

C H A P. VI.

Christ shews the lawfulness of works of necessity and mercy on the Sabbath day, 1,—11. Retires for prayer, 12. Chuses twelve apostles, 13,—16. Heals many diseases, 17,—19. His sermon to his disciples and the multitude, about the happiness of faithful sufferers for his sake, 20,—23. The misery of having this world for a portion, 24,—26. Love to enemies, and doing good, 27,—38. Ministers and people known by their fruits, 39,—45. And the necessity of practising true religion, 46,—49.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, on the second Sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn-fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat,

PARAPHRASE.

NOW on the first Sabbath after the second day† of the passover, Jesus was going through a field of corn which was then near ripe; and his disciples, who were with him, being hungry, plucked some of the ears, as the law allowed; (*Deut.* xxiii. 25.) and, having cleared the corn from the chaff, by rubbing it in their hands, they staved their hunger with it.

2 But

NOTE.

† From this day were reckoned seven weeks to the feast of pentecost; and the first Sabbath after it was called σαββατον δουλῶν ἑβδομηκονταῖον. (See *Lightfoot* and *Whitby*.) And it is natural to suppose, this

being the Sabbath, that Jesus was either going to, or returning from, some synagogue, as is represented in the paraphrase on *Mat.* xii. 1.

eat, rubbing *them* in *their* hands.

2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath-days?

3 And Jesus answering them, said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungred, and they which were with him;

4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

6 And it came to pass also, on another Sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath-day; that they might find an accusation against him.

8 But he knew their

2 But (*δε*) some superstitious *Pharisees* being nigh, and observing this, took occasion to quarrel with the disciples, and tacitly to reflect upon their Lord himself for it †, saying, How dare ye, the followers of Jesus, profane the Sabbath at this rate, by doing what is equivalent to reaping, or dressing victuals, which are forbidden on God's holy day.

3 In answer to this cavil, and in defence of what the disciples had done, Jesus replied, Have ye, who pretend to so much skill and exactness in understanding and observing the law, never taken notice of what *David* and his company did, in a like case of necessity, when they were hungry in a journey? (1 *Sam.* xxi. 3,—6.)

4 Do not ye there read, how, on that occasion, he went into the court of the tabernacle, and took from thence some of the loaves that had been offered to God, which he and his followers eat, though, in the ordinary course of things, these were the portion of the priests, and the law allowed none but them to eat of it? and yet *David* was never charged with any crime for doing this; it was justifiable by the law of necessity and mercy; and so is what my disciples have now done.

5 And in further vindication of them, he added, That, as they did this in his own presence, and by his allowance, while they were attending upon him, they had a sufficient authority for it; because the institution of the Sabbath itself was from him, as the God of nature, and the God of *Israel*; and is subject to his explanations and alterations, as the Messiah and Head of the Church. (See the notes on *Mat.* xii. 8. and *Mark* ii. 28.)

6 On another Sabbath-day, also, he went into one of their synagogues to preach; and there was among the people a certain man whose right hand was wasted and shrunk, and rendered utterly incapable of any use or service.

7 And as the *Jewish* doctors and *Pharisees* knew that Christ had used to take pity on miserable objects, they carefully observed whether he would go about to cure this man; that, if he should, they might endeavour from thence to expose him to the people, as a profaner of the Sabbath himself, as well as a defender of those that, in their account, had broke it.

8 But Jesus, knowing the malicious and ill-natured, as well as superstitious thoughts, of their hearts, ordered

N O T E.

† In *Mat.* xii. 2. & *Mark* ii. 24. the *Pharisees* are represented as speaking after this manner to Christ, as they are here said to do to his disciples; but both might be true, they speaking first to one, and then to the other.

their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose, and stood forth.

9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the Sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

10 And, looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

ordered the man, whose hand was shriveled, to stand up in the midst of the assembly; thereby intimating that he intended to heal him: Accordingly the man stood up, in hopes of a cure.

9 Then Jesus turning to the *Pharisees*, who by this time had expressed their thoughts, as if it were not lawful for him to heal on that day †, he said unto them, I will make one appeal to your own consciences, and demand your answer: Is it most lawful, honourable, and pleasing to God, and most agreeable to the design of a Sabbath, to perform an act of so much mercy and goodness without delay, as healing this man, and thereby preserving his life ‡, and making him capable of hereafter getting a livelihood? Or, under a pretence of strictness, in observing this holy day, to be so hard-hearted and cruel, as to let him continue languishing, and incapable of getting a subsistence, when only by a word's speaking I can recover him?

10 And as they made no reply, because they could think of none that might serve their own turn, he, first looking round about upon them for a while with holy indignation and grief at the hardness of their hearts, (*Mark* iii. 4, 5.) and then turning to the poor man, commanded him, with all the majesty of a God, to stretch out his withered hand: And he instantly enabled him so to do; it being perfectly restored to its proper size and strength, colour and activity, equal to the other.

11 Hereupon the *Pharisees*, instead of admiring Christ's power and goodness, were filled with the utmost rage and fury at his having so openly exposed them, and gained such reputation to himself; in so much that they resolved, if possible, to be his death, and consulted one with another, and with the *Herodians*, what steps to take for accomplishing it. (*Mark* iii. 6.)

12 About this time Jesus, having made many disciples by means of his preaching and miracles, retired one evening to the top of a hill for secret prayer; and, as a particular design of the greatest importance then lay immediately before him, he spent the whole night in solemn devotions, to recommend it, and all concerned

N O T E S.

† It is probable that, upon Christ's bidding the man stand forth, by which they perceived that he designed to heal him, they asked the question which is recorded, *Matth.* xii. 10.

saving his life, seems to intimate, as some of the ancients supposed, that by the loss of his right hand he was disabled from getting his living; he having no other way to subsist himself, and his family, if he had one, than by the labour of his hands.

‡ Christ calling the cure of this man,

cerned in it, to his Father's blessing, in a house of prayer (ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ †.)

13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples; and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named Apostles;

13 And the next morning, ordering all his disciples to draw near, he, by a sovereign act of his own will, as Lord of his kingdom, chose from among them twelve †, whom he called apostles, or extraordinary messengers; and whom he authorized, as his chief ministers, to be his special witnesses, and to publish the gospel, and work miracles in confirmation of it.

14 Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

14 Now the names of the twelve were these: *Simon*, whom Christ surnamed *Peter*; and *Andrew*, *Simon's* brother; *James* and *John*, who were likewise brethren according to the flesh, being the sons of *Zebedee*, and were made brethren in Christ, as well as in the apostleship; || *Philip* and *Bartholomew*;

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes,

15 *Matthew* the publican; and *Thomas*, who was more incredulous than all the rest of the apostles about Christ's resurrection; *James* the son of *Alphaeus*, who was likewise called *James the Less*, and the brother of our Lord; and *Simon Zelotes*, who was also known by the name of *Simon the Canaanite*;

16 And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

16 *Judas* or *Jude*, who was likewise called *Lebbeus*, and surnamed *Thaddeus*; and last of all was *Judas Iscariot*, who proved the perfidious traitor of his Lord.

17 And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out

17 Jesus having chosen these twelve apostles, who ever afterwards attended him as his family, he came down with them to a lower flat part of the mountain, where he stood § ready to receive all that should come to him; and immediately the company of disciples that used to follow him resorted to him again; and, his

N O T E S.

† The Jews had (προσευχαί) oratories, or houses of prayer, in fields and mountains, for retirement, and for the convenience of such travellers as might come those ways: And it seems that our Lord spent the night in prayer in one of these houses. *Vid. Vitring. de Synag. Vet. l. i. p. i. c. i.*

‡ The number of the apostles was twelve, answerable to the number of the tribes of *Israel* that sprang from the twelve sons of *Jacob*. And these twelve apostles were, under Christ, the spiritual fathers of the New-Testament church, begetting them to him by the gospel.

|| This *Philip* was not the deacon and evangelist of that name, spoken of *Acts* vi. & viii.; but we read of him, *John* i. vi. xii. & xiv. And some think, that *Bartholomew* was *Nathanael*; see *Hammond* on *John* i. 42. And for an account

of several others, see the notes on *Mat.* x. 3, 4. and *Mark* ii. 14.

§ Τοῦτο ἐπέδωκε may very well signify a flat and even part of the mountain toward the foot of it; and so it agrees with *Mat.* v. 1. if this and that relate to the same discourse. And after all that commentators have said, *pro* and *con*, it may be more natural to suppose, that this is rather, partly an abstract, and partly an enlargement of Christ's sermon on the mount, *Mat.* v. &c. than another discourse delivered at a different time and place: And the chief objection against this supposition seems to be removed, if he was then on a plain part toward the foot of the mountain; or if, as some think, he, being pressed by the multitude in the plain, went up the hill again to preach to them.

all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed *them* all.

20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed *be ye* poor: for your's is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed *are ye* that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed *are ye* that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

his fame being spread far and wide, a great multitude of people flocked about him, from all the towns and villages of *Judea*, and from *Jerusalem* itself, and from those parts of the sea-coast that lay toward *Tyre* and *Sidon*: Some came a great way to hear him preach, and others to be cured of their various distempers;

18 And some that were miserably possessed of devils, and thereby dispossessed of themselves, were brought to him: And all diseases and evil spirits, how great or many soever, flew away at his command, who, in an instant, recovered them that were afflicted.

19 Yea, so visible and remarkable was the divine power by which he healed them, that every one who wanted to be freed from any kind of malady, pressed hard to come at him, believing that, if they could but touch him, they should certainly be cured; and it was to them according to their faith: For efficacious influence not only came at his will and word, but proceeded from his own person, as the fountain of all power, to the healing of every one of them. (See the note on *Mark* v. 30.)

20 And as he was the great Physician of souls, as well as bodies, so he preached the gospel of his grace to them that came to hear him; when, looking upon his disciples, he began with saying, in the audience of the people, Ye are greatly blessed indeed who are among the poor of this world, and have left all its allurements to follow me; and who are so meek and lowly in heart, under an affecting sense of your utter insufficiency, sinfulness, and unworthiness, as to renounce all trust and confidence in your own wisdom, strength, and righteousness: For ye are the subjects of the kingdom of grace, to whom all its blessings belong; and are intitled to the kingdom of glory, which shall be your inheritance for ever.

21 Blessed are ye who willingly suffer hardships and hunger for my sake, and are more earnest in your desires and pursuits after spiritual and eternal blessings than after your necessary food: For all these appetites of your renewed souls shall be certainly and abundantly satisfied. Whatsoever the world may think of you, ye are really blessed, whose outward circumstances are now afflictive on my account; and whose inward grief and mourning for sin, and for the dishonour done to my name, are still more touching to you: For ye shall have secret consolations to sweeten these troubles; and in a little time everlasting joy and gladness shall be upon your heads, and all your sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

22 Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from *their company*, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

24 But wo unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

25 Wo unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Wo unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

26 Wo unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

27 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them

22 Once more, Blessed are ye, even when the wicked of the earth shall be full of enmity and spite against you, and refuse to have any society with you, in civil or sacred concerns; and when they shall load you with infamous slanders, as if ye were the most detestable wretches on earth, and shall pass unrighteous decrees against you, merely for your faithful adherence to the true Messiah.

23 Think of these things as your glory: Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, that ye are counted worthy to suffer shame for my name's sake: For observe what I say, heaven will make you a rich and everlasting amends for all your tribulations in this world. And ye are herein only the brethren and companions of the best men that ever lived upon earth: For, in former days, the ancestors of these wicked persecutors used the most famous prophets, and holy men of God, in the like barbarous manner; and as ye have fellowship with them in their sufferings, ye shall likewise be partakers of their glory.

24 But, on the contrary, dreadful is the case of those among you, whether ye profess to be my disciples or not, who are rich in your own conceits, self-opinionated and self-righteous; and who trust in the riches of this world, as if your happiness lay in them: For ye already have your all; and as your consolation is more imaginary than real, and there will be none after it, it is but a miserable portion.

25 Wo unto those of you that are so full of yourselves, and of creature-comforts, as to desire nothing better! For ye shall hereafter be entirely destitute of every thing that is good; and your eager, painful appetites for happiness shall never be satisfied. Wo unto those of you, that now spend your days in jollity, mirth, and pleasure, are strangers to godly sorrow, and indulge yourselves in sensual delights! For all your joy shall soon be turned into bitter mourning, weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, for ever.

26 And a heavy wo lies upon those of you who, preferring the applause of men to the favour of God, temporize and sly at nothing to gain the goodwill and good word of every man, and study to accommodate yourselves to their lusts and passions, that they may flatter you, as ye do them! For it was by these means that men, in former ages, were generally brought to caress hypocritical and false prophets, more than the true and faithful servants of God.

27 But to proceed: I say unto every one of you that hear me preach, Do not confine your love, as ye have been taught by the rabbies, to your own countrymen, friends, and relations, nor to those of your

them which hate you;

25 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek, offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also.

30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask *them* not again.

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners

own religion; but bear all good-will, even to your enemies, and be so just to them as to have a due esteem of every thing that is valuable in them, or done by them: And how inveterate soever they may be against you, be ye so far their friends, as to do what in you lies to promote their happiness.

28 Speak as well as you can of them, and wish all good to them, who revile and imprecate the worst of evils upon you; and instead of returning their injurious and spiteful usage, recommend them to the mercy of God, begging that he would convince them of their iniquities, change their hearts, and forgive them; and that he would restrain and defeat their wicked purposes, and be better to them than they are to you, or than ye yourselves can be to them.

29 And if the violence, which any one offers, be as affronting and provoking to your person † as a cuff on the ear or face, and as injurious to your property as taking away an useful garment; rather yield to his repeating the affront and injury, than gratify malicious resentment in righting yourself. If you cannot readily get relief by legal authority, and in methods becoming Christian charity, rather suffer wrong, than seek private revenge, or than indulge a litigious quarrelsome temper by expensive and tedious law-suits, in which the remedy may be worse than the disease.

30 If any one, whether friend or enemy, asks relief; and you are well satisfied he is in want, be ready to give to him according to your ability; and if any honest man has borrowed your money, or taken your goods upon trust, and is not able to return or pay for them, do not arrest the poor insolvent debtor, and throw him into prison, nor be severe in demanding what cannot be had.

31 And let this be the general rule of your conduct toward every one, in all situations of life, Whatsoever, upon serious, cool, and disinterested consideration, ye would think to be fit and reasonable, in equity or charity, in honour or conscience, for others to do, or refrain doing to you, were ye in their circumstances, and they in your's; put yourselves into their place, so as to make their case your own, and do, or forbear, the very same things to them.

32, 33, 34 These are the holy, excellent and distinguishing duties of religion, which I enjoin upon them that would be my disciples: For if ye only return love to those that have an affection for you, and are kind only to them that are so to you, and lend

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only

N O T E.

† These seem to have been proverbial expressions, to signify an invasion of the tenderest points of honour and property.

ners also love those that love them.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil.

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

only to them from whom ye expect to receive again as much, or more, what is there in all this that can be of any account with God? Or what man will have any great esteem of this, or think himself obliged to you for it? For the common principles of humanity and prudence, of gratitude and justice, yea, of interest itself, naturally prompt to these things. And all this is no more than, generally speaking, people do who know nothing of God, and have no conscience, or principle of religion to govern them. It is no more than is done by the very heathens, nay, by the publicans themselves, who, as ye yourselves judge, stand in the rank of the worst of sinners, and are some of the most self-interested, covetous, and oppressive sort of men in the world; and they do all this to persons as bad as themselves. If therefore ye go no further than this, what do ye more than others? or what are ye better than they?

35 But I insist upon it, as ever ye would be my disciples indeed, That ye be kind even to such as injure you; that ye do good, and lend, as there may be occasion, to them from whom ye can reasonably hope for no returns. And know, for your encouragement, that whatsoever ye thus do from a principle of faith in me, and of love and obedience to me; the less hope ye have of a due reward from men, the greater shall be your reward of grace from God, who will often return it with large increase in this world, and will certainly remember and own it to your everlasting advantage in the next: And ye will hereby resemble, and shew yourselves to be, the children of your heavenly Father; for in his providential dispensations, he is merciful and good to the ungrateful and wicked, as well as to the thankful and holy.

36 Let it therefore be your highest ambition and concern, that ye may have grace to imitate the blessed and glorious God himself, as children of his own likeness, in extending your beneficence and charity, as far as possible, to all sorts of men, whether they be friends or foes, good or bad.

37 Moreover, take heed of rashly censuring others, or judging their hearts and their eternal state: And do not be forward to aggravate any one's crime, or utterly condemn him in doubtful cases, or for a single act, as ever ye would not be judged and condemned by others, nor by the great God, for your uncharitableness, and for taking his judgment into your own hands: And when, in private, personal affairs, any offend you; put the most favourable construction on their conduct, and be ready to pass it by, as ever ye desire and hope for forgiveness from those

those whom ye yourselves may disoblige; and especially from God, against whom, *in many things, ye all offend.* (Jam. iii. 2.)

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.

38 And whenever ye are called to charitable distributions, give freely and liberally, as ye are able, and as need requires; and God will, one way or other, return blessings upon you, either in kind or value, with such an advantageous overplus, as shall be like not barely filling, but even thrusting and heaping a bushel, till it runs over: For according to the true meaning of a proverbial expression, *He that sows or gives sparingly, shall reap or receive sparingly: And he that sows bountifully, shall also reap bountifully.* (2 Cor. ix. 6.)

39 And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind: shall they not both fall into the ditch?

39 Our Lord likewise took occasion to caution the people, under the covert of a parable †, against ignorant and false teachers, and particularly the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, those blind guides, and to warn his disciples against being like them; saying, "If one blind man leads another, what can be expected but that they both should fall into mischief:" Thereby intimating, that if any ignorant and erroneous preacher, who knows not God and the way of salvation, pretends to teach others, and they give themselves up to his guidance, they are all in the utmost danger of falling into the pit of destruction, and of perishing there together; the people without excuse, and the preacher with high aggravations of his sin and misery.

40 The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

40 Whatsoever difficulties and sufferings therefore, said he, may attend my followers in observing and communicating the better instructions which I have given them in my doctrine and example, let them not think much at it: For the disciple should not expect to be exempted from doing what his master doth, nor from suffering what he submitteth to; but the highest perfection of a disciple lies in his being like his master, and learning of him.

41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the

41 And let him who would be duly qualified to instruct and reform others, begin first at home: For how preposterous and unbecoming is it for any of you to be quick-sighted in discerning, and severe in aggravating and censuring, even the smallest failings of

N O T E.

† As parables were suited to prevent prejudices against the truths intended by them, and to stir up inquiries after them: (see the note on *Mat.* xiii. 3.) So Christ sometimes spake by them for gracious information to his own disciples, and for righteous concealment from others who wilfully shut their eyes against clearer

light. *Mat.* xiii. 10, 11, 13. And at other times he used them, when he knew that plain and open declarations would too much provoke the passions of his hearers, and that they could not be borne, *Mark* iv. 33. It is for this reason that he seems to use the parable of the blind leading the blind.

the beam that is in thine own eye?

42 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

43 For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit: neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

44 For every tree is known by his own fruit: for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes.

45 A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the

of others; but, at the same time, to be blind, or exceeding favourable, to your own more heinous crimes, so as to overlook, extenuate, and excuse them, as if they were mere trifles, or there were no harm in them?

42 Or how can you be fit to correct lesser matters that are amiss in your brother, and with what face can you attempt it, while you take no notice of your own much greater faults; or if you are conscious of them, take no care about redressing them? This is the grossest hypocrisy: And whatsoever such an one may pretend to, he is no enemy to sin, as such; but is rather an enemy to his brother, than to his sin; nor is he like to do much good by his reproofs. If therefore you would act a wise, an upright, and a successful part in correcting and instructing others, begin first with your own hearts and ways; see that they be purified from the guilt and power of all iniquity; and then you will be more capable of reproving and directing your brother with judgment, decency, and authority, and more likely to succeed in it.

43 For every man is good or bad, according to his governing principle; and his life will be answerable to it. As the fruit of a good tree is excellent, and that of a bad one is worthless, according to their respective kinds: So a good man and holy minister, whose heart is renewed by grace, brings forth the genuine fruits of righteousness in his life and doctrine; and an unrenewed man and corrupt minister, whose principles are wrong, brings forth fruits of iniquity and falsehood in his conversation and ministrations; nor can the contrary to this be reasonably expected from them severally.

44 For as men rightly judge of the nature of a tree, by the sort of fruit it bears; so they may of peoples prevailing thoughts and dispositions, by their tendencies and effects: For as, in the natural and vegetable world, every thing produces according to its own nature, fig-trees figs, and vines grapes, neither of which can grow upon thorn-trees and bramble-bushes: So, in the spiritual and moral world, gracious and holy men and ministers bring forth spiritual and holy words and actions; and unregenerate carnal men cannot produce fruits of righteousness in their lives and ministry, while their notions are corrupt and their hearts vicious.

45 This may be further illustrated by the nature of a fountain: As a clear and sweet spring will send forth clean and pleasant water; so the man, whose heart is enriched with stores of spiritual knowledge and grace, will bring forth such things in his life as are savoury and edifying, and well-pleasing in God's sight:

the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

46 And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like.

48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock; and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it; for it was founded upon a rock.

49 But he that heareth and doeth not, is like a man that, without a foundation, built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that

fight: And, on the other hand, as a filthy, muddy spring will send forth foul and nauseous streams; so a graceless man, whose heart is full of vile lusts and corrupt affections, will vent such things as are offensive to God, and injurious to himself and others: For mens language and behaviour will be according to the prevailing thoughts and bias of their hearts.

46 Now, to apply all this to yourselves: What signifies your pretending relation to me; or your verbal acknowledgments of me, with seeming respect, as your Lord; or your loud addresses, with seeming earnestness and importunity, to me as such; or even your preaching in my name to others? How preposterous and absurd, how vain and hypocritical, is all this; what an affront to me, and what a cheat upon yourselves? Or with what face can ye do it, or what good ends can ye propose to yourselves by it, if, at the same time, ye do not receive me and my words into your hearts by faith, nor yield yourselves up to mine authority, nor act suitable to your profession of my name?

47, 48 The case of sincere believers, and of hypocritical professors, may be fitly represented by this plain similitude: Whoever comes by faith to me, attends to my doctrine, and heartily falls in with it, that he may observe and put it into practice; he is like a careful, prudent man, who, being to build an house, dug away the loose ground, till he could lay its foundation upon a solid rock; and this was such a strengthening to it, that no floods or storms could undermine or overset it: So the true believer cannot satisfy himself with notions and professions, or superficial pretences in religion, but searches till he finds a sure foundation to rest upon; and then builds, by a practical faith, on the Rock of ages; and being founded on this Rock, no temptations or terrors, persecutions or dangers, how furiously soever they may beat upon him and shake him, shall ever be able to overthrow and ruin him in his spiritual and eternal concerns; he will endure to the end, and be saved.

49 But, on the contrary, whoever only gives my word the hearing, and takes up with a bare profession of my name, without concerning himself any further; he is like a foolish, weak man, who, being to build an house, took no manner of care about its foundation; but set it upon loose or sandy ground, which had no strength or firmness in it; and as soon as ever any flood or storm beat upon it, down it fell, to its utter ruin. So will it be with the hypocritical false professor: He, having no solid support for his pretences to religion or his hopes of happiness, will never

that house was never be able to stand in a day of great trial; but great. when the times run against him, and grievous persecutions befall him for the gospel's sake, he will prove a sad apostate in this world, and perish with a vengeance in the world to come.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How consistent are works of necessity and mercy with the sanctification of a sabbath to the Lord! and yet how vain are pleas from thence against a religious observation of the Lord's day! Christ's authority is a sufficient answer to the cavils of men; but is not to be stretched beyond his design. He knows all our thoughts, and sees when any one's eye is evil, because his is good; and we, after his example, should never be afraid of doing good, how much soever others may be enraged at it, or how maliciously soever they may reproach us for it: It is our duty to attempt every thing that he commands us, in hope of strength from him to enable us to perform it; but we, like him, should give ourselves to prayer, especially when important affairs lie before us. How wonderful and effectual are Christ's works of power and mercy! They are blessed indeed, whom he blesses; but they must be dreadfully miserable that fall under his wo and curse. O what rich advantages will the saint have over the sinner in the other world; and what a wide difference is there in their rewards, how much soever the sinner may prosper, and the saint may be afflicted here! And amidst all the trials of the present life, how beneficent and kind, beautiful and excellent, is the spirit and design of Christianity, which calls us to an imitation of our heavenly Father, in his most amiable and endearing perfections and operations, to forgive injuries, and to overcome evil with good! It is a great thing to be a Christian indeed; and what a reproach is it for persons of that character, not to do more than others toward God, and toward enemies as well as friends! What occasion have they for daily humiliation and repentance, on account of their continual fallings short of the glory of God: And what need of daily forgiveness for daily sins! Were we more sensible of our own defects, we should be less severe in our censures of others: but holy men are the fittest and most likely to be instruments of promoting holiness in those about them. It therefore highly concerns us to take heed whom we hear and follow, and how we teach and lead: Our chief ambition should be to copy after Christ; and if we are but conformed to him in his holiness, we shall not think much at being so in his sufferings. The great end of hearing his doctrine is, to receive it by faith, and practise it in evangelical obedience: For true religion begins in the change of a man's heart: and the only way of others judging concerning it, is by the fruits it produces in his life. If we indeed come to Christ, and receive him with such a faith as works by love, we rest on a sure foundation; and, whatsoever our temptations and difficulties may be, we shall hold on, and hold out, to our eternal safety and joy: But if we take up with hypocritical pretences, shows, and forms, without the power of religion, we shall certainly miscarry in a day of trial, to our present shame, and everlasting ruin.

C H A P. VII.

Christ cures the centurion's servant, 1,—10. Raises the widow's son from the dead at Nain, 11,—18. John's messengers to Christ, and his answer to them, 19,—23. His account of John, and of his ministry, 24,—30. His reproof of the Jews for rejecting both John and himself, 31,—35. And his illustration of God's free forgiveness, with its effects, by the similitude of a forgiven debtor, 36,—50.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW when he had ended all his
 NOW when our Lord had finished the afore-mentioned discourse, which he delivered in a public man-

his sayings in the audience, of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this :

5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself : for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof.

manner to his disciples and abundance of other people then present, he went to *Capernaum*, the place of his most usual residence.

2 And at this city there was a servant of a certain Roman captain over an hundred soldiers, who was much esteemed by his master, and lay dangerously sick of a palsy, (*Mat. viii. 6.*) just upon the point of death, and past all hope of recovery by any human means.

3 And when the captain heard of Christ's miracles, and of his arrival at that place, he believed that this wonderful person could heal his servant : But, being himself a *Gentile*, and a *Roman* officer, thought it might be too presumptuous to go in person and ask such a favour ; and therefore, in testimony of his own humility, and great respect to Jesus, he got some of the *Jewish* elders, men of character, to go to him, and earnestly entreat that he would come to his house, and cure his sick servant. (See the note on *Mat. viii. 5, 6.*)

4 Accordingly, when these messengers came to our blessed Lord, they were very urgent with him to gratify the centurion ; and, to enforce his request, said for him what he never would have said for himself, *viz.* That he was worthy, not only of regard from the *Jewish* nation, who were highly indebted to him ; but even of Christ's kindest notice, as if he were obliged to shew him this favour :

5 For, say they, though he be a *Roman* officer, yet he has a great affection for us *Jews*, and for our religion † ; and, in testimony of his faith in the God of *Israel*, he himself has, at his own proper cost and charges, built us a synagogue for divine worship.

6 Then Jesus, who loves to encourage, and grant the requests of humble souls, readily went with the messengers, in order to his working the cure for which they came to him : And as soon as the centurion heard of his condescension and grace in coming with such a design toward his house, he still humbled himself yet more and more, and sent other friends to meet him in the way ; and they, personating the centurion, said, Lord, It is too much for thee to give thyself the trouble of coming home to me : I am far from insisting upon this ; for, whatever kind things others may say of me, I am a poor *Gentile* sinner, who

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† He probably had acquainted himself with the law and the prophets whilst he lived among the *Jews*, and from thence had conceived a good opinion of them, as the people of God ; and his

loving their nation relates to his respect to them above all other nations, though it cannot be supposed that he had an esteem for every individual person among them.

7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers: and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

11 And it came to

who cannot but think myself utterly unworthy of being honoured with thy presence in my house.

7 This thought prevented me, otherwise I had certainly waited in person upon thee; and I much more count myself unworthy of thy coming unto me: Besides, I am well satisfied that there is no need of thy stooping thus far to such a poor sinful wretch as I am, in order to thy answering my request; but that, wheresoever thou art, if thou wilt only give the word of command, my servant shall be as effectually recovered as if thou wert corporally present with him.

8 For even I, (*καὶ γὰρ ἐγώ*) a mean, petty officer, have such authority over my band of soldiers, that, whenever I give the word of command, they readily obey me, and go and come, and do this and the other business, according to my appointment, whether I am present or not: How much more canst thou, who exercisest absolute power † in the way of thy working, like the sovereign Lord of sickness and health, life and death, secure obedience to thy orders; so that all distempers must come and go at thy command, whenever thou pleasest, and wherever thou art?

9 When Jesus heard these uncommon expressions of the centurion's faith, attended with such profound reverence and humility; though he could not but know it before-hand, being himself the author of it, he seemed as if he were mightily surpris'd at it, as people use to be at rare and unexpected events: And, turning to the company that were going along with him, he spake of it to them in terms of high admiration and applause, saying, to the centurion's honour, and the reproach of the *Jews*, I have not met with any instance of so remarkably eminent and humble a faith before, no, not among God's own covenant-people, the *Israelites* themselves, as has now been manifested by this *Gentile* officer, from whom there was little room to expect any at all.

10 And as Christ thus commended, so he graciously owned and answered his faith; (*Mat. viii. 13.*) for as soon as the centurion's friends returned home, they found his servant perfectly recovered from his late dangerous disease.

11 As Jesus always went about doing good, so the

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† When we observe how the expressions of the centurion answer to what he may be supposed to have read, about the sovereign dominion that was peculiarly ascribed to the God of *Israel*, in ordering distempers to go and come at his pleasure,

(*Deut. vii. 15. & xxxii. 39. & 1 Sam. ii. 6.*) we can hardly forbear thinking that he believed in Christ, as a divine Person, who could send or take off distempers, in a sovereign manner, by his bare word, whenever he pleased.

to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the bier, (and they that bare him stood still:) and he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

15 And he that was dead, sat up, and began to speak: and he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

17 And this rumour

the next day he turned his course to a certain town called *Nain*, in the outward border of *Iffachar* toward *Samaria*; and several of his disciples, with great multitudes of other people, accompanied him thither.

12 Now as he approached the entrance into the town, observe, a remarkable opportunity offered for displaying his divine power: He met with a dead man, whom the *Jews*, according to their custom, were carrying upon a bier to bury him in a place out of the city; and whom, being the only son of a widow, she, with a great company of her friends and neighbours, were attending to his funeral.

13 When therefore, the Lord Jesus saw the tender mother bitterly lamenting the loss of her son †, he, of his own mere goodness, without any one's speaking to him, was moved with compassion towards her; and, resolving in himself what to do, spoke in a friendly manner to her, saying, Do not take on at this mournful rate for the death of your son.

14 Upon which they that carried the corpse made a stop to see what Jesus intended to do; and he, coming up, laid his hand upon the bier on which the dead body lay; and, with the majesty and authority of a God, said, Young man, I command thee to get up.

15 As soon as Jesus had uttered these words, the dead man instantly rising, sat upon the bier, and began to speak in the audience of the people, as if nothing had ailed him: And Christ restored him to his mother alive and well, that he might be a comfort to her, and that every one might be fully satisfied of his being truly raised from the dead.

16 And all the company were struck with awful fear and wonder, to see a dead man immediately recovered to life by a sovereign word of command: And, being convinced that nothing less than the power of God himself was in it, they broke out into thankful and admiring praises, saying, An extraordinary prophet, even the great Messiah himself, whom we expected, is come amongst us; (*John* vi. 14.) and God at length (*επισκεψατο*) has looked upon his people *Israel* in much mercy, to redeem them from all their troubles. (*Chap.* i. 68.)

17 And this miracle was so evident ‡, unexceptionable,

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† He probably had been the chief support and comfort of her widowhood.

‡ It is horrid and ridiculous trifling, instead of arguing, for any infidels to insinuate, without the least foundation, against the plainest matter of fact, as if

this young man was not really dead, but was only in a sort of lethargy: For his mother, and other relations and friends, certainly believed him to be dead; and he being an only son, for whom there was so much lamentation, we may be

mour of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

18 And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

19 And John calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them unto Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto him, They said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits: and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

22 Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your way and tell John what things ye have

tionable, and divine, that it could not be concealed or denied; but the report of it was spread to Christ's honour, and became the subject of common conversation far and near, through the whole province of Judea, and all the countries on every side that bordered upon it.

18 Among others, there were some disciples of *John the Baptist*, who, seeming to be concerned for his credit, and envious of Christ's growing reputation, went to their master in prison, and told him all that they had seen or heard, of this and other wonderful miracles, that they might have his opinion of him who wrought them.

19 And as *John* had all along directed his disciples to Christ, so he was desirous to have matters further cleared up and confirmed to them concerning him: And therefore, singling out two of them, who might be depended upon as faithful witnesses, he ordered them to go, as from himself, to Jesus, and ask him this plain question, Whether he was indeed the Messiah, (*o egxomenos*) who, according to ancient prophecy, should come into the world; or whether they were to expect any other person under that character?

20 Accordingly, when the two messengers came to Jesus, they told him, *John the Baptist* had sent them to desire that he would please to satisfy them, whether he was indeed the promised Messiah, whom they expected to come into the world? or whether they were still to wait for the appearance of some other?

21 And at the very instant of their arrival, Jesus was working, and went on to work many miracles, in healing all sorts of diseases, casting devils out of persons that were possessed, and restoring sight to the blind, and to do other acts of mercy and power that were prophesied of, as to be particularly performed by the Messiah. (*Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. and lxi. 1.*)

22 Then, turning to the messengers, he ordered them to go back to *John*, and tell him all that they themselves had been eye and ear-witnesses of, as certain proofs of his being the true Messiah; particularly, that he opened the eyes of the blind, made the lame to walk, cleansed lepers, restored the deaf to their

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sure they would never have attempted to bury him had there been the least ground of suspicion to the contrary. Besides, if the notion that infidels have of Christ were true, how could he, coming by as a stranger, know better than all the young man's own acquaintance, that he was only in a lethargy? Or, if he fancied

such a thing, how could he tell that he would awake out of it just at the minute when he should touch the bier and speak to him? and why should he, of his own accord, hazard his reputation so far, as to offer to raise him to life, upon such unlikely suppositions in his own mind?

have seen, and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

24 And, when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind:

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings courts.

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea,

their hearing, and even raised the dead to life again; that he did all these in a sovereign, godlike manner, barely with a touch or a word, according to his own will; and that the gospel, for the confirmation of which he wrought these miracles, was preached to, and mostly received by, the poor of this world, and was heartily embraced by meek and humble souls.

23 And to all this our Lord further added, He, and he only, is happy, and shall be so for ever, who is not prejudiced against me; nor rejects me by unbelief; nor is ashamed to own me, on account of my spiritual, self-denying, and holy doctrine, or the meanness of my appearance and followers, or the envy of mine enemies, and the like.

24 When *John's* disciples were gone back to him † with this answer, Jesus began to speak to the common people with high commendation of him, and of his ministry, saying, What end did ye propose to yourselves in flocking after *John*, when he preached and baptized in the desert? Did ye follow him for nothing? Or did ye go to see and hear a whimsical man talking backward, and forward, in the testimony he gave to me? If so, this was mere trifling indeed, like running to see a reed shaken to and fro with the wind: But he certainly was another-guests person; his doctrine was important, and always the same; and you ought to have been steadfast in your adherence to it.

25 What was it then that ye followed him for? Did ye expect to meet with a man appearing in all the pomp, luxury, and gaieties of this world, that ye might gratify your curiosity with such a sight? Or did ye go to hear him, and to be baptized by him, in pursuit of temporal honours? This was as foolish, as it was unworthy: For a man of such a character, and promoting such views was to be expected in a royal court; and would have appeared in another sort of place, and made another sort of figure, than *John* did.

26 If then it was not with such expectations as these, What was it that ye went out after him for? Was it to hear a prophet of the Lord? Thus I know ye

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† Christ did not speak the following things in the hearing of *John's* disciples, lest he should seem to flatter *John*, or to puff up his pride, or to compliment him into an adherence to his former testimony to himself. As to avoid all suspicions of this kind, he held no correspondence with *John* in prison, nor did any thing to set him at liberty; so, for like rea-

sons, he might defer this commendation of him till the messengers were gone; and then deliver it to the people, to prevent all imaginations as if *John* were wavering in his former opinion, and had sent the two disciples on this errand for his own rather than their satisfaction about his being the Christ.

Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

31 And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another,

ye then thought him to be, and ye thought right: For I tell you, that he was indeed a prophet sent from God to reveal his mind and will, and to tell you things to come; yea, he did more than any of the prophets that went before him, as he plainly pointed out the Messiah himself, and shewed him to the people as already present among them.

27 So great a man was John in his office, that he is the very person of whom the Jehovah of Israel said, (*Mal. iii. 1.*) *Behold, I will send my messenger before the Messiah's face, as his immediate harbinger, to tell the Jews of his being just at hand, and to turn their eyes toward him that they may receive him: (see the note on Mat. xi. 10.)* In this, John excelled all that went before him.

28 For I assure you that, on this very account, none of the holy prophets, born of women, ever were so great and eminent in their light and work as John the Baptist; and yet, great as he was, in what he saw and said concerning the Messiah, the meanest faithful minister in my kingdom shall know and preach more of me, and so shall be more excellent and honourable in his work and office, than John himself; and the weakest true believer, under the gospel-state shall exceed him, in his knowledge of my person and office, righteousness and grace.

29 And, as his ministry was so eminent, great multitudes of the common people, yea, even some of the publicans themselves, men of the vilest characters, were so wrought upon by means of his preaching, that they justified God as righteous, and condemned themselves as sinners, when they heard John speak of the wrath to come; and they publicly owned him, and his doctrine, to be of God, by their so readily submitting to his baptism.

30 But the men of figure and learning, and high conceit of themselves, such as the self-righteous Pharisees and the scribes, refused and despised John's doctrine and baptism, and thereby turned that dispensation of God's wisdom and grace toward them into an aggravation of their own guilt and condemnation.

31 Hereupon the Lord Jesus took occasion to say, What shall I compare the men of this perverse generation to? or by what similitude shall I represent them? It is hard to find a proper parallel to them.

32 They are like some furly and awkward children at play in the streets, who are justly complained of by their companions, for not acting their part in concert with them, saying, Whilst, in imitation of musicians at feasts and other joyful occasions, we played cheerful tunes to you, ye would not answer them with

ther, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread, nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.

35 But Wisdom is justified of all her children.

36 And one of the

a dance or any other expressions of joy; and whilst, as if we were at a funeral, we gave you mournful tunes, ye would not weep or use any tokens of sorrow; but always did directly contrary to what ye were called to: Just so the men of this corrupt age, especially the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, do by *John the Baptist* and me, opposing us in every thing, and regarding us no more than if all that we said were a mere farce to be treated with contempt and scorn.

33 For when *John*, like the children that acted the part for mourners, came preaching the doctrine of repentance, and led a retired, austere, and abstemious life, suitable to the nature and design of his work, they would not weep; but rejected both him and his doctrine, and loaded him with reproach, as if he were a melancholy man, possessed by an evil spirit.

34 On the contrary, when I, the Messiah, like the children that played cheerful tunes, came preaching the glad tidings of salvation; and, suitable to the nature of my joyful work, went into a free, open, and engaging conversation, eating and drinking sometimes with *Pharisees*, and at others with publicans and sinners, to do them good; these men likewise rejected me, and the gracious words that proceeded out of my mouth, and turned all into the vilest reflections upon me, as if I were a glutton and a drunkard, and an encourager of the most odious and infamous sinners. So horribly perverse were they, notwithstanding all that evidently appeared, or could be urged to the contrary.

35 But the wisdom of God in these different methods of treating and trying them, and in the doctrines preached by *John* and me for the recovery of lost sinners; and the wisdom of falling in with these doctrines to the acknowledgment of me as the personal † Wisdom of God, (*Prov. viii.*) is owned, and heartily approved of, by all true believers; who are taught of God, and made wise to salvation; and are standing instances of his wisdom, and witnesses to it, in its holy, powerful, and saving effects upon them; and who will at last reap its rich advantages, to the glory of God, and their own eternal happiness.

36 After this ‡, a certain *Pharisee* whose name was

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† As *wisdom* will bear all these senses, and it is difficult to fix on one to the exclusion of the rest, I have, as often on like occasions, taken them all into the paraphrase.

‡ That this history, and one like it in *Mat. xxvi. 7.* & *Mark xiv. 3.* were not the same, seems very evident: Because,

after this, *Jesus went through every city and village preaching.* &c.; (*chap. viii. 1.*) whereas after that, which was but six days before his last passover, (*John xii. 1.* see the note on *Mat. xxvi. 6, 7.*) he continued in *Bethany* and *Jerusalem*, (*Mark xi. 8.*) See *Whitby* on the place.

the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster-box of ointment,

38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

39 Now, when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him; for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay he frankly

was *Simon*, (ver. 40.) courteously invited Christ to take a meal at his house; and, as he sought all opportunities of doing good, and was an example of civility as well as holiness, he, accepting the invitation, went home with the *Pharisee* and sat down to eat.

37 And whilst he was at table, behold, a certain woman, who had been notorious for her wickedness, being informed that Jesus was gone to the *Pharisee's* house to refresh himself, came thither, bringing an alabaster-box of rich and costly ointment, which she designed to lay out upon him; she being a penitent believer, whose heart was full of respect and affection to him.

38 And as he was sitting at table, according to the usual manner of the *Jews*, in a leaning posture, with his legs thrust out behind; she, placing herself at his back, fell a weeping so plentifully as to drop her tears, upon his feet, and then wiped them with her own hair, the chief ornament of her head, kissed them most affectionately, and suppled and perfumed them with the ointment; hereby testifying her deep humility, and sorrow of heart, for her former iniquities, her ardent love to Christ, and desire of his favour, and her great willingness to do her utmost to honour and serve him.

39 But (*de*) when the *Pharisee*, who had invited him, saw what this woman did, he, knowing her former base character, was highly offended at it, thinking with himself, according to the superstitious opinions of his sect, Surely if this Jesus were really such a prophet of the Lord as he professes to be, he could not be a stranger to this woman's infamous character, and to the vicious course of life that she has led; and would not have suffered her so much as to touch him, much less to handle, wipe, kiss, and anoint his feet, lest he should be defiled thereby; for she certainly is a very scandalous wretch.

40 Then Jesus, knowing his thoughts as perfectly as if he had spoke them out, and designing to return an answer to them, said to him, *Simon*, I have a case to lay before you. The *Pharisee* immediately replied, Pray, sir, go on; I am ready to hear you.

41 Jesus then proceeded to propose, and ask his thoughts upon, the following parable, saying, A certain man was creditor to two other persons, who had run in debt to him for considerable sums of money; but one of them owed him ten times as much as the other.

42 And when they were both so very poor, that neither of them had any thing left toward discharging his own debt, the creditor, in his great goodness

for gave them both. and compassion, freely forgave each of them the whole : Now what I desire of you is, to tell me freely, which of these two you apprehend, will have the greatest affection for his generous benefactor, and think himself most obliged to testify his gratitude to him.

43 Simon answered, and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

43 The *Pharisee*, not perceiving what Christ aimed at, readily answered, It is plain to me, that the man to whom the greatest debt was forgiven will be most sensibly affected with the exceeding kindness of his creditor, and will love him best. Jesus replied, You are certainly in the right, and your answer is undeniably just.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet : but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

44 Then turning and pointing to the woman, at whom the *Pharisee* had taken offence, Jesus said to him, *Simon*, apply your answer to the case of this woman. Do you look with wonder, and with a carping eye, at what she has done? It is because you have not such a sense of the greatness of your sins, and of the endearing mercy of forgiveness, as she has, whose love has far surpassed yours. You, who think yourself more holy than your neighbours, have indeed invited me with civility to your house ; but have been wanting, even in the usual tokens of respect * to invited and acceptable guests : But she, who looks upon herself as the chief of sinners, has abounded and exceeded in them all. You have not so much as given me a little water to wash my feet, nor a towel to wipe them : But she has washed my feet, not with common water, But with her own affectionate and penitential tears, and has used the very hairs of her head as a towel to wipe them.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss : but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

45 You, at my entrance into your house, did not so much as give me the usual salutation of friendship in a kiss : But this woman, whom you despise and are offended at, has been in a manner incessantly kissing my feet over and over again, in token of her humility and love.

46 Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint : but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

46 Ye have not bestowed upon me so much as common oil, to anoint my head, in token of your respect : But this woman, who came hither to pay me honour, has anointed even my feet, and that with precious ointment, as thinking nothing too much to be done for me, or too costly to be bestowed upon me.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many,

47 Now the reason of this difference between her behaviour and your's toward me, lies in the different sense ye respectively have of the greatness of your sins,

N O T E.

* This intimates that it was customary with the *Yews* to shew respect and kindness to their welcome guests, by saluting them with a kiss, by washing and wiping their feet, and anointing their heads with oil, or some fine ointment.

many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

finns, and of the necessity, worth, and obligation of a full and free pardon. I therefore tell you, These expressions of her love and gratitude are a plain evidence, that, whatsoever she has been, her many sins are now graciously forgiven her*; for she has discovered a most uncommon affection, like one melted with the thoughts of her high obligation to me for the remission of her uncommon crimes: But, on the other hand, one, who, like you, thinks lightly of his sins, and imagines that he has merit enough of his own, very near, if not entirely, to quit scores, will have little affection for me, and little sense of his obligations to me; but will treat me in a cold and indifferent manner, as you have done.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

48 Then directing his words immediately to the woman herself, that he might comfort her against the distress of her own spirit, and against the Pharisee's frowns and censures, he spoke with wonderful endearment and authority to her, saying, Thy sins, many and great as they have been, are all freely remitted to thee.

49 And they that sat at meat with him, began to say, within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

49 At the hearing of this, they that sat at table with him were still more offended, and presently thought in their own minds, and began to say privately among themselves, (*εἰ αὐτοῦ*) What must we think of this man, who not only admits such a vile wretch to handle and kiss his feet; but likewise pretends thus absolutely to assume to himself the unalienable prerogative of God, in forgiving sins.

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee.

50 But (*δὲ*) he nevertheless persisted in assuring the woman of her pardon, saying, Thou art brought into a state of salvation, to the complete remission of all thy sins, through faith in me; do not be discouraged, but go home, rejoicing in a sense of the abundant grace which I have extended to thee.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

How unreasonable are the objections of infidelity against Christ in his divine and saving characters, which he has so evidently demonstrated in healing all manner of diseases, raising the dead, and pardoning sins, with all the efficacy and authority of a God! How tender are his compassions to the afflicted and destitute; and how sovereign, free, and plenteous, is his mercy to all sorts of sinners, in the forgiveness of multiplied and aggravated iniquities! What high and exalting thoughts then should we have of him! what abasing thoughts of ourselves before him! and what pleasure should we take in doing good, on all occasions, after his example! It is surely matter of great importance for us to inquire after Christ, that we may know who and what he is, and may be in love with him, and not prejudiced against

N O T E .

* The parable, of which this is the application, plainly shews, that her *loving much* is mentioned, not as the cause or reason, but as the effect and evidence, of her being forgiven, and of her appre-

hensions about it. And in this manner the particle *for* is often used, as particularly in *Hes. ix. 15.* where God says of *Ephraim, All their wickedness is in Gilgal; for there I hated them.*

gainst him: And he is ever ready to instruct and satisfy humble and inquiring souls, who should never think the worse of him, or of his religion, whatever reproaches, losses, or difficulties, they may suffer for his sake, or how much soever others may be offended at him, and may perversely set themselves against him. The meek he will teach his way, that they may be witnesses for God and religion, and may be made wise unto salvation; while self-righteous and self-sufficient persons are in the greatest danger of being left to reject God's counsel, to their own confusion! And O what a wonderful change does grace make upon a sinner's heart and life, as well as upon his state before God, in the full remission of all his sins, through faith in the Lord Jesus! What great humility, relents, and godly sorrow, for sin! What ardent love to Christ, and earnest desires to serve and honour him, will a sense of great forgiveness inspire us with! And if he says to any of us, "Your sins are pardoned," we may well go on our way rejoicing.

C H A P. VIII.

Christ preaches in several places, 1,—4. His parable of the sower, with its explication, 5,—15. His parable of the lighted candle, 16,—18. The high account he makes of his true disciples, as his nearest relations, 19,—22. He lays a storm at sea, 23,—25. He casts a legion of devils out of a man, and suffers them to enter a herd of swine, 26,—36. He is rejected by the Gadarenes, 37,—40. He cures a bloody-flux, and raises Jairus's daughter from the dead, 41,—56.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village preaching, and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; and the twelve were with him.

2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits, and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the things before-mentioned, Jesus travelled about from place to place, through many cities, towns, and villages, taking indefatigable pains in publishing and enforcing among the people the best news that ever was brought to sinners, relating to their salvation, through faith in him, who came to set up a kingdom of grace in this world, in order to his training up subjects for the kingdom of glory in the world to come: And the twelve disciples, whom he had chosen to be apostles, usually accompanied him, as his domestics, wherever he went.

2 And besides these more stated attendants, there were several women of considerable circumstances in the world; who, as they had opportunities, followed him, to hear and converse with him, they having found mercy in his casting devils out of some, and curing the diseases of others of them, as well as in enlightening and changing their minds and hearts. One of these was the remarkable *Mary Magdalene*, whom he had, in a miraculous way, delivered from the power of many evil spirits that had taken possession of her.

3 There was also a woman, of no mean figure, whose name was *Joanna*, and who was the wife of *Chuza*, a steward, or officer, in *Herod's* court; and another woman, named *Susanna*; with several others,

many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

4 And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable :

5 A sower went out to sow his seed : and, as he sowed, some fell by the way-side ; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

6 And some fell upon a rock, and as soon as it was sprung up it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred-fold. And when he had said these things, he cried,

which accompanied Jesus, not as his domestics, that used to be in the same house with him, but as friends and admirers of him and his doctrine : And as he humbled himself so low as to need assistance from others, unless he would be continually working miracles to support himself, and the apostles, his family ; so these good women, out of their great respect, would not suffer him to be burdensome to strangers, but cheerfully supplied him at their own expence.

4 And one day when abundance of people were come together from all the neighbouring cities, towns, and villages, to hear him, he represented the nature of the gospel-dispensation to them by the following similitude, among others. (See the note on *Mat.* xiii. 3.)

5 "A certain husbandman (said he) went forth to sow corn in his field ; and, as he was casting his seed, some of the grains fell upon a hard beaten path, and, not being covered with mould, they were either trod to pieces by passengers, or picked up by the birds :—Thereby meaning, that whilst he or any of his servants are preaching the gospel to all sorts of people, some of them are so careless, stupid, and hardened in their iniquities, and Satan has such power over them, that it makes no manner of impression upon them.

6 "Other parts of the seed fell upon a bed of stones, covered over with only a very thin lay of earth, which gave it an opportunity of springing up presently ; but it withered away for want of a sufficient depth in the ground, and moisture enough to cherish the roots :"—Thereby meaning, that others hear the word with some stirrings in their affections ; but it not having entered into their hearts, and worked effectually there, a day of persecution and temptation soon blasts and destroys all.

7 "Other grains were scattered among weeds and thorns, and began to spring up together with them ; but these soon got head of the corn, overtopped and choked it, so that it came to nothing :"—Thereby meaning, that other hearers of the gospel go still further, under the power of strong convictions, in some hasty resolutions for the present ; and yet the business, cares, possessions, and pleasures of life, have such a superior power over them as to stifle all again.

8 "But there were some other parts of the seed that fell into a good sort of earth, where it sprang up, grew, and thrived, and produced a very large crop, some of it to an hundred-fold increase :"—Thereby meaning, that there are other hearers who receive the truth, in the love of it, into their very hearts, they being

cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. being seasoned with grace; and it becomes exceeding fruitful in their lives. And, at the close, Jesus, to awaken the people's inquiry into the meaning and importance of the parable, said, Whosoever is capable and desirous of being instructed in things that concern his own salvation, let him seriously consider what I have been saying.

9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be:

9 Our Lord having delivered this parable, as he did several others, without explaining it to the people; the apostles, and some of his other disciples, took an opportunity, when he was alone, to desire that he would please to open to them what he meant by it. (*Mark* iv. 10.)

10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

10 He answering told them, That God, in his distinguishing favour, had given them an heart to desire, seek after, and understand, the great things of the gospel-kingdom, pertaining to his glory and their own salvation, which were all entire secrets till he came to reveal them, and are still strange things to carnal and unbelieving hearts that are prejudiced against them, and cannot see their true excellence and glory, and which continue to be incomprehensible, in some respects, even to those that are enlightened by his spirit, as well as by his word: But, said he, I represented these things to others only in a similitude, without explaining it, that as, through wilful perverseness and obstinacy, they shut their eyes, and harden their hearts, against my plainer instructions, they may be righteously left under the power of their chosen stupidity and blindness; and so the awful prophecy (*Isa.* lxix. 9.) may be fulfilled in them, as a people that see and hear the most plain and important truths in the ministry of the word, and yet do not truly discern them, nor desire to be acquainted with them.

11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

11 Then he explained the parable to his disciples, saying, The seed sown represented the doctrines of the gospel, which the great prophet of the church came forth to preach, in his personal ministry, and by the ministry of his servants.

12 Those by the way-side, are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe, and be saved.

12 The persons meant by the hard beaten path, into which the seed did not enter, were those hearers of the gospel upon whom it makes no good impression, through the hardness of their hearts; so that Satan obtains his will upon them, and effectually deprives them of all benefit by what they hear, turning off their thoughts from it, lest it should prove the means of their being brought to believe to the saving of their souls.

13 They on the rock, are they which

13 The persons signified by the rocky ground, on which the corn sprang up at first, but soon withered,

which when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

14 And that which fell among thorns, are they which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground, are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

16 No man when he hath lighted a candle covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

thered for want of depth and moisture to cherish the root, were those hearers that attend to the word; and, having starts of joyous affections under it, take up some sudden resolutions to comply with it; but, for want of a principle of grace in their hearts, as soon as temptations, reproaches, and sufferings for the gospel, befall them, they are disheartened, and turn apostates.

14 And the persons described by the ground in which thorns and weeds sprang up with the corn and choked it, were such as, under the hearing of the word, have promising appearances of receiving the truth in the love of it; but as soon as they return again to the affairs of this present life, their superior attachment to its business and hurries, riches and pleasures, overpower their concern about their souls, so that nothing is effectually brought to pass for God's glory and their own salvation.

15 But he told them, that the persons represented by the good soil, which produced a plentiful harvest, were those hearers, whose hearts being thoroughly changed by the grace of God, receive the doctrine of the gospel with a sincere faith, and upright desire of improving it, and profiting by it, to all the practical purposes for which it is designed; and, having thus received it, they retain it, prize it, and make frequent reflections upon it, that it may have its proper influence upon them, even after the sensible joy is gone which they had in hearing it; and so they habitually and perseveringly bring forth fruits of righteousness to God in great abundance, and that with a holy calmness and fortitude of spirit under all the tribulations and persecutions they may meet with for their holy profession.

16 Christ, having thus clearly and fully explained all these things to his disciples, proceeded to intimate their duty, as to spreading abroad that light to others, in their lives and preaching, which they had received, or might further receive, from him; saying, As a man never uses to light a candle with a design to conceal or hide it under a bushel, or in any obscure place where it cannot be seen; but sets it up visibly in a candlestick, that such as come into the room may have the benefit of its light: So I have given you these instructions, not that ye should smother them in your own bosoms, or keep them to yourselves; but that ye may communicate them, both by word and example, on all proper occasions, to others, for their knowledge and practice, to the glory of God and their salvation.

17 For nothing

15

17 For whatsoever I secretly communicate in my in-

is secret that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid that shall not be known, and come abroad.

18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

19 Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.

20 And it was told him by certain, which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to see thee.

21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

22 Now it came to pass on a certain

instructions to you, must hereafter be publicly preached by you, wherever ye go; and nothing that I now speak with obscurity, under the covert of unexplained similitudes, shall be always concealed; but ye, in due time, must publish it, with the greatest freedom and plainness, to the whole world.

18 As ever therefore ye would dread answering for the contrary another day, when every secret thing shall be brought into judgment, take heed in what manner, and to what purposes, ye hear the great things of my gospel; for he that heartily receives the truth, and faithfully improves his light to the good of others, shall have a still further increase of understanding and assistances for his own and their advantage; but whosoever * thinks lightly of the truth, and does not concern himself about making a right use of it, for the profiting of others, shall lose even the good notions he before had, and be left to give them up for their opposite errors, being neither established in them, nor savingly benefited by them, as before he might seem to have been.

19 At another time, as Jesus was preaching in an house, and was surrounded with a vast multitude of people, (*Mark* iii. 20, 31.) his mother, and others of his nearest kindred, (see the note on *Matth.* xii. 46.) came thither to speak with him; but could not get near enough, the crowd being so very great.

20 Then some of the company informed him, that his mother, with several other relations, who were called his brethren, (see the note on *Matth.* xii. 46.) were waiting abroad, and wanted to change a few words with him.

21 But (δε) instead of answering them directly, he, in his usual way of giving things a spiritual turn, took that occasion to express the affection he bore to his true disciples; and, pointing to them, said, These who receive and yield themselves up unto my divine teaching, are nearer and dearer to me than any relations according to the flesh; and whilst I am engaged in my heavenly Father's work, for his glory, and their spiritual benefit, I cannot suffer myself to be interrupted by the respect that I owe to an earthly parent, or any other relation, in the other world. (See the note on *Mark* iii. 34.)

22 And (και) on another occasion, when Jesus had been much employed in preaching and working miracles,

N O T E.

* Our Lord here speaks not of special saving grace, but of spiritual gifts, and particularly of the knowledge of the truth which we receive from him, that

we might communicate it to others, as appears from the whole scope of the discourse.

tain day; that he went into a ship with his disciples, and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

23 But as they sailed, he fell asleep, and there came down a storm of wind on the lake, and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind, and the raging of the water; and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? and they being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

26 And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over-against Galilee.

cles, and great numbers crowded about him, (*Mark* iv. 35, 36.) he took boat with his disciples, and ordered them to pass over the lake of *Gennesareth* to the opposite shore; accordingly they put off, and steered their course thither, at his command.

23 But while they were making the best of their way, he, as a man of like bodily infirmity with ourselves, having been fatigued by labours, lay down with his head upon a pillow, and fell fast asleep; (see the note on *Matth.* viii. 20.) and, as he was sleeping, there arose a terrible storm of wind, which all on a sudden caused such a swelling sea, that the boat was almost filled with water, and in the utmost danger of being sunk.

24 Then the disciples ran to him in a great fright; and, waking him, cried out, Lord! have compassion upon us, arise speedily for our help, we are this moment just on the point of being lost: And they no sooner cast themselves upon his care in their distress, but he got up, and, with the majesty of a God, charged the wind to cease, and the waves to rage no more, and immediately they obeyed their sovereign Lord: The wind was calm, and the waters became smooth and still.

25 And having thus wrought salvation for them, he reproved them for their unbelief, saying, Where was your dependance upon my power and goodness, after all the miraculous proofs I have given of them? What, did ye think that I was not able to help you, or had no care or concern for you, because I was asleep? Could not ye remember, that the great Watchman of *Israel* neither slumbers nor sleeps? Or did ye consider me as no more than a man, that ye so shamefully distrusted my care; upon which they were filled with awful reverence and amazement at their wonderful deliverance, and with confusion and shame for the diffidence and the terror that they had so sinfully given way to; and they said one to another, what sort of person is this! surely he must be more than a mere man; for he has acted the part of the sovereign Lord of universal nature, and even the winds and waves were forced, in an instant, to stop their furious course at his command.

26 Soon after this, they got safe to the shore for which they were bound, and which lay in the country of the *Gadarenes**, a heathen land, on the other side of the lake, opposite to *Galilee*.

27 And

N O T E.

* In *Matth.* viii. 2. it is called the *Girgassites*, mentioned in *Deut.* vii. 1. This country of the *Gergesenes* included that of the *Gadarenes*: And so it appears,

27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city, a certain man which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee torment me not.

29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains, and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? and he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

31 And they besought him that he would

27 And upon Christ's landing there, he met with a man, (see the note on *Mark* v. 6.) who was formerly (*ἐκ τῆς πόλεως*) an inhabitant of an adjacent town, but had been a great while so miserably possessed and harassed by devils, that he ran about like a furious madman, would keep no clothes upon his back, nor dwell in any house; but continually roved through desolate places, among the sepulchres of the dead, to the terror of all who passed that way.

28 When this poor miserable wretch set his eyes upon Jesus, he immediately roared out, under the power of the indwelling devil; and, running toward our Lord, threw himself down at his feet, and the evil spirit speaking in the man, cried out with a loud and hideous voice, being forced by a superior power to express his own terror, saying, O thou Jesus, whom I know to be the Son of the most high God, I dread thy power, and desire to have nothing to do with thee; but surely the time for my full torments is not yet come, I therefore earnestly beg thou wouldst not inflict them upon me now.

29 He said this because Christ had already commanded him to depart † from the man, whom he had so long and so cruelly possessed: For this vile spirit had often thrown him into such an ungovernable fury, that though several attempts were made to fasten him down, and secure him in chains and fetters, he was too strong to be held by them, and, breaking loose, was hurried away into the most melancholy and desolate part of the country.

30 Then, that the standers-by might have the more affecting thoughts of this poor man's misery, and of the greatness of Christ's power in delivering him, he ordered the evil spirit to tell him his name? in reply to which he said, It was *Legion*; thereby meaning, that not one only, but a great many devils were at that time in possession of the man, under one of their chiefs. (See the note on *Mark* v. 9.)

31 Hereupon the whole legion, finding that they could not resist Christ's power, joined in their request,

N O T E S.

pears that the place where Christ landed was in that part which was called the country of the *Gadarenes*.

† As our Lord's casting out devils is often distinguished from his healing diseases; so there are several things mentioned in the story of this man, that cannot be accounted for by any mere distemper whatsoever, nor made common sense of, without supposing him to be possessed of the devil: As particularly, when he

says his name is *Legion*, and expostulates with Christ for coming to torment them before their time; and when they intreated that they might not be sent out of that country, and asked his leave to enter into the swine, and upon permission obtained, actually entered into them; nor can we reasonably suppose that any disease could add such strength to this man, that no chains or fetters could bind him. See the note on *Matth.* iv. 24.

would not command them to go out into the deep.

32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city, and in the country.

35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

36 They also which saw it, told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

37 Then the whole multitude of

quest, that, upon casting them out of this man, he would not send them back to hell, to be confined in the bottomless pit *; but (*Mark* v. 10.) would suffer them to continue in the country of the *Gadarenes*, where they had hitherto ruled, with great power.

32 And as there was at that time a great herd, of about two thousand swine, grazing upon a neighbouring hill by the sea-side, the devils, knowing that they could do nothing without Christ's leave, earnestly begged him to permit their taking possession of that herd: And he suffered them to enter into the swine, and do their worst against them, as a righteous punishment upon some, and as a just and merciful rebuke and trial to others, of that country. (See the note on *Matth.* viii. 32.)

33 No sooner had our Lord ordered the devils to go out of the man, without laying any further restraint upon them, but they, acting according to their own vile malicious temper, went directly and took possession of the whole herd of swine; upon which they were all immediately seized with a phrenzy, and ran furiously down a precipice into the sea of *Galilee*, where they were suffocated and lost.

34 The swine-herds seeing this, were terribly affrighted at it, and ran with all haste to tell it, as a piece of wonderful news, to all the people they could meet with in the neighbouring city and country, wherever they went.

35 Which, when the people heard, their curiosity and concern carried them out to see what truth there was in the strange report that had been made to them; and coming to the place where Jesus was, they saw him, and the man, whom he had dispossessed of the infernal legion, sitting at his feet, regularly clothed, rational, composed, and calm in his mind like other men: And they, who before had often seen him running about naked, raving, and gashing himself, now beholding such a great and sudden alteration in him, were struck with awful amazement.

36 And some, who saw all that had passed from the beginning, told them how Jesus had restored him to his senses, by casting out the devils that before had possessed him, and how he had permitted those evil spirits to fulfil their desire of entering into the swine, upon which they were hurried down the hill into the sea, where they were all drowned.

37 The *Gadarenes*, having heard the whole story, and loving their swine and their sins more than Christ and

N O T E.

* Thus *τις τῆν ἀβυσσόν*, the expression here used, is rendered *into the bottomless pit*. Rev. xx. 3.

of the country of the Gadarenes round about, besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed, besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city, how great things Jesus had done unto him.

40 And it came to pass, that when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him; for they were all waiting for him.

41 And behold, there came a man named *Jairus*, and he was a ruler of the synagogue; and he fell down at Jesus'

and their own souls, were more afraid of him on account of their loss by the devils, under his permission, than pleased with the good he had done, and was capable of still further doing among them; and therefore, instead of desiring him to stay with them, that he might restrain the powers of darkness from doing them any further mischief, and might save them from their sins, and from the wrath of God, they all importuned him to depart from their country, that they might have nothing more to do with him; and he gave them up to their own choice, and, going aboard a vessel, returned back over the sea of *Galilee*.

38, 39 But (ðe) the man, out of whom the devils were cast, earnestly begged that he might go along with Jesus, and so, continuing under his gracious care, might be secured against their invisible, as well as visible power over him, might receive instructions about a still better salvation, and might go away from that wicked people, who would not consent that Christ should stay with them: However, Jesus would not allow of his attending him, lest it should look like ostentation and vain-glory; but ordered him to go home, and tell his countrymen* and acquaintance what a wonderful deliverance God had wrought for him, that they might be turned from idols to serve the living and true God: Accordingly he obeyed Christ's command; and returning home, took all opportunities of relating to every one he met with, in *Gadara*, and the rest of the cities in *Decapolis*, (see the note on *Mark* v. 20.) what a gracious, miraculous, and god-like deliverance Jesus had wrought for him, which was in effect the same as if he had said, Which God had wrought for him, because Jesus, who worked it by his own power, was indeed the true God.

40 Now upon the return of Jesus back to the other side of the sea of *Galilee*, the people, who were still waiting there, in hope of his coming to them again, were exceeding glad to see him, and received him joyfully.

41 And whilst he continued in these parts, observe a very rare instance of a great man's faith in him, and public acknowledgment of him! *Jairus*, a noted person, and a ruler of the synagogue, hearing of Jesus, came to him; and prostrating himself before him, in the presence of all the people, humbly and earnestly

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N O T E.

* When our Lord wrought wonderful works in *Judea*, he usually ordered that they should not be divulged, because he would not needlessly provoke the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, nor seem to seek his own

glory; but having wrought one among the heathens, he ordered it to be published, as the means of bringing others to believe in him.

Jesus' feet, and be-
sought him that he
would come into
his house:

42 For he had
one only daughter,
about twelve years
of age, and she lay
a dying. (But as
he went, the peo-
ple thronged him.

43 And a wo-
man having an is-
sue of blood twelve
years, which had
spent all her living
upon physicians,
neither could be
healed of any.

44 Came behind
him, and touched
the border of his
garment; and im-
mediately her issue
of blood stanch'd.

45 And Jesus
said, Who touched
me? When all de-
nied, Peter, and
they that were
with him, said,
Master, the multi-
tude throng thee,
and press thee, and
sayest thou, Who
touched me?

46 And Jesus
said, Somebody
hath touched me:
for I perceive that
virtue is gone out
of me.

ly begged, that he would please to go home with him, and heal his child. (See the notes on *chap. xiii. 14.* and *Matth. ix. 18.*)

42 For his only daughter, of about twelve years old, was so exceeding weak, that when he left her, she lay at the very point of death; and as Jesus refused none that came to him with faith in his power and goodness, he readily consented to go along with this ruler, a great crowd of people accompanying him, some out of curiosity, and others out of affection to him.

43, 44 And as he was walking toward the house, there was a certain woman who had been sorely afflicted with a bloody-flux, for twelve years past, and had impoverished herself by her great expence in applying to physicians for relief, and all in vain, she growing rather worse than better; (*Mark v. 26.*) this woman had a mind to try for a cure from Jesus, who she believed was able to heal her, and certainly would do it, if she could but get so near him as to touch any part of his clothes: (*Mat. ix. 21.*) And therefore, with great modesty, humility, and privacy, she crept behind him in the crowd, and, without any of the company's observing her, touched the hem of his garment, in expectation of a cure by that means: And it was done for her according to her faith, she immediately finding a wonderful alteration in herself to a perfect recovery.

45 But Jesus knowing all that had passed, and desiring to bring it to light, for the manifestation of his own and his Father's glory, for the encouragement of *Jairus's* faith, in what he was about to do for him, and for the comfort of this poor woman, who seemed to have stolen a cure from him, turned himself about and asked, Who had touched him, meaning with a design of deriving virtue from him? And when the people that were nearest him generally denied that any of them had done it, *Peter*, and some others of his disciples, supposing that he spoke of barely touching him, replied, Master, it is unavoidable, but that, in such a crowd, some or other of the people should come too near, and be thrust upon thee; we wonder therefore that thou shouldst ask, Who touched me?

46 But (*2c*) Jesus not willing to have the matter stifled, said, with great earnestness, One of the company I am sure has touched me, out of the ordinary way, with a design of getting a private cure from me; for I am no stranger to the power that is gone forth from my person, who have knowingly and

willingly communicated virtue for healing. (See the note on *Mark* v. 30.)

47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people, for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.)

49 While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.

50 But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not; believe only, and she shall be made whole.

51 And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

52 And all wept and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.

47 Then the woman, finding that she could no longer be concealed, came trembling for fear of a rebuke; and, prostrating herself at his feet in the humblest manner, made an open declaration, in the presence of the whole multitude, that she had indeed touched him, in hope of a cure from him, and that she had not failed of her hope, but instantly found herself restored to perfect health, though her case had been all along so desperate before.

48 And as she thus put herself into Christ's hands, to do with her what might further seem good in his sight, he, to take off her fears, said, in the most tender and affectionate manner, Daughter, let thy heart rejoice in my favour and love; thy faith, which broke through all difficulties and discouragements to honour and derive mercy from me, has been owned and honoured by me, to the healing of thy grievous disease: Go home with satisfaction in thine own mind, and fear no evil: I have blessed thee, and thou shalt be blessed.

49 Whilst he was speaking in this comfortable manner to her, messengers came to *Jairus*, having been sent from his house, to tell him that his daughter was actually dead, and that therefore it was now too late, and would be to no manner of purpose, to give the great Master of *Israel* the trouble of coming to her, or to make any further applications to him about her.

50 But when Jesus heard this message, and saw how the young damsel's father was affected with it, he spoke comfortably to him, saying, Let not your heart be troubled, neither be afraid, as if there were now no hope; only believe that I am gracious and able to raise her even from the dead, and she shall live and do well.

51 And they going still forward till they came to the house, Jesus, to avoid ostentation, ordered the multitude to withdraw, and permitted no person to go in with him, except three of his disciples, *viz.* *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, and the parents of the child, that they, being present, might be eye-witnesses of the miracle he designed to perform.

52 At his entering into the room where the young creature lay, he found a company of people all in tears, bitterly lamenting her death, and preparing for her funeral: But he, applying himself to these busy mourners, said, There is no need of all this hurry and sorrow; for she is not so dead as to require preparations for her interment; but her present condition

dition is rather to be accounted a sleep than a death, because she shall presently awake out of it in perfect health, as one does out of sleep.

53 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

53 But they being as sure as they could be of any such thing, that she was really dead, laughed at him with great derision, for talking so contrary to the plainest evidence, and, as they imagined, at such a whimsical rate.

54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.

54 However, he clearing the room of all this company, and having with him only the three fore-mentioned disciples, and the father and mother of the child, went up, and, taking her by the hand, spoke to her with divine majesty and power, saying, Young damsel, I will, and command thee to get up.

55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway; and he commanded to give her meat.

55 And these words were attended with such vital energy, that her soul immediately returned into her body again, and she instantly got up in perfect health and strength, as if she had only awaked out of a comfortable and refreshing sleep; and to shew that she was raised to the same animal life which she had enjoyed before, and was as capable of feeding as if she had never been sick, he ordered that something should be given her to eat.

56 And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

56 And her father and mother were filled with great amazement and joy at this miraculous recovery of their daughter, by a resurrection from the dead: But Jesus, not seeking his own glory, commanded them not to make any public noise of what he had done; and yet the fame of this miracle soon spread abroad. (*Matth. ix. 26.*)

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

O the deep humiliation and condescension of our blessed Lord, that he should stand in need of assistances, and accept of supplies, from such as had been the greatest of sinners! All sorts of persons were effectually wrought upon by the gospel, which brought forth fruit, more or less, in them severally; and wherever it fails of success, it is not from any defect in the good seed of the word, but from the criminal disorder of people's own hearts, which either resists its impression upon them, or soon loses it, through the subtilty of Satan, and the temptations of this world. With what serious concern should we seek grace to make our hearts good, and take heed how we hear, and how we improve our light, for the benefit of others, as well as of our own souls! They that cordially embrace the gospel, are as dear to Christ as the nearest relations on earth can be to one another; and though he may suffer them to meet with many a threatening and surprising storm, yet his presence is their security and relief in all their troubles, frights, and dangers; and they ought to fly to him, trust in him, and adore him, as their God and Saviour, who is never unmindful of them, though sometimes, like one asleep, he may seem to neglect them.—But O what a malicious, cruel, and hateful enemy is Satan! Were he to have his will of us, he would make us the most miserable of all creatures; and none but Christ can rescue us out of his hand, or lay him under restraints: But he has such a complete dominion over him, that he can do it whenever he pleases. How foolish and wicked then are they, who prefer any thing in this world to Christ, and who, under terrible apprehensions of sin and danger, have hard thoughts of him, and put him away from themselves! And how just is it in him to take them at their word and choice! But how wise and happy are they, who

who gladly receive him, and depend upon him; whose faith presses toward him through all discouragements and apprehensions of their own unworthiness! He is willing to receive, help, and save them; and, having his warrant for our faith, we should think that nothing can be too great for him to do for us. How like a God, did he, by virtue in himself, heal diseases, cast out devils, raise the dead, and call back their departed souls to animate their bodies again! And how should we glorify him, who fought not his own glory! In whatever he commands we should readily obey him, how self-denying soever it may be so to do. But, as gracious souls cannot but wish to be as near to Jesus as possible, and to abide with him, how desirable is it to be admitted to immediate attendances on him, when the circumstances of things admit of it! And how great is the blessedness of that world, where nothing will hinder our being ever with the Lord!

C H A P. IX.

Jesus sends forth the twelve apostles, 1,—6. Herod's perplexing thoughts about him, and desire to see him, 7,—9. He miraculously feeds five thousand, 10,—17. His discourse with his disciples concerning himself, and following him, 18,—27. His transfiguration, 28,—36. His casting the devil out of a youth, which the disciples had attempted without success, 37,—42. He foretels his own sufferings to death, 43,—45. Checks the ambition of his disciples, 46,—48. Reproves them for a party, selfish, and revengeful spirit, 49,—56. And shews the danger of delaying and of drawing back, 57,—62.

TEXT.

THEN he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

3 And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, nei-
ther

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Lord having some time ago singled out twelve of his disciples, whom he designed for apostles, (*chap. vi. 13,—16.*) and who ever since had attended him, and been training up, as it were, at his feet, for their office, he took an opportunity of calling them together: And, that they might be thoroughly qualified for his service, he vested them with proper powers, which should be effectual, through his name, to cast out devils, and heal all manner of distempers.

2 Whereupon he sent them forth, with a commission, to publish in several parts of *Judæa*, (*Matth. x. 6, 7.*) that he would soon set up the kingdom of grace, which should be perfected in the kingdom of glory; and for the confirmation of their doctrine, and recommending it to the affections, as well as judgment of the people, he ordered them to heal the sick, and do other wonderful works, as occasions might offer, wherever they went.

3 And as, by this first mission, they were not to go very far, and were soon to return, he said to them, Do not trouble yourselves about making provision for your journey before-hand; but go forth depending upon the providence of God for protection, and for

ther money: neither have two coats a-piece.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead:

8 And of some, that Eliás had appeared: and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

9 And Herod said,

a supply of all the necessaries of life; carry with you no staff for defence, but only that which you commonly use for walking; no bag for victuals, nor any food or money to buy it; nor any change of raiment.

4 Nor be ye solicitous about entertainment where ye go; but take up your quarters with the first sober family that is willing to receive you; and, to avoid all appearance of fickleness, curiosity, or daintiness, there continue, without changing your lodging till ye leave that town or city.

5 And whatsoever place ye come to, if, upon trial, the people make an uproar against you, or the civil magistrate will not suffer you to preach; when ye go away from thence, shake off the * dust of your feet, as a witness that the gospel of salvation was sent to them, and they, like hardened and ungrateful wretches, rejected it to their own perdition; and as a signal of your detesting their wickedness, and refusing to have any communion with them, and of God's shaking them off as contemptible and vile, like the dust of one's feet.

6 With these and such like instructions they went forth, according to Christ's command; and, traveling over the towns and cities of *Judea*, executed their commission, in preaching the gospel wherever they came; and both confirming and recommending it by miraculously healing the sick, and casting out devils, and the like.

7 Now this spread the fame of Jesus wider, and raised his character higher, than ever before; so that all the great things that were done by him in person, and by his apostles in his name, and by virtue derived from him, reached the ears of *Herod*, the tetrarch of *Galilee*, (see the note on *chap. iii. 1.*) who was exceedingly distressed with horror in his own conscience, for having beheaded *John the Baptist*, and with fear, lest now it should be avenged upon him; because it was reported by some that this wonderful person was no other than *John* appearing again, as risen from the dead.

8 But (δε) others imagined that Jesus was *Elias*, who, the *Jews* thought, would personally appear before the coming of the Messiah; and others fancied him to be one of the ancient prophets, raised to life again

9 Amidst this variety of opinions, *Herod*, full of

N O T E.

* Some have observed, that as the *Jews* thought the very dust of the *beathen* land to be polluted; so our Lord ordered his apostles to shake off the dust of

their feet, as a testimony that they, who refused the gospel, were to be looked upon, and treated like the *beathens*, to whom he had forbid them to preach it.

said, John have I beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things? and he desired to see him.

10 And the apostles when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place, belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

11 And the people when they knew it, followed him; and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

12 And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.

13 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

14 For they were about five thou-

of terrible anxieties, said, I have indeed beheaded *John*, but cannot tell what to think of this person, who, as I now hear, appears with extraordinary power, and works abundance of miracles, both by his own and his disciples hands. Is this *John the Baptist*? or if not, who can it be? And he earnestly wished for a sight of Jesus, hoping thereby to satisfy himself about it.

10 In the mean while, the twelve apostles having executed their commission, came back to their Lord, and gave him an account (as all his servants must, of their labours in the final judgment) how and where they had preached and wrought miracles; and what reception they had met with: Upon which he retired with them to a solitary part of the country, not far from the city of *Bethsaida*, that he might give them a little relaxation from their late labours and fatigues, and might further instruct and encourage them in what related to their work.

11 But (ð) the common people, knowing to what place he had withdrawn, followed him in great crowds thither: And though they broke in upon his measures for a little recess and refreshment, yet so great was his goodness, that he kindly received them; and, instead of sparing himself, preached the gospel of his kingdom to them, and healed such as were disordered, and came to him for a cure.

12 And when it grew toward night, his twelve apostles desired him to dismiss the people, that they might have time enough, while day-light lasted, to reach some of the nearest towns and villages, and get lodging and entertainment there: For, said they, we are here in a desolate, barren part of the country, where there are no accommodations for them; so that they must necessarily suffer great hardship, if they stay any longer.

13 But he replied, Give them something to eat before they go, lest, having had no refreshment so long, some of them should faint by the way: The apostles not considering how God fed *Israel* of old in the wilderness, nor how easily their Lord could do the same now, objected to this motion, saying, We have only a little of our common fare, five barley-loaves and two small fishes, just enough for a meal or two at most for ourselves; it would therefore be only to tantalize the people, were we to offer them an entertainment, unless we were to go to some neighbouring town, and buy provisions there for this vast multitude.

14 The reason of their speaking after this manner was, because the number of men only, then present, was about five thousand: However Christ, ha-

thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 And they did eat, and were all filled, and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them, twelve baskets.

18 And it came to pass as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

19 They answering, said, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias: and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering, said, The Christ of God.

ving determined in himself what to do, commanded his apostles to desire all the company to sit down on the grass, and to place them by fifties in a rank.

15 And the apostles, without any further disputing, obeyed their Lord's order, causing the people to sit down in that manner, by which means they might be the more easily numbered, and the food more readily distributed among them. (See the note on *Mark* vi. 40.)

16 Then Jesus, having the five loaves and two fishes before him, took part of them into his hands; and, according to his exemplary custom at meals, asked a blessing upon them, turning his eyes upward toward heaven, from whence every good gift descends: (see the note on *Matth* xiv. 19.) And then, dividing the food into pieces fit for distribution, he conveyed it, through the hands of his apostles, to all the people, as they sat in their several rows.

17 And by his creating power, he gave it such a surprising increase, that the whole company eat of it till they were fully satisfied: And, small as the quantity was before they began, there were no less than twelve baskets full left, after they had been so plentifully refreshed, and had quite done eating. (See the note on *Matth*. xiv. 20.)

18 Having thus shewn his compassion both to the souls and bodies of this great multitude, he dismissed them, and retired to converse with God his Father, and with the disciples his friends, that he might open his heart freely in his petitions for them, and in his instructions to them; and when, like the master of his household, he had given them an example of family prayer, he proceeded to a free and religious conversation with them concerning himself, saying, What is the general opinion that men have of me? Or whom do they take me to be?

19 The apostles answered, that people were much divided, and had very different notions about him; some fancying that he was *John the Baptist* come to life again, whilst others insisted that he was *Elijah the Tishbite*, appearing among them to anoint the Messiah, whom they were looking for; and others talked as if he were one or other of the ancient prophets come to them from the dead.

20 Then Jesus said to his disciples, But, amidst all these various conjectures and debates of the people, tell me the sense of your own hearts; Whom do ye believe me to be? *Peter* said in all their names, they consenting, Whatsoever others think of thee, we are satisfied that thou art the only true Messiah, and the eternal Son of God. (*Matth*. xvi. 16.)

21 And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing.

22 Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away.

21 And though Christ highly approved of this confession of their faith in him, yet he strictly forbade their publishing it for the present, that the *Jews*, who expected the Messiah to be a temporal prince, might not raise a tumult on his account, either by contending for or against his being their king, and so attempting either to hinder or hasten his death out of its proper season; as also that the full manifestation of the glory of his character might be reserved till he should rise from the dead.

22 Accordingly he took this opportunity to turn off their own expectations of temporal advantages from him, or of his immediately appearing in the glory even of his spiritual kingdom, saying, The Messiah, according to divine appointment and predictions, and for answering the great design of his coming into the world, must undergo many terrible sufferings and indignities; and particularly must be opposed, reviled, and condemned by the great council, consisting of the elders of the people, and of their chief priests and doctors; and at length must be put to a cruel death: And he added, for their comfort, that on the third day he must rise again, to shew that he is a divine person, and that his Father accepts and owns him in his work.

23 And as his disciples, and *Peter* in particular, could not tell how to brook what he had said about his sufferings and death; and as by this time a multitude of people were come again to him, (*Mark* viii. 32, 34.) he said to them all in general, If any one would be my disciple, and share in the blessings I am come to bestow, he, after my example, must be contented to part with the riches, honours, and pleasures of this life, and submit to the heaviest hardships and sufferings day by day for my sake, even unto death; and must follow me with faith and patience, through much tribulation, till he arrives at my heavenly kingdom. (See the note on *Mark* viii. 34.)

24 For whoever declines these duties, to save his temporal life in this world, shall fall short of eternal happiness in the next, which is losing his life in the worst sense that possibly can be: But whoever is willing to put them into practice, even to the loss of this transitory life, for his faith in me, and profession of my name, shall certainly obtain eternal life, which is the best that any one can enjoy.

25 For the soul of man is his life and his glory, his principal and immortal part; and, as it fares with that, he himself must be extremely happy or miserable for ever: What comparison then can there be between all this world and his own soul? or what

26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

28 And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into ^a

advantage could he have, were he to gain the utmost grandeur and delights on earth, and, after all, were to be himself eternally lost or destroyed?

26 And yet this will be the dreadful condition of all those that refuse to take up their crosses and follow me: For whoever is afraid or ashamed to own me and my gospel now, in the presence of men, lest they should persecute or reproach him, or laugh at him for it, him will the Messiah publicly refuse to own, and upon him will he pour the greatest contempt at the great day, when he shall appear in his own personal and mediatorial glory, as the eternal Son of God, and Judge of all, and in the glory of his heavenly Father, whose divine perfections, majesty, and authority, will then display themselves in him; and when he shall be attended with a pompous retinue of holy angels, to execute his commands and celebrate his praise*.

27 And (δε) I solemnly assure you, that it will not be long before a lively emblem of this shall appear: For some here present shall live to see the kingdom of the Messiah set up in the world with great glory, by his resurrection and exaltation at the Father's right hand, by the plentiful effusion of his Spirit, to glorify him, and spread his gospel with speedy and surprising success, and by his coming to take vengeance upon the incorrigible Jews, in the utter destruction of their city and nation; and here are some, who, in a few days, shall be eye-witnesses of an illustrious display of his glory. (See the note on *Matth.* xvi. 28.)

28 About a week † after Christ had said these things, he, designing to give a little specimen of his future glory, singled out three of his disciples, *Peter*, *John*, and *James*, to be eye-witnesses of it, as they afterwards were to be of his agony in the garden; (*Matth.* xxvi. 37.) and taking these along with him, he

N O T E S.

* Here seems to be, according to Dr *Whitby's* observation, an allusion to the *Shechinah*, which was called the glory of the God of Israel, and the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord, their great Jehovah: And as it was the *Logos*, or the Son of God, who usually thus appeared, and who, after his ascension, was invested again with this glory, it was his glory as well as the Father's. And we may add, that the living creatures, and the cherubims, being also represented in several of those appearances, as the ministers of providence and attendants on this glory, Christ seems to speak likewise, in

the same allusion, of his coming in the glory of the holy angels. See *Ezek.* i. and x. chapters.

† In *Matth.* xvii. 1. and *Mark* ix. 2. this is said to be six days after the foregoing discourse, meaning only the days that passed between that and the day of Christ's transfiguration; but here it is said to be about eight days after it, inclusive both of the day of Christ's saying these things, and the day of his going up to the mount, which, together with the six intermediate days, made up about eight days, though not eight complete.

a mountain to pray.

29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment *was* white and glistering.

30 And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias.

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 But Peter, and they that were with him, were heavy with sleep; and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; not knowing what he said.

34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And there came

he went up an high hill, as he was wont to spend some time in secret prayer.

29 And while he was thus humbling himself in the form of a servant, his divine glory broke forth to give him an appearance in the form of God; so that, all on a sudden, a dazzling lustre flushed through his countenance, and a shining brightness through all his clothes, by which he appeared all over glorious, like the God; *who covers himself with light as with a garment.* (*Psal. civ. 2.* See the note on *Matth. xvii. 2.*)

30, 31 There were likewise, at the same time, two of the greatest men that had ever lived upon earth, who came to own and honour him; one was *Moses*, the giver of the law; and the other was *Elias*, the restorer of it: These appeared in glorious forms, like persons that came from the blessed state and world above, and they conversed with Jesus about the nature and design of his sufferings and death, which he was shortly to undergo at *Jerusalem*.

32 But at the beginning of this wonderful scene, *Peter* and the other two disciples were so exceeding drowsy, that they could hardly attend to any thing about it; till, recovering themselves out of their sleepy fit, and being perfectly awake, they plainly saw the glorious appearance that Christ made, and took notice of *Moses* and *Elias*, who were with him.

33 And while the disciples were filled with astonishment and delight at what they had seen and heard, *Peter*, observing that those two ancient prophets were about to withdraw, addressed himself to Christ, saying, Lord, how glorious and transporting is it to be here! and how happy would it be if we could always enjoy such heavenly manifestations, discourse, and company, as this! Suffer us to set up three tents; one for thee, the second for *Moses*, and the third for *Elias*, that we may all dwell together in this place: This he said in a sort of rapturous surprize, which made him incapable of duly considering whether it might be fit and proper, or not.

34 But at the very instant that he was uttering these words, the disciples found themselves covered with such an awful cloud, as was an emblem of the divine presence; (see the note on *Matth. xvii. 5.*) which, when it began to spread over them, not only deprived them of all further sight of *Moses* and *Elias*, (ver. 36.) but filled them with great fear, as not knowing what might be the consequence; though Christ being with them, there was no room to apprehend any danger.

35 And to shew that this cloud was a visible token of

came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear him.

36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone: and they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

37 And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

38 And behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee look upon my son, for he is mine only child.

39 And lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out, and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him, hardly departeth from him.

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not.

41 And Jesus answering, said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer

of divine favour, and not of wrath, they immediately heard a voice from the eternal Father out of the cloud, saying, This is the Son of my highest love, in whose person, office, and performances, my soul delights, and by whom I will make the last revelation of my mind and will: Attend therefore to him, and obey him, in whatsoever he shall say unto you.

36 Immediately after this voice the whole vision closed; Moses and Elias were gone, the cloud of glory withdrew, the transfiguration was over, and Jesus was with them alone in his usual form: And they, according to his command, (*Matth. xvii. 9.*) kept counsel for the present, without discovering what they had seen to friend or foe, till after his resurrection, when it was much more easily credited than it would have been before.

37 Now (*δε*) when our Lord and the three disciples returned, on the morning of the next day, from the mountain, he found abundance of people, with the rest of his disciples, waiting for him below.

38 And as soon as he appeared, they flocked about him, and one of the people falling down at his feet, cried out with great earnestness, Lord, I humbly beg that thou wouldst look with an eye of compassion upon my son, and heal him; for he is a dear and only child, for whom I cannot but be tenderly concerned in his present deplorable condition, which is this:

39 An evil spirit has taken possession of him, and distresses him in so terrible a manner, that sometimes he shrieks out all on a sudden, and talks like one frightened out of his wits; at other times he is racked and tortured, and thrown into violent convulsions, till he foams at the mouth, and seems to be quite senseless; at other times he falls down in an instant wherever he is, and receives abundance of hurt; and so cruel and malicious is the devil in tormenting him, that he hardly ever gives him any respite.

40 Having therefore heard of thee, and of what wonderful works even thy disciples have done in thy name, I applied to them, while thou wert absent, begging that they would cast out this evil spirit: But, alas! they attempted it in vain; and now I come to see whether thou thyself canst do any thing to help him. (*Mark ix. 22.*)

41 Hereupon Jesus severely reproveth the father of the lad, together with the unbelieving multitude, and especially the *scribes*, who had run down his disciples because they could not work this cure; (*Mark ix. 14.*) and he said to them, O ye desperately incredulous, obdurate generation of men, how long shall

fer you? Bring thy son hither.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him; and Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

43 And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God: but while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

44 Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

46 Then there arose

I be working divine and merciful miracles among you? and how long must I nevertheless bear with your perverse diffidence, enmity, and opposition to me? Then speaking to the father, for the encouragement of his faith, and to the people, and particularly the *scribes*, (*Mark ix. 19.*) for the confuting of their unbelief, he said, Bring the child to me*.

42 And as the youth was coming, the devil, who knew Christ's power better than the *scribes* did, was enraged at the thoughts that he must now be cast out; and to shew his furious inclination for doing all the mischief he could, he threw the poor young creature down with great violence, and shook him as if he would have torn him to pieces: But (*δὲ*) Jesus spoke with sovereign power and authority to the evil spirit to depart; and immediately restored the child to perfect health, and delivered him back to his father safe and sound.

43 And the whole multitude were struck with great astonishment at so plain a demonstration of the truly divine power, which our blessed Lord exerted in performing this stupendous work, and thereby defeating the triumphs of his enemies. But while the people were admiring this and other miracles which Jesus had wrought, and he and his disciples were again got together alone, (*Matth. xvii. 19,—22.*) he, to guard them against entertaining any thoughts of his appearing in worldly power and grandeur, said,

44 Take particular notice of what I have told you before, and am going to tell you again; often think of it, reflect seriously upon it, and live in the daily belief and expectation of it, that ye may not be surprised and shocked when ye come to see it; *viz.* That I, whom ye know and believe to be the Messiah, shall certainly be given up to the power of mine enemies, who will put me to death.

45 But how plainly soever he talked to them of these things, their heads were so full of notions about the Messiah's appearing with external pomp, that they could not tell how to understand his suffering and dying in a literal sense, nor could they imagine what he intended by such expressions: And yet, he having so often used them, and shewn his displeasure at the exceptions which *Peter* had lately offered against them, (*Matth. xvi. 21,—23.*) they were ashamed, and afraid to make any further inquiries about his meaning in them.

46 And as Jesus was going with his disciples toward

N O T E.

* See the notes on *Matth. xvii. 17.* and *Mark ix. 19.* where Christ speaks to the faithless generation to bring the child to him.

arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

47 And Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him.

48 And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

49 And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us, is for us.

51 And it came to

ward *Capernaum*, (*Mark ix. 33.*) they, lagging behind, entered into a warm debate, about which of them should have the pre-eminence in the temporal kingdom, which they still expected Christ would soon set up in the world, notwithstanding all that he had said to the contrary.

47 But Jesus, who knew what was in man, was perfectly acquainted with all their ambitious views, and with the whole of their vain dispute, though he was not corporally within hearing; and therefore, as soon as they arrived together at *Capernaum*, he, calling for a young child, set it before them.

48 And then he said unto them, This child is a proper emblem of the true subjects of my kingdom, who, like him, should be disinterested, meek, and humble, free from all ambition, envy, and malice; and whoever shall receive any persons of these holy dispositions into his affection, and shew kindness to them in obedience to my command, and for my sake, because they bear my image, and are in favour with me, shall be accounted of as if he had done it personally to myself; and whoever shall receive me into his heart, by a self-denying faith and love, for spiritual purposes, shall be esteemed as paying the same religious regard to my Father himself, who sent me into the world: For this is the rule of my kingdom, that he, who is most humble, condescending, and self-abased among you, shall be advanced to the greatest honours, and most highly favoured with my smiles and blessings.

49 Then the apostle *John*, desirous to know whether he had preserved this excellent temper on another occasion, said, Master, I and others of thy disciples, not long since, saw a certain man making use of thine authority in casting out devils; and we thought proper to rebuke him, and forbid his doing so any more, as supposing that he had no right to use thy name for such purposes, because he did not associate with us, or with any of thy constant followers.

50 But (*xxi*) Jesus being displeas'd at such a peevish, narrow, unbecoming party-spirit, reproved *John*, and his companions that joined with him in it, saying, Ye are much to blame for going about to hinder such an one in my work, and to rob me of my praise; for he who does not oppose us, and especially he who carries on the same design with us, can never be reckoned as an enemy, but should be esteemed, embraced, and encouraged as a friend; though for reasons which ye know not, he may not think proper to join in company with you.

51 Now the time drawing on, when, according to the

to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to *Jerusalem*.

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the *Samaritans* to make ready for him.

53 And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to *Jerusalem*.

54 And when his disciples *James* and *John* saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as *Elias* did?

the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, our Lord *Jesus* was to pass through his last sufferings to glory, his heart was so fully set upon the redemption of the church, that he resolved, and set out to go to *Jerusalem*; nor would he hear of any persuasions to the contrary, though he knew the terrible things that would befall him there, by the righteous ordination of God, and the malicious, wicked, and cruel management of men and devils.

52 And as his direct road from *Galilee* to *Jerusalem* lay through *Samaria*, he, to give as little offence as possible, sent two of his disciples beforehand, to let the inhabitants know his design of passing through their country, and to prepare necessary entertainment in one of their towns for himself and company.

53 But, foolish and wicked creatures as these were, they would not receive this noble stranger, who would have borne his own charges, and, had they desired it, was ready, as well as able, to have blessed them; nor would they suffer him to enter into one of their villages, to take the rest and the accommodations which were necessary for him and his followers on their journey, because they perceived that he was going to worship at *Jerusalem*, and thereby practically declared against the *Samaritans*, who warmly denied that to be the place appointed of God for his worship*.

54 Then the disciples *James* and *John* looking upon this to be, as indeed it was, a heinous indignity to their Lord and Master; their love to him, and zeal for his honour, so inflamed their passions against the *Samaritans*, that they were for revenging the affront upon them in the severest manner, supposing that they had power enough in their commission so to do; and yet not daring to attempt it without his leave, they asked him to permit their ordering fire from heaven, to destroy these abusive wretches, in like manner as *Elijah* did of old, for the destruction of the two captains and their fifties that came to offer violence to him †. (2 *Kings* i. 10, 12.)

55 But

N O T E S.

* As the fame of *Jesus* was spread among the *Samaritans*, on account of what he had formerly done in their country, (*John* iv.) and he was looked upon as at least an eminent prophet; they were provoked to think that he should go to *Jerusalem* at this time, which seems to have been the feast of tabernacles, (*John* vii. 2.) and should thereby determine directly against them, that not mount *Gerizim*, but *Jerusalem* was the place

where God should be worshipped: And therefore, full of all resentment, they would by no means entertain him.

† *Elijah* did this in *Samaria*, very near, if not at this particular place; and this might probably put it into the disciples heads to make such a furious motion now, rather than at any other time and place where *Christ* had received live affronts, as particularly among the *Nazarenes* and *Geruzenes*.

55. But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

57 And it came to pass, that as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee, whithersoever thou goest.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

55 But our blessed Lord turned quick upon them, and sharply rebuked them, saying, Alas! ye do not consider what sort of spirit it is that would push you upon these cruel measures; how much passion and revenge, pride, and affectation of temporal power, mingle with, and secretly govern, your love and zeal for me; nor do ye consider the different nature and design of the dispensations then and now.

56 For *Elijah* was the minister of the law, and came to display its terrors against the horrible abominations of those days, when vain idols were consulted, and set in competition with, yea preferred to, the living and true God: This was high treason against *Jehovah* as *Israel's King*, as well as flagrant idolatry in opposition to him as their God; and it was suitable to that state of things, and to the terror of the mount-*Sinai* dispensation, that *Elijah* should have a commission for bringing fire down from heaven, to vindicate the authority which God had given him, and to execute vengeance upon them. But the design of the dispensation of love and mercy which I, the Messiah, am come to set up, is not to destroy enemies by kindling flames of wrath to consume them, but to melt and win upon them by heaping coals of a better sort of fire on their heads, and to work such miracles for the establishment of my cause and interest, as are not of the revengeful, but merciful kind. And having said these things to pacify and instruct his disciples, he, with all meekness, turned aside with them from this place, and went to another town or village, whose inhabitants might not be so strongly prejudiced against him.

57 And as Jesus and his disciples were walking together * in the road to *Jerusalem*, where the *Jews* expected the Messiah would set up his throne, and appear in his glory, a certain man came to him, and offered his service to attend upon him wherever he went, in hopes of getting great riches and honour under him.

58 But Jesus, knowing the carnal design of his heart, said to him, I, the Messiah, am so far from coming with the magnificence of a prince, to set up a temporal kingdom, that I have not so much as the conveniencies which are afforded even to the foxes and the fowls of the air, who have their places of abode and safety, retirement and rest; whereas I have neither house nor home of my own, nor can meet with common civility in my travels for lodging or entertainment:

N O T E.

* This seems not to refer to the same case that is mentioned *Matth.* viii. 19. the circumstances of place and time being different, though the substance of the conversation was the same.

tainment: If therefore you expect great things in this world from me, you will meet with a sad disappointment.

59 And he said unto another, Follow me: But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

59 There was another person, to whom Christ made the first motion, saying, Come thou, and attend upon me and my service; and this man intimated that he would readily comply with his command, only he begged leave to defer it till he should have performed the last offices of duty and respect to his father, in seeing him buried. (See the note on *Matth.* viii. 21.)

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

60 But our Lord, who will admit of no excuses or delays, nor will suffer any to indulge them when he comes to work effectually upon them, replied, It is not for those that are alive unto God, and are called to devote themselves to him, to put off my service for these lower concerns. Let them who are * dead in sin, and dead to God, by a dissolution of the union which originally was between him and their souls, attend to the business of burying them that die corporally, by a dissolution of the union of their souls and bodies: I insist upon your going immediately, at my call, to preach the gospel of my kingdom for the salvation of lost sinners; and he was made willing in the day of Christ's power, without any further objection or delay †.

61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house.

61 And there was a third person, who offered to be one of Christ's disciples, and a preacher of his gospel, saying, Lord, I would willingly give myself up to thee and thy work, only let me first go and take a decent leave of my relations and friends, and settle the affairs of my family at home, that neither my reputation nor my temporal interests may suffer.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

62 But (δὲ) Jesus replied, in a way of sharp rebuke to him, As a ploughman must be always keeping his eye forward upon his work, and never be looking back, or else his hand cannot guide the plough to make regular furrows of a due and equal depth: So no person who takes upon him to be my disciple, or to preach my gospel, and looks wishfully back to the affairs of this life, as if he were loth to part with

P 2

them,

N O T E.

* We cannot make sense of this passage, without supposing that, in the former clause, our blessed Lord meant persons who were spiritually or morally dead, according to *Eph.* ii. 1, 5. *Col.* ii. 13. and *1 Tim.* v. 6. And this instance plainly shews, that the scripture-notion of this sort of death is not to be confined to the *Gentiles*, as if it related only to their de-

plorable condition as such; for the persons here spoken of were *Jesus*.

† Christ ordering him to go, and no more being said of this man's continuing to object against it, intimates, that his heart was overcome by grace, and that he no longer insisted on his former excuse.

them, can be a meet subject for my kingdom, nor fit to be engaged in its service.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

With what authority does Christ commission his servants to preach the gospel; and with what faithfulness should they attend to their work, as knowing that they must give an account to him of all their behaviour in it! And oh how much will it be to the joy or grief of their hearers, according as they either receive or reject them and their Lord! Happy are they who are not ashamed to own Christ, whatsoever sufferings or reproaches they may meet with for it; but such as are ashamed of him, his truths and ways, shall be disowned by him, to their utter confusion, and to the everlasting loss of their own souls, which can never be compensated by the greatest affluence of the good things of this world.—O the transporting pleasure of the divine presence! It is good for us to be there: The weakness of human nature, in its present state, would indeed soon be overset with its brightest manifestations on earth; but it admits of lively emblems of what will be seen in heaven, where all the saints shall appear with Christ in glory, and shine in robes of light like him. In the mean while, all that we do in religion must be under his direction and command, and all our hopes toward God must be only in and through him, in whom his Father is well pleased. Our Lord observes whether we have any true faith in him, and to what degree it prevails in us; what the disputes are which we most eagerly go into, and what manner of spirit we are of: And O how great are the defects, prejudices, pride, and passion, that remain with his own disciples! He highly disapproves of these things; but with what affection, tenderness, and applause does he treat meek and humble souls! And how wonderful is his condescension and grace to sinners, in bearing with them, and in having resolutely undergone the greatest sufferings for them, and in taking the most endearing methods to overcome them! and yet upon what unworthy pretences do they reject him, or excuse themselves from embracing him! But whoever once begins to profess his name, or engage in his work, should persist therein, and never look back with an hankering and insinuating affection to the business, pleasures, or honours of this present life, as ever he would share in the blessings and glories of Christ's kingdom here, and for ever hereafter.

C H A P. X.

Christ's commission to the Seventy, 1,—16. His discourse to them, and thanksgiving to his Father on their return, 17,—24. His discourse with a lawyer about the way of attaining eternal life, 25,—37. His reproof of Martha, and commendation of Mary, 38,—42.

TEXT.

AFTER these things, the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city, and place, whither he himself would come.

PARAPHRASE.

AS our Lord had about a year before sent forth twelve apostles; (*chap. vi. 13.* see the note there) so he sent out seventy other disciples with the like commission, answerable to the seventy elders of *Israel*, who were partakers of the same spirit which was upon *Moses*: (*Numb. xi. 25.*) And, having chosen these to assist the apostles, he sent them likewise by pairs, to go, as his harbingers, to every town and city of the *Jews*, to which he himself designed afterwards to follow them.

Therefore said he

2 And as he had a great harvest of souls to gather in

he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

3 Go your ways: Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

4 Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

5 And into whatever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again.

7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they

in to himself, by means of the gospel, first among the Jews, and afterwards among the Gentiles; he intimated, that, notwithstanding this addition of seventy to the twelve, the number of hands would still be very small, compared with what there would be occasion for; and therefore ordered them, as he had his disciples before, (*Matth. ix. 38.* see the note there) to apply earnestly to the great Lord and Proprietor of the harvest, that he would add still abundance of others, who should be skilful, faithful, and laborious preachers of the gospel.

3 And, says he, go ye forth, for the present, to the work to which I have called you: Observe who has sent you, and what sort of people I tell you beforehand ye will meet with: I have given you your warrant, and will afford you all needful protection and assistance, amidst the great dangers and discouragements ye will be exposed to, and unable to defend yourselves against; while ye, like timorous and helpless, as well as meek and inoffensive lambs, will be cast among enemies, who, like crafty and cruel, violent, and furious wolves, are seeking to harass and destroy you.

4 Commit yourselves by faith to the care of divine Providence, for a supply of such necessaries of life as ye may have occasion for: And, in confidence that God will raise up friends to shew you kindness, do not trouble yourselves about carrying with you money, or food, or any other conveniencies, no, not so much as a pair of shoes, more than ye have on your feet: And apply yourselves so diligently to your main work, as to lose no time in exchanging compliments, or entering into unnecessary discourse with any whom ye may meet with in your way.

5 And whenever ye go into any house for entertainment, express your hearty concern at your entrance into it, for the prosperity of all who dwell there, begging that God would abundantly bless them.

6 If there are any who hereupon shew a friendly disposition toward you, a desire of peace with God, and a willingness to receive the gospel of peace, they shall be blessed in answer to your prayers for them: But if they discover an obstinate and prejudiced spirit against you and the gospel of salvation, relating to the way of obtaining favour with God, though your prayer may not be answered for them, it shall return with double blessings upon your own heads.

7 And take up your abode in the first family that ye go into, and find disposed to entertain you, courteously accepting such provision as it affords, though it be the meanest fare, and freely eating and drinking what

they give; for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

what they set before you, without any uneasiness in your own minds, as if ye were a burden to them: For as the labouring man has a lawful right to his wages; so, while ye are employed in the service of their souls, ye have a just claim to sustenance for your bodies, and so every one will think who receives any spiritual benefit by your labours: Do not therefore shift your quarters while ye have any work to do in the neighbourhood, that ye may not seem to be fickle or pamperers of your appetites, nor lose the opportunity of establishing friendship with your first acquaintance there.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you.

8 In like manner, whatsoever town or city ye go to, if its inhabitants shew any dispositions to hear your message, and to entertain you among them, do not be nice or curious about what sort of food they offer you, or in inquiries whether it be ceremonially clean or not; but eat heartily, like persons pleased with your fare.

9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

9 And in return for their civilities, as well as in confirmation of the divine authority of the commission which I have given you, set yourselves to heal their sick, by miracles wrought in my name; and while ye are doing such kind and endearing works among them, tell them that the kingdom of the Messiah, with all its rich and glorious blessings, is brought near to them in the gospel, which ye are sent to preach, as his harbingers, who will soon follow you thither, and appear in person to receive all that come to him.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

10 But if ye go into any town to perform miracles, and preach my word there, and the people resolutely set themselves against you, and will by no means suffer you to go on with your work, withdraw from thence; and as ye pass along the streets, enter a solemn and public protest against them, saying,

11 Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

11 We shake off the very dust of your city, which sticks to our feet, in token of God's abhorring and rejecting you, and of our leaving you to his righteous judgment, for your obstinately and maliciously rejecting the means of grace which we were sent to bring to you: But, at the same time, charge it upon them to reflect upon the dreadful consequences of their despising this great mercy; since they shall certainly one day know, that the gracious dispensation by the long-expected Messiah, was at last brought to their very doors, and freely tendered to them; and that there can be no other remedy for them, but that they must inevitably perish, with a vengeance, for their wilfully rejecting it.

12 But I say unto you, that it shall be

12 And I assure you, their incorrigible wickedness and infidelity shall be so far from going unpunished;

be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.

13 Wo unto thee Chorazin ! wo unto thee Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell.

16 He that heareth you, heareth me : and he that despiseth you, despiseth me : and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.

17 And the seventy

nished, that the destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, by fire and brimstone from heaven, shall be found, in the day of judgment, to have been incomparably less terrible than that which shall be brought upon them ; and the guilt and miseries of the notoriously wicked inhabitants of those ancient cities shall be far less, in that day, than these obstinate refusers of gospel-light and grace shall then be loaded with.

13 On this occasion our Lord said, The greatest of all woes hangs over your heads, ye impenitent and unbelieving inhabitants of *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, who have been most remarkably favoured with endearing means of grace, and yet have shut your ears and hearts against them : For if the impious heathen cities of *Tyre* and *Sidon* themselves had been indulged with so clear a revelation of Christ, and such numerous unquestionable miracles to confirm his divine authority, as have been vouchsafed to you ; it is highly probable, that even they would long ere now have yielded to conviction, and expressed their humiliation and repentance in the most affecting tokens, like persons who cover themselves, in days of the deepest mourning, with sackcloth and ashes. (See the note on *Matth.* xi. 21.)

14 But your guilt is so highly aggravated, that when God shall come to execute vengeance in the great day of account, it shall fare better with the people of *Tyre* and *Sidon* than with you.

15 And as for thee, O *Capernaum*, who hast been, as it were, my head-quarters where I have chiefly resided, preached, and performed miraculous works, and who hast been exalted in gospel-privileges to the very gates of heaven, and art now proud and prosperous ; thou shalt be cast down from all thy riches, privileges, and glory, and thy inhabitants shall be pressed, by the heaviest weight of God's wrath, to the very lowest and hottest place in hell.

16 However, Jesus, to encourage the seventy disciples in preaching the gospel, wherever they could get opportunity for it, intimated, that their labour should not be altogether in vain ; but that they should be owned and honoured among many, whatsoever might be the event as to others ; saying, He who attends to you, and heartily embraces your message, does in effect pay all that respect to me ; but he who slights and rejects you, and your preaching, in my name, thereby, in reality, shews the greatest disregard to me ; and he who treats me with negligence and scorn, pours all that contempt upon my heavenly Father himself, who sent me.

17 Upon this warrant, and these encouragements, the

venty returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

the Seventy set out for their journey, to execute Christ's commission in several towns and cities where they could meet with any favourable reception: And, after some time, they returned to give an account of what they had done; and having succeeded beyond their own expectation, all the fatigues, hardships, discouragements, and dangers they met with, were as nothing to them; but their hearts were wonderfully lifted up, and they spoke to Christ with a sort of joyful surprise*, saying, Lord, we have not only healed diseases in confirmation of the doctrine we preached, but have even been enabled to cast out devils in thy name; so that nothing can stand before thy power which has been with us, and has subjected them to us.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

18 Jesus replied, This is no more than I knew beforehand: For when I sent you forth to preach the gospel, and confirm it with miracles, I saw the forces of hell falling before you all on a sudden, like lightning, which darts down in an instant from heaven; and this is but the presage and beginning of the speedy triumphs that my gospel shall make, with an amazing spread over the whole kingdom of darkness, in turning the hearts of sinners from the power of Satan to God.

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

19 And in order to the further advancement of this great end, behold I now renew and enlarge my former commission, and give you power, through my name, to subdue and triumph over your grand adversary the devil, and all his instruments, who are as subtle and mischievous as serpents and scorpions; and over all sorts of venomous creatures †, that none of them may be able to do you any harm.

20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

20 Nevertheless, that they might not over-value themselves upon the powers they had already exercised, and now further received, he added this gracious caution, Let not your rejoicing terminate here, nor let it be your chief joy, that evil spirits themselves are put into subjection to you, and are dispossessed by the authority which I have given you; for all this honour might be conferred upon you for promoting my cause and kingdom in the world, and ye yourselves might, notwithstanding, eternally perish: But exult and triumph principally in this, that ye are

N O T E S.

* Their joy seemed to be with a mixture of surprise, because this power was more than, as far as appears, Christ had expressly mentioned in their commission, ver. 9.

xc. 13.; and this was literally fulfilled, *Act: xxviii.* 3, 5. And the power Christ here gave to the Seventy against Satan and all his instruments, was a remarkable instance of God's fulfilling the first promise, *Gen. iii.* 15. that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.

† Here seems to be an allusion to *Psal.*

enrolled in heaven, among the chosen and called of God, as persons whose names were written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world, (*Rev. xvii. 8.*) and who shall be adjudged and received to the everlasting inheritance.

21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

21 While Jesus was thus directing his disciples to rejoice, above all things else, in God's free favour and love, relating to their eternal salvation, his own heart was so exceedingly delighted with this thought, that (*ἠγαλλίασατο τῷ πνεύματι*) it even leaped for joy; and, in holy rapture, he said, I adore and bless thee, O my Father, thou great Proprietor, Disposer, and Governor of all persons and things in heaven and earth, that while thou hast seen fit to * leave men of parts and learning to their own wilful blindness and prejudices, which hinder their discerning the truth, excellence, and importance of what they have heard concerning the mysteries of thy kingdom; thou hast, nevertheless, in the riches of thy grace, and to set it off with the more advantage, freely discovered them, by thy Spirit, to persons of low capacity and mean figure in the world, and hast opened their hearts to embrace them: This is the way which thine infinite wisdom and good pleasure have taken to glorify thyself in their salvation, and it highly becometh thy greatness and goodness to dispose of thine own free favours in a sovereign manner.

22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal *him*.

22 And, to shew his own full concurrence with his Father herein, he immediately added, As universal dominion, so all the persons whose names are written in heaven, and all things designed of God to be revealed and communicated to them, are committed to my management in my office-capacity: And there is, such an entire intimacy and harmony between the Father and Son in their knowledge of one another, that none, but the Father is thoroughly acquainted with the nature and will, design and work of the Son; nor does any one understand what these things are in the Father, except the Son, and such other persons as, in their measure, receive them by revelation from him, whose sovereignty in revealing them is answerable to that of his Father in his eternal purposes about them.

23 And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are

23 Then, turning to his disciples, he pronounced them blessed, because he had made them so, saying to them in private, Ye are happy creatures indeed, who

N O T E.

* Christ rejoiced not in the destruction of the wise and prudent; but in the display of the riches, freeness, and sovereignty of God's grace to others, in such

a manner as reserves to him the entire glory of our salvation, and hides pride from the eyes of man.

are the eyes which see the things that ye see.

24 For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law, how readest thou?

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

who see the Messiah appearing in the flesh, and setting up his kingdom in the world; and who know these important things for yourselves, having been assured from my own mouth that your names are written in heaven. (*ver.* 20.)

24 For I assure you, that many prophets, holy men, and kings of *Israel*, who were beloved of God, and eminent for their religion, longed to see the glorious light, privileges, and blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, and to share in them; but were never indulged with this favour, as ye are: And they would have been glad to hear the blessed tidings of salvation, with that clearness, pleasure, and advantage, as ye have heard them, but never obtained this desire of their hearts. These things were hid from ages and generations past, in comparison with the plain discoveries which are now made to you.

25 At another time, there was a remarkable conversation between our Lord and a certain scribe: This man came to Jesus with a design, if possible, to pose him, or get some advantage against him, saying, Master, as you profess to teach the way to eternal life, pray what is necessary for me or any other man to do to obtain it?

26 Jesus knowing the captious temper with which he put this question, replied, Since you are a professed interpreter of the law, and expect salvation by it, what do you say are the terms which it proposes for life? What do you read there about it, and how do you understand the matter?

27 The scribe readily answered, What the law insists on as the condition of life, is summarily comprehended in loving the Lord our God supremely, unreveredly, and constantly, with the united concurrence of all the faculties of the soul; and in bearing such a sincere good-will to our neighbour, as to make the love of ourselves the rule or measure of our dispositions and behaviour to him, supposing he were in our circumstances, and we in his.

28 Jesus owning this to be a just summary of what the moral law requires, and designing to convince the scribe of his own defects, replied, These are indeed the demands of the law for justification and salvation: See then that you fully come up to all this, in your duty to God and your neighbour; and, on that condition, you shall inherit eternal life.

29 But the scribe being desirous to shift off conviction, and support a good opinion of himself, slipped over what related to the love of God, and asked what was meant by our neighbour; imagining that it signified only one's friends and acquaintance, or persons

sons of the same country and religion, and that a just and kind behaviour toward such, sufficiently answered this demand of the law.

30 And Jesus answering, said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem, and fell among thieves; which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half-dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought

30 Then Jesus replied, You may form a good notion of what the word *neighbour* imports, by the following representation of a supposed case: A certain Jew, travelling from Jerusalem to * Jericho, fell into the hands of wicked men, who having robbed, stripped, wounded, and barbarously abused him, left him wallowing in his blood, and almost dead.

31 Now Providence so ordered it, that the first person who passed that way was a certain priest, whose profession and public character ought to have engaged him to shew the utmost tenderness, compassion, and care, toward this poor, miserable, helpless, and perishing object, especially he being one of his own religion and nation; and yet, as soon as he saw him, he turned off to the other side of the road, and pursued his journey without doing any thing toward his relief.

32 The next that came was a Levite †, whose office and profession likewise, one would have thought, might have moved his compassion toward so distressed a countryman and brother; and yet he hardened his heart against him, and only just looking upon him to gratify his curiosity, passed by at a distance on the other side of the way, without giving himself any trouble, or being at one farthing's charge to help him.

33 But at length a certain Samaritan, travelling on that road, came to the place where he lay: And though the enmity between that people and the Jews, has been so extremely great, by means of their frequent bitter quarrels about religious and civil concerns, (see the note on John iv. 9.) yet, as soon as this Samaritan saw the poor Jewish stranger in all his distress, his eye moved his heart into compassion toward him:

34 And, going up to him, he washed, suppled, and dressed his wounds in the best manner he could; and then, helping him to mount his own beast, he carried him to a public house, where he might have better assistance, and took care that all proper means might

Q²
N O T E S.

* Jericho was in the tribe of Benjamin, about eighteen or nineteen miles easterly from Jerusalem; and Jewish writers tell us, that about twelve thousand stationary priests and Levites dwelt there, who used to attend the service of the temple. The road therefore between those two cities, which lay through desert and rocky places, was much fre-

quented by priests and Levites, and infested with thieves.

† By Levites were principally meant such descendants of Levi as were employed in the lower offices of the temple, in subordination to the priests, who, likewise, being of the family of Aaron, descended from Levi by Kohath. 1 Chron. xxiii. 6,—32.

brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two-pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

might be used immediately for his comfort and recovery there.

35 And, being obliged to proceed on his journey the next morning, he called the inn-keeper; and, paying him * what the wounded man's lodging and other necessaries there came to, charged him to take all further requisite care of him; and promised, that whatsoever the expence might be, he would defray it at his return †.

36 Now, said our Lord to the scribe, which of these three men do you think might justly be deemed the neighbour of this poor, stripped, and wounded man? Was it the priest or the Levite, who shut up the bowels of their compassion against him, and did nothing for him? or was it the *Samaritan*, who, though a stranger, and of a different religion, took such tender care of him, and did such kind offices for him?

37 The scribe replied, He who was so compassionate and kind, most certainly best deserved this character ‡. Then our Lord said unto him, See that, in imitation of this *Samaritan*, you maintain a like benevolent and merciful regard, not only to your friends and acquaintance, and persons of your own religion and party, but likewise to such as are strangers and enemies, before you pretend to have perfectly kept the law, or to claim a title to eternal life for your obedience to it.

38 At

N O T E S.

* Two *Roman* pence amounted to about fifteen pence of our money, which, according to the rate of provisions in that country, might answer the charge of a night's lodging, and of the little food that the poor man might be supposed to have eat: But some think that this is to be understood of money left in hand for future charges, with a promise of paying whatsoever they might amount to more; and others suppose, that here is a reference to the half-shekel, which was to be paid for the ransom of a man's soul or life, *Exod.* xxx. 12, 13. two pence making that sum.

† Pious men have considered this parable as a fit representation of the miserable state of mankind by nature. Sin and Satan have wounded us to death, and we are utterly unable to help ourselves. The law, like the priest and Levite, the ministers of it, shews no compassion to us, nor is it in its nature to help us; it cursets us as transgressors, but cannot bless us, nor afford any relief in our deplorable perishing circumstances. But our Lord Je-

sus, like the good *Samaritan*, has had compassion upon us. Though we have been enemies to him, have dishonoured and provoked him, and never can make him amends for any favour he shews us; yet, of his own infinite love, his eye has pitied us, and he takes care of us at the expence of his own precious blood. He binds up our wounded spirits; heals the broken in heart, and pours into them the virtue of his blood, and the consolations of his Spirit, which are infinitely better than oil and wine. But how apt and beautiful soever the similitude may be to illustrate the endearing love and compassion of Christ to poor, wounded, and perishing souls; yet the immediate view of our Lord, in this parable, is for instruction in important points of another kind, as appears by his own application of it in the following verses.

‡ He could not, for shame, say otherwise, though he thereby unavoidably condemned himself, and overthrew his own false notion of the neighbour to whom our love is due.

35 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

42 But one thing is needful. And Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

38 At another time, Christ and his disciples, being on their travels, went to a town called *Bethany*, near two miles from *Jerusalem*: (*John xi. 18.*) And as *Martha*, the sister of *Lazarus*, lived there, Jesus went to her house, who, with the rest of the family, gladly took in this noble Guest, and all his attendants for his sake.

39 And as, upon entering the house, he, according to his usual way, began to preach the glad tidings of salvation, there was a sister of hers named *Mary*, who, being a great lover of Christ, took this opportunity to place herself, with all humbleness of mind, like a learner, at his feet, that she might attend unto, and receive instruction, by the gracious words which proceeded out of his lips.

40 In the mean while, *Martha*, being desirous to shew the best respect she was capable of to her Lord, was mighty busy in preparing a suitable entertainment for him; and finding that *Mary* was unwilling to be called off from hearing his discourse, she went and complained of her to him, saying, Lord, I cheerfully take all the pains I can to provide for thee and thy disciples, but the work is really more than I am well able to manage by myself: Dost thou not think it reasonable that my sister should take her part with me in it? Pray be pleased to order her to give me her assistance, and not sit still to hear till our hurry is over, when she may have a fitter opportunity for it.

41 But, contrary to her expectation, Jesus replied with great earnestness, O *Martha, Martha*, you are over-solicitous, and too much employed about things which are not worth such anxiety: I do not need or require, nor do I like, that you should spend so much thought, time, and pains, about entertaining me, who came not to be ministered to, but to minister; and, though it be intended as a token of respect, you distract and encumber yourself about every thing's being done in the handsomest manner, beyond what is proper for the occasion of my coming hither.

42 But let me tell you, One point is necessary, which your many other things ought to give way unto as infinitely more important; and that is the saving knowledge of myself, and of the true doctrine of eternal life which I am come to preach: *Mary* has had such an affecting sense of the excellence of this, as to make it her choice, in preference to all things else: and she has herein chosen the greatest good, which no powers of earth or hell shall ever be able to deprive her of.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How great are the difficulties on one hand, and the assistances on the other, that attend the servants of Christ, whom he employs, like labourers in a harvest, to gather souls to himself! But O how much work is there of this sort to be done; and how few are the laborious, skilful, and faithful agents, under Christ, that are engaged in it! We had need be daily praying to the Lord of the harvest, to furnish out good ministers for his service; and should remember, that as all their authority, qualifications, and assistances, so all their success depends entirely upon him. How great is the joy of being instrumental in advancing his interest, and overthrowing the kingdom of Satan! But how much happier still is it for ourselves to be found enrolled, as God's special favourites, among his children and the heirs of glory! And how should they, that are so, magnify the riches of his sovereign grace to them, who, notwithstanding all external revelations of God's mind in his word, would never have been made wise to salvation, unless Christ had been pleased to render them effectual by the internal light and energy of his Spirit! But the worst of all woes belong to such as wilfully reject him and his gospel: And as for those that desire to be under the law, as a covenant for life, let them hear its high demands, to confute their vain hopes of being justified by their own obedience to it; and yet let every one regard it as an everlasting rule of righteousness, summarily comprehended in the great command of perfect love, in heart and behaviour, toward God, and towards all men, whether they be friends or enemies, acquaintances or strangers, of the same religion with one's self or not. But how should all enquiries after eternal life and salvation be made with a serious, and not with a curious or captious temper, as ever we would be directed into the right way of obtaining them! And as the concerns of our souls are of the greatest importance above all others, how should we take heed that no secular affairs interfere with them! Christ will graciously encourage, countenance, and secure, the happiness of those that are more solicitous about a saving acquaintance with himself, than about outward testimonies of respect to him, which he never required, or about any business relating to this present life. May we be helped to chuse that good part which shall never be taken from us!

C H A P. XI.

Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray, 1,—13. Casts out a dumb devil, and proves that he did it not by any power of devils, 14,—26. Shews that the doers of the word are blessed, 27, 28. Reproves the perverseness and obstinacy of the Jews, 29,—36.; and the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and scribes, and denounces woes against them for it, 37,—54.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray,

PARAPHRASE.

AT a certain season, Jesus having been at prayer, as he was wont, one of his disciples took occasion to apply to him, on behalf of himself and his brethren, saying, Lord, we humbly beg that thou wouldst please to direct us how to pray, as *John the Baptist* * did his disciples.

2 In

N O T E.

* How *John the Baptist* taught his disciples to pray, cannot be determined with certainty, either by scripture or any remains of antiquity: But it seems, that, as the *Jews* went chiefly into thanksgivings and doxologies in their

prayers, so *John* gave his disciples a summary of *petitions*, which should go into theirs, suitable to the nature of the dispensation they were then under. Accordingly one of Christ's disciples, probably one of the seventy, who was not present

as John also taught his disciples.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins: for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say un-

2 In answer to which he said, As to the *matter* of prayer, let your petitions be for such things as may principally be summed up in the following address: "O thou common Father of all mankind by creation, and our God and Father by covenant, whose throne is in the heavens; We, encouraged by thy power and goodness, humbly intreat, that thou wouldst display the glory of thy perfections, by thy Spirit, works, and word; and wouldst enable us and others to reverence and adore thee, and to shew forth thy praise. May the Messiah be exalted; his word run, and be glorified; and many souls, through faith in him, be brought into thy kingdom of grace, and made more and more partakers of its blessings, till all shall be perfected in glory! And O that we, and all around us on earth, may be enabled to imitate the blessed inhabitants of the heavenly world, in a cheerful and universal compliance with, approbation of, submission and obedience to, thy will, in whatsoever instances thou mayest make it known to us!

3 "Bestow upon us, if it seem good in thy sight, the necessary and convenient provisions of the present day, and so on from day to day; and add such a blessing to them as shall sanctify them to our use, and refresh us by them that we may be fitted for all the duties to which thou callest us while we continue in the body.

4 "And graciously pardon all our sins, of every kind, that have been committed against thee, as thou hast commanded and inclined us to forgive those who have wronged or offended us: And we earnestly beseech thee, that for the future thou wouldst either not suffer us to be tempted to any unlawful thing, or not leave us to the power of any temptation whatsoever; but that thou wouldst seasonably strengthen us against, and give us victory over, the corruption of our own hearts, and over that evil-one, the devil, together with all his wicked instruments, and thereby prevent our dishonouring thy name, and bringing trouble and ruin upon ourselves."

5, 6 And our Lord further said to his disciples, As to the *manner* in which ye are to present such petitions as these, that they may be heard and answered, it should be with great earnestness and frequency, and with believing importunity and perseverance, till ye obtain

N O T E.

present at his sermon on the mount, (*Matth.* vi.) asked him to tell them, What requests they should make, suitable to the dispensation which was now further advanced under him; and he leaving out the doxology, reminded them

of those which, in that sermon some time before, he had taught them to offer; (*Matth.* vi. 9, &c. see the notes there) and then added further instructions concerning the manner in which they should perform that duty.

to him, Friend, lend me three loaves :

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him ?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not ; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed, I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet, because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you : seek, and ye shall find : knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh, receiveth : and he that seeketh, findeth : and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father,

tain the blessings ye pray for ; as may be illustrated by the following similitude : Suppose any of you had a friend, and should go to him, in the dead of the night, to beg a supply of such necessary provisions as you want, telling him that another friend of yours, being on a journey, is just come to you for refreshment, and that you have no manner of food to give him.

7 And suppose that the friend you apply to should at first so far discourage you, as to call from within his house, and desire you not to give him so unseasonable a trouble, telling you, that, it being late, his doors were fastened up, and he and all his family were got to bed, and therefore he must be excused from rising to answer your request.

8 If a man in these circumstances were still to continue insisting on the urgency of the case, and to repeat his pleas with him, like one who hoped in his goodness, and would not take a denial ; I tell you, that at length he would be prevailed upon, by such pressing importunity, to rise and let him have all that he wants, though he would not do it merely in consideration of the friendship that had been between them.

9 Now, to apply this : If one, who shewed so much backwardness to grant the request of his friend, was overcome at last by his repeated intreaties ; how much more will your heavenly Father, who has the kindest heart toward you, and never thinks you troublesome or unseasonable in your addresses to him, suffer himself to be prevailed upon by your fervent importunity, though he may not immediately answer your prayers, but at first may seem to refuse you. I therefore say unto you, Whatsoever mercies ye stand in need of, ask them of God in faith, according to his word, and he will freely grant them : Seek to him with earnestness, and ye shall obtain them : Be importunate for them, like one knocking, and continuing to knock, as at the door of his mercy, and he will give you a gracious answer.

10 For every one who applies to God in prayer, with faith in his power and goodness, and in his promise through the Mediator of his appointment, and with persevering earnestness, like one heartily concerned for the blessings he asks, shall surely be answered, in God's way and time, either in the very thing he prays for, or in what Infinite Wisdom knows will be as good or better for him.

11, 12 And, further to illustrate and enforce this, our Lord added another similitude, saying, Suppose any of you, who is an earthly parent, had a son that should

ther; will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, 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?

14 And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake: and the people wondered.

15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

16 And others tempting *him*, fought of him a sign from heaven.

should ask for necessary food, such as bread, fish, an egg, or the like; would you deny him, and, instead thereof, give him what you know would be as useless and injurious to him as a stone, a serpent, or a scorpion*? Let any one, who has the heart of a father, consult his own bowels, and think whether he could do so unnatural and cruel a thing to his own son.

13 If therefore ye yourselves, who are under the influence of irregular passions and various humours, would nevertheless, merely from natural affection to your own offspring, hear their cries, and give them what ye know to be necessary and proper for them; how much more will the infinitely-perfect Father of mercies give such things as he knows to be for the safety and happiness of his children? (*Matth.* vii. 11.) Yea, how certainly will he bestow that best and most necessary of all blessings, his holy Spirit, upon them who, relying on his grace, earnestly seek to him in prayer for it?

14 At another time, our blessed Lord undertook the casting out of a devil, who had utterly deprived the possessed man of his speech: And, as soon as Satan was forced to depart, the dumb man spake; thereby making it known to all the company that he was effectually released. And the generality of the spectators were amazed, that one who made so low a figure, contrary to what they expected from the Messiah, should exert such godlike authority over devils, and heal the poor distressed creature in an instant.

15 But the envious *Pharisees*, and some of the people under their management, gave a malicious and wicked turn to this miracle, privately insinuating one to another, that he cast out devils, not by the power of God, but in concert with, and under the influence of the prince of devils, called *Beelzebub* †, who made underlings yield to his superior authority over them.

16 Others took a more artful way to discredit Christ among the people, demanding some extraordinary sign from heaven, as a demonstration of his being the Messiah; thereby intimating, as if all the miraculous works he performed upon earth, might possibly be by the black-art, and so proved nothing in his favour.

17 But

N O T E S.

* A scorpion is a small blackish creature of the serpent kind, and is exceedingly venomous and mischievous.

† The name *Beelzebub* signifies *the god of flies*; and was given to the heathen *Jupiter*, whom his worshippers accounted the chief of their gods, but whom they meanly represented as employed in

driving away flies from *their* temples and sacrifices. The *Philistines* worshipped a deity under this title, as the god of *Ebron*: (*2 Kings* i. 6.) From hence it is probable that the *Jews* took the name, and applied it to the chief, or prince, of the devils, who was supposed to have some rule and dominion over the rest of the kingdom of darkness.

17 But he knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation: and a house divided against a house, falleth.

15 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges.

20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

21 When a strong man

17 But Jesus, knowing their evil intent in all this, and particularly what some privately muttered among themselves about his casting out devils by the prince of devils, replied first of all to that monstrous calumny, saying, It cannot reasonably be supposed that any communities should seek an establishment of themselves, or that their interests should really be promoted and secured, by the head and members being divided in their designs and actings one against another, in what relates to their common cause. On the other hand, every one must think, and all observation and experience proves, that such measures tend to, and, if pursued, must end, in their utter desolation, whether they be kingdoms or families, or any other societies whatsoever.

18 If therefore Satan were to assist in restraining and confounding his own agents, and that in confirmation of a doctrine so good and holy as mine, how is it possible that his kingdom should subsist? This would be the direct way to ruin, instead of strengthening and establishing it; and since it cannot be thought that he is so foolish and stupid as not to know this, it is malicious and absurd, to the last degree, for you to say that I defeat devils by any power derived from him.

19 And to retort the invidious charge, he further said, If ye suggest that I cast out devils in confederacy with their chief, pray what do ye say to your own disciples, who cast them out in the name of the God of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*? Ye never ventured to talk thus of them. And what do you think of your own honest, plain, undesigning countrymen, who do the like in my name? Ye have no room to imagine that such as these are in league with the devil: (see the note on *Matth. xii. 27.*) They therefore shall witness against you, and condemn you for your partiality, rashness, and injustice, in ascribing what I do of the same kind to the power of Satan.

20 But if, contrary to your blasphemous insinuations, I cast out devils by the power of God*, as I evidently do, ye cannot deny but that I am come from him to set up his kingdom of grace among you; and by opposing me, ye are the greatest enemies to yourselves, sinning against your own mercy to your utter confusion.

21, 22 And still further to shew that what he did herein

N O T E.

* The *finger* of God seems to be an allusion to what the *magicians* said, when they found themselves out-done by *Moses*, (*Exod. viii. 19.*) and it is called the *Spirit of God*, (*Matth. xiii. 28.*)

man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace.

22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, and take from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 He that is not with me, is against me : and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.

24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest ; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there : and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

herein was really a destruction of the devil's power, he illustrated it by this similitude, saying, When an armed and mighty man is in possession of his house, he rules without controul, and thinks himself secure : But when one, still more powerful, breaks in upon him, and gets the mastery over him, he disarms him, and takes all his goods into his own hands. So when Satan has got possession of the souls and bodies of men, and, by his wiles and strength, keeps them under his own dominion, there are no mutinies against him, and he thinks himself able to hold them fast : But when I come upon him with superior strength, and exercise my authority over him, I break to pieces all his power by which he before detained them, raise an opposition against him in those who before were tamely subject to his tyranny, and deliver the prey of the terrible one out of his hands, that I may use it for myself.

23 His interest and mine are so directly opposite, that it is impossible we should agree in the same designs : He therefore cannot approve of my doctrine, and of the works which I perform to confirm it, for the destruction of his power and kingdom ; nor can he side with me, but will ever do his utmost to oppose me therein ; and so do all those of you that deny my operations to be the effect of the power of God : There is no neuter in this cause ; but every one, who will not allow my doctrine and miracles to be truly divine, is really an enemy to me.

24, 25, 26 And your lamentable condition, O ye hypocritical and cavilling *Jews*, may be illustrated in the following manner : When an evil spirit is cast out of a man, he discontentedly wanders about, seeking a settlement elsewhere : But meeting with perpetual disappointments, he returns to attempt a recovery of his old habitation ; and, upon trial, finds nothing to oppose him, but every thing ready to entertain him. Upon which he enters again, and gets faster hold of the same man than ever, bringing many other more malignant spirits than himself to take possession with him : And by this means the case of that man is much more deplorable than it was before. So when the power of Satan is shaken by what I do among you of this wicked generation, he, being forced to retire against his will, roves about among the *Gentiles*, to carry on his empire there : But at length the gospel, attended with the power of miracles, and with internal operations of the Spirit, following him thither, to overthrow his interest among them, by vanquishing their idols, and captivating the souls of multitudes to the obedience of faith, he will return

to make another trial upon the Jews; and, finding them destitute of the grace of God, and unreclaimed under their high pretences to religion, he will enter again among them with greater power and prevalence: And they thereby will become more vile and wicked than ever, to their utter destruction, both in this world and the next. And thus it is with all in whom there has been only a temporary work: Satan returning again to see how things stand with them, and, finding that they are only cleansed from some former gross sins, and garnished with some false appearances of goodness, but are void of all true principles of religion, he takes possession of them again, and works in them with more malignity and power than ever before; so that they prove utter apostates, turn to be the worst of men, and are brought to the most dreadful condemnation and ruin.

27 And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lift up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast suck'd.

28 But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

29 And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign, and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

27 Whilst our Lord was discoursing in this excellent and awful manner, a certain woman was so mightily affected with it, that, in a rapture of admiration and joy, she interrupted him, crying out aloud among the people, What a wonderful person is this! with what authority does he command devils, and with what wisdom does he confute men! O happy woman who bore and brought thee up! what would I have given to have been the mother of such a Son! All generations will rise up and call her blessed.

28 But he replied, Do you think it such an honour and privilege to have conceived, brought forth, and suckled me? a much greater dignity and happiness than this shall be conferred on those who hear my gospel, and receive the love of the truth, that they may be saved. It is this that leads the way to real blessedness and glory, and is inexpressibly better than the nearest relation to me, according to the flesh.

29 The people, being alarmed at this surprising incident, ran together, crowding up still nearer to him; and then, resuming his discourse, he proceeded by way of reply to those that had demanded a sign from heaven, (*ver.* 16.) saying, The men of this degenerate age are exceeding obstinate and perverse. Notwithstanding all the unquestionable miracles I have wrought, still they unreasonably insist on proofs of my divine commission, by some extraordinary visible appearance in the heavens*: But their wilful, and incorrigible

N O T E.

* The time was not yet come to give them a sign from heaven: This was not to be till after Christ's ascension, first at the overthrow of Jerusalem, which would be the destruction of the then present ge-

neration; and afterwards at Christ's second glorious appearing to judge the world: And therefore he would not so far humour their unreasonable obstinacy and unbelief, as to give them such signs

corrigible infidelity shall not be gratified by any other sort of wonders, for the present, than I have already wrought; except such an one as resembles that of the prophet *Jonah*, which will close my appearance among them on earth, and will leave them altogether without excuse.

30 For as *Jonas* was a sign unto the *Ninevites*, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

30 For as the miraculous deliverance of *Jonah* from death, on the third day, after he had been buried in the belly of a great fish in the sea, was an evidence to the *Ninevites* that God sent him to warn them of their approaching destruction, unless they should repent: So I, who am truly man, shall be demonstrated to this generation to be the Son of God with power, by my rising from the dead, on the third day, after I shall have been crucified, and buried in a sepulchre; and if, after this proof that my message to them is from heaven, they continue in unbelief, destruction shall come upon them to the uttermost.

31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdom of *Solomon*; and behold, a greater than *Solomon* is here.

31 And our Lord fore-seeing that this grand evidence of his being the Messiah would likewise be rejected by the bulk of the *Jewish* nation, said, The example of the Queen of *Sbeba*. (who dwelt in that part of *Arabia* which was called *Sabæa*, and lay southerly from *Jerusalem*;) will turn to the confusion and reproach of this unbelieving and hardened generation of men, in the day of judgment: For she, though a great woman, and a stranger to the commonwealth of *Israel*, took a long journey from the most distant parts of the continent, to satisfy herself about what she had heard of *Solomon's* wisdom; and, upon seeing some specimens of it, she was convinced, and struck with admiration at it. But observe the perverseness of the professing people of this age! one of incomparably greater dignity, wisdom, and glory, than *Solomon*, now appears among them at their own doors, and that with much higher evidence of the divine excellence of his person and doctrine; and yet they reject and vilify him.

32 The men of *Nineveh* shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of *Jonas*; and behold, a greater

32 The behaviour of the *Ninevites* shall likewise testify against the obstinate perverseness of the people of this age, to aggravate their condemnation in the great day of account: For though they were heathens, and the prophet *Jonah* was a stranger, and a man of like sinful passions with themselves; and though he preached to them but three days, in which he denounced nothing but destruction, and wrought

no

N O T E.

as they insisted upon then. But at another time he told them, (*Matth.* xxvi. 64.) Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

greater than Jonas
is here.

no miracle in their sight; yet they believed, and were influenced by his message, to go into a general humiliation and repentance. But observe the difference! a much greater prophet, even the Messiah himself, is now come among you: And though he is one of your own nation sent of God to you as a people visibly in covenant with him; though he has year after year, preached the glad tidings of salvation through faith in himself, as well as denounced the righteous vengeance of God, which will certainly come upon you in case ye continue impenitent and unbelieving; and though he has multiplied miracles of various kinds before your eyes, to confirm his character and his doctrine; yet ye harden yourselves in your wickedness, and will not believe in him.

35 No man when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel; but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light: but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

33 These are awful truths. But as no man lights a candle to conceal it, or to hide it under a vessel, but to set it up in a candlestick that all in the room may see by it: So, whether ye will receive my doctrine or not, I must go on to publish it; and it will visibly turn to your advantage or confusion, according to your entertaining or rejecting it; a further illustration of which, ye may take in the following similitude.

34 As it is a man's eye that lets in the light of this world; and therefore, if this valuable organ be free from cataracts, and all vicious humours, his whole body has the benefit of the light for its direction and comfort: But if his eye be perished, or its sight be lost, how clearly soever the beams of the sun itself were to surround him, he can have no advantage by it, but is as incurably dark as if no light shone upon him. So it is a man's understanding that lets in spiritual light; and therefore, if his judgment be free from the influence of pride and covetousness, carnality and unbelief, his whole soul is enlightened with the glorious things of the gospel, approves of them, takes pleasure in them, and is directed and profited by them: But if his judgment be corrupted by any depraved affections, how brightly soever the evidence of gospel-truths may be set before him, his whole soul is as full of darkness, confusion, and misery, and is as effectually deprived of guidance and influence to salvation; as if no external revelation were made to him.

35 Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

35 Let every one therefore take care that the eye of his mind, which ought to receive the light of my doctrine, be not shut up under the power of lusts and prejudices: For this will be the worst of all darkness; and will certainly mislead the soul to ruin, instead of its being directed into the way to everlasting blessedness.

36 If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

37 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled, that he had not first washed before dinner.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter: but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

40 Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also?

41 But rather give alms of such things as you have: and behold, all things are clean unto you.

36 But, on the contrary, if the judgment be enlightened, and, together with this, the will and affections be renewed and sanctified, the whole man will be filled with the light of truth, holiness, and comfort; and the gospel, which is as a light shining in a dark place, will, like the clear burning of a candle in a dark room, shed its light into all the powers and faculties of the soul, for its direction in the way of life and peace to eternal glory.

37 Whilst our Lord was engaged in this discourse to the people, a certain *Pharisee* civilly invited him to take a dinner at his house; and as Jesus was affable and courteous, and took pleasure in opportunities of instructing all sorts of men, he readily accepted the invitation, and sat down to eat with him.

38 But (*de*) the *Pharisee*, like the rest of his superstitious sect, holding it to be sinful and defiling, according to their traditions, to eat a common meal without washing one's hands immediately before it, thought it strange that a prophet of so much sanctity, as Christ professed to be, should begin to eat without having first performed that rite.

39 And our Lord, observing this, reproved him and his brethren for their folly and hypocrisy, saying, Ye *Pharisees* are like persons, who, to get a reputation for cleanliness, take a great deal of pains to scour the out-side of their cups and dishes; but, at the same time, leave them very filthy and nauseous within: So ye are superstitiously nice and exact in external washings and cleansings, that ye may appear with a face of strict holiness in the eyes of men, while your minds and consciences are defiled, being full of rapine and extortion, cruelty and covetousness, and all manner of vile affections, which render you abominable in God's sight.

40 What a silly as well as hypocritical part do ye herein act, as if ye could impose upon the all-seeing and heart-searching God, who desires truth in the inward parts? Did not he create the soul as well as the body? and can ye suppose, that he is pleased with your ceremonious washings of the flesh, and takes no notice of the impurity of your spirits?

41 But there is a better way of having an allowed and sanctified use of your common food; and that is by liberal distributions out of your worldly substance to refresh the bowels of the poor, according to God's ordinance, for a holy enjoyment of creature-comforts, and of his blessing upon them: (*Deut.* xxvi. 12,—15.) And as the duties of mercy and charity are of moral obligation, and are proper fruits of true repentance, especially when persons have been guilty of extortion

tortion and oppression, ye should be much more solicitous about these than about external washings, that all things may be clean to you, as they are to him who is clean. (*Tit. i. 15.*)

42 But wo unto you, Pharisees: for ye tithe mint and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment, and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

42 But the greatest of all woes hangs over your heads, ye hypocritical *Pharisees*: For, under pretence of extraordinary piety, ye are wonderfully exact in paying tithes of the most inconsiderable parts of your increase, such as mint, anise, rue, and cummin, and all sorts of herbs, which are of little value, that ye may gain the admiration of the people, ingratiate yourselves with the priests, and make a merit of it with God; and, at the same time, ye shamefully neglect the plainest duties of the moral law, such as the practice of justice and righteousness in your dealings with men, and a sincere affection to God: Whereas ye ought to have attended to these duties in the first place, as of chief importance and eternal obligation, though not to the neglect of such ritual performances as are of divine institution.

43 Wo unto you, Pharisees: for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

43 The heaviest vengeance is coming upon you, O ye hypocritical *Pharisees*: For ye are excessively fond of appearing in seats of distinguishing and superior honour, in places of public worship, where there ought to be the most humble sentiments and behaviour, as in the presence of God; and your ambition is so extravagant, that ye are eagerly desirous of, and mightily pleased with, the highest compliments and homage from the people, in all places of common resort, as if ye were holier than others, and were the lords of their faith and obedience.

44 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them, are not aware of them.

44 I likewise pronounce you to be extremely miserable, O ye *scribes* and *Pharisees*, who play the hypocrite with God and man: For as the * graves of dead men are full of rottenness and corruption; but, lying level with the ground, and being overgrown with grass, are not easily distinguished; and they that walk over them, not being aware of them, are ceremonially defiled by touching them. (*Numb. xix. 16.*) In like manner your outward appearances are so specious, that men cannot easily discover your hypocrisy;

N O T E.

* Some graves or sepulchres were whited with chalk or lime, that people might know and avoid them, to prevent being defiled by them. These are mentioned, *Matth. xxiii. 27.* as full of all loathsomeness within, notwithstanding the beauty of their outward appearance. But others were overgrown with herbs or grass, which hindered their being known to be graves. These are referred to here, to represent the danger of

persons being unawares defiled by them, because they could not be distinguished. And in both these considerations our Lord might speak of them as fit emblems of the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, in different discourses, as these were: For this was in the house of a *Pharisee*, ver. 37.: but the other was some time after, in the temple, in the hearing of the disciples and multitude, *Matth. xxiii. 1.* &c. and *xxiv. 1.*

fy ; but ye are full of all uncleanness within ; and they that converse with you are infected, and drawn into sin, by your corrupt doctrines and manners, before they are aware.

45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also.

45 At these words, a certain doctor of the law, then present, was highly offended ; and, interrupting Christ's discourse, said, Master, you not only have been reflecting on the *Pharisees* in general, but now you make too free with our character in particular, considering the eminence of our function*.

46 And he said, Wo unto you also, ye lawyers : for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

46 But ($\delta\epsilon$) Jesus, who was no respecter of persons, nor afraid of the faces of men, replied, Ye also are exceeding guilty before God, and exposed to his dreadful wrath, O ye expounders of the law : For, in your interpretations of it, ye stretch such things as may be most burdensome to the people, beyond what God ever intended, and ye furthermore add many severe and expensive precepts of human invention ; and all these ye enjoin with the utmost rigour upon others, without the least abatement : But ye yourselves live in the neglect of the most important things, which it is your office to teach and enforce upon them, how strict soever ye may be in some rituals that cost you little charge or trouble, and may recommend you to the reverence and applauses of men.

47 Wo unto you : for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

47 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical boasters : For ye shew abundance of zeal to keep up, repair, and beautify, the sepulchres of the holy prophets, that were persecuted to death for their faithfulness, and to garnish their tombs, under pretence of your having all possible veneration and respect for their memory ; but ($\delta\epsilon$) your fathers were the persons that so cruelly destroyed them.

48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers : for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

48 And ye are the inheritors of their wickedness, and practically approve of what they did, being as truly their offspring in your temper, disposition, and behaviour, as by natural descent. For it is indeed true that they were the murderers of the Lord's prophets, and that ye take care to keep their tombs in good repair : But this is so far from being, as ye would have it thought, an evidence of your piety, that it is really a perpetuating the memory of that malignant spirit in your ancestors, who put them to death ; which reigns with greater fury, and will discover

N O T E.

* The scribes or lawyers, which are terms of the same import, were, by their office, interpreters of the law, and were commonly judges in the *Jewish* sanhedrim, and teachers in their schools and

synagogues ; and therefore they assumed to themselves an air of great gravity, and valued themselves upon the dignity of their stations ; and they were mostly of the sect of the *Pharisees*.

cover itself with still higher aggravations, in yourselves.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute;

49 Therefore the Son of God *, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and by whom their brightest glory is displayed, proceeded to deal still more plainly with them, saying, I will send, among you of this age, divinely-inspired prophets, and extraordinary messengers, to publish my gospel; and some of these ye will barbarously destroy, and others of them ye will persecute with reproaches, imprisonments, scourges, and other cruelties.

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

50 Hereby ye will far exceed your fathers in extensive and outrageous instances of wickedness, which God will suffer you to commit, in defiance of greater mercies, and more evident means of conviction, than they ever enjoyed, that ye may bring upon the present generation of the *Jews* all the terrible wrath threatened and due for national guilt, in shedding the blood of the servants of God in former ages, from the beginning of the world.

51 From the blood of Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

51 Even from the blood of righteous *Abel*, which was shed by *Cain* on account of religion, and which cried aloud to heaven for vengeance, before the giving of the law, unto the blood of that well-known *Zacharias*, under the law, whom your predecessors stoned to death, for reproving their idolatry, in the court between the altar of burnt-offering and the temple, and who, when he died, said, *The Lord look upon it, and require it*: (2 Chron. xxiv. 20,—22. see the note on *Matth.* xxiii. 35.) I assuredly tell you, that God, in his righteous judgment, will revenge all this blood upon the men of this generation, for their still more flagrant iniquity of the same kind, in the utter destruction of their city, temple, and nation.

52 Wo unto you lawyers: for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that

52 Wo unto you, in particular, ye perverse interpreters of the law: For, instead of faithfully discharging the duty of your office, ye mislead the people †, and will not suffer them to take the scriptures in any other sense than ye think fit to impose upon them; and

N O T E S.

* If, as some suppose, Christ himself here spoke of that divine perfection which we call the *wisdom of God*, it is difficult to make any tolerable sense of this verse, unless the things here mentioned, as said by the wisdom of God, were to be found in the Old Testament, which, I think, is silent about them: And therefore I take this phrase to be the evangelist's appellation of Christ, who is expressly said to

have spoken these things; (*Matth.* xxiii. 34.) and who was represented under the character of *Wisdom*, in *Prov.* viii.; and so is called *the wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24.

† The *key of knowledge*, as some think, is an allusion to the custom of the ancient *Jews*, who, at the ordination of a *Rabbi*, or teacher of the law, gave him a key, to intimate that he was to open the scriptures to the people.

that were entering in, ye hindered.

53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:

54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

and so ye not only refuse to enter into the gospel-kingdom yourselves, but likewise keep them in ignorance who seem inclined to put in for its benefits, and do all ye can to hinder them by the false glosses which ye give to the word of God, and by hiding from them its plainest references to the Messiah.

53 Whilst our Lord was thus freely exposing and reproving the wickedness and hypocrisy of the scribes, they, together with the Pharisees, were enraged at it; and therefore pressed him with many captious questions, to try, whether they could not provoke him to drop some unguarded expression, which might, one way or other, be turned to his disadvantage:

54 They, at the same time, critically observing every thing he said, and endeavouring to put an invidious construction upon it, that might give them a plausible pretence, either of prejudicing the people against him, as an enemy to their law, or of prosecuting him as an enemy to the *Roman* government.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

What need have we that Christ should teach us to pray unto God, as our heavenly Father, for all temporal, and especially spiritual blessings, with holy adoration and reverence, importunity, faith, and fervour, and with a charitable and forgiving frame of spirit, that God, in all things, may be glorified! And what encouragement have we to hope for a gracious answer, when we are enabled in this manner, and with an eye to the great Mediator, as discovered in the clearer light of the gospel, to pour out our hearts before the Lord! But while some are desirous of Christ's teaching them to pray, how are others left to blaspheme, instead of receiving him, who is the only destroyer of Satan's power, and deliverer of his miserable captives! And though some are more desperately wicked than others, there are no neutrals in religion, but all are really either friends or enemies to the only Saviour; and many, who seem to be reformed, and freed from the power of the devil, may turn the vilest apostates, and be more than ever subject to his tyranny over them. But oh happy souls that believe and observe the word of God! They are dearer to our Lord than his nearest kindred, according to the flesh; whilst others, whose unbelief will not submit to the clearest evidence, fall under his severe rebukes: Even heathen nations will rise up in judgment against them. What a miserable case is it to be blinded with sinful prejudices in the midst of gospel-light! But their folly and wickedness is most aggravated, of all others, who pervert and abuse the means of grace, under the power of a superstitious, hypocritical, and persecuting temper: They prefer external forms and ceremonies to the substantial duties of love and obedience; they take up with fair shews of religion, whilst all manner of impurities are indulged, and reign within; and they are inveterate enemies to Christ, his gospel, and his followers, while they pretend to condemn others of a like temper in former ages. But God will take the heaviest vengeance upon them, if not in this world, in that which is to come; and national sins, must issue in national reformation, or national ruin. Blessed be God for the free use of the scriptures: May none of us incur the wo of taking them out of the hands of the common people, or of imposing our own sense of them upon their consciences! And may none of us be ever so impatient of reproof, as to have heart-risings against Christ and his word for condemning our faults, instead of taking conviction of them!

C H A P. XII.

Christ cautions his disciples against hypocrisy and cowardice in their profession and preaching, 1,—12.; and against covetousness, 13,—21. Directs them to cast all their care upon God, and to make religion their chief business, 22,—34. Shews them the necessity of watchfulness, 35,—48. Bids them expect persecution, 49,—53. And warns the people of the danger of neglects and delays, 54,—59.

TEXT.

IN the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

2 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

3 Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light: and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops.

PARAPHRASE.

WHILST our Lord was discoursing with the scribes and Pharisees, a vast multitude of the people crowded about him, and were ready to trample one another under foot in pressing forward to get near enough to hear him: Then, in the audience of all the people, he turned his discourse particularly to his disciples, saying, Take heed, (*πρωτον*) above all things else, of hypocrisy, which is the reigning sin of the Pharisees, and, like leaven, puffs them up, sours, and corrupts their spirits, spreads its infection through all their professions, words, and actions, and utterly spoils their specious pretences to religion. Be not ye like them:

2 For how close and artful soever your hypocrisy may be, it cannot be so secret, but that, as it is always known to God, it shall one day be manifested to others; nor can it be so disguised, but that, sooner or later, it shall be exposed in its true light to public view, sometimes to the confounding of its own design even in this world, and certainly in the day of judgment.

3 Your most concealed transactions, therefore, with one another, shall hereafter be made manifest; and what private instructions soever I have communicated to you, and ye have hitherto talked over only among yourselves, like persons whispering in the dark, or in a closet, ye shall publish them in the plainest manner wherever ye go, that they may be seen like the light at noon-day, and may be heard like a proclamation from the battlements of an house, by all about you*: Remember that it shall appear at last whether ye have been sincere and faithful in all these things or not.

4 And

N O T E.

* It seems, by comparing this with *Matth. x. 26, 27.* (see the note there) and *Mark iy. 21, 22.* that our Lord spoke it with relation to his disciples publishing the gospel; and yet, as it is here

brought in by way of caution against hypocrisy, I have also had a regard to the discovery of secret transactions in the day of judgment.

4 And I say unto you, My friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do.

4 And let me caution you, my disciples, whom I esteem, and am concerned for, as my dearest friends, not to be discouraged in, or turned aside from, the way of your duty, by fears of provoking the *Pharisees*, or any man whatsoever: For the utmost that their malice and power can do against you, is only to destroy the life of the body, which would quickly die of itself; they, after all, can neither deprive the soul of its life and happiness, nor hinder the body's rising again to eternal life.

5 But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him which, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

5 But I will tell you, whom ye ought to regard as the object of religious fear, and to be afraid of offending, by the omission of any duty, or commission of any sin; and that is the great God, who is able to kill the body whenever he pleases, and afterwards to make both soul and body for ever miserable in the torments of hell; but, without whose permission, the worst of your enemies can do you no harm: It is, I say, your highest wisdom and interest, as well as duty, to be governed by a holy fear of him.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

6 Are not sparrows of so little worth, that five of them are usually sold for two farthings? and yet the all-governing providence of God so carefully watches even over them, that not one of them dies, or is killed without his cognizance and leave. (*Matth. x. 29.* see the note there.)

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

7 But there is still a more special care of Providence exercised about you, inasmuch that all your minutest concerns, even to the hairs of your head, are under God's exact inspection and disposal; none of them can suffer injury, much less can your lives be destroyed or hurt, without his knowledge and will. Be not therefore afraid of what man can do unto you: For ye as men, and especially as God's servants and children, are in the rank of creatures, and, in his account, of much greater value than ever so many sparrows; and he, who does not forget them, ye may be sure, will never be unmindful of you.

8 Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.

8 And, for your further encouragement and caution, I assure you, that, whether God shall see fit to protect you from the fury of your enemies in this world or not, your being courageous and faithful, or timorous and men-pleasing, in your profession and preaching, will be of the greatest consequence in the world to come: For whoever shall boldly own and profess his faith in me here, and shall stand up for my honour, truths, and ways, in the face of all opposition, reproach, and persecution from men; I, the Messiah, will hereafter publicly own and honour him as one of my disciples, and pass a sentence of eternal

nal blessedness upon him, in the presence of my Father, (*Matth. x. 32.*) and his holy angels.

9 But he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God.

9 But whoever, through fear or shame, in days of terror and calumny, for my sake, shall refuse an honourable testimony to me, and shall decline or cast off an open profession of my name, to the gratification of mine enemies, and disheartening of my friends, in this life; he shall certainly be disowned by me, and exposed to public shame, before God (*Matth. x. 33.*) and angels, as one whom I never approved of, and shall be condemned to eternal misery and confusion in the day of judgment.

10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.

10 And while ye make a due profession and declaration of my gospel to others; if any among them, in my present state of humiliation, shall speak lightly of me, and even dispute against my being the Christ of God, through their own ignorance and prejudices, occasioned by the meanness of my appearance, and the greatness of my sufferings, contrary to their expectations about the Messiah; they may obtain repentance and remission of these sins, through the Spirit's influence, and my mediation: But whoever, after my resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and pouring down of the Holy Ghost, shall speak maliciously against him in his extraordinary gifts and operations for the confirmation of my character, imputing them to the agency of the devil, as some of the Pharisees do the miraculous works which I now perform; the guilt of their sin will be so great, and so directly against the last and only means of conviction and salvation, that no repentance or forgiveness of it shall ever be granted.

11 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

11 But (*de*) whatever be the event to others, and how much soever any may be enraged against you for the testimony ye bear to me, even though they should carry you to ecclesiastical courts of judicature, held in the synagogues, to be tried, judged, and condemned by the *Jewish* rulers, or should bring you before magistrates, and governors among the *Gentiles*, to answer for the doctrine which ye profess and preach; yet fear none of their faces, nor be over-solicitous, much less anxiously and distrustfully careful, about what defence ye shall make for yourselves, and for the truth.

12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

12 For, as the cause is mine more than yours, I will stand by you; and the Holy Ghost shall be, at that instant, a spirit of wisdom and courage to you, that ye may know what to answer, and how to behave, as may be most for my glory and interest in the world, and most becoming yourselves as my servants.

13 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you?

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully.

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This

13 Whilst our Lord was discoursing in this manner to his disciples, one of the standers-by, a worldly-minded man, broke in upon him, saying, Sir, as you are a person of an extraordinary character, and set up for the Messiah, I beg that you would be so good as to decide a controversy between my brother and me about an hereditary estate, and order him to do me justice.

14 But, (ð;) Jesus replied, Friend, whatsoever your notions of the Messiah's temporal power may be, I make no pretences to interpose in an affair of this nature; my business lies in spiritual things, relating to the inheritance of eternal life, and not in secular concerns, relating to the inheritances of this world: And, were I to meddle with them, no doubt but some would say to me, as the *Egyptian* said to *Moses*, in a way of resentment and reproach, *Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?* (Exod. ii. 14.)

15 Christ, having in this manner waved interesting himself in temporal affairs, took occasion from the unseasonable motion that had been made to him about them, to say to his disciples, and the rest of the company, Be watchful over your own hearts, and stand upon your guard, lest the sin of covetousness insensibly ensnare, defile, and ruin you: Do not give way to a fondness for the good things of this world, to an over-solicitude about them, and eager pursuit after them, or to an unwillingness on proper occasions to part with them: For as a little will suffice for the necessaries, conveniencies, and comforts of the body; so the happiness of the present life, and satisfaction of the soul, does not consist in an affluence of earthly possessions, which usually brings incumbrances and snares, rather than contentment and advantage, and is rather an hindrance than furtherance of a man's using and leaving this world with decency, and exchanging it for a better.

16 To illustrate and confirm this, our blessed Lord added a supposed instance of a rich man, who was far from being an happy one, saying, A certain man possessed and occupied a very large estate in land, which yielded so great an increase of fruits, that he had not stowage sufficient to hold them.

17 Hereupon, instead of contriving what he should render to the Lord for all his benefits, and how he might best improve them for his glory, and the good of others, his mind was full of solicitous concern how to secure and dispose of all this abundance for his own use.

18 And at length the resolution he came to was this:

This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.

22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought

this: I will even pull down my old barns, and build new ones more commodious and capacious than the present; and will put my vast increase into them, that I may keep it in store, and use it for my pleasure.

19 And, having so much treasure heaped together, he vainly congratulated himself, as if nothing more were necessary for his safety and comfort, saying, O my soul, thou hast now enough to regale thyself with, to the utmost of thy inclinations and appetites, for a great many years to come; fear no evil, and spare no cost on any account whatsoever; but indulge thyself in all the indolence and pleasure, luxury and merriment, that heart can wish for.

20 But just as he was thus laying out his schemes, without any thought of death or danger, God broke all his measures in an instant, by an awful summons, saying, O vain, inconsiderate creature, who imagine yourself to be lord and sole proprietor of all this plenty, as if you neither received nor held it of me, nor were accountable to me for it; and who are grown so self-sufficient, as to fancy that these uncertain riches would secure long life and pleasure, and make up an entire satisfaction to your immortal soul itself: This, your way, is your folly; that soul of yours shall this very night be stripped of all these possessions, and be required to give an account of itself and them at my tribunal; and surrounding devils will demand it for their own, that it may be tormented with them for ever: And then, who will inherit the treasures which you, with care and toil, have scraped together? How do you know whether they will fall into the hands of friends and relations, or of strangers and enemies, of wise men or fools, of niggards or spendthrifts? but whoever may be the possessor, they will be no longer yours; you can carry none of them away with you, and they will be so far from profiting in the day of wrath, that they will rise up in judgment against you for your abuses of them.

21 Such a fool as this, is every earthly-minded covetous man, who sets his heart upon, and seeks after, the riches of this world, as if his chief happiness lay in affluent circumstances, and in making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof; and who is not rich in faith, hope, and holiness, nor is seriously concerned about a share in the treasures that are incorruptible, undefiled, and never fade away, and from which he himself shall never die.

22 But (δε) as Christ's disciples, being generally poor, might be apt to think that they had little or no concern in what he had said about the rich, he proceeded more particularly to warn them against such soli-

thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: How much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 And which of you, with taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit?

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not: and yet I say unto you,

folicitude of mind about the *necessaries* of life, as their low and exposed circumstances were the greatest temptations to, saying, Take heed of being anxiously careful, and disquieting yourselves with unbelieving fears, even about those enjoyments of this world that are requisite to the support and the ordinary comfort of your lives, such as food and raiment, and accommodations of that kind; but depend on the providence of God, in the way of your duty, for such things as may be needful and convenient for you.

23 For as the human life and body are more valuable than food and clothes, which are only the *means* of their sustenance and comfort; so God having already brought you into being without your own concern about it, or contribution toward it, he will much more give you a sufficiency for continued subsistence, without your perplexing thoughtfulness about it, as long as he designs you to live, or has any work for you to do in the body.

24 As to *food*, observe what care God, in his providence, takes of the fowls of the air, even of the most hungry and voracious among them, such as the ravens; he constantly supplies them with the provisions of the day, though they can do nothing to prepare it, nor have foresight enough to lay up for time to come: And are not ye a much more noble part of God's creation as men, and much dearer to him as his children? surely then, he, who feeds and takes care of ravens, will not starve and neglect you.

25 And your carking thoughts about these things are as foolish, as they are needless. To convince you of this, consider, that ye insensibly grow up to that determinate stature and age (*μετρον*) of the body which God has appointed to you respectively: And who among you can, by any contrivance, art, or management, make it one degree taller, or stretch out its life one moment longer, than God pleases? It, after all, must be just as he sees fit to order it.

26 If therefore it is impossible, by your utmost anxiety, to do so trivial a thing as adding ever so little to that stature of the body, or that time of its life, which God has set for it: How much less can ye do all things that are necessary for the support of its whole frame, and lengthening out its age to any number of years? Why then should ye distress yourselves about them?

27 And as to *raiment*, there is as little reason to be over-solicitous about this: For do but observe how the flowers of the field, and particularly the lilies or tulips, are arrayed, without their own weaving, or spinning, or taking any pains to provide for themselves.

you, that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

25 If then God so clothe the grafs, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

And yet I tell you, that God, in his providence, adorns them with a beautiful clothing, of various colours, vastly superior in their paint to the richest robes of *Solomon* and his courtiers, when on high days he appeared in all his splendor.

28 If then God puts such exquisitely fine and curious ornaments on these short-lived flowers of the grafs, which one day flourish in the field, and the next either fade of themselves, or are mowed down and consumed in heating an oven; Can ye suppose that he will not much more give you at least necessary apparel, till ye be cut down by death, and your bodies be consumed in the grave? Surely your faith is low indeed, if ye distrust the care of Providence to clothe you.

29 Be not therefore perplexingly thoughtful about, and eager in your pursuits after, the things of the present life, such as meat, drink, and raiment, whether ye shall be provided with them, or whether they shall be of the more ordinary, or of the more delicate and sumptuous kind; nor give way to a distracting, unsettled, fluctuating, and distrustful temper about them, (*μη ανεπιμελεσθε*) as if God would not supply you with such things as are proper for you.

30 Such a temper as this is very unbecoming you, my disciples: For this is to behave just like the heathen, who are ignorant of God and his providence, and live without hope of a blessed life to come; and who, for want of knowing better, are carking and caring about the concerns of this world, as if their happiness lay in them, and nothing more than their own industry were requisite to secure them. But (*δε*) as all things are under the management of your heavenly Father, and he knows that some of them are necessary to your subsistence and comfort, ye may well trust in him for seasonable supplies.

31 But let your principal care, desires, and pursuits, be after the more important, spiritual, and eternal blessings that belong to the kingdom of grace and glory; seek these, rather than even the necessaries of the present life; seek them first and principally, before and above all things else; and if ye are but partakers of these, ye may be sure that he, who has given the greater, will not withhold the less, but will add all such temporal things as he knows are fittest for you.

32 Fear no want of any good thing, O ye my dear property and charge, who, compared with the numerous herds of the wicked, are like a small flock of sheep and lambs: For your heavenly Father, by a sovereign, gracious act of his mere good pleasure, has appointed

appointed and provided for you, has given you a right and title to, and will bring you to the possession of all the riches, honours, and delights of the kingdom of glory : How much more will he give you all the necessaries of this life ?

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms : provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

33 Instead therefore of following the chace of this world, or being anxiously thoughtful about food and raiment ; be ready to part with even what ye have, when God, in his providence, calls you to resign it for his glory and the relief of the poor : And let your principal concern be about the heavenly inheritance, that all things here may be managed in a due subserviency to this ; which is like a treasure put into bags, that will never rot or decay ; nor will it ever waste, or be spent, or stolen from you by fraud or violence ; nor be moth-eaten, like garments for the body ; but will endure incorruptibly, and make you happy without abatement or end.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

34 For whatsoever ye esteem as your chief treasure, will command and govern your hearts and affections, desires and hopes, cares and fears, whether it be any thing in this world, or the glory and blessedness of that which is to come.

35 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning ;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding, that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

35, 36 And as the best of treasures are to be enjoyed or lost, when your Lord shall come to judgment, the time of which is unknown and uncertain ; be ye like servants that are continually waiting * with their loins girt, and lights burning, in all readiness to receive their master, at the first notice of his returning home from a wedding. See that ye live in a daily exercise of grace, and performance of duty : Labour to keep your evidences clear for heaven, and to spread the knowledge of spiritual things all around you, that ye may be continually prepared in your frame and employment, as well as in your state, and may be waiting with expectation and hope for your Lord, whenever he shall appear in his glory to take up the church to heaven, which he has espoused to himself, by the ministry of the gospel, on earth : And be always circumspect, that, as soon as ever the alarm shall be given of his being just at hand, ye may be in no surprize ; but may be ready to bid him welcome, and to enter with him into his joy.

37 Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when

37 Those faithful servants are happy, beyond expression, whom their Lord, at his second appearing, shall find to be thus diligently waiting in expectation

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* Here is a manifest allusion to the long garments that used to be worn, by the easterly nations, down to their feet, and to be girded about the loins when a-

ny service was to be attended to, as also to the lights that servants were wont to carry at weddings, which were usually in the night.

when he cometh, shall find watching; verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the good-man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41 Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

of it: I assuredly tell you, that he will shew the greatest condescension to them*, and put the highest marks of honour upon them, in admitting them to his glory, and entertaining them with all the delights of the heavenly world.

38 And, whether he shall appear sooner or later, at the beginning of their expectation, or after they have long waited for him, every one who shall be found ready in this manner to receive him, shall be truly and for ever blessed with him.

39 And as the coming of your Lord will, for its surprising suddenness, and sad consequences to the unwatchful and unprepared, be like that of a thief in the night, observe what I say in the following parable: If any house-keeper certainly knew before-hand the exact time when thieves would attempt his dwelling, he could not be so stupid and careless as not to be on his watch just then to prevent them: But every wise and prudent man will do more than this; he will take care that his house be always in a state of good security, lest it should be assaulted at unawares.

40 In like manner therefore, see that ye defer not your preparation for the coming of your Lord to judgment, till the surprising hour overtakes you; but that ye be always in such a state, and frame, and course of life, as ye would wish to be found in, whenever it may be; for the Messiah will certainly and suddenly appear, to your confusion, or joy, at a time when ye may least of all expect it.

41 Then Peter said to Jesus, Lord, is this awakening parable spoken to us only, who are thy servants in the work of the ministry; or dost thou intend that it should be applied in common to all that hear it?

42 Our Saviour replied, Though all in general are concerned in it, I spoke it more directly to you: For who, think ye, but such as, like good stewards, are faithful in improving their various talents, will be highly advanced in their lord's house, to have the management of his affairs according to his will, and to make such distributions in proper time and season, as are suitable to the respective states and circumstances of all under their charge?

43 Such

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* We are not to suppose that this is to be understood literally, as if our Lord, at his second glorious appearing, will put himself into such an abject form, and minister to his saints in such a humble manner, as he did when he girded himself and washed his disciples' feet on earth. But these expressions are to be taken in a figurative sense, alluding to the practice

at some feasts among the ancients, and particularly among the Romans at their *Saturnalia*, or feasts dedicated to *Saturn*; where servants had the honour of sitting at table, and their masters waited upon them, to serve them; as it is customary among some of our nation, in the present age, for the bride-groom to wait at table, like a servant, on his wedding-day.

43 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh, shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men-servants, and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And that servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is

43 Such, and such only, are happy servants, whatsoever their station may be, who shall be found faithfully discharging the trusts committed to them, whenever their Lord shall come to call them to an account.

44 I assuredly tell you, that he will own and accept them in their work and labour of fidelity, faith, and love, and will raise them * to the highest dignity and glory, when he shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and kingdom.

45 But if, on the other hand, any one, who professes to be my disciple and servant, shall give way to unbelieving thoughts, as if his great Lord and Master would never come again to call him to an account, because he sees no present appearances of it; and if, under the power of this practical infidelity, he shall grow remiss and careless, and shall thereupon give himself liberty to revile, insult, abuse, and persecute others of his fellow-servants, and to be luxurious and intemperate in his sensual appetites, as well as outrageous in his passions;

46 His Lord will surprize him in the midst of all his unbelief and wickedness, when he little thinks of it; and will cut him off by death from all his vain and flattering imaginations, from all his comforts here, and from all hope and happiness hereafter: He will separate his soul from his body, and separate them both from God and blessedness; and sentence him to everlasting destruction, which is the portion of unbelievers.

47 Only there will be this difference: As under the law a distinction was made between sins of ignorance and presumptuous sins, (*Num. xv. 29, 30.*) and criminals were to be beaten with a number of stripes, more or less, according to the degrees and aggravations of their faults: (*Deut. xxv. 2, 3.*) So he, who had a clear knowledge of what his Lord requires, and may reasonably expect from him, under all his advantages and opportunities, and yet neglects his duty, and sins against the light and convictions of his own conscience, shall be proportionably punished with the heaviest strokes of divine vengeance.

48 But he who, though he had proper means of being acquainted with his Lord's will, did not understand it, and so acted contrary to his commands, shall be punished with less severity than the other: For, according to the universal law of equity among men, the greater capacities, opportunities, and advantages, any

N O T E.

* Christ here alludes to the further honours and trusts that masters use to confer on those servants who have approved themselves to be prudent and faithful, as *Pharaoh* dealt with *Joseph*, *Gen. xli. 40.*

is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

49 I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled.

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father: the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother: the mother-in-law against her daughter

any servant has for discharging a trust committed to him, the higher will be his Master's expectations and demands from him; and the more he is intrusted with, the greater will his guilt and punishment be, if, on any account whatsoever, he prove negligent and unfaithful.

49 I am come to establish a doctrine so contrary to the pride and prejudices of men, that it will incense them against me and my disciples, and be the occasion of great animosities, contentions, and persecutions in the world: And as these fiery trials are already begun, in the opposition and rage of the *scribes* and *Pharisees* and others, on this account, what shall I say, or do, or wish for, with respect thereunto? Shall I desist from my design of publishing my gospel? No; it is too important for the glory of God, and the salvation of sinners, to be declined, how much soever I and my followers may suffer for it upon earth.

50 For my part, I know that the first and heaviest storm will fall upon myself in the most terrible ignominious sufferings and death; so that I shall be solemnly consecrated to my priestly and kingly offices by the baptism of my own blood, as I have been to my prophetic office by the baptism of water, and of the Holy Ghost: But I am so far from refusing the distress, that, like a woman in travail, who longs for her pains to increase upon her, that she may bring forth her child, I am exceeding desirous of going through it, that I may see my seed, and the pleasure of the Lord may prosper in my hand.

51 And as for you, my apostles and disciples, Do ye imagine that the design of my coming into the world is to settle temporal peace and prosperity? Alas! that is a very great mistake. I assure you, the event will be so far from this, that, on the contrary, ye will find it turn to greater strifes and divisions, miseries and confusions, than ye ever knew before.

52, 53 For though my gospel is full of love and goodness, and directly suited and designed to promote friendship, kindness, and social affection, and will have this happy effect on those that cordially embrace it; yet, through the corruptions, enmity, and opposition of others, it will henceforward prove an occasion of fierce contentions, and cruel persecutions: So that, when some in the same house shall receive, and others reject me, as suppose, in a family consisting of five persons, there be two of one sort, and three of the other, they who continue in unbelief will be enraged at the converted, that even father and son, mother and daughter, every rank and degree of relations, according to the flesh, will cast off all the tender

daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

54 And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when ye see the south-wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, and of the earth: but how is it, that ye do not discern this time?

57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

58 When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered

der sentiments and obligations of natural affection, and be the most implacable persecutors of one another.

54, 55 Then Jesus, turning to the unbelieving multitude, reprov'd them for their stupidity and folly in rejecting him, notwithstanding the plain evidences he had given of his being the true Messiah; saying, If at any time a cloud appears toward the sea, which lies west of *Judea*, ye immediately conclude that there will be a shower of rain; and if ye observe that the wind blows south, from the hot country of *Africa*, ye reasonably expect that the weather will be hot and sultry, and, generally speaking, ye are not mistaken.

56 O ye hypocritical people, what blindness, obstinacy and prejudices, are ye under, with respect to your spiritual concerns? ye are sagacious enough in observing the motions of the wind and clouds, and prognosticating the weather from thence, that ye may order your affairs accordingly; but ye take no notice of the much plainer and surer tokens of the present day of merciful visitation, which is of infinitely higher importance to you. Ye may see that the Old-Testament prophecies of the Messiah are fulfilled in my birth, tribe, and family, in the place where I was born, in *John the Baptist* as my forerunner, and in the manner of my life and doctrine; and ye may see that all my pretensions to that character are confirmed by numerous miracles. How is it then, that ye do not discern this time, that it is indeed a day of grace, in which I appear as a Saviour among you?

57 Yea, why do not ye take example from yourselves? (*αφ' εαυτων*) In the instance but now mentioned, ye are skilful and diligent observers, and act with prudence according to your observations: Why then should ye not be excited, by what ye do in those lesser things, to take the same care, and use as much observation and prudence, with respect to the greater things that relate to your eternal peace? And why do not ye act in this affair as the common prudence of a man would suggest to be right in temporal concerns*?

58, 59 Suppose any of you were going to a court of judicature with an adversary who has an action of debt against you, which, if prosecuted, would be your utter ruin; common sense would tell you, that all possible means should be used for a timely compromise with him, lest he should get judgment and execution against

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* If we connect this verse with the foregoing, both these interpretations may stand; but if it be connected with the following verse, the latter is to be preferred.

livered from him ; left he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

59 I tell thee thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

against you, to your imprisonment all the days of your life. In like manner, as sin has brought you into a state of enmity with God, and were he to mark iniquity, you could not stand ; it is your highest wisdom now, while you are in the way of mercy, to fall down at his feet, acknowledging your transgressions, and to seek peace and reconciliation with him, through faith in the Messiah, that you may be delivered from the hands of his vindictive justice ; left he bring you into judgment for rejecting the only Saviour, and for your other innumerable sins, and the Judge of all should condemn you, and deliver you over to the executioners of his righteous vengeance, and they should cast you into the prison of hell. I assure you, that if once, through your own impenitence and unbelief, this becomes your case, you must be held there in eternal torments, because you will never be able to satisfy divine justice, or pay the debt of sufferings, which is due for your iniquities.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

What a senseless sin is hypocrisy, since our most secret thoughts lies open to the omniscient eye of that God who will bring them all to light ! And how preposterous is it to fear man more than him ; since we have immortal souls which cannot be killed with the body, and men cannot hurt the body itself without God's permission, but he can make both soul and body for ever miserable in hell ; and since Christ will certainly own or reject them in the other world who own or reject him in this ! But there is forgiveness with God for all sorts of sins, except that against the Holy Ghost, which none that have any serious desires after the gospel-salvation can be guilty of. And O with what satisfaction may true believers commit all the concerns of this life to that God, whose providence takes care of all his creatures, and extends to the minutest affairs ! And with what humble confidence may they commit the concerns of their souls to Christ, who was eagerly desirous of dying the worst of deaths to redeem them ; and to the God of all grace, whose good pleasure it is to give them a kingdom of glory ! That kingdom consists of riches infinitely preferable to all the possessions of this world : And therefore they should be sought before, and above all things else, as they will be by those who really esteem them as their chief treasure : This is the way to all true happiness here, and especially hereafter ; but covetous and anxious cares about the things of the present life are the bane of religion, and the riches of this world are often the ruin of carnal minds. — Quarrels and confusions will indeed arise among men, on account of Christ and his gospel, as long as the lusts, passions, and prejudices of multitudes lie in opposition to them. But distinguishing grace makes a difference in others, and that in the same families ; and if we are hated and persecuted for Christ's sake, and do not bear a guilty part in religious quarrels, he will enable us to make a just defence of his cause, and of ourselves for our profession of it. How careful should ministers of the gospel be to imitate their great Lord in keeping to their own province, and not intermeddling, as umpires, in secular affairs, nor assuming to themselves civil powers ! And how apt should they and all others be to take every word of Christ to themselves, that they may be always ready to meet him in death and judgment, not knowing how soon he may summon them to appear before him ! But O what a source of stupidity, sensuality, and wickedness, is unbelief ! And how are secure sinners in perpetual danger of being surpris'd into utter destruction ! Their ignorance and inobservance of what they ought to know and consider, is no just excuse for their sin ; and yet sinning against light and convictions is attended with still higher aggravations, and shall be more severely punished. How perverse are the hearts of men that set themselves against the only Saviour, and the only way of salvation

salvation by him ! And how much more careful and prudent are the generality of them about their temporal, than about their spiritual concerns ! But as their natural state is a state of enmity with God, and exposes them to the utmost danger of falling into the hands of his justice ; so, unless they seek and obtain peace and reconciliation with him now, through faith in his Son, while there are means and hopes of it, their misery will be unavoidable, insupportable, and without end.

C H A P. XIII.

Christ's remarks upon the destruction that fell on the Galileans and others, 1,—5. His parable of the barren fig-tree, 6,—9. His healing a crooked woman on the Sabbath-day, 10,—17. His parables of a grain of mustard-seed, and of leaven, 18,—21. His preaching, and answer to the question, Whether few shall be saved ? 22,—30. His slighting Herod's threatenings, and lamenting over Jerusalem, 31,—35.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

THERE were present at that season, some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

2 And Jesus answering, said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things ?

3 I tell you, Nay : but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

WHILST our blessed Lord was speaking of the importance of being in a state of peace and friendship with God, some of the company took occasion to mention to him the sudden tragical slaughter of certain *Galileans*, whose blood *Pilate*, the Roman governor, had shed, by sending soldiers to cut them in pieces, even while they were offering their sacrifices at *Jerusalem* ; because, being followers of *Judas of Galilee* *, they persuaded the *Jews* that they were a free people, and ought not to be subject to a foreign government, or to pay tribute to *Cæsar*.

2 And as the persons who made this report, would thereby seem to intimate, as if these must needs be uncommonly wicked people, and very unprepared to die, since vengeance so remarkably fell upon them in the midst of their external devotions ; Jesus, to guard against this uncharitable censure, replied, Do ye conclude from the time and manner of these *Galileans* being thus barbarously murdered, that they were more notorious sinners than all the rest of their countrymen ?

3 I assure you that no such inference can be justly drawn from thence : But as these men are only examples in providence of the miseries that every sinner deserves, and is in danger of ; so, unless ye repent of your infidelity and wickedness, your whole nation shall as certainly be destroyed, and your blood shall

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* These seem to have been some of that faction which *Gamaliel* referred to when he said, (Acts v. 37.) *After this man* (viz. *Theudas*, a noted impostor) *rose up Judas of Galilee, and drew away much people after him ; he also perished, and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.*

be mingled with your sacrifices in as dreadful a manner, by the sword, as theirs was †; and all impenitent sinners shall perish by the righteous judgment of God, if not in this world, yet inevitably in the next.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

4 Or, to remind you of another awful providence, which ye know befel some among yourselves nearer home, Do ye imagine that the eighteen persons who were killed, without the immediate hand of men, in the fall of the tower of *Siloam**, were more flagitious sinners than all the rest of the people of *Jerusalem*?

5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

5 Whatsoever ye may think of the matter, I tell you, No such censure ought to be passed upon them, since all things relating to the present life come alike to all: But this is likewise a sample of the dreadful calamities which are coming upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who, unless they are brought to repentance, shall perish in the ruins of the whole city, as those persons did by the fall of that tower: And the guilt of every one of you is so great, that, if ye persist in impenitence and unbelief, ye shall certainly be punished with everlasting destruction in the world to come, whether ye fall by any remarkable judgment here or not.

6 He spake also this parable: A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

6 And still further to enforce this solemn warning, and shew the danger and aggravations of their iniquities under the rich advantages they enjoyed, our Lord added the following similitude: "There was (said he) a certain owner who had planted a fig-tree in his vineyard, and coming at the proper season, with an expectation of gathering fruit from it, he found none."—So God, whose vineyard is his church, gave his peculiar people, the *Jews*, all the spiritual privileges of that sacred inclosure; and when it might be reasonably expected that they should bring forth fruits of righteousness to his glory, he found that they had only the leaves of an outward formal profession,

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† This was literally fulfilled, according to *Josephus's* account, that many thousands of the *Jews* were slaughtered in the temple, and round about it, at the feast of the passover, because of their opposition to the *Roman* yoke: And so their blood was mingled with their sacrifices by the *Roman* sword, and that for the same cause, as the blood of these *Galileans* had been by *Pilate*. Vid. *Joseph. Bell. Jud. l. vi. c. 11. & l. vii. c. 17. & Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. iii. c. 5.*

* *Dr. Lightfoot* supposes that this was a tower by the pool of *Siloam*, which was the same with, or at least communicated

its water to, the pool of *Bethesda*: That it belonged to one of the porches, where the impotent people lay watching for the moving of the waters; and that some of them, or some others, who came thither to purify themselves for the temple-service, were killed by the sudden fall of that tower. But when, or how this tower fell, or where it stood, is uncertain to us, we having, as far as I can learn, no other account of it, either in sacred or civil history, than what is here said about it, where our Lord speaks of its fall as a remarkable well-known fact in these days.

feſſion, and continued to be carnal and ſenſual, impatient and unbelieving : And this is the caſe of all obſtinate ſinners, and hypocritical profeſſors, under the means of grace.

7 Then ſaid he unto the dreſſer of his vineyard, Behold, theſe three years I come ſeeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none : cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground ?

7 “ Then the owner ſaid to his vine-dreſſer, See how long I have waited, even three years paſt, in vain, and ſtill this fig-tree is entirely barren : Cut it down ; why ſhould it any longer take up the place of better plants, and draw away the fructifying juices of my ground, that might be profitable to other trees ? (*ὕατι καὶ τὴν γῆν καταργεῖ.*)—So God, having exerciſed much patience, and beſtowed many ſpiritual advantages upon the hardened unbelieving *Jews*, ſaid to his Son, and to his ſervants who laboured in the miniſtry under him, Behold, I have, with great long-ſuffering, borne with this incorrigible people year after year *, while there was any room to expect fruit from them ; take no further pains with them, but deliver them up to ſpeedy executions of wrath : For to what purpoſe ſhould my care and kindneſs be any longer abuſed by them, who, like cumberers of the ground, do more harm than good, miſimprove the means of grace, and fill up the room of others that might profit by them ? And in like manner he ſpeaks of all that continue obſtinate and unfruitful under the preaching of the goſpel.

8 And he answering, ſaid unto him, Lord, let it alone this year alſo, till I ſhall dig about it, and dung it :

8, 9 “ But (*δὲ*) the vine-dreſſer answered the owner, Sir, I beg that you would bear with the fig-tree one year longer, till I have tried ſome further methods of cultivation, ſuch as digging about it, and dunging it : If by theſe means it ſhall become fruitful, all will be well ; but if not, do with it as you pleaſe.”—So Chriſt, in the greatneſs of his compaſſion, intreated for ſparing mercy to be extended a little longer to the *Jewiſh* church ; as he likewiſe does for others under the goſpel ; and that ſome further means of conviction might be uſed with them, before God ſhould utterly cut them off † : And his ſervants are earneſt-

9 And if it bear fruit, *well* : and if not, *then* after that thou ſhall cut it down.

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* The three years of God's patience are ſuppoſed, by ſome, to relate to the three years of Chriſt's perſonal miniſtry. But the one year of further trial, mentioned afterwards, does not ſuit this literal conſtruction ; ſince it was between thirty and forty years after the death of Chriſt, before the *Jewiſh* church and nation were deſtroyed. The conjecture of *Grotius* ſeems leſs liable to exception ; which is, That theſe three years are mentioned with a reference to the nature of ſome fig-trees in that country, which did not uſe to be longer than three years

before they began to bear : Therefore, till that time, there was a reaſonable ground of expectation that they might bring forth fruit ; but if they bore none then, there was little room to hope for it afterwards. But, be this as it will, there ſeems to be a direct reference in this parable to what the prophet ſaid of the church of *Israel* ; (*iſa. v. 1.*—7.) and much light may be received from thence to explain it.

† Theſe further means ſeem moſt immediately to refer to the higher evidences that ſhould be given of the truth and excellence of Chriſtianity, after the reſur-

rection

ly desirous and importunate with God, that their obstinate hearers may be spared some time longer, and tried with further means of grace, in hopes that he may give them repentance. If at length they shall be effectually changed, the patience and pains bestowed upon them will have a happy issue, to the glory of God, to the joy of Christ and his servants, and to the salvation of those souls themselves: But if, after all, they still continue stupid, hardened, and carnal, neither Christ nor his servants will offer any thing in their favour; but will leave them, as utterly inexcusable, to the executions of God's righteous wrath.

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

11 And behold there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath-day, and said unto the people, There are six days on which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath-day.

15 The Lord then answered him, and

10, 11 Now as Jesus, according to his custom, was preaching on a certain Sabbath in one of the synagogues, behold, a lamentable object presented to his notice. There was a poor woman, whose body had been convulsed to such a degree, for eighteen years together, by the power of Satan, who had been permitted to afflict her, (*ver.* 16.) that she could by no means raise her head, or stand upright.

12 And, as she came with great difficulty to public worship, Christ looked with compassion upon her; and, calling her to him, said, Woman, I command that you be now delivered from your disease, by which you have been bowed down so many years.

13 And, whilst he was speaking, he laid his hands upon her; and so powerful were his authoritative word and touch, that, in an instant, her body was restored to its proper stature and straightness: And she, feeling such a sudden and surprising cure, blessed God for it, with great joy, before all the people.

14 But the ruler of the synagogue, (see the note on *Mat.* ix. 18.) envying Christ the glory of this undoubted miracle, cavilled at it, because it was wrought on the Sabbath; and, intimating to the people, as if it were a profanation of that holy day, he severely reprimanded them, saying, God has appointed six days in the week for doing all manner of works; and therefore, if ye want to be healed of any distempers, ye ought to come on those days for it, and not on the Sabbath, which God has appropriated to his own immediate service.

15 Then the Lord Jesus himself, taking up the cause, replied, O hypocritical pretender to a mighty zeal for the sanctification of the Sabbath, that you may defame the divine and merciful work which I have wrought in this cure! Is it not an universal and allowed

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rection of Christ, and effusion of his Spirit, and the solemn exhortations that were to made with them by the apostles on this foot.

and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath-day?

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

18 Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

19 It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree: and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

allowed practice among you, to untie and let out your ox, your ass, or other cattle, and to lead them abroad to a watering place on the Sabbath-day?

16 If this is done without any scruple for the relief of a beast, that it may not suffer so much as one day's thirst, is it not still more evidently and unquestionably lawful for me, merely by a word and a touch, to set a woman at liberty, on the Sabbath-day, from a much sorer distress, which she had been afflicted with for eighteen years together? especially considering that she is not only a rational creature, but a descendant from your father Abraham, and a daughter of the covenant, to whom the promise of Abraham's blessing belongs; and that what was done for her, was rescuing her out of Satan's hands who had so long and so cruelly oppressed her?

17 The force of this answer was so exceeding plain and convincing, that all his enemies were entirely baffled, and were ashamed that any of them had made such a weak and frivolous cavil as could by no means be supported with the least shew of argument: And, on the contrary, there was a general rejoicing among the common people, who were much affected at the glorious appearance of Christ's wisdom, power, and mercy, in what he had done and spoken on this occasion.

18 Then said our Lord, By what fit emblem shall I represent the rise and progress of the kingdom of God, as it relates both to the gospel in the world, and the work of grace in the heart? Or by what similitude shall I illustrate it to you?

19 "It may be compared to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man sowed in his garden, and which, though it is one of the least of all seeds, grew up to a tree, whose branches were large enough for the birds of the air to lodge, and build their nests in them." —So the gospel of the kingdom, which, in the first preaching of it, is confined to a corner, and is received but by very few, shall, in due time, spread through the world of Jews and Gentiles, and be the power of God to the salvation of vast multitudes; and the work of grace in the heart, which is at first so very small as to be hardly perceivable, shall gradually increase and flourish, to the joy and encouragement of others, as well as to the benefit of the soul itself in which it is planted, till it shall be perfected in heaven.

20 Again, he said, By what further similitude shall I represent the silent, secret, and efficacious power of the gospel, and of the grace of my kingdom, as one is the means of conveying and propagating the other?

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying towards Jerusalem.

23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock

21 "It may be compared to the nature of leaven, which, when it is put, as it usually is by women, into a great quantity of meal or dough, ferments and diffuses its virtue through the whole mass."—So the doctrine of the gospel comes not with outward pomp or shew, or human authority; but secretly and effectually makes its way in the world, and into the hearts of men, by a divine evidence and power; and the grace, which it is the means of begetting in the soul, secretly and effectually operates there, till it makes a thorough change in the heart and life; so that old things pass away, and all things become new, and grace, at length, is perfected in glory.

22 After this, our blessed Lord, who was indefatigable in his labours, travelled through many cities, towns, and villages, directing his course toward *Jerusalem*, and preaching, as opportunities offered, in every place where he came.

23 And a certain person said to him, Lord, are there but few of mankind that shall be saved? But (*δὲ*) Jesus, perfectly knowing with what temper of mind this question was put, waved a direct and positive answer, that he might neither gratify curiosity, nor give a captious hearer any advantage against him; and, turning to the people, took this occasion to say to them;

24 Instead of making curious inquiries whether few or more shall be saved, let it be your chief concern, that ye yourselves may be of the happy number of those who shall get into the way to eternal life, the entrance into which is indeed exceeding strait and difficult: Be diligent in your attendance on the ministry of the word; seek after an experimental acquaintance with the only true way of salvation through the Messiah; wrestle earnestly with God for his Spirit to teach and assist you, to change your hearts, and to give you faith and repentance; and, in a dependence on him, spare no time or pains, which, by his grace, may subserve your arrival to everlasting happiness. For I assure you, that many, who would willingly go to heaven, seek after it, either in such a formal, cold, and slothful manner, or by such mistaken methods, which their own ignorance and carnality, pride and prejudices, suggest to them, that they will never be able to obtain it.

25 And if ye rest short of, or turn aside from, the true way, to that blessed state now, it will quickly be too late to hope for admission thither: For though, at present, a door of mercy is opened before you in the gospel, and there are rich encouragements for striving to enter into it by faith; yet, as soon as ever the

knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are:

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And behold, there are last which shall

the great Lord of his house shall shut up this door, at death and judgment, it will then be too late for you to find mercy, how earnest and importunate soever ye may be for it, or how confidently soever ye may expect it: For he will turn a deaf ear to all your cries, and tell you, to your everlasting confusion, that he never owned or approved of you as his real disciples.

26 Then, full of consternation at your miserable repulse, ye will begin to plead various privileges, which ye rested in here, as if they would be your passport to heaven hereafter: Some will be ready to urge, that they had frequent conversation with the Lord himself upon earth, were admitted into his company, and freely eat and drank with him, and heard him preach in their streets; and others will think to make a merit of their having often attended upon sermons and prayers, and gone to the Lord's table, and made a strict profession of his name.

27 But alas! he will nevertheless reject you, saying, with awful and tremendous majesty, I tell you, that I never looked upon, or esteemed you as my true disciples: What signified all your external privileges and professions, while, under the power of unbelief, ye continued to be in love with one or another sin, and to go on in the practice of it? Depart, all ye habitual impenitent sinners, from my blessed and holy presence; and be gone to your own company, to share with them in everlasting torments.

28 Then anguish and despair, the bitterest lamentation and horror, will seize you, like persons howling and grating their teeth for vexation and envy, when ye shall behold the famous patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, and all the holy men and servants of God, triumphing amidst the exalted honours and delights of the heavenly world; and, at the same time, shall find that all your hopes and pleas are defeated, and that ye are violently pushed back with indignation, though ye were a people visibly in covenant with God, the natural seed of glorified saints, and the children of the promise.

29 And what will still further add to your consternation and envy, O ye unbelieving *Jews*, will be, that, while ye are thus disappointed and rejected for your obstinacy and wickedness, great multitudes of the *Gentiles*, being made, by faith, the spiritual children of *Abraham*, and walking in his steps, shall come from all parts and nations of the earth, and be admitted to a state of rest, blessedness, and glory, with your own renowned and godly ancestors.

30 So that, O ye depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! the *Gentiles*, who, for

shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

for many ages, were not his people, shall be favoured with the rich blessings of the gospel; and the *Jews*, who formerly were his people, shall be rejected for their impenitence and unbelief: And it shall appear at the day of judgment, that they who seemed, in human view, to be at the utmost distance from heaven, and least likely to get thither, shall at length obtain it through faith in the Saviour of *Israel*; and they who seemed to stand fairest for heaven, shall, for their iniquities, fall short of it.

31 The same day came some of the *Pharisees*, Christ's most inveterate and implacable enemies, who envied his growing reputation among the people, and wanted to get rid of him; and they, hoping to scare him out of *Galilee*, told him, It would be his wisest way to hasten out of *Herod's* jurisdiction, because he had formed a design against his life, and was seeking an opportunity to apprehend and put him to death, as he did *John the Baptist*.

32 But our Lord was so far from being intimidated by this malicious and artful insinuation, that he boldly replied, Ye may go, if ye please, to that subtle contriver*, who, like a crafty fox, thinks to remove me from his neighbourhood by stratagem, whilst he dare not attempt my life; and ye may tell him from me, that let him do his worst, I am not afraid of him, but shall go on with my work for some time still: My triumph over devils in casting them out, my compassion to the sick in healing them, and my preaching to the people, must be carried on † a little longer: And at the time appointed of my Father, which is very near approaching, I shall finish the work that he gave me to do on earth, shall be perfectly qualified for, and consecrated to, the remainder of my office, by my sufferings and death, and shall be as willing

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* Though this dishonourable appellation, of a prince from a private person, might be thought opprobrious language, and a reviling of the rulers of the people, contrary to God's law; yet it was not so in Christ, who herein acted under the character of a prophet; and so, by virtue of his office, had liberty and commission to reprove, and that sharply, the greatest princes upon earth, according to what God said to *Jeremiab*; (chap. i. 17, 18.) and the name which Christ gave *Herod*, most fitly agreed to his crafty character and conduct, particularly on this occasion.

† To-day, to-morrow, and the third day, must be understood to signify a little time, and not precisely such a num-

ber of days: For in the next verse Christ speaks of his continuing to walk on the day after the morrow; whereas here he speaks of his being perfected on the third day, which relates to his finishing the work of redemption, and being consecrated by death to his office, as our great High-priest, and Captain of salvation, according to the common use of this word *τελειωμαι*, as particularly in *Heb. ii. 10.* & v. 8, 9, 10, & vii. 27, 28.; and it is the same word which is used in the Septuagint to signify the consecration of *Aaron*, and the legal priests to their office: But it was many days after Christ spoke this, that he continued to work, before he was crucified.

to die, a sacrifice for sin, as *Herod* can be to kill me.

33 Nevertheless, I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of *Jerusalem*.

33 However, in the mean while, be his designs or threatenings what they will, they are all vain and impotent: I must, according to divine appointment, pursue my journey, (ver. 22.) and go on a little longer in my Father's business; and I shall not fall by *Herod's* hands in *Galilee*: For as God has fore-ordained the place, as well as the time, of my death; so no prophet can be tried and executed, under pretence of law, in any other place than *Jerusalem*, where the great council sit, who claim the power of judging about the Lord's prophets, and, by long prescription, have exercised it in murdering them.

34 O *Jerusalem*, *Jerusalem*, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee: how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

34 Hereupon our blessed Lord, as a holy man, and affectionate minister, took occasion to lament over *Jerusalem*, saying, with a most tender, earnest, and moving pathos, O *Jerusalem*, *Jerusalem*, who once wert the holy and beloved city, but now art become desperately and incorrigibly wicked, even unto the murdering of the prophets of the Lord, and cruelly persecuting his messengers of peace; in which you will go on, to fill up the measure of your iniquity, by putting me and my followers to death! How often have I instructed; cautioned, reprov'd, encouraged, and expostulated with your inhabitants, and used all manner of convincing and engaging methods to bring them in to myself, that they, like chickens under the wings of an hen, might be secured from the destruction which would otherwise come upon them, and might be cherished and comforted with my mercy and salvation! But alas! they would not come to me that they might have life, nor would they that I should reign over them; and ye, their teachers and rulers, would neither go into my kingdom yourselves, nor suffer your disciples and dependents to enter into it.

35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

35 Behold therefore now with dread and astonishment, and know for certainty, that your temple and city, the house of God, and your own houses, are consigned over to final and utter destruction, which shall quickly lay them desolate: And I assuredly tell you, that the time hastens apace, (see the note on *Mar.* xxiii. 39.) when I will visit *Jerusalem* in mercy no more; and ye shall never see me again, till, as an emblem of my last awful and glorious appearing, I shall come to destroy it: Then ye will have quite other thoughts of me than ye now have, and be forced to own that I am the blessed One, and the sent of God, whom ye treated as an impostor, and loaded with a curse; and then ye would be glad to

be found among those who shall bid me welcome, and embrace me, as their Saviour.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

How should we guard against uncharitable censures of others, with respect to the judgments of God falling upon them! And how much rather should we go into a humbling sense of our own iniquities and obnoxiousness to his wrath, whose exact retributions of justice are reserved for the world to come! In the mean while, he takes notice of all the seasons and means of grace that we enjoy, and of all our unprofitableness under them: But as long as, through the mediation of Christ, the gospel is continued to us, there is room for hope of its being made effectual: Though it be rejected by many, it shall have a wide spread among others, and wherever it is received in truth, and is the means of producing a principle of grace in the soul, it shall flourish and prevail to a thorough change in heart and life, like the growth of a grain of mustard-seed, and the efficacy of leaven in meal. But God's patience will not always last towards incorrigible sinners; their abuses of gospel-opportunities will, sooner or later, turn to their righteous and utter ruin: Then they would be glad of the salvation which they before neglected; but all their cries for mercy then will be in vain; all their hopes and pleas from external privileges, and pretences to religion, will be defeated; and there will be none to intercede for them: This will be the awful condition of vast multitudes. But of how much greater importance is it to us, to seek in good earnest after our own salvation, than to indulge curious questions about the fewness of them that shall be saved! And yet, to quicken our diligence and dependence upon God's grace, and to raise our admiration and praise, if we are made partakers of it, we should remember that the number of these is very small, compared with those who will be lost; and that God maintains such a wise and holy sovereignty in bestowing his favours, that the least likely, in human account, many times freely receive them in his way, whilst others, more likely, fall short of them. And O what rich encouragement have we to hope and try for mercy, while we are in the way of it, and such an almighty gracious Saviour as Christ is set before us! How godlike was his power and goodness, in his miraculous cures, to prove his divine character; and what a lively emblem did he therein give of his tender compassion to those that are, and have been, long bowed down in spirit, under the power of sin and Satan! He prevents them with his grace, and commands their deliverance.—How indefatigable was he in his labours and preaching! What an honour did he put upon public worship, and Sabbath-solemnities! And with what wisdom did he settle the law of God's holy-day, that works of piety and mercy may be attended to thereon! How did he despise the terrors of men; and how willingly did he give himself up to the worst of deaths, to make atonement for sin! But till his time was come, no powers on earth were able to destroy him. What long-suffering, and bowels of compassion did he shew to sinners; what a variety of endearing methods did he use to win upon them! And who can think of such as are finally obstinate and impenitent, and not like the tender-hearted Jesus, mourn over them, in that they wilfully reject him and his gospel, and resolutely persist in their sins, with high aggravations, for which their destruction at last will be insupportable and unavoidable.

C H A P. XIV.

Christ cures a dropsy, and vindicates his doing it on the Sabbath-day, 1,—6. His lesson of humility, 7,—11. Of charity to the poor, 12,—14. The parable of the guests invited to a great-supper, 15,—24. A description of true discipleship, 25,—33. And the difference between good and bad ministers and professors, 34, 35.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, as he went into

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord being invited (*ver. 12.*) on a certain Sabbath-day to a necessary refreshment, at the house

into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath-day, that they watched him.

2 And behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering, spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?

4 And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go;

5 And answering them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath-day?

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose

house of a great man*, who was a *Pharisee*; he courteously accepted the invitation, and went in to take a meal with him: But some of that sect, and several doctors of the law, being present, narrowly watched him, as usual, (*Mark* iii. 2.) to see if he would do any thing contrary to their rules about the Sabbath, that they might take an occasion to accuse and reproach him.

2 And a remarkable opportunity offered to try him: For at that time there was present † a poor miserable man, who was grievously afflicted with the dropsy.

3 And as Christ, in his wonted compassion, determined to heal him, but knew the captious designs of the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, he, answering to their inmost thoughts, asked them, Whether it were contrary to the law of God to do such an act of mercy and charity, as to heal a diseased man on the Sabbath-day?

4 They not knowing how to make a defensible reply, consistent with their superstitious rites about the observation of the Sabbath, chose to be silent: And therefore Christ, without more ado, took the dropsical man aside, to avoid ostentation, and laying his hand upon him, (*επιλαβομενος,*) reduced his swollen body to its proper shape and bulk in an instant; and then sent him away in perfect health, that the *Pharisees* might not quarrel with him for suffering himself to be cured on that day.

5 Then Jesus, turning again to the *Pharisees*, said, Who is there of you all, that if his ox or his ass were fallen into a pit, would make any scruple even of taking great pains to pull it out on the Sabbath-day? none of you would refuse to do this, or think there were any harm in it. Ye cannot therefore, without the greatest partiality and injustice, count me guilty of any crime, in only stretching forth my hand to heal a poor distressed man, in danger of his life, on the Sabbath-day?

6 And there was such undeniable evidence in this way of reasoning, that they were all confounded, and could not reply a word against it.

7 Our Lord observing, that when the invited guests, especially those of the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, came to place themselves at the table, every one strove for the upper hand, endeavouring to get the highest seat, he took occasion from thence, as from a pro-

X 2

N O T E.

* He seems to have been one of the *Jewish* sanhedrim, and a chief ruler in the synagogue.

† He probably came there, hoping for a cure; or perhaps was one of the family.

chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them.

8 When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room: lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him, come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.

12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the

per similitude, to reprove their pride, and recommend the excellence and advantage of humility, saying,

8, 9 When any of you are invited to a wedding, or other public feast, do not put forward for the highest place, vainly conceiting yourself to be worthy of it; lest there should be some other guest of higher rank, by his age, station, or qualifications, and thereupon the master of the feast should, out of due respect to him, come and desire you to let him take your seat; and so you should be exposed to contempt before all the company, and be forced, with confusion and disgrace, to remove lower.

10 But, on the other hand, whenever you have such an invitation, chuse to set yourself in one of the lowest seats, with a due sense of your own unworthiness, and with a preference of others; that when the master of the house observes it, he may desire you, in a respectful manner, to remove to a more honourable place: This will procure you much esteem and reputation among all that shall be at table with you. And as in this, so in all other actions of life, let your behaviour toward God and man be with all humbleness of mind, and becoming modesty.

11 For whosoever is wise and deserving in his own conceit, and would take honour to himself before the Divine Majesty, or fellow creatures, shall certainly have contempt poured upon him; God will abhor and bring him low; and men will despise and disdain him: But whoever is of an humble spirit, abasing himself at the foot of God, under a sense of his own nothingness and vileness, and preferring others to himself, he shall be highly honoured of God and man. (*Prov. xxix. 23.*)

12 Then Jesus, observing what sort of guests were at table with him, turned to the *Pharisee* who invited him, and said, When you design to make an entertainment, if you would have it pleasing to God, and really advantageous to yourself, do not confine it to your friends and nearest kindred, nor to your rich neighbours and acquaintance, exclusive of others, to the wasting of your substance, and hindering your liberality, where it may be needed; nor be fond of making sumptuous and costly feasts, that your great and wealthy friends and relations may honour your table, and admire its elegance; lest they retaliate your bounty, by feasting you with their dainties again, and that be the whole of your reward: For all this is only feeding your own selfishness, pride, and luxury.

13 But when you make a feast, let it ordinarily be of good, wholesome, and less costly food; and invite or send portions of it to those (*Neb. viii. 10.*)

that

the maimed, the lame, the blind :

14 And thou shalt be blessed: for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him, heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many :

17 And sent his servant at supper-time, to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

that are really in want, such as the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, who are objects of great compassion, and unable to provide for themselves.

14 And though it is not in the power of these to return the same sort of kindness to you, ye shall nevertheless be blessed in the best manner; for they will bless God for you; and, being sensible that they have no other way to make you amends, will pray for his blessing upon you: (*Job xxix. 13.*) And, you being found among the righteous, he will own and honour these charities, and graciously reward them, if not in this world, yet with rich advantage at the general judgment. *Blessed are the merciful: For they shall obtain mercy.* (*Matth. v. 7.*)

15 Now one of them who sat at table seemed to be much affected with this discourse; and, breaking out in a sort of ecstasy, said to Jesus, They are blessed indeed that shall share in the privileges and pleasures of the Messiah's kingdom on earth, and shall be admitted to all the delightful entertainments of the heavenly world at the resurrection of the just.

16 To this our Lord replied, What you say is very true; my kingdom is full of blessings, though many despise and reject them; as may be represented in the following parable: A certain man made a great feast, which, as usual, was at supper, and invited many guests. So Christ, now in the end of the world, has made plentiful provisions of gospel-grace for spiritual refreshment and perfect happiness, that sinners may be holy here, and blessed for ever; and he freely invites all that hear the gospel, beginning with the *Jewish* nation, to accept those rich provisions for their present relief and comfort, and for their eternal salvation.

17 And when the feast was fully prepared, and but few of the guests were come in, the master sent his servant again to them who had been invited, to let them know that all things were now ready for their entertainment, and to bid them come without any further delay. So Christ having called the *Jews* by his personal ministry, and by the preaching of his servants, whom he sent to the cities of *Judea*, with little success, he commissioned the apostles and evangelists

N O T E.

† To eat bread was a usual phrase for a whole meal, whether of common or delicious provisions, (*2 Sam. ix. 7.* and *xii. 17.* and *Prov. ix. 5.*) And as the company were now at table, and Christ's discourse had turned upon spiritual subjects, in allusion to a feast; the advantages of religion here, and the blessedness of hea-

ven hereafter, are very seasonably expressed by the metaphor of eating bread in the kingdom of God: Though, as some tell us, this was a saying common among the *Rabbins* from *Esdra's* days; and it is probable that this man had carnal notions about the honours of the Messiah's kingdom, when he used it.

gelists after his resurrection, to renew his gracious invitation, and to assure them that now all things were thoroughly prepared, that the work of redemption was actually finished, that the Spirit was poured out from on high to bear witness and give efficacy to it, and that he was still willing to receive every one who should come by faith to him. And this is the language of the gospel, wherever it is preached*.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife; and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is

18, 19, 20 And yet the invited guests, as it were by common consent, put off their coming, upon various pretences: One alledged, that he had lately bought a piece of ground, and must needs go to see how the bargain was like to prove; and therefore begged to be excused: Another pleaded, that he had just bought five yoke of oxen, and must go to try whether they were fit for his business; and therefore desired that he might be excused: And another insisted, that he was lately married; and therefore peremptorily declared, he could not come. So the *Jews* in general, and the *scribes* and *Pharisees* in particular, and many others, that sit under the gospel, reject its gracious invitations, upon frivolous and carnal pretences; some preferring their worldly gains and advantages, and others their sensual ease and pleasure, to Christ, and the blessings of eternal life; and all unbelievers are for shifting off a present attention to his calls, which carries in it a real denial, though they are ashamed in plain terms to avow it.

21 The servant, returning to his lord, reported the several excuses they had made: And the master of the feast, being provoked at their ingratitude and contempt, ordered him to go immediately into the public parts of the city, and invite the poor, the maimed, the halt, and blind, whom he might meet with there. So the ministers of Christ give him an account, with grief, in their prayers, of the unsuccessfulness of their labours, saying, Lord, we are a favour of death unto death to many; they will not hear and receive our message: And he, being highly offended with those first refusers of his grace, sent his servants to the dispersed *Jews* and the *Gentile* proselytes, to preach the gospel to them, and even to the most despicable people, who make but little figure in the world, and are remarkably ignorant, impotent, and miserable.

22 And when the servant had executed this commission with some success, he said to his master, Lord,

N O T E.

* Though this parable primarily related to the calling of the *Jews*, and afterwards of the *Gentiles*, yet it is applicable to all persons, in all ages of the world, to whom Christ sends his gospel.

is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden, shall taste of my supper.

25 And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

Lord, thy orders have been obeyed, and some are come in, and yet there is room. So upon preaching the gospel to those *Jews* and profelytes, many of them believed; and the servants of Christ rejoice to tell him of the success of their ministry, whenever, by his grace, their preaching is made a favour of life to life; and this revives their hearts, and encourages their pleas, that still there is room for more in the church, and in the heavenly mansions, which are not yet full, and in the grace of God and merit of the Redeemer, which are not yet exhausted.

23 Then the lord of the feast ordered his servant to go into the high roads and hedges without the city, and to be very earnest with even the beggars, and the country people there, to come in, that his house might be filled. So the Lord Jesus sent his gospel to the ignorant and idolatrous *Gentiles*, who were afar off, (*Eph.* ii. 12,—17.) and to the most notorious sinners; and he made it effectual among them, who flocked in multitudes to him and his church, like persons constrained to it, not by force of arms, but of arguments attended with the Divine Spirit, who persuades, encourages, convinces, and sweetly overcomes the hearts of the disobedient, and draws them with cords of a man, with bands of love, that they may be a willing people in the day of Christ's power. (*Hos.* xi. 4. and *Psal.* cx. 3.)

24 And the reason why the master of the feast would send no more to the resolute refusers, was, because, being angry with them, he declared not one of them should ever taste of his rich entertainment. So Christ, being provoked at the ingratitude and obstinate infidelity of the *Jews*, ordered his apostles to make no further proposals of the gospel to them; but to turn to the *Gentiles*: (*Acts* xiii. 46.) And God has sworn in his wrath against them who believe not, that they shall not enter into his rest. (*Heb.* iii. 18.)

25 After this, a great multitude attended our blessed Lord in his way to *Jerusalem*; and, that they might not pretend to be his followers in expectation of secular advantages, he, turning to them, said,

26 It is not so easy a thing to be my disciples, nor so consistent with, much less so subservient to, your carnal pleasure, and worldly safety and interests, as ye may imagine; do not deceive yourselves in a matter of such consequence as this: For if any one would come by faith to me, would make a profession of my name, and cleave to me for the blessings of my kingdom, he must go into such acts of self-denial, and submit to such hardships and persecutions for my sake,

fake, as shew that he prefers me to all the dearest comforts and relations of life, such as parents, wives, children, brethren, and sisters; and must be as ready to part with them, and to be separated from them at my call, as if he really hated them; and must be indeed averse to them, and to his own enjoyment of them, so far as they would hinder his faith, and love, and faithfulness to me: Yea, he must have the same self-denying temper of spirit, with regard to his own life too, being as willing to resign that also for my glory, when they stand in competition; or else he cannot be a true disciple to me, nor share in my blessings.

27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

27 And whosoever is not willing and resolved, by the grace of God before-hand, to submit to reproaches, injuries, and cruelties, even unto death, if he should be called to endure them, for my sake, and after my example, that he may maintain his fidelity to me, cannot be, in truth, one of my disciples, nor will I own him as such: Think therefore of these things seriously and deliberately now, as ever ye would be Christians indeed; lest, in a time of sore trial, ye be discouraged, and all your profession and hopes come to nothing. Thus men use to do in other cases of importance.

28 For which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

29 Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth, whether he be able, with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the

28, 29, 30 For who is there among you, that, designing to build an house, would not, before he begins the work, sit down, and carefully compute the whole charge, and consider whether he is able to go through with it? lest, after he has inconsiderately begun the building, he be forced to desist for want of a sufficient stock of money to defray the necessary expence; and so should expose himself to the derision of all that know him, for having foolishly attempted what he had no reasonable prospect of ever being able to finish.

31, 32 Or, to give you another instance of prudence among men: What king, of common thought or conduct, who is in danger of being engaged in a war with some other potentate, would not, before he ventures a battle, deliberate seriously with himself, whether he be able, with only ten thousand, to encounter twenty thousand of his enemy's forces? and if he thinks he is no match for him, what man in his senses would not rather send ambassadors, while the enemy is at a distance, and sue for a treaty of peace upon any tolerable terms, than rashly give him battle, to the apparent hazard of a total defeat, and entire loss of all his dominions, and even of his own life? Surely every thoughtful prince would do this.

the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an embassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

33 It is therefore of much greater necessity and importance for those of you, who would engage in a profession of my name, and entertain hopes from me, to sit down and thoroughly count the cost, reckoning upon the very worst, as well as the best, that ye may expect to meet with for my sake. And then it behoves you to think seriously with yourselves, whether ye set out upon such a foundation as will support your hopes and views for eternal life, and carry you through all the difficulties that lie in the way to it; whether, though ye cannot go on in your work, and go out against your enemies, in your own strength, my grace be not sufficient for you; and whether ye find your hearts engaged thereby to run all risques, and encounter all opposition from Satan, the flesh, and the world, rather than abandon me? For I have already told you, that unless ye come to a point in the spiritual dispositions and settled purposes of your souls about these things, even to the loss of all this world, if need be, ye cannot be really my disciples, owning me, and owned by me.

34 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his flavour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

34, 35 My doctrine, and a holy profession of it, are, like salt*, very valuable and serviceable; and truly gracious and holy Christians, and especially sound and faithful ministers, are the excellent of the earth, and of great use to spread the favour of the knowledge of God, to prevent corruption, and improve all company, where they come: But if my doctrines be debased; or a profession become loose and lifeless, and professors and ministers themselves degenerate, and prove carnal, graceless, destitute of the power of religion in their hearts and lives, and so sink under the difficulties and discouragements they meet with for my sake; they become like tasteless, spiritless salt, which has lost all its virtue and relish†; and no other principles or means can ever recover such persons from their depravity and apostacy: And as insipid salt is neither fit for so much as to manure land, or to make dung; so error is mischievous; and such persons are rather injurious, than serviceable to any, the least valuable purposes whatsoever; and are to be utterly abandoned and rejected; to be cast out of the church in this world, and shut out from the kingdom of heaven in the next: Attend therefore to, and deliberate carefully upon, what I have said;

N O T E S.

* By salt may be meant either the doctrine of Christ, and a profession of his name, (*Mark ix. 50.*) or good Christians, and especially good ministers, whom

Christ calls *the salt of the earth*, (*Mat. v. 13.*)

† This tasteless salt is such as chymists call, after distillation, *Caput mortuum.*

said, as a matter of the highest moment to yourselves, if ye would be indeed my disciples.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How careful should we be to observe the law of the Sabbath, free from the extremes of superstition on one hand, and of profanation on the other! Happy is he who does not allow himself in that which he condemns in others: Nature requires proper rests on the Lord's day, and religion demands such acts of mercy and goodness as are suitable to present circumstances: But our chief employment, discourse, and table-talk, like our blessed Lord's, should be of a religious strain.—How amiable and exalting is true humility; but how odious and debasing is pride, both in the sight of God and man, and in its different events relating to this world and that which is to come! And how little is the highest honour and esteem among great men and friends on earth, to be compared with the glorious recompence which shall be made at the resurrection of the just! In order to the obtaining of this, behold the rich provisions of gospel-grace, and its free invitation to all sorts of sinners, even the most unworthy! And behold its victorious power, in bringing them in to Christ! None shall be excluded, who do not, by unbelief, exclude themselves; and yet, alas! how many are there that make light of its blessings, prefer this world to them, excuse themselves, by trifling pretences, from embracing them, and provokingly refuse them, to their own eternal loss and ruin! But, blessed be God, there is yet room; and as all things are now ready, they shall not be utterly lost: The whole human race shall not be suffered to reject the gospel; but sovereign grace will make it effectual to many, even to sinners of the *Gentiles*, and to the most unlikely, in human view, till Christ's house be filled. Ministers must give an account to him of their labours and success, in their prayers here, and at the day of judgment hereafter; and whilst he accepts them in the faithful discharge of their office, he will be angry with the obstinate refusers of his grace, and never allow them to partake of its saving benefits: But he will make all those heartily welcome who by faith receive him. How should he have the preference, in our hearts, to life itself, and all its dearest relations and comforts! And how concerned should we be to enter upon a profession of his name, on such principles as will carry us through the worst that can befall us for his sake! We should sit down and count what our religion will cost us, and what blessed assistances, encouragements, and comforts, are to be found in Christ, to support us under tribulation, over-balance it, and crown us with victory, and triumph over it: And O how excellent is his doctrine, and how effectual, when maintained in its purity, and the heart is seasoned with grace! We then are blessed, and made blessings. But how pernicious is error; and how useless and injurious at present, and miserable at last, will loose and carnal, corrupt and careless professors and ministers be! They shall be rejected of God as contemptible and vile. With what attention and concern should we think on these things, that we may not be of them that draw back to perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of our souls!

C H A P. XV.

The Pharisees offended at Christ's conversing with, and preaching to publicans and sinners, 1, 2. He vindicates himself in the parable of the lost sheep, 3,—7.; and of the lost piece of money, 8,—10.; and of the prodigal son, 11,—32.

TEXT.

THEN drew near unto him all the

PARAPHRASE.

AS Christ was preaching in a certain place †, there were present a company of men who collected

N O T E.

† It seems that our Lord was now in *Galilee* of the *Gentiles*, beyond *Jordan*, from whence he afterward went to *Jerusalem*; chap. xvii. 11. and that the sinners

the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just

lected the tribute which the *Romans* demanded of the *Jews*, and were mostly persons of ill character; these, with abundance of other infamous sinners, came to hear and receive instruction from him, under a conviction of their sin; and with a desire to learn the way of recovery and salvation.

2 Upon this, the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, a superstitious, self-conceited people, took offence, quarrelled with Jesus, and reproached him, as if he could not be a good and holy man, because he preached to such despicable and abandoned wretches as these, and suffered them to come so near him, and even sometimes to eat with him. (*Chap. v. 29, 30.*)

3 But (ð) our Lord, to vindicate his own conduct for the recovery of lost sinners, and to shew the condescension and the riches of Divine grace to the chief of them, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, illustrated his design in the following similitudes*, saying,

4 Suppose any of you had an hundred sheep, and one of them, going astray, were lost in the wilderness, and in danger of being destroyed, Would he not leave all the rest of his flock, which were visibly in safer circumstances, and go in search after that which was lost, till he should find it?

5 And when he meets with it, he would certainly take it up, and carry it back upon his shoulders, with more than ordinary pleasure, in the thought that he had recovered, and saved it from ruin.

6 And, as soon as he gets home, he would express greater joy among his friends, neighbours, and acquaintance, and expect them to rejoice with him, more at his finding and bringing back this lost sheep, than on account of all the rest which were not so exposed to danger.

7 In like manner, I tell you, that I have sheep among the greatest of sinners, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, who are gone astray from God, have lost their way to heaven and happiness, and are running headlong to destruction; and who are lost to the service and honour of God, and to their own safety and comfort: And wherever they are scattered, or into whatsoever lengths of sin and danger they have run; I will follow them by my word, providence, and Spirit, to search and find them out, and bring them into my

Y 2

fold:

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sinners here mentioned so emphatically, were sinners of the *Gentiles*, which best agrees with the scope of the following parables.

* Here are three parables of like import, the two first of which represent the

grace of God in searching his people out, chiefly among the *Gentiles*; and the other in receiving them with great kindness, upon their return to him; and all of them represent the great pleasure he has in their salvation.

just persons which need no repentance.

fold : And when my grace becomes effectual for bringing them to repentance unto life, this is matter of rejoicing to my Father and me, who delight in mercy ; and to the holy angels, who rejoice in our glory, and in their happiness : Yea, speaking according to the usual workings of mens passions upon obtaining what was much desired, and yet seemed past recovery, There is more joy in the conversion of a sinner of human race, than in the confirmation of the angels, who never sinned ; in the conversion of the *Gentiles*, than in the preservation of the *Jewish* church, whose covenant-relation supposes them to be already turned to God ; in the conversion of notorious sinners, than of those who have always been so civilized as not to need such a visible change ; and there is undoubtedly more joy in the conversion of all ranks and degrees of sinners, than in the pretended religion of such self-righteous persons as think themselves too good to need any repentance. And if, on these occasions, there is such joy in heaven, it should surely be matter of high approbation, and not of murmuring on earth.

8 Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it ?

9 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me ; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth.

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons :

8 Again, Suppose a woman had ten pieces of money, and out of her little stock had lost one of them in her house, Would she not light a candle, and look about for it, sweep the room, and narrowly search every creek and corner, till she should find it.

9 And, as soon as she finds it, she would naturally express more abundant joy to her friends and neighbours, and expect them to be more pleased on that occasion, than if she had never lost it.

10 In like manner, I tell you, that all who belong to God, and are in a lost state of sin and misery among the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, are of high account with him, who will search till he finds them out, and will suffer none of them to be lost for ever : And, upon the conversion or true repentance of any one of them, such is the joy of God therein, that he will discover it among his holy angels in heaven ; and they will rejoice in it more than if this penitent had never sinned, and exposed himself to the damnation of hell.

11 Then, still more directly to convince the *Jews* in general, and the *scribes* and *Pharisees* in particular, of their pride and wickedness, in being envious at his shewing favour to publicans and sinners, and that even among the *Gentiles*, he added another similitude, saying, Ye may easily conceive of a certain man, as having two sons. So God, as the Creator and Preserver, Benefactor and Governor of all mankind, is the common Father both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who, in their

their original state, had a fulness of all things as his offspring : And, since the apostacy, he has sons of both these sorts, by gracious choice and adoption ; the elder being the *Jews*, whom he calls his first-born, (*Exod. iv. 22.*) because first taken into his covenant, and the younger being the *Gentiles*. And the like may be said of all those who have long been visibly in covenant with God, and of others, who, having gone on a great while in a course of sin, are at length turned to him.

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

12 Now the younger of the sons not caring to be under his father's eye, and imagining he could improve a stock to the best advantage, pertly demanded his portion : And his father made a proper division to them both. So the *Gentiles*, and all mankind by nature, and young people in particular, chuse to be at their own dispose, without controul ; and being conceited of their own abilities, are apt to challenge good things as their due : And God, in the bountiful dispensations of his providence, giving them all, and more than they have any just claim to, righteously leaves them, at least for a while, to follow the way of their own hearts, in managing his gifts and talents, that they may see what their own conduct will bring them to.

13 And, not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

13 And soon after the younger son had received his portion, he turned it into ready money ; went with his whole stock, from his father's presence, into a distant country, and there spent it all in riotousness, looseness, and debaucheries. So it was with the *Gentiles* : Soon after they were left to natural light, and some traditions of the earliest revelations of God to man, they corrupted their notions and their way, fell into idolatry, superstition, sensuality, and profaneness, misapplied all their talents, and became vain in their imaginations : And so it is with particular sinners, who, being left to themselves, abuse their mercies, run into every kind of excess and wickedness, and lose all sense of God and religion.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land : and he began to be in want.

14, 15, 16 But after some time, when the young man had spent all his substance, there was a great famine in the country where he dwelt ; and he began to want all the necessaries of life : And finding himself reduced to the utmost straits, without any friend to help him, he was obliged to hire himself, for mere sustenance, to one in those parts, who employed him in the mean drudgery of looking after the swine, and so stinted him in his wages, as not to allow him to eat to the full, even of the very husks which the hogs themselves lived upon ; though, if he might, he would have been glad to satisfy his hunger with them.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country ; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly

belly with the
hulks that the
swine did eat :
and no man gave
unto him.

So the *Gentiles* in general, after they had departed from God, defaced the small remains of religion that were formerly found among them, and yielded themselves up to the will of Satan, who ruled with tyranny over them, carried them into the worship of devils, and many superstitious and cruel rites, and into the most absurd methods of seeking peace and happiness, in which they could never find the satisfaction they sought for : And so all sinners, being far from God, and having sinned away their light and mercies, give themselves up to the meanest and worst of servitude, to the lusts of their own hearts, to Satan and the world, and seek their happiness in the empty, unsatisfying enjoyments, and sinful, fordid pleasures of this life, in which they can never find it, till at length they are reduced to the utmost perplexity and want.

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger !

18 I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son : make me as one of thy hired servants.

17, 18, 19 At last, the youth's pinching necessity, and extreme distress, even to a despair of relief in that far country, brought him to his senses, and put him upon thinking with himself, What have I done, in running away from my father's house, where the poorest of his hired servants are daily eating to the full, and leave enough for the satisfaction of many others, whilst I am just ready to starve by means of my extravagancies ! Hereupon he resolved to go to his father, with humble confession of his high offences, and with earnest supplication, that, though he was unworthy to be put among his children, he might nevertheless be received into his family, among the meanest of his servants, to have their fare, and do their work. So sinners, who, in the days of their unregeneracy and departure from God, acted directly contrary to all true principles of reason and religion, are at length brought to their right mind when God comes to work effectually upon them : He, by his word and Spirit, and oftentimes by means of disappointing and distressing providences, lays a sense of guilt and danger upon their consciences, shews them what madness and folly they have been guilty of, in running away from him, and betaking themselves to creature-comforts for happiness, and that there is no possible relief for them but in the rich provisions which he has discovered, as made in Christ for the household of faith. Hereupon a sense of necessity brings the awakened sinner to say, Whatever the event may be, I am resolved, in the strength of divine grace, to depart from sin and Satan, and from all dependence on self and the world, and to go to God, as a Father of mercies in Christ ; I will humbly confess mine iniquity to him, saying, " I have heinously sinned against thee, the God of heaven, before thy face, and

and under thine eye ; I therefore own myself to be utterly unworthy of being received and dealt with as a son, and shall think it wonderful condescension and grace if I may but be admitted to have the privilege of only a door-keeper in thy house, and of serving thee, in whatsoever thou shalt command me, all the remaining days of my life. Thus it was with the heathens, when they *turned from idols to serve the living and true God* ; (*1 Theff. i. 9.*) and thus it is with every sinner, when God is bringing him home to himself by converting grace.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

20 Accordingly the young penitent set out, between hope and fear, for a return to his father : But whilst he was yet at a great distance, his father was quick-sighted to discover him ; and, his bowels being moved toward him, he ran with all speed to meet him, and in a most affectionate manner embraced and kissed him. So the sinner, under a true sense of sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, sets about returning to him from all iniquity in good earnest, and without delay : And whilst he is full of doubts and fears lest so vile a wretch as himself should never find acceptance, God observes him in all his distress, and in the very first motions of his soul toward him ; and, being full of compassion, prevents him with the blessings of his goodness, makes haste to relieve his fears, and manifests his love to him, with great endearments, and in most affectionate expressions, to shew that he is reconciled. Thus God graciously dealt with the *Gentiles*, when he granted them repentance unto life ; and thus every returning sinner is accepted of him in the Beloved.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

21 Upon this discovery of the father's kindness, the young prodigal's heart was melted, and encouraged to claim relation to him, and to cast himself upon his mercy, with ingenuous confessions of his aggravated offences, and of his utter unworthiness ever to be owned and received as his son. So God's manifesting his favour to the *Gentiles* wrought on them, and emboldened their humble hopes toward him : And an awakened sinner's heart is much affected with the discoveries of God's condescending, free, and pardoning grace, and is thereby encouraged to plead with him as a father, and to hope in his mercy, through Jesus Christ, for all salvation ; and a sense of forgiving love is so far from making him think the lighter of sin, that it humbles him the more for it, and makes him the more ashamed of it, and the more ready to confess, with the greatest contrition, that God might justly have disowned and abandoned him for ever.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

22, 23, 24 But instead of the father's rebuking the recovered prodigal, he seemed to stop him short in his submissions, as if he should say, It is enough that thou art thus deeply sensible of thine own unworthiness, I will be better to thee than all thy deserts, and than all thy hopes: And he ordered his servants to bring out the very best garment in his wardrobe, and clothe him with it; to put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and to kill the fatted calf, and make a feast for him, that they might eat and rejoice together; because his son, whom he had looked upon as dead, and had given up for lost, was now alive, and returned to him in safety: Accordingly they, and the whole family then present, began to express great joy on this happy occasion. So when sinners come in to God through Christ, the more they lothe and condemn themselves for their iniquities, the less will he shew any tokens of displeasure; and, for the glory of his own grace, he will not only make them servants, but sons; and do exceeding abundantly more for them than they are able to ask or think: As they come to him in filthy garments, he gives them change of raiment, clothing them with the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness, and with the riches of heavenly graces: As they come poor and destitute, he gives them a pledge and earnest of the everlasting inheritance by the Holy Spirit of promise: As they come lame and wounded, like cripples, unable to go, he furnishes them with the preparation of the gospel of peace, that they may walk with ease and cheerfulness, and may hold on and hold out in his ways: As they come in a starving condition, he sets before them a feast of fat things in the gospel, and gives them the bread of life, that they may eat and be satisfied, and may be nourished unto eternal life: And as they were in great distress and sorrow of heart before, he rejoices to comfort them, and to make them glad with the light of his countenance; and all his family in heaven and earth, exceedingly rejoice with them, upon information, that they, who were dead in trespasses and sins, are now made alive to God; and that they, who were in a lost condition, are now recovered to a state of safety, usefulness, and blessedness. Thus when God called the *Gentiles*, he freely admitted them, not only to all the external privileges of the gospel-state, but to the saving and eternal blessings of his covenant; whereupon they and the believing *Jews* rejoiced; (*Acts* xi. 18. and xiii. 48.) and the holy angels rejoice in this great joy to all people, to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*: (*Luke* ii. 10, 13, 14.) And thus when any, especially notorious sinners,

finners, are converted, Christ is made to them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and there is great rejoicing in heaven and earth.

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came, and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out and intreated him.

25, 26, 27, 28 Now the elder son returning from the fields, and hearing an unusual sound of extraordinary rejoicing in the house, inquired of one of the servants what might be the meaning of it: The servant told him that his younger brother was returned home, beyond all expectation; and his father was so exceedingly affected with it, that he had killed the fatted calf to entertain him, and express his joy; because he had received him, not only in health of body, but also as a thorough penitent, and in his right mind: But the elder brother, instead of being pleased, as he ought to have been, was highly offended at his father's favour to the young prodigal, and resolved not to go in: Whereupon the father himself went out, and with great condescension and kindness, entreated him to come and partake of the entertainment and joy. So the *Jews* in general, and the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* in particular, were highly offended and enraged when they heard of God's shewing mercy to the *Gentiles*, and making them partakers of the richest privileges and blessings of the gospel*. And so great was their envy at this, that they, through unbelief, refused and shut themselves out from its benefits: Nevertheless, God did not immediately cast them off; but, bearing long with them, came in the ministry of Christ and his servants, preaching peace to them. In like manner †, many of a Pharisaical spirit, that have lived soberly, and made a profession of religion, are offended at the doctrines of God's free and sovereign grace to the vilest and unworthiest of sinners; and this is such an offence to some of them, that, through their own pride and envy, it proves an occasion of their rejecting Christ and the gospel to their own perdition: And yet God does not take their first refusal, but continues beseeching them to be reconciled to him.

29 And he answering

29, 30 But (*δε*) the elder son still continuing obstinate

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* They were filled with such envy on this occasion that they spoke against the things *Paul* preached to them, contradicting and blaspheming. (*Acts* xiii. 45.) And when he was afterwards making his defence to them, as soon as he spoke of Christ's sending him to the *Gentiles*, they lost all patience, and said, *Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live: And they cried out against him, and cast off*

their clothes, as ready to stone him, and *threw dust into the air*, to shew their indignation against him. (*Acts* xxii. 21, 22, 23.)

† Something like this was the case even of the believing *Jews* themselves, who contended with *Peter* for going in to the *Gentiles*, and discovered their displeasure at it, till he cleared up that dispensation of God's grace to them. (*Acts* xi. 1,—9.)

swering, said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment, and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends :

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

stinate and refusing to go in, talked very pertly, saying, As for me, I have always been your obedient son, have lived like a servant in your family, and never offended you in any instance whatsoever; and yet so cool and unkind have you been to me, that you never so much as gave me a kid to entertain my friends, that they might rejoice with me: But no sooner was this vile wretch, your son, come, whom I am ashamed to own as a brother, and who has profusely squandered away all the portion which you gave him, in rioting, luxury, and debaucheries, but immediately the fatted calf must be killed to entertain him, and make merry with him. So the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, and the generality of the *Jews*, notwithstanding the repeated gracious invitations of the gospel, continued obstinately to refuse coming in to Christ, and behaved insolently toward God: They boasted of their own exact regularity and obedience, as if they had never offended him; they thought themselves so worthy of his favour, that all the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom ought to be confined to them; they looked with indignation and disdain upon the *Gentiles* as the most despicable wretches, that ought not to be owned as their brethren; and could not bear the thought that they should be equalled to themselves, much less that they should be preferred before them: And thus it is with self-righteous professors of Christ's name, who are apt faucily to arraign the dispensations of God's grace, notwithstanding the continued overtures that are made of it to themselves.

31, 32 But his father replied, Son, what room is there for all this discontent, and all these murmuring complaints? you have constantly eat at my table, which has been supplied with rich provisions every day, and have continually lived in my presence, under the tokens of my favour, who have hitherto confined them to you: and I have still enough for you: But here is a fit occasion for expressing more than ordinary joy, in that your brother, whom I love, and you ought to love too, and who was given up for dead and lost, is now returned alive and well, deeply sensible of, humbled for, and reclaimed from, his extravagant wickedness and folly, and is now a dutiful son to me. So God vindicates the free dispensations of his grace to the *Gentiles*, and to the most infamous sinners, against all the dissatisfaction and murmurings of its enemies: He had been exceeding liberal to the *Jews*, confining his covenant-mercy for many ages to them, among whom he had pitched his tabernacle with the special tokens of his presence;

(Rom.

(*Rom. ix. 4, 5.*) and if they should not cut themselves off by unbelief, all would still be theirs, he having enough for them and others too: But the conversion of the *Gentiles*, and of remarkable sinners, is the quickening of them who were most evidently dead in trespasses and sins, and a bringing them home who were far from God in a perishing state: And this cannot but be a just occasion of exceeding great joy, in the account of God and angels, and all good men †.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How dreadful is a state of sin and apostacy from God! It is a lost, perishing, and enslaved state; injurious to the Author of our beings, to ourselves, and others; destitute of all that is honourable and comfortable; involved in disappointments and perplexity, want, and misery; and exposed to utter ruin. But behold the riches of divine grace to the worst of sinners and young prodigals! God searcheth after his lost sheep, finds them out, and brings them home to himself, and his heart and arms are open to receive every humble penitent; he observes all their groanings and distress, all the workings of their consciences, and solicitous thoughts about their wretched condition, all the first and most distant motions of their hearts toward him, all their desires, fears, and hopes, and all their purposes, and attempts of coming to him; his bowels move towards them, and he prevents them with his mercy, secretly draws them, that they may run after him, helps them against their discouragements, melts their hearts into ingenuous repentance for sin, and emboldens their trust and hope in his mercy, through the Lord Jesus; and he graciously accepts them in their returns to him, forgives all their sins, takes them into his family, manifests himself to them as he does not unto the world, sheds abroad his love in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, supplies all their wants, and enriches them with the blessings of grace and glory, as if they had never offended him. And O what a happy change does his grace make upon them! They, who before were beside themselves, are then brought to their right mind, and made wise to salvation; they that were proud and self-sufficient, and had run great lengths in sin, are made humble, and brought back again to God; they that were lost to all that is good, and to their own or others power, to work effectually upon them, are recovered to every thing that is happy and glorious; and they that were dead in trespasses and sins are made alive to God, to glorify him here, and enjoy him for ever: And, on this occasion, what exceeding great joy is there, in their own souls, and among the saints and servants of Christ upon earth: Yea, in the heart of the blessed God himself, and among the angels in heaven! But O how naturally perverse is the sinner's heart, that, notwithstanding all this, he will try to make any shift, rather than return to God through Christ; and that nothing but a sense of absolute necessity will ever bring him in: And how monstrously wicked are they, who, from a high conceit of themselves, rise up with prejudices against the freeness and sovereignty of God's grace, and would hinder or murmur at the happiness of sinners, in their conversion to him! And yet how patient and unexceptionably kind are the overtures of mercy in the gospel, even to the most froward in heart! Happy for them, who, at length, are overcome by it! But wo to them, who, after all, continue obstinately to reject it:

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C H A P.

N O T E.

† The elder son's making no reply to this, may intimate either that those *Jews*, who persisted in their infidelity, still retained their prejudices against the gospel on this account, being enemies to it for the *Gentiles* sakes: *Rom. xi. 28.* Or it may intimate, that those *Jews* who believed, were satisfied with this account of the *Gentiles* being made fellow-

heirs with them, and had nothing to reply against it, according to *Acts xi. 18.* And the same may be said of false and formal professors of Christ on one hand, and of some real believers on the other, with respect to the inveterate prejudices of the one, and the weak and ignorant murmurings of the other, against the riches of divine grace to the worst of sinners.

C H A P. XVI.

The right use of worldly enjoyments, represented in the parable of the unjust steward, 1,—13. A reproof of the Pharisees for their covetousness and hypocrisy, 14,—18. And the danger of setting one's heart on earthly treasures, illustrated in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, 19,—31.

TEXT.

AND he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship: for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord, having reprov'd the *scribes* and *Pharisees* for their pride and envy, proceeded to instruct his disciples, in a parable, about the right use of worldly enjoyments, saying, A certain great man committed the management of his estate to a steward †; and, after some time, an accusation was brought against him, that he had wronged his master, and misapplied his goods. So it may justly be charged upon the men of this world, that, through unfaithfulness and neglect, they have abused the bounties of Providence, and applied them to other purposes than those for which God bestowed them.

2 Thereupon the lord of the steward summoned him to appear before him, and said, What a sad report do I hear of your treachery? deliver up your accounts of all that I have entrusted you with; for now I will turn you out of your office. So the cry of their iniquity who abuse the goodness of Providence, is, like the sin of *Sodom*, great against them: (*Gen. xviii. 20.*) And the time is coming, when God will say to them, as he did to *Cain*, *What hast thou done?* (*Gen. iv. 10.*) And as he then will suffer them to have no further use of his bounties, so he gives them warning before-hand in their own consciences and in his word, that *every one of them shall give an account of himself to God.* (*Rom. xiv. 12.*)

3, 4 Upon this notice from his lord, the steward reasoned in himself after this manner, I shall soon be dismissed from my master's service, and reduced to the utmost necessity: What shall I do for a subsistence, who have never been brought up to labour, and am ashamed to go a-begging? But at length he resolv'd upon a project, to secure friends to himself among his lord's debtors, that, when he should be discharged from his stewardship, he might find entertainment with them. So sloth, and pride, and unrighteous ways of living, having brought the spend-thrift

N O T E.

† The rich man in this parable represents God; and the steward, represents those, that are entrusted with the bounties of Providence, and abuse them.

they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, and how much owest thou? and he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of

thrif to distress, and to expectations of utter ruin, he is at his wit's ends, and is full of inquiries after a provision for time to come, till he has encouraging prospects of obtaining it: And the sinner, who is truly brought to see his danger by sin, will dread the consequence, and never rest till he hath hopes of eternal happiness.

5, 6, 7 Now the policy of this steward, to provide for himself, was this, He sent for all his lord's debtors, and having taken their just accounts, ordered one of them, in all haste, to deduct half, and another a fifth part out of the bill, which was to be given to his lord; and so abated every one a greater, or less proportion of his debt, that he might secure a retreat when his master should put him out of his place. So the men of this world are full of subtle contrivances, and neglect no means, though ever so unjust, to retrieve their desperate affairs: And the sinner ought to consult, in a better manner, what he shall do to be saved.

8 And when his lord heard how artfully this man had managed, he owned that it was a politic scheme for securing a supply when he should be reduced to extremity*. So though the dishonesty of such a servant is detestable; yet his foresight, care, and contrivance, about the interests of this life, deserve an imitation, with regard to the more important affairs of another, and condemn the inconsiderateness and stupidity of those that are less thoughtful about them: For worldly-wise men, who place their chief happiness in what relates to the body, are, generally speaking, more sagacious and industrious, in their way, to form and compass their designs for temporal advantages, than the professors of religion, who have the light of the gospel, are for the concerns of their souls and eternity, though they know that in a little time they must die, and give an account of themselves to God: And even true believers do not ordinarily contrive and lay out themselves so much about spiritual, as the men of this world do about temporal things.

9 I therefore advise and charge you to use as much foresight and diligence about the concerns of eternity, as worldly-minded men do about the things of time. Instead of employing † uncertain riches in any

N O T E S.

* Some suppose that the Lord here intended is Christ himself, who passed this judgment upon the steward's conduct.

† *Mammon* signifies riches: and, according to the heathen theology, was the god of plenty: And all the treasures of this world are here called the mam-

mon or riches of unrighteousness, in opposition to (*αληθινον*) the true riches, ver. 11. because they are empty and unsatisfying, precarious and disappointing to the expectations of those that place their happiness in them. And yet they may likewise be so called, because they are

of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

10 He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

14 And the Pharisees

any unrighteous way, use them in acts of piety and charity, with a subservience to real and everlasting happiness; that, when flesh and heart, and all these enjoyments fail, and ye come to die; (*εκλιπῆτε*) God may receive you, as faithful stewards, to eternal mansions in the heavens, the holy angels may take charge of your souls to conduct them to glory, and the poor members of Christ may receive you with joy in the other world, whose bowels ye refreshed, and whose prayers were offered for a blessing to come upon you, in this.

10 It may generally be observed, that a man who is found faithful or unfaithful in a small trust, will prove to be so in a greater; accordingly it is usual to advance an honest, diligent servant from a lower to an higher post: But no prudent person will ever venture to do this by one that is treacherous.

11 If therefore you are so unfaithful, as not to improve the mean and perishing enjoyments of this world for the great ends for which God committed them to your charge, how can ye expect that he should ever intrust you with the more important and substantial riches, that relate to the heavenly world?

12 And if ye act the part of dishonest stewards in the management of the good things of this life, which are not your own, but which God has committed to you, as a trust, to be employed for his glory, and the good of others, and which, in a little while, ye must leave to ye know not whom, how can ye expect that he should enrich you with those better treasures, which, when once they are bestowed upon you, are that *good part, which, by the constitution of his covenant, shall never be taken from you?*

13 Add to all this, that it is impossible for any one to be heartily engaged in the interests of two masters, whose demands are directly opposite: For if he loves one of them, and lays himself out in his service, he must of necessity be averse to the other, and chuse to neglect his affairs. Thus it is with respect to God, and the riches of this world: The man, who supremely loves God, as his chief good, will despise all earthly treasures, when they come in competition with him, and will use them to honour and please him; but the man, who has an inordinate affection to this world, will despise and neglect the service of God, and make religion itself subservient to his secular views. (See *Jam. iv. 4.*)

14 Some of the *Pharisees*, a covetous, hypocritical

N O T E.

are often unjustly obtained and possessed, abused and made the means of corrupting many, and are the only portion of unrighteous men.

rifees alfo, who were covetous, heard all thefe things: and they derided him.

15 And he faid unto them, Ye are they which juftify yourfelves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly efteemed amongft men, is abomination in the fight of God.

16 The law and the prophets were until John: fince that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man preffeth into it.

17 And it is eafier for heaven and earth to pafs, than one tittle of the law to fail.

cal fet of men, being prefent, heard this difcourfe, and treated Chrift with contempt for it; becaufe, though they could not confute it, they were refolved not to comply with direCTIONS, which lay fo entirely oppofite to their darling lufts.

15 But, though he knew how to defpife the fame, he reproved them for their fin, faying, Ye indeed verbally difclaim every charge of iniquity; and, by your outward fhews of uncommon devotion, and great exactnefs in ceremonial obfervances, pafs for extraordinary faints in the eyes of men: But God fees through the inmoft pride, covetoufnefs, and hypocrify of your hearts; and fo ye ftand quite otherwife in his account than in theirs: For your high pretences to holinefs and piety among men, who can only fee your outward appearances and profefions, are deteftable in the judgment of God, who fees you as ye are, and beholds all the fecret and governing vilenefs of your hearts; and he will reject you, and admit others to his favour in your room, notwithstanding your high conceit of yourfelves, and contempt of them, as well as of me and my doctrine.

16 For the Old Testament difpenfation, which prefigured and prophesied of the Meffiah, continued till *John* appeared to point him out unto the people; and, as that difpenfation was, in a manner, confined to the *Jews*, ye have an high opinion of yourfelves, on account of your external compliances with it: But, from the time of *John the Baptift*, a difpenfation of much greater light and grace began to be publifhed; and now multitudes of perfons, of what nation or character foever, even publicans, and finners of the *Gentiles*, are earneftly defirous of hearing and embracing the gofpel, are putting in by faith for an intereft in its bleffings, and are admitted to them, though they are no obfervers of the rites and ceremonies of the law.

17 And yet the law is not hereby made void; the prophecies, types, and shadows of the Old Testament are fully accomplifhed, and the moral law is honoured and confirmed, by the gofpel; its precepts are explained by my doctrine, and are exemplified and fulfilled by my obedience; it is eftablifhed as an effential law of my kingdom, and as an eternal and unchangeable rule of righteoufnefs; its obligations are enforced, and the practice of it is fecured upon the moft effectual principles: So that the heavens and the earth fhall fooner fail, and the whole frame of them be diffolved, than any precept of this law fhall be difannulled by the New Testament difpenfation, which is defigned to vindicate it from all corruptions,

to restore it to its primitive purity, and to discountenance all depraved affections that lie in opposition to it, as appears (among other instances) in that which relates to the original law of marriage.

18 Whoſoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whoſoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.

18 *Moses* indeed permitted a man, in various caſes, to give his wife a bill of divorce, and put her away, for the preventing of greater miſchief, which, through the perverseneſs of your hearts, might have enſued. (*Matth.* xix. 4,—8.) But to ſtrike at the root of all iniquity, and reduce this ordinance to its primitive inſtitution, which was moſt ſuitable to the ſtate of human nature, I declare that this ſhall be permitted no longer; but that whoſoever ſhall divorce his wife, and marry another, except it be on account of his firſt wife's having been guilty of adultery, (ſee the note on *Matth.* v. 32.) he himſelf ſhall be accounted an adulterer; and whoſoever ſhall marry the divorced woman ſhall be accounted an adulterer too, he having no lawful claim to her, whilſt her firſt husband is alive.

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and ſine linen, and ſared ſumptuouſly every day.

19 Our bleſſed Lord having thus reproved the *Phariſees* for their pride, covetouſneſs, and hypocriſy, returned to his diſcourſe about the right uſe of temporal riches, and repreſented the great danger of perverting them unto ſeliſh, ſenſual, and licentious purpoſes, in the following parable, ſaying, There was a man of a very large eſtate, who indulged himſelf to the utmoſt in the enjoyment of it: He was arrayed in the richeſt and fineſt apparel, with purple robes, like a nobleman or a prince, and feaſted on the moſt delicious rarities; and elegant dainties every day. So many of the rich men of this world, ſpend all their treaſures upon themſelves, to appear gay and great, to gain, the admiration of others, and to gratify their own ſenſual appetites, in all the luxuries of life that wealth and art can provide.

20 And there was a certain beggar named *Lazarus*, which was laid at his gate full of ſores.

21 And deſiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his ſores.

20, 21 At the ſame time there was a certain man, fitly named *Lazarus* *, who, being reduced to perfect beggary, and (*ἄλκαμνος*) all over-ſpread with ulcers, was laid at the rich epicure's gate, where he begged for the broken meat or ſcrapes, yea, rather than fail, for the very crumbs, that the dogs uſed to pick up under the table: But this profuſe and unnatural man hardened his heart againſt his miſeries and his cries, and would take no notice of him, to order him the leaſt relief; and yet (*ἀλλὰ καὶ*) his ſores were ſo grievous, that the very dogs got about

N O T E.

* By the rich man clothed in purple, Chriſt perhaps pointed to *Herod*; and by *Lazarus*, which ſignifies one who has God for his help, he might mean ſome eminently pious man of that name, who was a known beggar in thoſe days.

about him, and shewing more pity than their cruel master, licked them. So many of God's own children are among the poor of this world, and afflicted with distempers, pains, and sores, as well as others; in these circumstances they are sometimes cast, by Providence, in the way of rich and sensual men, who have ability, but no hearts to relieve them, and will rather waste their superfluities upon their dogs, than refresh the bowels of these poor saints with them, and are more unnatural and unmerciful than the brutes themselves.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried:

23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom,

22, 23 But (22) in a little while the poor distressed beggar was dismissed, by death, from all his afflictive, wretched, and necessitous circumstances; and his soul, as the departing souls of all believers are, was immediately conducted, with safety and grandeur, under a convoy of angels, to a state of glory and blessedness, where he had the honour and the delight of being lodged and cherished, like one leaning on *Abraham's bosom*, amidst all the rich entertainments of the heavenly world *. The rich man likewise died, as well as the poor beggar; and had a pompous funeral, which finished all his glory; but, alas! how insipid, vain, and worthless were the last honours paid to his formerly pampered, and now insensible and loathsome carcase, whilst, at the same time, his soul was no longer conscious of them, but was tortured in the midst of terrible agonies, which is the case of all that die in their sins, how grand soever their lives and burials were: For in his separate state †, immediately after the death of the body, he fell under executions of vindictive wrath, for his abuses of God's goodness; and there, surrounded with devils and damned spirits, his companions in hideous horror, he had a discovery of the feat and company of the blessed,

N O T E S.

* *Abraham's bosom*, was a phrase, by which the *Jesus* expressed the happiness of the souls of the righteous, immediately upon their death, which they used to say were carried thither by good angels: And this description of heavenly blessedness seems to allude to the posture that was customary among the ancients at their feasts, where the guests sat leaning backwards, the second in the bosom of the first, and so on to the last: Thus the beloved disciple *leaned on Jesus's bosom*: (John xiii. 23.) And so poor *Lazarus* had the honour and felicity of being placed next to *Abraham*, the father of the faithful, and the friend of God, to share in communion and rest, in refreshment

and entertainment with him, as *Christ* does with his Father, who is said to be *in his bosom*. (John i. 18.)

† *Adēs*, the word here translated *hell*, properly signifies the state of separate souls; and it appears from hence, as also from this rich man's having five brethren still living upon earth, under the means of grace, that his misery, and *Lazarus's* blessedness, immediately followed their respective deaths, though their different states are represented, in a figurative strain, by most affecting images, taken from the body, and from what we know to be most sensibly touching to it, in the painful or pleasing way.

ed, at a great distance from him, which aggravated his own misery, and that so much the more, as he there beheld poor *Lazarus*, whom he had formerly neglected and despised, lodged with safety, honour, and joy, in the very bosom of *Abraham* himself.

24 And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send *Lazarus*, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

24 The rich man seeing *Lazarus* possessed of all happiness, and himself plunged into all insupportable miseries, cried out to *Abraham**, with great earnestness, in the despairing agony of his soul, O thou Father of all *Israelites*, have compassion upon me, who am one of thine offspring, and who hoped to be blessed by thy covenant, as a descendant from thee, order *Lazarus*, I beseech thee, to come hither, and give me a little relief, though it be no more than a drop of water, hanging on the tip of his finger, might be to cool the tongue of one in the midst of a raging fire, which is the liveliest emblem of what I feel: For I am dreadfully tortured, under the sense and impressions of Divine vengeance, as in an intolerable flame. So the sensual and flourishing sinner, who neglected and scorned the people of God in their poverty and affliction, being miserably tormented, immediately after death, in hell, whatever his religious privileges were on earth, would be glad to receive any favour, though ever so little, at their hands, to whom they refused the least kindness before.

25 But *Abraham* said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise *Lazarus* evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

25 But *Abraham* bid him reflect, as the damned in hell can do, upon his own and *Lazarus*'s former and present circumstances, saying, You are indeed my son, according to the flesh, and had many privileges as such; but how unworthy have you acted of the father, from whom you vainly boast of your descent? and how ungratefully, as well as foolishly, have you finned away the advantages, which might have been hoped for from thence? Consider, that you, whilst on earth, had riches, pomp, and pleasure in abundance: These were all the good things that you desired, esteemed, and placed your happiness in; these you used only for yourself; and having abused these, through the hardness and impenitence of your heart, no further good remains to you for ever. And consider that *Lazarus*, whilst he lived in the body, was destitute and afflicted, pining with hunger, and a despicable object in human view: These circumstances were very uncomfortable to him; these

N O T E.

* The following conversation between the rich man and *Abraham* is not to be literally understood as if, in fact, such discourse had passed between them; it is only a representation, by borrowed lan-

guage, of the happy and miserable state of things, and of the sense which the righteous and wicked have of them, in the other world.

these he received with submission and patience, from the sovereign, holy, all-disposing providence of God; and some of these he received immediately from cruel and unmerciful men, who, like you, shut up their bowels of compassion against him. But now the tables are turned, all his evil things are past and gone, and he possesses blessedness without alloy; but all your good things are at an end, and you are insupportably tormented: And how can you, who would not allow him a crumb of bread, expect a drop of water from his hand now? So none of the enjoyments of the sinner, and none of the afflictions of God's people, reach any further than the present short, perishing life; the saint, at death, will exchange his sorrows for all comforts; and the sinner will exchange his mercies for all miseries; and shall then be forced to remember all that passed on earth, in such a manner as will condemn himself, and add a sting to his torments, and will justify God's righteousness in inflicting them.

26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

26 *Abraham* furthermore added, Ah poor wretch! the time of mercy and hope is now over; God hath fixed such a vast and unpassable distance between the happy and the miserable, by an irreversible decree and sentence, that if any of us were ever so desirous to go and relieve you, it would be absolutely impossible to do it; and it is as impossible for any of your distressed company to come to us, and share in our joys, though they were ever so earnest in attempting it. So the state of every soul, at death, is unalterably fixed in heaven or hell, there is no medium; to one of these it must go, and there abide for ever.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

27, 28 Then the rich man, despairing of any comfort for himself, said to *Abraham*, I entreat thee, by all the tenderness of a father, to shew me, at least, so much favour, as to dispatch *Lazarus* to my father's house, where I have five brethren still living, who are your offspring too, that he may acquaint them with the true state of things in the eternal world: Let him tell them what a dreadful condition my sins have brought me into; and let him warn them of the danger of treading in my steps, lest they share with me in my plagues, and increase my guilt and torment, for having drawn them into ruin by my example. So though there is no compassion or charity in hell, yet the damned there are in fearful expectation of growing miseries, when their companions in iniquity come thither; and as their punishment is already more than they know how to bear, they would fain have every thing prevented, that might add still further to their distress.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

29 To this *Abraham* replied, No request can be granted to you, who are under an irrevokable sentence of damnation; and as to what you ask for your brethren, it is unreasonable: God will not go out of his appointed and settled way to humour you, or them; they have sufficient notices and warnings in the writings of *Moses* and the prophets, which they may read as often as they please, and which are read and preached in the synagogues every Sabbath-day: If therefore they would escape the torments of the damned, and obtain the blessedness of the righteous, let them attend to those instructions which God has already afforded them. So sinners in hell will find no expedient to prevent their increasing calamities; and sinners under the means of grace upon earth must stand or fall, according to their use or abuse of those means, having no room to expect that God will convert them by voices or visions from the other world, or go out of his ordinary and instituted way to save them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

30 The rich man answered, Nay, father *Abraham*, what I urged for them is more likely to be effectual than what you mention: The doctrines, the commands and threatenings, contained in the law and the prophets, are become so common and familiar to them, that they the less regard them; but what I speak of, would be a new and strange thing, and so much more affecting and convincing: And therefore if such an one as *Lazarus*, who was known to be a good, though a poor and afflicted man upon earth, were to rise from the dead, on purpose to tell them of the vastly important things of the invisible world, and to admonish and warn them by his own and my example, they could not but be brought to alter their sentiments, and to turn from sin to God, that they might escape my torments, and enjoy his blessedness. So people insensible of the power of natural corruption, and of the necessity of divine grace to make an effectual change upon the heart and life, are apt to imagine that some other means would be more effectual to conversion, than those which God himself has appointed.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

31 But *Abraham* replied again, If they will not believe the warnings given by *Moses* and other inspired writers, whose doctrine is plain, and has been confirmed by unquestionable miracles; an express sent from the dead, might indeed startle and surprise them, but they would give no more credit to his testimony than they do to that which they have already, and which is less liable to be suspected of any fraud: So the same depravity and perverseness of heart, which will

will not be prevailed upon by ordinary means, would, were a man left to himself, as effectually throw off the influence of all extraordinary ones whatsoever; and it is only by the blessing of God on his own appointments, that any can warrantably expect conversion and salvation.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

What are all the enjoyments of this transitory life, but trusts, which God has committed to us for his glory and doing good? We cannot hold them long, and a day of reckoning will quickly come, God only knows how soon, when every one of us must give an account of our stewardship to him: And O how great is the concern that we be found faithful in the great day! How foolish is it, and how contrary to the maxims of common prudence in other affairs, to be more industrious in pursuing earthly riches, than eternal treasures! Who that is as wise for another world, as prudent men are for this, would not use all his opportunities and advantages here, in subservience to everlasting abodes of blessedness hereafter! And they only, who are earnest in pressing after them, can expect to obtain them. How watchful should we be against all unfaithfulness and iniquity; since little sins lead on to greater, and an abuse of lower trusts and enjoyments is a just reason why God should deny us higher! But alas how apt are covetous, proud and hypocritical people, and all under the dominion of any sin, to deride reproof, rather than fall under conviction by it! And how often is that, which is of high account with men, abominable in God's sight, who knows the heart; and whose law is a rule of righteousness and of judgment, which never can be reversed! How inconsiderable and worthless are all the riches of this world; since God sets so light by them, as to bestow them with the greatest affluence on wicked men, and they grow worse, instead of better by them, consuming them on their lusts! And how much more desirable is the lot of the poorest and most distressed Christian upon earth, whose evil things, which will soon have an end, are only in this world, and whose good things will be enjoyed in the next with everlasting and unutterable delight, than that of the richest sinner, whose uncertain and unsatisfying comforts are confined to this short and vanishing life, and who will be stripped of all enjoyments, and exchange them for insupportable and endless torments in the world to come! There, immediately after death, the different states of unmixed happiness, or misery, will be unalterably fixed for ever, to the exceeding joy of the now afflicted believer, and to the utter confusion of the impenitent epicure. And O how terrible will the reflections of lost souls be then, how much sorer they may slight and trifle about their eternal concerns now! But blessed be God, that, on this side hell, there is yet room for a happy change of state, from nature to grace, from wrath and curse to favour and a blessing, by means of God's word and the ministry of it. But if by these we are not brought to repentance, there is no room to expect that any other means will be given, or be made effectual for that purpose. How earnestly therefore should we beg, that, while we are in this world of mercy, the gospel may be set home upon our hearts by the blessed Spirit, and so may be the power of God to our own salvation!

C H A P. XVII.

Christ's discourse about offences and forgiving of injuries, 1,—4. About faith and humility, 5,—10. His curing ten lepers, 11,—19. And his account of the nature of his kingdom, and of the destruction of the Jewish nation, 20,—37.

TEXT.

THEN said he unto the disciples,

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord, turning his discourse to his disciples, reminded them of several things which he had delivered

ples, It is impossible but that offences will come : but wo *unto him* through whom they come !

delivered to them before, (*Matth. xviii.*) saying, Such is the wickedness and perverseness of mankind, and such their passions and prejudices, that it is morally impossible, but that occasions will arise to the stumbling and falling of many. It is therefore to be expected that persecutors, seducers, and carnal professors will use such violence, vent such corrupt doctrines, and lead such scandalous lives, as will grieve and discourage some, and pervert others from the simplicity of the gospel, and draw them into sin : But great will be the guilt and ruin of that man, through whose errors and evil practices any such offensive and injurious things shall be brought into the world.

2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

2 It would have been much better for him to have undergone the worst of capital punishments, from the hands of men, such as being thrown into the sea with a great stone about his neck, to drown him, than that he should have lived to dishonour and provoke God so highly, and to bring such dreadful miseries upon himself, by doing so much mischief to any one, even of the weakest of them who believe in me. (*Mat. xviii. 6.*)

3 Take heed to yourselves : If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him ; and if he repent, forgive him.

3 Take heed therefore that by your example, doctrine, or misconduct, ye do not lay stumbling-blocks in the way of any, or become an occasion of saddening their hearts, or of drawing them into sin ; but do all that in you lies to encourage them, to prevent their falling, and to recover them from their falls : In order hereunto, if one, who is called a brother, should affront and injure any of you, be watchful over your own spirit, that it be not filled with prejudices against him, or against me and my gospel for his sake ; but, in a prudent, tender, and brotherly manner, endeavour to convince him of his fault, and of the greater mischief it does to himself than to you ; and, whenever he discovers a concern for it, pass it by, and be heartily reconciled to him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent ; thou shalt forgive him.

4 Yea, suppose it should happen, that, through forgetfulness, carelessness, imprudence, and the like, he should soon and often repeat his offence, even to seven times in one day, and should as often renew acknowledgments of it, with promises to take care that he be not guilty of the like for time to come, so that he at last seems to be in good earnest, go on still to forgive him, persevering in your duty toward him, till you thoroughly overcome and reclaim him.

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

5 The apostles having heard Christ's charge about these great and difficult duties, which lay so contrary to natural resentments, were much affected with a sense of their excellence and importance, and of their

own indispensable need of his special assistance for putting them into practice; and therefore earnestly besought him, as their Lord, that he would strengthen their faith in God's forgiveness of their own great and multiplied provocations, and would draw it into lively exercise, for deriving strength from him, whereby they might be inclined and enabled to answer these high demands.

6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine-tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

6 And the Lord Jesus replied, If your faith in me be of the right kind, though it were, comparatively speaking, as small as a grain of mustard-seed, it has such a vigorous communion with my fulness, that, in its proper exercise, ye might perform all these difficult duties, which by your own power are, and in your own sense of things may seem to be as hard and impossible for you to do, as it is by a bare word, to root up that sycamore-tree, which ye see growing in the earth, and to plant it in the sea: And these duties are as easy to the least true and saving faith, by strength derived from me, as such transplanting of a tree can be to a miraculous faith; for ye may do all things through my strengthenings. (*Phil.* iv. 13.)

7 But which of you, having a servant plowing, or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

7 But always remember that, how great or difficult duties soever ye perform for the glory of God, your own, or other's good; as the strength whereby ye do them is from him through me, so ye can deserve nothing at his hand on their account: For if any of you have a servant who is your property, and whom you maintain at your own charges, to do your business; when he has been plowing your land, or feeding your cattle, and returns home, do you immediately order him to go to supper, before you yourself have been served?

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink?

8 Or rather, will you not charge him to do the necessary business of the house, in order to your own supping, and then wait upon you at table, till you have done eating and drinking? and after all this, but not before, do not you use to bid him take his own supper, to refresh himself?

9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

9 And when his master's injunctions have been complied with in all these things, does he think himself indebted to that servant, or obliged to return him thanks for it? No, by no means, he having done no more than his master had a right to, and the duty of his own place required.

10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say,

10 Even so the case stands between the great God and you: Ye are his servants, and absolute property, and ought to be so, more than any creature can be yours; and when ye have gone through one service, in obedience to his commands, ye must not think yourselves discharged, but go on with the greatest application

say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

11 And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And, as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

13 And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And, when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them

application and diligence to another, as long as he has any thing for you to do; and ye must continue waiting upon him, and waiting his time, before ye rest from your labours, and are entertained with everlasting refreshments: And after all that it was possible for you to do, by the richest supplies of grace and strength, ye must humbly own that ye could merit nothing at the hands of the sovereign Lord of all, nor lay the least obligation upon him, no, not so much as to deserve any thanks from him, because ye have only done what was your proper business, and indispensable duty to do.

11 As Jesus was afterwards travelling to Jerusalem, he, by a special design of Providence, took the course which carried him into those parts of Samaria that lay next to Galilee, and so passed, as it were, in the midst, between those two countries*.

12 And as he came near to a certain village, ten leprous persons, who were excluded from towns and common conversation, because of their uncleanness, were got together to converse with, and condole one another †, and they meeting with our blessed Lord, and knowing who he was, kept at a distance from him, in obedience to the law, (*Lev. xiii. 46.*) and under a sense of their own unworthiness:

13 But, believing that he was able to cleanse them, they called upon him with a loud and earnest cry, as with one consent, and one voice, saying, Jesus, thou compassionate Saviour, who hast the mastery and dominion over all diseases, look upon our miserable condition with an eye of pity, and cure us of our leprosy.

14 And he, seeing their distress, and their faith and importunity for healing, took pity on them, resolving in himself to magnify his power and goodness by granting their request: In order thereunto he bade them go and present themselves to some of the priests at Jerusalem, according to the appointment of the law; (*Lev. xiv. 2.*) thereby intimating that they should pronounce them clean, and thereby give a public testimony to his miracle in cleansing them: And as they were going, in obedience to his command, they all found themselves restored to perfect health; the power of Christ being as effectual to recover them, when they were corporally at a distance from him, as if they had still been before him.

15 Then ‡ one of them, finding what a wonderful work

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* *Vid. Lightf. Hor. Hebr.*

† Or they might have heard of Christ's coming that way, and so might be got together to wait for him.

‡ 'Tis likely that they all went to the priest, to be discharged from the confinement they had been under, by reason of their leprosy; and then, all but one, went

them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God.

16 And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.

20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them, and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.

work Christ had wrought upon himself, as well as the rest of his companions, was so affected with it, that he went back again to him, with an heart full of gratitude and joy, being as earnest to proclaim the praises of God with a loud voice for his cure, as he had been before to beg for it:

16 And, prostrating himself with profound humility and reverence at Jesus' feet, he particularly returned solemn thanks to him, who was the immediate author of this great deliverance: And it is remarkable, that the grateful creature, who thus honoured him, by doing the duty which the rest neglected, was a *Samaritan*, who, as such, knew and professed less than the *Jews*, nine of which were healed with him.

17, 18 But (ðs) Jesus, knowing what he had done in curing them all, said publicly, by way of reproof to the *Jews*, and approbation of this *Samaritan*, Was not the same mercy shewn to ten lepers, in their being all healed at once? what is become then of the other nine, who are mine own countrymen, and profess the God of *Israel*, and from whom it might most of all have been expected, that they should render thanks according to the benefit bestowed upon them? How is it that none, but this stranger to the common-wealth of *Israel*, is come back to glorify God for his mercy to him? What a better sense of gratitude and religion does he discover than they? and what a reproach is this to them?

19 Then turning himself to the *Samaritan*, he encouraged and comforted him, saying, Get up from your prostration at my feet, go in peace; I have observed your faith, expressed in your prayer and praises, which hath been uncommon, and hath obtained a cure for you with rich advantage, not to your body only, but likewise to your soul*.

20 Our blessed Lord and his disciples having often declared in their preaching, that *the kingdom of heaven was at hand*, some of the *Pharisees* asked him, when it should be set up in the world? In answer to which he said, Your notions of the Messial's kingdom are very wrong, while ye imagine that, like earthly kingdoms, it will make a pompous appearance in external riches and grandeur, and will rise and spread, by temporal power, to draw the eyes of the

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went about their business, without taking any further notice of the benefit they had received.

* All these lepers had faith to be heal-

ed, but this man's faith had something singular in it; and Christ's answer seems to extend to the salvation of the soul.

Thy faith hath saved thee, σωξαι σε

the people, and force their subjection to its sceptre; these things are not suitable to its nature.

21 Neither shall they say, Lo here; or, lo there: for behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

21 Nor shall any be able to say, Behold in this or the other particular place is the Messiah's throne and court, or this or that is the city or nation where he reigns. No, the gospel-kingdom, which I am come to erect, is altogether spiritual in its nature, power, and designs, suited to the benefit of souls for another world; it works inwardly in men's hearts and consciences, and makes wonderful revolutions there, turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God: Behold, therefore, it is already begun in the preaching of the gospel, and in the conversion of some among yourselves, though ye perceive it not; it is (*εἰς τοὺς ὕμῶν*) in the hearts of those among you that believe, though invisible to others.

22 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

22 He likewise, directing his discourse to his disciples, said, Do not ye entertain any fond notions of the temporal glory of my kingdom: For such tribulations will befall you, together with the whole nation of the *Jews*, and such severe restraints will be laid upon you, before ye have fulfilled your ministry, that, in those times of fore distress, ye would be glad of one such day of my personal presence with you on earth, as ye now enjoy; but, alas! ye will wish for it in vain.

23 And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

23 And, in the midst of the disappointments and troubles that will surround you, some will pretend to tell you, that the Messiah is in this or the other private place, or in this or that city, ready to deliver his followers, and to put an end to all the troubles of those days: However, do not let your fondness for his personal presence incline you to give any heed to them, but look upon all such reports as false and foolish.

24 For as the lightning, that lighteth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven: so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

24 For as the lightning does not shine merely in this or that particular part of the heavens, but darts at once through all the air: So the Messiah will not appear in this or that particular place only, when he comes to destroy the *Jews*, and advance his kingdom in the world; but vengeance, by his providence, shall suddenly spread through all *Judea*, to cut off his obstinate enemies; and the gospel, by the mighty power of his Spirit, shall fly like lightning through the nations, and prevail with wonderful success among the *Gentiles*, far and wide.

25 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

25 But before all these things come to pass, the eternal purpose of God, the ancient prophecies, the rights of divine justice, the wickedness of the *Jews*, the perfection of the gospel-state, and the everlasting salvation of the church make it necessary, that I, the Messiah,

Messiah, should undergo many grievous sufferings of pain and shame, even to the worst of deaths, by the unbelieving, spiteful, and wicked *Jews* of this age : After this, my gospel will diffuse its light through the earth, and my vengeance will fall upon those mine enemies all at once, and before they are aware, just as it was in the destruction of the old world, and of *Sodom*.

26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark ; and the flood came and destroyed them all.

28 Likewise also, as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded :

29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

31 In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away : and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32 Remember Lot's wife.

26, 27 For as, in *Noah's* days, the people went on secure, and merry, and busy, following the affairs and diversions of life, and contracting marriages, in expectation of continued safety and pleasure ; yea, they mocked at that holy man's warnings, rather than gave any heed to them, and so they continued to do, till on a sudden the deluge came, and swept them all away.

28, 29, 30 And just as, in *Lot's* age, the people of *Sodom* lived in sensuality and security, gave themselves up to the lusts of the flesh, and to the ordinary course of traffic, provided for posterity, and despised the admonitions of that righteous man, as if they were in no manner of danger ; and so they lived at a carnal and riotous rate, till the very day on which he left that city, and God poured utter destruction upon them and consumed them all, by a dreadful tempest of extraordinary lightning from heaven. Even so the unbelieving *Jews* will persist obstinately in the pursuit of business and pleasure, in their wicked courses, and in expectation of a temporal Saviour ; will despise all the warnings which I and my apostles shall give them : And will continue so to do, till the very time that my righteous servants shall be hid with safety, and my vengeance shall come with sudden surprise upon mine enemies, by the hands of the *Romans*, to their utter destruction*.

31, 32 When an army therefore shall come to besiege *Jerusalem*, whoever would be safe, let him fly with such speed, as, if he be on the top of his house, not to go into it ; (see the note on *Matth.* xxiv. 17.) and if he be abroad in the fields, not to go home, to take care of even his most valuable treasure there : And for your caution against hankering after worldly possessions, when God shall call you to fly for your lives from among the people of his wrath, remember how *Lot's* wife was destroyed, and turned into a

B b 2

pillar

N O T E.

* This is very applicable to other sinners in all ages, and particularly at the end of life and time : They go on carelessly and secure in the worldly and sensual temper of their hearts, hardening themselves against all counsel and reproof, and against all warnings of death and judgment, till, to their great consternation, Christ will summon them, before they are aware, to appear at his awful tribunal.

pillar of salt, as a monument of divine vengeance, only for lingering and looking back with a wishful eye upon her temporal concerns in *Sodom*, which God had marked out for destruction.

33 Whoſoever ſhall ſeek to ſave his life, ſhall loſe it: and whoſoever ſhall loſe his life, ſhall preſerve it.

33 In like manner, whoever, in the terrible days I am ſpeaking of, ſhall think to ſecure his own life, by any worldly policy in diſobedience to my commands, by giving up his profeſſion of my name, or by hearkening to the *Jews*, and ſinfully complying with them, he ſhall certainly fall by the righteous judgment of God in the common calamity with them: But he who, notwithstanding all viſible danger, ſhall ſtedfaſtly adhere to me, and regard the notices I have given, ſhall be in a fair way of eſcaping the miſeries of that dreadful deſolation, and ſhall certainly obtain everlaſting life.

34 I tell you, In that night there ſhall be two *men* in one bed; the one ſhall be taken, and the other ſhall be left.

34, 35, 36 Ye may depend upon theſe things: For I, who am the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, aſſure you, that in the darkeſt of theſe tribulations, diſtinguiſhing acts of providence and grace ſhall appear to ſome, beyond others, who may be equal as to their viſible danger and circumſtances in life; like two men in the ſame bed, or in the ſame field, or like two women grinding together at the ſame mill; God will then ſeparate the precious from the vile; one ſhall be taken into his peculiar care and protection, and the other ſhall be left to periſh in the common ruin for his iniquities.

35 Two *women* ſhall be grinding together; the one ſhall be taken, and the other left.

36 Two *men* ſhall be in the field; the one ſhall be taken, and the other left.

37 And they answered, and ſaid unto him, Where, Lord? And he ſaid unto them, Whereſoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

37 Upon hearing theſe things, the diſciples put the following queſtion to him, ſaying, Lord, where is it that all this deſtruction on one hand, and ſafety on the other, ſhall be found? And, referring to the *Roman* enſigns, which had an eagle for their arms, he replied, Wherever the unbelieving *Jews* ſhall be, the *Roman* ſoldiers will purſue them to their deſtruction, while others ſhall eſcape. And according to a proverbial expreſſion, As thoſe quick-ſighted birds gather about a dead carcaſe to devour it, ſo the judgments of God will find out obſtinate finners, wherever they are; and as eagles fly ſwiftly to their prey, ſo wherever Chriſt, the Saviour, is to be found, thither will true believers flock, with eager deſire for their ſafety and reſreſhment, till at length they ſhall all be gathered up to him in glory.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

What an imperfect, wretched world is this! How full of ſins and ſorrows, deſolations and deaths, of infidelity and licentiousneſs, of earthly affections and ingratitude, and of ſtupidity and contempt of Chriſt's word and warnings; and how expoſed to ſudden ſurpriſes by the righteous judgments of God! How many offenſive and injurious things are found among the profeſſors of Chriſt's name, to the grievous and ſtumbling of ſome, and to the everlaſting ruin of others! And what heavy

woes must fall on their heads, whose corrupt principles and practices are the occasions of these mischiefs! How weak is the faith of God's own people; and how hard do they find it to come up to self-denying duties! How prone are they to offend God and one another! How backward is the offender to repent, and the offended brother to forgive! And how often are Christ's disciples mourning the want of his presence, which sometimes they have enjoyed, and fain would be favoured with again! O may the miscarriages of others, and the rebukes and miseries thereby brought upon them, be a caution to us, that we be neither ungrateful to God and our Saviour, like the nine lepers, who were cleaned; nor hanker after this world, like *Lot's* wife; nor despite divine warnings, so as to go on in sin, till death and judgment surprisè us, like the old world, and the inhabitants of *Sodom*, and like the *Jewish* nation! What need have we, under a sense of our own vileness, to cry out with the lepers, Lord, have mercy upon us; and, with a dependence on his power and grace, to go on in the way of his appointment for healing! And, under a sense of all discouragements, how should we say, Lord, increase our faith! And after the utmost that we can attain to, in a way of duty, what low thoughts should we have of ourselves as unprofitable servants who deserve nothing at God's hand! And what honourable thoughts should we ever have of Jesus, as a divine person, and the true Messiah, who is the author and finisher of our faith, and can heal and save wherever we are, as if he were visibly present with us; and whose predictions have been punctually fulfilled, with regard to the destruction of the infidel *Jews*, and the spreading, like lightning, among the *Gentiles*, that kingdom which is of a spiritual nature, and does not come with observation, but lies within men's own hearts! And whatsoever we may suffer from men for Christ's sake, all our safety and happiness lies in a faithful adherence to him, who is tenderly affected toward the weakest believers, resents the injuries and griefs that are brought upon them, and will distinguish his own, and gather them at length to himself in heaven.

C H A P. XVIII.

The parable of the importunate widow, 1,—8. Of the Pharisee and publican, 9,—14. Christ's kind and gracious regard to infants, 15,—17. The rich ruler's coming to him, and Christ's discourse on that occasion with his disciples, 18,—30. His prediction of his own sufferings, death, and resurrection, 31,—34. And restoring a blind man to sight, 35,—43.

TEXT.

AND he spake a parable unto them, to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

² Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

PARAPHRASE.

AS prayer is the duty of all, and believers are a generation that seek God's face, our Lord intimated, that they ought daily to go on with perseverance in that duty, and not give way to despondency, because of any present troubles, or because their prayers are not immediately answered: And, to stir up a holy fervour and constancy therein, he represented the happy success of importunity in the following similitude:

² There was, said he, an unrighteous, wicked magistrate in a certain city, who had no conscience or honour, no religion toward God, nor concern for his own reputation among men, no regard to right or wrong, but only to his own passions; and therefore little justice or mercy could be expected from him.

3 And there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying, Avenger of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

3 And in the same city, which was under the jurisdiction of this magistrate, there was a certain poor widow, who being oppressed by a powerful enemy, and having no other way of relief, was forced to apply to him, begging that he would plead her cause, and do her justice, as, by his office, he was able and obliged to do.

4 And, for a while, he took no notice of her petition, hardened his heart against her miseries, turned a deaf ear to her earnest cries, and would do nothing to redress her grievance: But she continuing time after time, to follow him with importunate entreaties; and taking no denial, he at length thought with himself, Though I have no regard to conscience or honesty, to the fear or favour of God, or to the reproaches or applauses of men,

5 Yet, for mine own ease and quiet's sake, I will do her justice, and deliver her out of the hands of her cruel adversary; lest I should be perpetually teized, and have no rest at home or abroad, by reason of her repeated pressing importunity; and so, to get rid of her, he granted her request.

6 Observe, said our Lord, how even this hard-hearted, unrighteous, and unmerciful creature owns himself to be perfectly overcome by the earnest and continued entreaties of this poor woman, and how he resolved to espouse her cause against her oppressor, though he had no value for her, or concern for her miseries.

7 How much more then will the holy and gracious God, who has stiled himself a God hearing prayer, and delights in mercy, attend to the cries of them that call upon him, and arise for the succour and salvation of his own chosen people, whom he loves, and whose concerns lie near his heart? Can ye think that he will not do this, when they are in any temporal or spiritual trouble, and when, according to his own appointment, and their duty, they wrestle with him in their continual prayers, though for wise ends he may exercise forbearance toward their enemies, and may try his people's patience, by deferring his vindication of their righteous cause to the fittest season?

8 I assure you, that ere long he will hear and deliver them: His compassionate nature and will, his affection and promises to them, and peculiar propriety in them, his just vengeance against their enemies, and righteous regard to their high-priest and advocate, the glory of his own name, and the interest he himself has in their cause as his own, and his delight in their believing and fervent prayers, will certainly engage him

to hear and answer them in due season. But, notwithstanding all this, whenever the time shall be at hand, in which Christ will remarkably appear against their persecuting enemies in this age among the *Jews*, or in any after-ages among the *Gentiles*, and in which he shall come to execute judgment upon all the wicked and ungodly, and to save his elect at the last day, how few true believers and faithful men will then be found on the earth? how few that have any faith in him, and particularly concerning his coming? and among sincere Christians themselves, how few will be found in a lively exercise of faith, praying with holy importunity and continuance for it?

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

9 Our Saviour having encouraged and enforced the duty of importunity and perseverance in prayer, proceeded, in another supposed instance, to caution against a self-righteous pharisaical spirit, which must be renounced, and to recommend humility and self-abasement, which must have a place in the heart, if ever we find acceptance of our persons and prayers: And he directed this discourse to a set of people, who, like the *Pharisees*, had high confidence in their own merit, and made this their great plea with God for acceptance, and who looked with contempt and disdain upon others, as not worthy to be regarded of God, or compared with themselves.

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

10 To illustrate this design he said, Two men of very different characters went up*, at the same time, to present their prayers to God in the temple, one of them was a proud, self-conceited *Pharisee*, who trusted in his own righteousness to recommend him to divine acceptance; and the other was a poor, humble, penitent, self-condemned publican, who had an affecting sense of his own guilt and vileness, and of his absolute need of pardoning mercy.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

11 The *Pharisee* stood by himself, with great formality, in a place where he might be taken most notice of, and made his address after this lofty and censorious manner, I thank thee, O God, thou author of my being, for the noble powers with which thou hast endowed me, by my own wife and careful improvement of which, I have kept myself from being so wicked and irreligious, as (*οι λοιποι*) the rest of the world. I am no cruel oppressor, no knave or cheat, no adulterous or unclean person; nor am I guilty of any of the vices which, in particular, yonder poor

N O T E.

* The temple stood upon mount *Moriab*; and it was usual for the people of God to go up thither, and offer up their prayers there, because it was not only

the appointed place, but likewise the medium of acceptable worship, as it was a type of Christ.

poor despicable wretch, the publican, has doubtless committed; none of all this iniquity is found with me.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

12 But I am a person of more than ordinary piety and holiness; I keep a solemn fast two days in every week; and I devote the tenth part of all my worldly possessions to religious uses, whether they be tithable by the law or not.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

13 On the other hand, the poor publican, like a truly humble and contrite penitent, stood at a great distance from the holy of holies, as unworthy to draw nearer, and as deserving, that God should for ever behold him afar off; yea, so deep was the sense he had of his own vileness, that he feared it would be presumptuous for him to lift up so much as his eyes to the habitation of God's glory in heaven; but, looking downward with dejection, he beat his breast, as if he would take revenge upon his own wicked heart, and cried out with great earnestness, O thou God of all grace, mercy, and not merit, is my plea, I most humbly beseech thee to be propitious to me, (*λασθητέ μοι*) a poor perishing sinner, as thou shewest thyself to be unto such, by the atoning sacrifices offered at this place, and by the mercy-seat here.

14 I tell you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

14 Then our Lord added, I assure you, that, whatsoever opinion these two men severally had of themselves, or others might have concerning them, the humble, self-abasing, penitent, and believing publican returned home discharged from guilt and condemnation, and accepted of God, and not * the proud self-justifying *Pharisee*: For whosoever is righteous in his own eyes, or conceited of his own goodness to the contempt of others, and expects that God should accept him on account of any merit in himself, shall be righteously brought low, to his utter confusion and ruin; but every one who is self-diffident, mean, worthless, and vile in his own eyes, depending entirely on the mercy of God for pardon and acceptance, as he has discovered himself to be propitious to sinners through an atonement, shall be graciously advanced to endless glory.

15 And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his

15 After this, some of the believing *Jews*, who were concerned for their childrens happiness as well as their own, brought (*τα βρέφη*) babes in their arms, and presented them to Christ, desiring that he would lay his hands upon them, as a signal of his owning them,

N O T E.

* *Rather than*, seems from what follows to be put for *not*; as *rather* is used in the positive, instead of the comparative sense, *Eph.* iv. 28. and v. 4, 11. and

the particle (*η*) is put for (*μαλλον η*) in this evangelist, chap. xv. 7. and in *1 Cor.* xiv. 19.

his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

them, and conveying the blessings of his kingdom to them, (see the note on *Mark* x. 13.) according to a famous prophecy of the Messiah's days, that God would *pour his Spirit upon their seed, and his blessing upon their offspring.* (Isa. xlv. 3.) But when his disciples observed their attempt, they shewed a displeasure at it, and went about to prevent them, lest it should lead the way to a practice, that might be too fatiguing to their Lord, and prevent what they took to be more important work.

16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

16 But Jesus, to shew his favour to the infants, and encourage those that brought them, said to the disciples, By all means let the little children come unto me, that I may bless them; and do not do any thing to hinder or discourage it: For the gospel-dispensation is not designed to exclude them from God's covenant; but such as these, as well as adult persons, are to be deemed subjects of the Messiah's kingdom. (See the note on *Matth.* xix. 14.)

17 Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.

17 Hereupon, to rebuke his disciples for their rash and haughty zeal, and to improve this occurrence to spiritual advantage, he added, I solemnly assure you, that no man, who does not receive the things of the gospel, with a teachableness and meekness, humility and simplicity of spirit, and with a childlike subjection to mine authority, shall ever enjoy its blessings of grace here, and of glory hereafter.

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

18 As Christ was going from this place, there met him a certain young man, (*Matth.* xix. 20.) a person of distinction and authority among the Jews, who, falling upon his knees, (*Mark* x. 17.) saluted him under the title of Good Master*; and, with these tokens of superior reverence, asked, by what works of righteousness he might obtain everlasting life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, that is, God.

19 Jesus replied, by way of reproof, What means this high swelling title to one whom you take to be no more than a man? It is God only, who is strictly and properly speaking good, there being none originally, absolutely, and perfectly good besides him; and therefore, unless you believe me to be God, you go too far in applying this epithet, with so much reverence, and in such an absolute, unreserved manner to me.

20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit

20 'Then our Lord, without taking any notice whether he himself were God or not, proceeded to the question, saying, If you would get eternal life

by

N O T E.

* This the ambitious rabbies of that age affected to be honoured with; but, as some suppose, it was an higher title than used to be given, even to the most celebrated among them.

commit adultery,
Do not kill, Do
not steal, Do not
bear false witness,
Honour thy father
and thy mother.

21 And he said,
All these have I
kept from my youth
up.

22 Now, when
Jesus heard these
things, he said un-
to him, Yet lack-
est thou one thing;
sell all that thou
hast, and distribute
unto the poor, and
thou shalt have
treasure in heaven:
and come, follow
me.

23 And when
he heard this he
was very sorrowful:
for he was ve-
ry rich.

24 And when
Jesus saw that he
was very sorrowful,
he said, How hard-
ly shall they that
have riches enter
into the kingdom
of God!

by your own performances, you know what God in the law has commanded them to do, who would live by it: As for instance, thou shalt not commit adultery, nor be guilty of any kind of uncleanness; thou shalt not injure any one's life, or reputation; thou shalt not rob, or cheat him of his property; thou shalt not tell untruths, or give into false reports or accusations against any one whatsoever; thou shalt pay all due reverence and honour to thy parents and superiors*, and the like.

21 The young man, having been of a sober and regular behaviour, but ignorant of the exceeding strictness and spirituality of God's law, as extending to the heart as well as life, said, I have always punctually fulfilled every one of these commands from my childhood to this very day; surely then I must be safe for heaven, there is no flaw in my title to it.

22 Now when Jesus heard this answer, he, to convince him that he was far from being perfect, replied, You are nevertheless deficient in one thing, *viz.* hearty love to God and your neighbour, which the law requires, as the main principle of all obedience: And, for your trial in this, I insist upon your going and selling all your estate, and giving the money away for the relief of poor distressed objects; and if you cheerfully submit only to this one proof of your love, I tell you, for your encouragement, that, instead of earthly treasure, you shall have an heavenly one: And when you have done this, come again, and give up yourself to me, as my disciple and servant, and I will further instruct you in the sure way to everlasting life. (See the note on *Matth.* xix. 17.)

23 At this he was sorely disappointed; and as he was really destitute of a governing principle of love to God, and to them who needed help, he went away from the only Saviour, much troubled in himself to think that he must lose a treasure in heaven, because he could not consent to part with all his temporal enjoyments, in prospect of it: For he had great possessions, which he resolved not to quit, whatsoever might be the consequence.

24 Our Lord Jesus observing what a snare this rich man's estate was to him, took that occasion to caution his disciples (*Mark* x. 23.) against an inordinate love of this world, saying, How hard a matter is it for such as are in affluent circumstances, and are fond of them, to submit to the self-denial that is necessary to my

N O T E.

* Christ instanced only in these duties of the second table, that he might convince the ruler of his defect even in them, and so might shew him that he was far from having duly kept the whole law.

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needles eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?

27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God.

28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

29 And he said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or child-

my disciples, when their temporal enjoyments stand in competition with the blessings of grace and glory!

25 For such is the deceitfulness of riches, and such the natural addictedness of mens hearts to them, and so many are the temptations and incumbrances which attend them, that hardly any thing can be imagined so difficult, no, not for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, as for a man of a great estate, whose heart is set upon it, to be willing to resign it for the blessings of my kingdom, or to be so weaned in his affections from it, as is necessary for one of my disciples to be, in prospect of an eternal inheritance. (See the note on *Matth.* xix. 24.)

26 When the disciples heard him speak after this manner, they were greatly amazed to think, what a sad condition the affection of most mens hearts to this world has brought them into, and what a disappointment they themselves must meet with, who expected that in the Messiah's kingdom they should abound in riches; and thereupon they cried out, If this be such a bar to good hopes of eternal life, who among mankind can ever be saved? And what success can we expect in the ministry to which thou hast called us?

27 Our Lord replied, It is indeed impossible for any man, by his own strength, or by any natural principles within himself, to get the mastery over his worldly affections, and to become so dead to the allurements of this present sinful life, as to prefer future and invisible things to them, and be willing to part with them, whenever I call him to resign them: But all this may easily be done by the power of God's almighty grace, which, accompanying my gospel, works effectually in them that believe.

28 Then *Peter*, reflecting upon what he and the rest of the disciples had done, when Christ first called them, said, with a mixture of humility and pride, Behold, Lord, how readily we, thy disciples, have, by the power of this grace, at thy command, and for thy sake, given up our trade, friends, and relations, together with the best accommodations and advantages of life, which we enjoyed! and as thou tellest us, that abundance of wealth and temporal possessions is so far from going into the blessings of thy kingdom, as to be a hindrance to persons enjoying them; what may we expect from thee in this world and the next?

29, 30 To this our Lord replied, I solemnly assure you, that no one shall be a loser by me: Whether a man have more or less of the good things of this world, if he loses his temporal possessions, or his nearest and dearest friends and relations, and is willing to forsake and give them all up, rather than abandon

children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

31 Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man, shall be accomplished.

32 For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spit on :

33 And they shall scourge him, and put him to death : and the third day he shall rise again.

34 And they understood none of these things : and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

bandon me and my cause; and his hopes of the blessings of my kingdom; he shall, even in this present life, have more valuable friends, whose hearts will be inclined to pity, favour, and assist him; and shall have infinitely better supports and joys, and more contentment of spirit in his circumstances, than he ever had before; and in the other world he shall possess the utmost glory and blessedness without interruption or end.

31 Christ, being now on the journey that would issue in his death, took the twelve apostles aside from the company, and told them what would very soon befall him, that they might not be surpris'd and discouraged when they should see it come to pass: Observe, says he, what I am about to tell you, we are now going up to Jerusalem, and this is the time in which all those things shall be fulfilled in me, that have been foretold by the ancient prophets concerning my sufferings, and the glory that is to follow them; the word of God must be herein fulfilled, which will be a clear and certain proof that I am indeed the true Messiah.

32 For as it was prophesied, that kings and rulers should take counsel together against him, (*Psal.* ii. 2.) that he should be a reproach of men, despised of the people, and laugh'd to scorn, (*Psal.* xxii. 6, 7.) and that he would not hide his face from shame and spitting. (*Isa.* l. 6.) So I shall be delivered into the hands of the Romans, shall be summoned before their tribunal, and be derided, insulted, and abused by their soldiers, and they will spit upon me with contempt and disdain.

33 And as it was foretold that the Messiah should give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that pluck off the hair; (*Isa.* l. 6.) that he should be cut off, but not for himself; (*Dan.* ix. 26.) and that God his Father would not leave his soul in a separate state, nor suffer his holy One to see corruption. (*Psal.* xvi. 10.) So mine enemies will lay me under the lash, as if I were a contemptible wretch, and put me to the most cruel and ignominious death, even that of the cross; (see the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 26.) and on the third day I shall break through the bands of death, by rising again.

34 He spoke these things in the plainest manner possible; and yet the disciples heads were so filled with notions of the temporal grandeur of his kingdom, that they could not tell how to understand his reproaches, sufferings, and death, in a literal sense, nor what to make of his rising from the dead; but thought some other unknown construction must be put upon all these words.

35 And it came to pass, that, as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way-side begging :

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

37 And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.

39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace : but he cried so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me.

40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him : and when he was come near he asked him,

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee ? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive

35 As Jesus was passing along, Providence so ordered it, that, when he was near *Jericho*, he met with a noted blind beggar *, who being poor, and unable to get his livelihood, sat by the side of the road, as beggars use to do in public places, to ask the charity of the people :

36 And when he heard the noise of the great company that went along with our Lord, his curiosity, or his hopes of some advantage, put him upon inquiring what might be the occasion of such a great concourse.

37 And some of the company informed him that Jesus of *Nazareth* was there, and that all this multitude was going along with him.

38 Upon which, being desirous of a cure, he lifted up his voice, saying, with great earnestness, Lord Jesus, as I believe thee to be the promised Messiah of *David's* race, who art sent of God for the salvation of *Israel*, I beseech thee to have compassion upon me, who need thy help.

39 And some of those, who went in the foremost part of the crowd, reprimanded him for it, bidding him be quiet, and not teaze Christ with his clamour now upon his journey : But, instead of being restrained by their chidings, he cried out with so much the more importunity, O thou Messiah, who art raised up in the house of *David*, I beg that thou wouldst hear, and have pity upon me.

40, 41 Then Jesus seeing his faith, and being full of mercy and tenderness toward him, whilst others checked, discouraged, and despised him, made a stand, and ordered the people to bring this poor creature to him : And upon his coming near, he, for the further trial of his faith, and more distinct notification of his own goodness in giving him the very thing he wanted, asked him what the particular mercy was which he so earnestly begged ? The blind man presently replied, Lord, it is not for an alms, but that thou wouldst please to open mine eyes.

42 And Jesus, approving of his faith and his choice, said to him, I command that your sight be restored :

N O T E.

* *Matthew* xx. 30, 34. speaks of two blind men, that were cured, and *Mark* x. 46. tells us the name of one of them was *Bartimeus*. Here, and in our evangelist, notice is taken only of this one, because he was the most noted beggar. *Matthew* and *Mark* say Christ wrought this miracle, as he went out, or departed from *Jericho*; whereas *Luke* seems to

speak of his doing it, as he drew near to *Jericho*: But perhaps the word (*εγγιζων*) here rendered *coming nigh*, may signify only (*εγγυς υρας*) his *being near Jericho*; and so this fact is anticipated in *Luke's* history, which he resumes in the beginning of the next chapter. See a note relating to *Jericho* in chap. x.

ceive thy sight : thy faith hath saved thee.

43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God : and all the people when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

restored : Your faith has prevailed with me to answer your request.

43 And no sooner did he speak, but it was done ; the blind man immediately saw, and was so affected with the instantaneous and perfect cure, that he followed Jesus in his way to *Jerusalem* ; and with a heart full of thankfulness and joy, glorified God for this signal mercy, which was shewn to himself, and for sending the long-looked for Saviour to open the eyes of the blind : And all the people joined their thanksgivings and praises to God, who had raised up an horn of salvation for them, in the house of his servant *David*. (Chap. i. 69.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

It is surely good for us to draw nigh to God ; and the more persevering and importunate our faith is in the duty of prayer, the more welcome and successful we shall be. Though the answer may be deferred for a time ; yet every consideration of God, as revealed in the gospel, assures his people that it shall certainly come in the proper season. But how differently may the same duties be performed by different sorts of persons ! Some, like the *Pharisee*, manage them with pride, hypocrisy, formality, and contempt of fellow-worshippers, to the provoking of God, instead of getting advantage to themselves ; whilst others, like the humble, contrite publican, abase themselves at his footstool, trust in his mercy and grace, through the great Atonement, and obtain justification to eternal life. And O what a comfort is it to believers, that Christ takes notice of their little ones, has confirmed God's covenant with their seed, has enrolled them with themselves, as the subjects of his visible kingdom under the gospel-state, and is so much set on their being presented to him, to bless them, as to take it ill of those that would debar them of their privileges ! But neither privileges nor duties are to be rested in ; for persons may go a great way in religion, like the *Pharisee*, and in morality, like the young ruler, and yet fall short of saving grace : And were we to have a right view of ourselves, in the light of God's law, we should soon be convinced of our defects, and of our need of a better righteousness than our own to entitle us to heaven. But, alas ! what dangerous inares are the riches of this world to men of carnal minds ! Nothing short of God's almighty grace, with whom all things are possible, can effectually change the bias of their hearts, and make them think it worth their while to give up all their temporal enjoyments for Christ. But whatsoever, upon principles of faith and love, we may lose for him, we may be sure of losing nothing by him : And what Christian would think much of suffering for him, who was abased and crucified for us, and rose again from the dead, according to the predictions of the prophets, and his own declarations before-hand, as a demonstration of his being the Christ ? And yet how great is the power of carnal prejudices to hide the plainest truths from us ! But as the compassions of the great and merciful Saviour are extended to the most wretched objects, he can as easily cure the depravity of our understandings, as open the eyes of such as were corporally blind : And when we receive any signal mercies from him, what special engagements are they upon us, to follow him, and glorify God for raising up such a powerful and gracious Saviour to us !

C H A P. XIX.

The conversion of Zaccheus, 1,—10. The parable of the ten pounds, 11,—27. Christ's riding into Jerufalem, 28,—40. His lamenting over it, 41,—44. And his casting the buyers and sellers out of the temple, 45,—48.

TEXT.

AND Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

2 And, behold, there was a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was, and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

PARAPHRASE.

CHRIST proceeding on his journey toward Jerufalem, his way lay through the city of Jericho, in the tribe of Benjamin.

2 And behold a wonderful instance of his grace, as he passed along ! There was in that neighbourhood a certain man, called *Zaccheus*, who was one of the chief collectors of taxes for the Roman emperor, or a receiver-general, to whom the other publicans brought their money ; and so he had more authority and influence, and a larger share of profits, than the rest, and by this means was grown very rich*.

3 This man having heard much of the fame of Jesus, which rung through all the country, had a great curiosity to see what sort of person he was ; but, being low in stature, he could not hope to obtain his desire, standing on the ground, because of the crowd of taller people.

4 Therefore, laying aside all state, he ran to a sycamore-tree, by the side of the road, where he knew Jesus was to go ; and climbed up into the tree, that he might have a full view of him.

5 And it was happy for him that he was found in Christ's way, though only curiosity brought him thither : For as Jesus came to save the chief of sinners, so when he arrived at the place where *Zaccheus* had set himself, he looked up to the tree ; and, seeing him there, (*εἶδεν αὐτον*) knew him to be one of his sheep, whose name was written in the book of life ; and, contrary to this man's expectations, he took a kind and particular notice of him, and calling to him, said, *Zaccheus*, come down with all speed ; for I must needs stay a while to-day at your house.

6 These words wrought effectually upon him by a secret energy that attended them ; and he was so affected with the thought of Christ's taking such particular

N O T E.

* This *Zaccheus* was probably a Jew, as his name intimates, it being a common name among that people : However, his office, and the abusive methods with

which it was ordinarily managed, rendered him odious to them ; and the greater he was, the more criminal and detestable they accounted him.

ticular notice of him, that he instantly came down, and cheerfully received him into his heart, and then into his house.

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold.

7 And when the company saw the kind salutations and behaviour that passed between them, they were highly offended, and expressed their resentment at it, saying, How unworthy is this of the professed sanctity of Jesus, that he should go for entertainment to one of the greatest sinners in all the city?

8 But (*δε*) *Zaccheus*, to shew that the grace of Christ had indeed reached his heart, and that he was now become another man than he had been before, and than they uncharitably and maliciously supposed him to be still, stood and publicly professed his faith and repentance before all the people, saying, Behold, O Lord, thou expected Messiah, what an effect thy words have had upon me! whereas I have gathered a great estate, and hitherto used it only for myself, I now feel such remorse and grief, as even constrain me to give away one moiety of it immediately, for the benefit of the poor, that I may honour God with my substance, and do all the good I can with such money as may have been injuriously taken from persons at present unknown to me: And if any one, whom I have wronged by fraud or extortion, by false charges or oppression, will give me an opportunity of repaying him, I am ready, in testimony of my hearty repentance, to make him amends, not only by restoring as much as I took from him, but even four times more with it, according to the utmost demands that the law makes of restitution, in any case of injury whatsoever*.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to

9 Jesus, to encourage him, and vindicate himself, against the murmurs of the people, replied, I, the † Saviour of lost sinners, am this day come hither, bringing

N O T E S.

* In cases of theft and fraud, and swearing falsely, to deprive another of his property, the law required a restoration of the principal, with the addition of a fifth part. (*Lev.* vi. 2,—5.) If the theft were found in a man's possession, it required restoring double; and for a stolen ox, that was killed, or sold, it demanded five oxen to be restored. (*Exod.* xxii. 1, 4.) *Zaccheus* therefore, to shew the sincerity of his repentance, declared himself willing to comply with the strictest of all the laws about restitution. And repentance can never be proved to be sincere, without restitution for the injuries we have done to others, according to our ability, and the opportunities we may

have for it. This is the genuine way in which true grace works in the heart, and where there is no concern about this, when we have cheated, robbed, or defrauded any man, in vain do we flatter ourselves that our repentance is unto life.

† By *salvation* may be meant *Christ himself*, the author of salvation: (*Isa.* xlix. 6. and *Luke* ii. 29, 30.) Or, as is most usual, the *blessings* of salvation, (*Acts* iv. 12.) or the *promises* and the *gospel* of salvation. (*John* iv. 22. and *Acts* xxviii. 28.) And by *Zaccheus's* being the son of *Abraham*, may be meant, his being so, both by birth and by faith in Christ. Accordingly all these senses are included in the paraphrase.

to this house, for-
somuch as he also
is the son of Abra-
ham.

bringing the glad tidings, and all the blessings of sal-
vation along with me to this man, who, ye hear, by
his own confession, is become a true believer and
penitent; and this day the promises of salvation are
brought to his family, they being taken into cove-
nant together with himself; because he is now, not
merely by birth, but by faith in me, one of the true
and spiritual seed of *Abraham*; what I have therefore
done herein cannot reasonably be objected against.

10 For the Son
of man is come to
seek and to save
that which was
lost.

10 For I, the Messiah, am sent to search and seek
out my sheep, wherever they are scattered, especially
those of the house of *Israel*; and as this man, by be-
ing a publican, was looked upon as lost to God and
all goodness, and as he really was in the lost state
and condition of a sinner, I am doing my proper bu-
siness in converting him, and bringing salvation to
him and his.

11 And, as they
heard these things,
he added, and
spake a parable,
because he was
nigh to Jerusalem,
and because they
thought that the
kingdom of God
should immediat-
ely appear.

11 The people having heard Christ speak of his
coming to act the Saviour's part, and knowing that
he was on his way to *Jerusalem*, the seat of their an-
cient kings, imagined that, as soon as he should get
thither, he would openly declare himself to be the
Messiah, and set up his kingdom with great pomp
and worldly power there: And therefore, to rectify
their mistaken notions, he acquainted them that the
nature of his kingdom was very different from what
they apprehended, that the generality of the *Jews*
would exclude themselves from it, and that its glory
would not appear so soon as they vainly fancied; and
this he illustrated in the following similitude:

12 He said
therefore, A cer-
tain nobleman
went into a far
country to receive
for himself a king-
dom, and to return.

12 A certain noble lord took a long journey into
another country, to be vested and confirmed in his
kingdom, and then to return, with all his honour
and authority, to distribute proper rewards to his sub-
jects*. So Christ is of high and noble birth, as the
Lord from heaven; and being King of *Israel*, and
of the whole church of God, he ascended up on high,
to be vested in his spiritual and glorious kingdom;
and afterwards to return in power and great glory, to
execute judgment in the rewards and punishments of
the great day.

13 And he call-
ed his ten servants,
and delivered them
ten

13 And before the king set out on this design, he
called together ten of his servants, and divided among
them ten pounds†, ordering them to trade with these
to

N O T E S.

* Here seems to be an allusion to the
kings of *Judea*, who used to go to *Rome*,
to receive the investiture of their king-
doms from the *Roman* emperors, and then
return to *Judea* in the full glory of their
character.

† The value of a pound is uncertain,
though some have reckoned it at about
three pounds two shillings and sixpence;
and others at twice as much of our cur-
rency.

ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that they might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath

to the best advantage, till he should return. So Christ, before he left this world and went to the Father, instead of raising his disciples to temporal preferments, as they were ready to expect, called them to duty and service; in order to which, he bestowed upon them several gifts, suited to the nature and design of his kingdom, such as * knowledge and grace, utterance, miracles, and the means of salvation, commanding them to make a proper use and improvement of them for the advancement of his interest in the world, till he should come again, and call them to an account.

14 But as soon as the prince was gone, his own citizens, who all along had hated him, declared that they would not submit to his dominion. So the body of the Jewish nation, who were Christ's kindred, according to the flesh, and his covenant-people, discovered their continued enmity against him by their obstinate refusals of his grace and government, and violent opposition to his gospel, after he was ascended into heaven. And in like manner, all unbelievers hearts are naturally so averse to him, that they will have nothing to do with him; or if they would have him for their Saviour, they will by no means have him for their King.

15 And, being established in his kingdom, he ordered his servants, at his return, to give an account of the money, which he had entrusted them with, that he might see what improvement each one had made of it. So Christ being exalted at the right hand of the throne of God, far above all heavens, will come again at the last day, and make a strict inquiry of every one, how he has used the several gifts and talents committed to him, according to his station and character, circumstances, and opportunities in the world, and what good he has done by them, for the glory of God, and the good of his own and others souls.

16, 17 Then one of these servants, whose improvements had been most considerable, gave in his accounts to his lord, saying †, The produce of thy one pound, which

N O T E S.

* We are not to suppose that the gifts, signified by the pounds delivered to each person, were all of one sort, and were bestowed upon all alike; for this parable is of much the same import with that of the talents, (*Matth.* xxv.) which were distributed, in various allotments, to one and another servant; and these pounds and talents include all the gifts which Christ bestows on different persons, whether of common providence, of common assistances and gospel-privileges to unbe-

lievers, and un sanctified ministers; or, together with them, the additional gifts of special grace to true believers, and his faithful servants. See the note on *Mat.* xxv. 14.

† The servant's saying, Thy pound has gained ten pounds, may intimate that, though he was active in employing it, the advantage made by it sprung out of the pound itself, and was owing to that, rather than to himself.

hath gained ten pounds.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou laidst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

which thou committedst to me, is ten more for thine honour and service: And his lord, commending his diligence and faithfulness in the good use he had made of so small a trust, generously rewarded him with the government of ten cities. So when Christ shall come again to judgment, such of his servants, as have the grace of God in truth, and have been most laborious, faithful, and successful in laying it out, together with all other gifts and furniture, for the interest of Christ and religion, will ascribe the improvement, not to themselves, but *to the grace of God which was with them*; and yet he will publicly declare his approbation of their care and faithfulness, and will amply bestow upon them gratuitous rewards, letting them know, at the same time, that what they had done in so very little a matter, and that by virtue of his own free gifts to them, could never deserve so high an honour and advantage, as answers to being made a governor over ten cities.

18, 19 Another of his servants said, By means of thy one pound, five more are gained for thee; and his lord, expressing his approbation of him also, bountifully rewarded him with the government of five cities. So such of Christ's servants as have been helped to be faithful in improving his gifts, though not with such remarkable and uncommon diligence and success as some others, for the advancement of his kingdom in the world, will be publicly and favourably approved of by him; and he will give them such a proportion of his free rewards, as shall carry like evidence, that it is all the vouchsafement of his own rich and sovereign grace.

20, 21 And a third of these servants, who had been careless and slothful, came with excuses of himself, and accusations of his lord, saying, Here is thy money, which I have wrapped up and laid by; for I durst not venture to trade with it, lest it should not turn to good account, because thou art a severe exacter, who, I expected, wouldst demand more than thou gavest me. So it is with graceless, careless, and slothful ministers and professors of Christ, who, having gifts suited to the edification of others, have no concern about doing good with them, and think it enough if they do no harm: They are apt to form vain excuses for themselves, as if there were danger of loss, and no prospect of success, though they were to take ever so much pains in attempting to do their duty; and they entertain hard and unrighteous thoughts of God, as if he demanded more difficult services, than he had furnished them for, or would assist them in.

22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath, shall be given; and from him that

22, 23 But (*δε*) the king, being offended at his frivolous pretences and unjust charges, said to him, Thou wretched, evil-minded servant, not only your own iniquity, but even your own mouth shall condemn you: If you thought that I was a severe master, who demanded more than I gave, Why did not that very consideration put you upon trying some way or other to improve my money, at least by putting it to interest * in some public fund, where it might have been safe, and I might have received it, though not with the greatest, yet with some increase? So it will be in the day of judgment: The careless, graceless, and slothful, will then be found to be base and wicked servants; and Christ will condemn them as such, not only for their injurious charges upon him, but for their not doing what even their own wrong notions about him told them he expected from them: For if they knew that he would demand an improvement of his gifts, to his glory, and their own and others good, as indeed he justly may, How could they expect to escape his anger for their negligence and sloth, in making no good use of them at all?

24 Hereupon the king ordered some that were present, to take this pound away from the wicked and slothful servant, and give it to him who had already ten pounds. So Christ, in the administration of his kingdom in this world, often blasts the gifts of those that make no good use of them, and, in the day of judgment, will strip them of all the advantages they enjoyed before; and he increases the gifts and graces of his good servants, that live in the exercise of them here, and will distinguish them that have been most faithful and diligent, with remarkable degrees of glory hereafter.

25 The standers-by, objecting against this, said to the king, How is it that thou wilt order this pound to be given to him who has already ten pounds? So some, who are strangers to the rich liberality of Christ, in his gracious dealings with his faithful people and servants, are ready to envy their superior gifts here, and the high honour Christ will put upon them in the day of judgment.

26 But the king signified that his order should not be reversed: For I tell you, said he, it is my will that he who makes a right use of what I have entrusted him with, shall have still more; but he who makes no good use of it shall be deprived even of that which

N O T E.

* Christ here seems to allow of improving money, by way of interest in public funds: And therefore every kind of usury, or of increasing money by lending it, is not to be deemed unlawful.

that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

which I had given him. So Christ assures us, that his faithful disciples and servants, who make a right improvement of the graces, gifts, and opportunities he bestows upon them, shall have the greatest increase of them here, and shall shine as the stars in the firmament for ever and ever; and that the unprofitable and slothful servant and professor, shall often be deprived of his gifts and abilities in this world, and shall be cast into outer darkness in the next. (*Mat. xxv. 30.*)

27 But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

27 When the king had taken this account of his servants, and dealt with them suitable to their different characters, he at last proceeded, with the utmost severity, against his obstinate and implacable enemies, saying, But as to those rebellious subjects of mine own city, who absolutely refuse to have me for their ruler, I will make them the most dreadful examples of my just indignation, by bringing them forth, and putting them to death before my face. So Christ will execute the most terrible vengeance on the rebellious nation of the *Jews*, and on all that obstinately reject his authority and grace, especially on those that bore a visible relation to him*.

28 And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

28 Our blessed Lord, having thus guarded against mistaken prejudices about the nature of his kingdom, continued his journey toward *Jerusalem*; and, knowing that the approaching passover was the appointed time for his being made a sacrifice for sin, he went foremost of the company, to shew how ready he was to offer himself.

29 And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage, and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples,

29, 30 And when he arrived at the mount of *Olives*, near *Bethphage* and *Bethany*, he thought fit to make a public entry into *Jerusalem*, in a sort of humble triumph, which might at once represent his low condition in this world, and the high honours that were nevertheless due to him, as the King of *Israel*, and, in a little time, would be conferred upon him in his exaltation to his kingdom, at the Father's right hand. And therefore, having a perfect foreknowledge of every minute circumstance of things, he ordered two of his disciples to go into a village, which lay at a little distance, telling them, that at their

30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which, at your entering, ye shall

N O T E.

* As the *Jews*, after Christ's ascension, and the effusion of his Spirit, continued resolutely to oppose his grace and government, persisted in their impenitence and unbelief, persecuted his disciples, and blasphemed his name, he destroyed their city and nation by a most exemplary execution of his vengeance upon them, in the dreadful *lavock* that was made of

them by the *Romans*. And this was to be a lively emblem of the still more terrible and everlasting destruction he will bring upon them, and upon all the ungodly, who obstinately persist in their sins, and in their rejecting of Christ and his gospel, and especially upon apostates, when he shall come to judge the world at the last day.

shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring *him* hither.

31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose *him*? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

32 And they that were sent, went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

33 And, as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice,

their very entrance into it, they should find an ass's colt, which had never been backed, and bade them untie and bring it to him. (See the note on *Matth.* xxi. 7.)

31 And, said he, if any one go about to prevent you, asking what business ye have to meddle with the colt, and lead it away, ye shall answer him, that your Lord and Master has, at present, a special occasion to make use of it; and this shall so far pacify him, that he will readily let you bring it to me.

32 Then the two disciples, in obedience to their Lord's command, went into the village; and, punctually following his directions, found every thing come to pass, just as he had foretold.

33 Accordingly, whilst they were untying the colt, some of its proprietors asked them, what they meant, by offering to take it away? thereby intimating, that they should let it alone.

34 But (ð) they, according to the instructions Christ had given them, replied, That their Lord and Master had a special occasion, just then, to make use of it; upon which these persons made no further opposition, but let the disciples take their own course.

35 And they, bringing the colt to Jesus, put their clothes upon it, for the ease, convenience, and decency of his sitting; and, having thus arrayed it, they mounted him upon it, that he might ride in the meek glory of his triumph to *Jerusalem*; whereby some ancient prophecies of the Messiah were fulfilled in him. (See *Matth.* xxi. 4, 5, 7. and the notes there.)

36 And, as he marched toward the city, the people, to express their high respect and joy, spread their garments, like carpets, in the way, for him to pass over, as was usual at the triumphal processions and entries of great princes into their capital cities; others cut off the branches of trees, and strewed them in the road. (*Matth.* xxi. 8. see the note there.) And many, when they heard at *Jerusalem* of his approach, went out from thence to meet him, with branches of palm-trees in their hands. (*John* xii. 13.)

37 And when he arrived at the lower part of mount *Olivet*, on that side which was next the city, and not far from it, a numerous croud of disciples, that attended him, began, as with one heart and one mouth, to unite their voices in such loud and joyful acclamations, as caused the air to echo with the high praises of God, for the many great and wonderful miracles which their King and Saviour had wrought, and which

voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen.

38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord : peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude, said unto him, Master, Rebuke thy disciples.

40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, That if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

which were brought to their remembrance by what they had lately seen, or heard of, in his raising *Lazarus* from the dead. (*John* xii. 17, 18.)

38 Therefore, amidst their praises of God, they honoured Jesus, and expressed their joy, as they used to do at their feast of tabernacles, saying, Blessed be Messiah our King, who is come with a divine commission and authority to save us : Peace is brought to earth from heaven, God now shews himself to be reconciled, all is safe and happy : May prosperity attend the Saviour and his kingdom, and every glory be heaped upon him ! we extol him in the highest strains ; may his throne be exalted above every other throne ! And may the blessed angels join their loudest songs with ours, that his name may be ever glorified, and God's name in him ! (See the notes on *Mat.* xxi. 9.)

39 While they, under a divine afflatus, were thus paying their honours to Christ, his enemies were vexed and enraged at it ; and some of the *Pharisees*, who mixed with this vast multitude, fearing that it would effectually destroy their authority among the people, and defeat their malicious designs against him, spake to him with great contempt and indignation, saying, Master, how does this consist with your pretences to gravity and humility ! What a ridiculous farce is here ! and how mutinous and seditious is this ! Command your disciples to be quiet, and not to make such an intolerable noise.

40 But, instead of checking them, he severely rebuked the *Pharisees*, saying, Whatever evil constructions ye put upon their joyful acclamations, I assure you, they are so fit and necessary, and due to me, and so much to my Father's honour, that if these persons were to be silent to our praise, others should be found to proclaim it ; yea, rather than fail, as great a miracle should be wrought for this purpose, as if the very stones were to burst out into the loudest songs ; and if all the *Jews* were to withhold the honour which belongs to me, as the Messiah, the most stupid and unlikely, such as ye reckon the heathens to be, should rise up and pay them.

41 When he drew so near the city, as to take a full prospect of it, he beheld its grandeur and magnificence ; and, his human passions being moved with the thoughts of its approaching desolation, for the obstinate impenitence and unbelief of its inhabitants, he, amidst the hosannas of the people, compassionately lamented over it with tears*

42 Say-

N O T E.

* He did this to shew that he had tenderly touched with the thoughts of *Jerusalem's* iniquities and miseries, and would

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another: because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

45 And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought,

46 Say-

42 Saying, as a man and minister, O thou great and populous city, who hast been flourishing and prosperous, and once wert the city of God's peculiar habitation, how melancholy is the thought, that, ere long, thy glory will depart! O that thou hadst been wise †! Happy would it have been for thee, hadst thou but understood, and seriously considered, the things which relate to thy temporal and eternal happiness, if not before, yet now at least in this last season of grace! But, alas! whatsoever may be the case of some few among you, it is now too late for you, as a community, and for the chief and greatest part of you to obtain mercy: God is about to deprive you of all means of salvation, to give you up, in righteous judgment, to that blindness of mind, and hardness of heart, which ye have chosen, and to bring upon you the utter destruction which ye have deserved.

43 For the appointed time draws near, in which your enemies will surround and closely besiege you on every side, and will shut up all your inhabitants within your walls, so that none of them shall escape.

44 As to thy strong and sumptuous buildings, they shall be so utterly razed to their very foundations, that not one stone shall be left upon another, to shew the ruins of thine ancient grandeur; and as to thine inhabitants, they shall all be miserably destroyed by the fury of their enemies, and by the just vengeance of God, because thou hast shut thine eyes, and hardened thine heart against the light of my word, and the stirrings of my Spirit, and wouldst not regard my warnings and threatenings on one hand, nor my kind invitations and overtures of mercy on the other ‡.

45, 46 Jesus at length arrived in the city; and, alighting from the ass's colt, went not to the royal palace, as if he designed to set up for a secular prince, but to the temple, as to his own house, whose kingdom was not of this world: And upon his entering into the outward court, called the court of the *Gentiles*,

N O T E S.

would try all proper means to awaken a just concern in the people's minds about their own sin and ruin.

† Some suppose this to be the form of a wish; others take it to be an abrupt sentence, under strong workings of the passions, which is to be supplied with such words as these, *Happy would it have been for thee*, if thou hadst known, &c. accordingly I have taken both senses into the paraphrase.

‡ All this was exactly verified, when, about forty years afterwards, *Titus* be-

sieged *Jerusalem*, cast up a trench, and built a wall round about it, that none of the *Jews* might escape; and at last the temple being fired, contrary to his will, he commanded the soldiers to dig up the foundations of the temple and city, and to lay all level excepting three towers, which, in *Julian* the apostate's days, were also levelled with the ground, as we are told by *Josephus* and other historians. Vid. *Joseph. de bell. Jud. l. 5. c. 27. & l. 7. c. 1. & Socrat. c. 20.*

46 Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves.

tiles, where the profelytes used to worship, he found that the people, by the encouragement, and for the advantage of the priests, had turned it into a market-place, for changing of money, and for buying and selling of oxen, sheep, and doves: (see the paraphrase on *Matt. xxi. 12.*) But, he drove out all these traders, and would not suffer them to continue there; saying, It is written, (*Isa. lvi. 7.*) *Thy house shall be called an house of prayer for Gentiles as well as Jews*; but ye have profaned it, by putting it to secular uses, to which it was never consecrated; and, according to the complaint in another prophet, (*Jer. vii. 11.*) Ye, by your covetousness and unlawful gains here, have turned the sanctuary of the Lord into a place for robbery and extortion. (See the note on *Mark xi. 15.*)

47 And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests, and the scribes, and the chief of the people, fought to destroy him;

48 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

47, 48 And, when he had purged the temple from these abuses, he continued preaching there every day of that week, till the passover came on at which he suffered*. But the chief priests, doctors of the law, and the principal heads and rulers of the people, were so enraged at his spiritual and holy doctrine, and at his opposing their corruptions and their authority, that they held close consultations about putting him to death; and yet they could not tell how to contrive a scheme for doing it effectually, and with safety to themselves: For the generality of the common people (*εξουχιστα*) hung upon him, and were exceeding diligent in attending his ministry, who, they thought, spoke like one having authority, and not in such an empty, jejune, trifling manner as the *scribes*.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

What riches of sovereign grace are there in Christ, whose eye is upon his sheep wherever they are! He prevents them with his free mercy, touches the hearts of the rich as well as the poor, and of greater as well as lesser sinners, and sometimes turns curiosity itself into effectual faith and repentance; it is good to be found in his way. And O what a wonderful change does grace make in its secret operations! It opens the ear to Christ's call, and the heart to receive him gladly; it brings the whole man into an obediential subjection to him, in whatsoever he demands; it turns the covetous, proud, and cruel oppressor and extortioner, into an humble and honest, merciful and liberal man; and it engages him to make restitution, as far as possible, for every injury he has done to others. How great is the happiness that attends this change, as the blessing of Abraham therein comes upon him, who was in a lost state before; and as it opens a door of hope for his family, together

N O T E .

* He, in those few days, discoursed concerning the nature and design of his death, the incredulity and rejection of the *Jews*, and bringing in of the *Gentiles*, his own divine authority, and his coming to judge the world at the last

day, with several other things relating to himself and his saving work, as we find them recorded in the next chapter, and in *Matth. xxi, xxii, xxiii, xxiv, xxv.* chapters, *Mark xi, xii.* chapters, and *John xii. 20.* to the end of the chapter.

together with himself! And how high should Christ stand in our account, who came to save us in the name of the Lord! All that we call our property is his, and nothing should be with-held from him; he is worthy of the most exalted triumph, and joyful praise; and, however some may envy and detract from his honour, he will have a seed to serve and glorify him: His house shall be reformed, divine institutions shall be preserved, and his authority shall bear down all opposition before him: All our knowledge and assistances, privileges and means of grace, are his gifts, to be improved for him; and when he comes again to judgment, he will require a strict account of what we have done with them. How earnest then should we be for grace to make a good use of all his other gifts! Dreadful will be the case of the slothful servant; Christ will count him a wicked one, for not doing what he might and ought, and will righteously strip him of all the comforts and advantages he ever enjoyed or hoped for: The things that belong to his peace may soon be hid from his eyes; and those enemies, who will not that Christ should reign over them, shall be slain before him. But O what free and bountiful rewards will he bestow upon his faithful servants, in wise proportions, beyond their expectations or deserts! *God works in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, that they may do his will; and they are encouraged to be always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as they know that their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord,* Heb. xiii. 21. and 1 Cor. xv. 58.

C H A P. XX.

Christ's vindication of his authority by a question about John's baptism, 1,—8. The parable of the vineyard, 9,—19. The obedience that is to be paid to the civil magistrate, 20,—26. The resurrection vindicated against the Sadducees, 27,—38. The scribes puzzled with a question about Christ's being David's son, 39,—44. And a caution against the scribes, 45,—47.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him, with the elders,

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, By what authority dost thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

PARAPHRASE.

THE chief priests, *scribes*, and elders, that made up the *Jewish* sanhedrim, having formed a design against Christ's life, wanted a fair pretence to execute it; and as they were afraid of provoking the people, who had generally a good opinion of him, they resolved to try, whether they could not urge him to say something that might give them a plausible occasion of laying sedition, or blasphemy to his charge: And therefore as, from day to day, he was continually instructing all that came to the temple, and preaching the gospel to them; so, on one of those days, these men came in a body, hoping to surprize and terrify him.

2 And they said to him, in a fierce, insulting manner, We come as persons that have a right to demand what you mean by this way of going on, and insist upon your telling us by whose commission you thus take upon you? who empowered you to enter *Jerusalem* in such a public and noisy manner, to turn the buyers and sellers out of the temple, to broach new doctrines, and preach down those which have been so long established, and to attempt the lessening of

our character among the people? Pray, who could pretend to give you a commission, and from whom do you say you had authority for doing such things as these?

3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

3 But (*de*) Jesus knowing their invidious designs, and having many a time before asserted his divine commission, and proved it by various signal miracles, said, I have likewise a question of the same nature to put to you; and if ye will answer it, I will tell you plainly who it is that has authorized me to do all these things:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

4 When *John* came preaching the doctrine of repentance, and baptized the people into the faith of the approaching Messiah, Was it by a commission from God; or only of his own head, or by the order and appointment of any other man?

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

5, 6 This question exceedingly gravelled them, their thoughts working after this manner: If we shall say that *John the Baptist* was sent of God to preach and baptize, we shall give up our main point, and confirm the authority of Jesus against ourselves; for he will certainly reply upon us, that then we can never answer our rejecting himself and his doctrine, to which that divine messenger gave testimony: And, on the other hand, if we shall say, that *John* came of his own head, or only by the order and appointment of some other man, the generality of the people will be so incensed against us, as to stone us; for they are fully persuaded that he was a prophet, who had a divine commission for what he said and did.

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that *John* was a prophet.

7 And they answered, That they could not tell whence it was.

7 And therefore, perceiving the danger of answering either way, they declined giving their real sentiments about *John's* doctrine and baptism, and pretended not to know whence, or from what original his authority was derived.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

8 Upon this Jesus said to them, Since ye refuse to answer so plain a question, which would have served for a just reply to your own, I may well be excused telling you from whom I have my authority to do what ye have seen and heard; and therefore at present shall say nothing further about it.

9 Then began he to speak to the people this parable: A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

9 Having thus defeated the design of these his implacable enemies, in such a way as carried a smart reproof for their disregarding both his own and *John's* authority, he proceeded in a discourse to the people, together with them, to deliver the following parable; by which he intimated, that God would cast off the *Jewish* nation, and particularly the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, notwithstanding all their pretences to religion, for their obstinately rejecting him; and would receive the believing *Gentiles* in their room:

There was, said he, a certain man, who planted a vineyard, and provided it with every thing necessary and convenient ; and, having let it out to some husbandmen, to cultivate and improve it, he took a long journey, from which he was not to return for a great while. So God instituted the *Jewish* church by the hand of *Moses*, enriching it with many privileges and blessings, suitable to that dispensation ; and then, committing its administration to the chief priests and rulers of the people, he withdrew the visible appearances of his presence, and left them promises of returning again in some future age.

10 And at the season, he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard : but the husbandmen beat him and sent *him* away empty.

10 And when the proper season for vines bearing, and bringing forth ripe grapes was come, (see the note on *Mark* xii. 2.) the master sent his servants to the husbandmen, to require the profits, and to assist in gathering and managing the fruits : But they, instead of answering his just demands, shamefully abused his servants, and drove them empty away. So when God's ancient people the *Jews* had enjoyed these rich advantages for a considerable time, and brought forth little good fruit answerable to them, he sent several prophets, under the former part of the Old Testament dispensation, to stir them up to their duty, and to instruct and encourage them in his ways : But they raised up persecutions against his servants, and disregarded their message, instead of returning to him, and yielding the holy obedience he demanded of them ; and the corruptions of the priests and rulers had such an influence upon the people, that God had no revenues of glory from them.

11 And again he sent another servant : and they beat him also, and entreated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty.

12 And again he sent the third : and they wounded him also, and cast *him* out.

11, 12 And again the master sent other servants, one after another, from time to time : But (*de*) the husbandmen, still persisting in their disobedience, abused them more than the former, driving them away also empty-handed. So God continued to send the latter prophets to the *Jews*, with further counsels and cautions to reclaim them ; and, at the close of that dispensation, he sent *John the Baptist* to point out the Messiah, and to call them to repentance, and to faith in him : But they still persisting in their obstinacy, impenitence, and unbelief, rejected and despised, vilified and persecuted all these, one after another, with yet greater virulence ; and thrust them away, resolving not to be reformed.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do ? I will send my beloved son : it may be they will reverence *him*

13 Then the master of the vineyard considered with himself what might be proper for him to do further, to win upon these obstinate rebels ; and at last resolved to send his own son and heir, supposing that they might shew a due respect to his authority. So God, according to the eternal counsel of his will, determined

him when they see him.

determined to send at length his only begotten and dearly beloved Son, who is Lord of all, as the last expedient for working upon the rebellious *Jews*; since it might justly be expected, that they should homage and submit to such a divine person, who gave the plainest proofs of his being so by the miraculous works which he wrought in a God-like manner among them.

14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What, therefore, shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

14, 15 But, upon the husbandmen's seeing their master's son and heir, they thought, that if they could but get rid of him, they might take possession of the estate for themselves: And therefore they desperately resolved to lay violent hands upon him; and, dragging him out of the vineyard, destroyed him. So when the Son of God appeared among the *Jews*; and the chief priests and rulers saw with what authority he preached and behaved, what wonderful miracles he performed, and how the people applauded him, they, instead of believing in him themselves, and encouraging others to embrace him, were filled with envy at him: And thinking that, if they could but dispatch him, there would be none left to oppose their authority, they rose up in rage against him, cast him out of the church, who was indeed its chief Corner-stone, and crucified the Lord of glory. What punishment therefore, said Christ, must ye suppose the lord of the vineyard will inflict upon those wicked wretches, meaning the *Jews*, for abusing and destroying, not only the servants he sent to them time after time before, but at last his own dear son also?

16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.

16 He will certainly execute judgment upon them, to their utter destruction; and commit the care of his vineyard to others, who will be more true to their trust, and yield him its fruits in due season. And, as Jesus had not explained this parable, the chief priests and elders, not considering at first how far they might be concerned in it, condemned those wicked husbandmen, as deserving to be destroyed without mercy, that more faithful men might be put into their place. (*Mat. xxi. 41.*) But as soon as they perceived that Christ herein pointed at themselves, as the persons represented by the husbandmen, they said, Far be it from us to be guilty of putting the true Messiah to death; whenever he comes, we shall take care that we do not commit so horrible a villany.

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written,

17 But, (*δε*) while they were thus professing their detestation of such wickedness, our Lord, looking upon them with compassion, and yet with severity and disdain, said, If what ye pretend be real, what means

ten, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

19 And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

20 And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly.

22 Is it lawful for

means that ancient prophecy, where it is written, *Psal. cxviii. 22.*) *The stone which the builders refused, is become the head-stone of the corner? i. e.* The Messiah, who was rejected by the chief priests and elders, that ought to have been builders of God's house, and by the generality of the *Jews* under their influence, is made the foundation and chief Corner-stone of the church, upon whom, when he comes to be exalted, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* shall rest, like the two sides of a building, and be firmly and beautifully knit together in him.

18 If therefore, under the power of mistaken prejudices, any should be so offended at the Messiah, because of his mean appearance on earth, as not to believe in him, he exposes himself to great hurt and danger, which will be like flinging him down upon a great stone: But if any shall utterly reject Christ after his exaltation, he shall be inevitably destroyed without mercy, and that for ever, like one crushed to death by the weight of a heavy stone cast upon him. (See the note on *Matth. xxi. 44.*)

19 Then the chief priests and *scribes*, who by this time clearly saw that Jesus meant all this against them, instead of being concerned about it, and humbled under it, were so much the more incensed at it, and would immediately have seized him by force, and put him to death, had they not been restrained by their fear of the people, who they knew had a high esteem of him.

20 And therefore, that they might get a fairer opportunity for it, they resolved to keep a watchful eye over him, and sent some *Pharisees*, who were zealous for the liberty of the *Jews*, and some *Herodians*, who were as zealous for the *Roman* authority, to be spies upon him; (*Matth. xxii. 16.* see the note there) ordering them to put on the appearance of honest, conscientious men, who wanted him to satisfy the scruples of their own minds; and in that way to try whether they could not draw something from him, that might either offend the common people, or expose him to the resentments of the government, and lay a foundation for a judicial process against him.

21, 22 And they, according to their instructions, addressed him in a respectful manner, saying, Master, we are well assured that you are a person of great integrity and wisdom, and teach the right way of pleasing God, and that your impartiality and resolution set you above being influenced by favour or affection, or by the fear of any man whatsoever. We therefore desire that you would resolve a case of conscience which lies in debate between us, *viz.* Whether it be lawful

for us to give tribute unto Cefar, or no ?

lawful for us, who are God's own peculiar people, and under his immediate government, to submit to the authority of the emperor, who by nation and religion is a foreigner, and, in consequence thereof, to pay the tribute he demands of us ? What do you say is our duty in this case ?

23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me ?

23 But he, who saw through their treacherous and wicked designs against him, knew that if he should answer in the negative, they would accuse him as an enemy to *Cæsar* ; and if in the affirmative, they would incense the people against him, as an enemy to their rights and liberties ; and therefore he said to them, Why, under a pretence of respect, in referring a case of conscience to me, do ye attempt to ensnare me, as if I did not understand your deceit ?

24 Shew me a penny : Whose image and superscription hath it ? They answered and said, Cefar's.

24 Let me see a piece of your tribute-money ; and when they shewed him a *Roman* penny, which used to be paid on that occasion, he asked them whose image and superscription were stamped upon it ? They, not perceiving his design, immediately replied, *Cæsar's*, as the *Roman* emperors were ordinarily stiled.

25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cefar the things which be Cefar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

25 Upon which he answered, Your receiving *Cæsar's* coin, as current, is a practical confession of his authority ; it being always accounted the prerogative of the higher secular powers to coin money, and thereby to ascertain its value, and make it current : Ye therefore ought to return the tribute of that to *Cæsar*, which ye receive and enjoy by his authority and protection, as far as ye can do it consistently with the homage and service ye owe to God, to whom ye must likewise be faithful, in rendering all religious obedience unto him.

26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people : and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

26 And there was so much wisdom and equity in this answer, that these captious, subtle enemies, did not know how to give a bad turn to what he said, in the hearing of all the people ; but were amazed at his prudence and caution, and were entirely silenced and confounded.

27 Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, (which deny that there is any resurrection) and they asked him,

27 They having failed in this attempt, some of the *Sadducees*, who were the free thinkers of the age, and denied the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body, came on the same day, (*Matth.* xxii. 23.) and put the following question to him,

28 Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

28 Saying, Master, *Moses* ordered in the law, (*Deut.* xxv. 5.) that if a married man, who has brethren, should die without issue, one of them, being single, should marry his widow, to keep up his name and family, and perpetuate his inheritance in *Israel*.

29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

31 And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also. And they left no children, and died.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

33 Therefore in the resurrection, whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus answering, said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

36 Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, even

29 Now, say they, It happened that there were in a certain family seven such brethren, the eldest of which, having taken to him a wife, died, and left her without any child.

30 And the second brother marrying her, died likewise, leaving no issue behind him.

31 And then the third in order took the widow for his wife; and so, in their turns, did all the rest, none of which had any child by her.

32 At last the woman herself died without issue likewise.

33 If therefore there be a future state, and a resurrection of the body, we would ask you, whose wife shall this woman be in that other world, since they were all married to her in this, and she bore no child to either of them, to give one more than another a claim to her?

34 Jesus replied, Ye are grossly mistaken, in supposing that this is any real objection against the doctrine of a future existence, and of the resurrection of the dead; and all your cavils of this sort proceed from your own ignorance of the true design of these and other scriptures, and of the exceeding greatness of God's power, as if he could not raise the dead. (*Mat. xxii. 29.* and *Mark xii. 24.*) Here indeed, in this mortal state, it is necessary for the continuance of mankind upon earth, and is proper for their convenience and comfort, that men should marry, and women should be given to them in marriage; and the law of inheritances, and of keeping up distinct families in *Israel*, made it expedient, that surviving brethren should, in their order, marry the childless widow of a deceased brother: ²²

35 But they, whom God shall graciously accept as worthy to be admitted to the inheritance of eternal life, and to be raised from the dead to the possession of it, in the other world, will have no occasion for marriages, either to keep up the stock of its inhabitants, or to provide for their own conveniency or comforts, or to entail their inheritances upon their families after them.

36 Nor can they die out of that world, and leave successors behind them, as they do in this: For they shall all be as glorious, happy, and immortal, as the holy angels themselves; their manner of living and enjoying shall be just like theirs, and they shall possess all the glory of a divine adoption, as the sons of God, who are to abide in his house for ever, after the resurrection from the dead.

37 And (*δε*) that there really will be a resurrection of the body to a blessed immortality, may be fairly

ven Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

fairly argued from what even *Moses* himself said, (see the note on *Matth.* xxii. 31.) in his recital of the words, which God spoke, when he appeared to him in the bush, saying, (*Exod.* iii. 6.) Not *I was*, but *I am* the God of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, many years after they were dead; thereby intimating, that they still continued to be his children, and so the sons of the resurrection, who are *waiting for*, and shall receive *the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body.* (*Rom.* viii. 23. see the note on *Matth.* xxii. 32.)

38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

38 For his being their God implies, that he is their portion, and exceeding great reward: But as they never were partakers of the full glory of this relation here; so he could much less be still the God of those human persons, if that essential part of the man, which is now dead, were never to rise again. Therefore, as their souls already live in another world, and it cannot be said that in all respects they are even now dead; so their bodies shall revive at the resurrection of the just: For all his people live to him, that not only a part of them, but the whole man, according to the tenor of his covenant, may be for ever and completely happy in the enjoyment of him; and they now live in his account, who *calls those things which be not, as though they were, because he quickens the dead.* (*Rom.* iv. 17.)

39 Then certain of the scribes answering, said, Master, thou hast well said.

39 Upon this, some of the *Jewish* doctors, who believed the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body, were so pleased with his judicious answer to the *Sadducees*, that they could not but express their satisfaction in it, saying, Master, you have clearly solved the difficulty, and established these great doctrines beyond all reasonable contradiction.

40 And after that they durst not ask him any question at all.

40 And such was their conviction of his wisdom and ability, by this and several other answers to questions which were put to him, that they were afraid to offer any more, or to engage in any further dispute with him.

41 And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?

41 He then took an opportunity, in his turn, to propose the following question to the *Pharisees*, (*Mat.* xxii. 41.) saying, Why do the *scribes*, (*Mark* xii. 35.) or interpreters of the law affirm, that the Messiah shall be a son of *David's* race*? How can that be, or how do ye understand it?

42, 43 *David*

N O T E.

* It was generally owned among the *Jews*, that the Messiah was to spring from *David's* loins: Accordingly, on occasion, some of them pleaded, Has not the scripture said, that Christ comes of

the seed of *David*, and of the town of *Bethlehem*, where *David* was? (*John* vii. 42.) And the usual appellation of Christ among those who looked upon him as the Messiah, was, *Thou Son of David.*

42 And David himself saith in the book of psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

44 David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?

45 Then, in the audience of all the people, he said unto his disciples,

46 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

47 Which devour widows houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

42, 43, *David* himself, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, owned him as then existing, and honoured him as his superior, and as a divine person, saying, (*Psal. cx. 1.*) God the Father said unto my Lord, the Messiah, Sit thou enthroned in all dignity and power, glory and delights, in heavenly places; and continue reigning in thy mediatorial kingdom, till all thine enemies be effectually and entirely put under thy feet, in a way of subjection to thee.

44 Since therefore *David*, in this known prophecy of the Messiah, expressly stiled him his own Lord, by way of superiority to himself; How can ye reconcile this with your other notion, which ye truly have, of his being a descendant from *David*? And his enemies, being at a loss what reply to make, held their peace. (*Matth. xxii. 46.*)

45 Then as, by this and other instances of their perverseness, it appeared that whatever he said, and how much soever he confuted them, they either would not be convinced, or would not own themselves to be so, Jesus applied himself to his disciples; and, in the hearing of all the people, publicly cautioned them against these men, saying,

46 Take heed of being imposed upon by the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, and of imitating or gratifying their pride, hypocrisy, and self-conceit, who wonderfully affect to put on solemn airs, that they may command the greatest reverence, and get an ascendancy over others: Accordingly they chuse to walk about in long garments down to their feet, with an appearance of stately gravity; they are ambitious of receiving high compliments, and visible tokens of respect from the people, in the streets and markets; and they are ever pushing forward for the upper-hand and highest seats, in all places of public worship, and at all entertainments, as if they were holier and more worthy than the rest of mankind.

47 They likewise make high pretences to uncommon piety, and draw out their prayers to a much greater length than others: But all this fond appearance of sanctity and zeal, is only a cloak to their covetousness and oppression, that they may be the less suspected of any ill designs, and may the better impose upon and injure the richer sort of widows, and their fatherless children, by getting their affairs into their own hands, and sacrificing them to their own gain: And as they commit this wickedness under, and by means of a hypocritical form of godliness, the more aggravated and provoking is their guilt, and the more dreadful vengeance will the righteous God inflict upon them for it.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

How unreasonable are all exceptions against the authority of Christ, who ought to be revered as God's own Son, and the chief Corner-stone of the church! And what hard shift do his enemies make to avoid the conviction that would lead them to own and honour him! And yet behold the surprising patience of God, and the various means of grace, which he sends, time after time, to an unfruitful and rebellious people, before he utterly casts them off! But how dreadful will be the misery of those, that finally reject Christ, and set themselves against his servants and him! They are all along doing mischief to themselves, and pulling down the heaviest destruction upon their own heads; while they, who build on him as their only foundation, shall find the utmost security and satisfaction in him, shall be taken into his vineyard, kept under his eye and care, and made fruitful to eternal life.— O what a wonderful person is Christ, who was David's son and Lord! It is only a consideration of his divine and human natures, that can reconcile the seemingly contradictory characters of supremacy and inferiority, which the scripture gives of him. How securely may we depend on him without danger of being deceived! And how carefully should we beware of evil men, that we may guard against their designing hypocrisy, and never place an implicit faith in any human guides, how dignified and sacred soever their professions may be! But there is no inconstance between an entire subjection of conscience to God, in all matters of religion; and yielding faithful obedience to civil magistrates, in secular concerns: And though difficulties may be started and urged against the most evident and important truths; yet our faith should not be shaken by them; but whatever is asserted in, or, by just consequences, deduced from the word of God, should be heartily believed; and we may be sure, according to its infallible testimony, that, as there will soon be a change in the circumstances and relations of this dying world; so true believers can never die away from their God. And O what a blessed lot will they have in the world to come, where they shall be the children of the resurrection, and be like the holy angels, at the final manifestation of the sons of God!

C H A P. XXI.

Christ's observation of a poor widow's casting two mites into the treasury, 1,—4. His prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, as a type and figure of the end of the world, 5,—33. His caution to be watchful; 34,—36. And a general account of his preaching, 37, 38.

TEXT.

AND he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

² And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

³ And he said, Of a truth I say unto

PARAPHRASE.

AS our Lord was one day sitting over-against the treasury in the temple, (*Mark. xii. 41.*) he took notice of several rich persons making very large free-will-offerings, which they put into the public chest for the service of that holy place, and for the several religious uses to which those gifts were to be applied.

² And he observed there came, among others, a poor widow, who being desirous to honour God, according to, and even beyond her ability, threw in two small pieces of money, which amounted to the value of but one farthing. (See the note on *Matth. x. 29.*)

³ Hereupon Christ, to shew his approbation of it, called his disciples to him, (*Mark. xii. 43.*) and bade them

unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:

4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

5 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said,

6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

7 And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass?

8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

9 But when ye shall

them observe that indigent, and yet generous creature, assuring them, that the little present which she had made, was really more for her to give, and of higher account with God, than all the large offerings of the rich.

4 For, said he, all these have parted only with a small proportion of what they might well spare out of their abundant wealth; whereas this destitute widow, being herself in necessitous circumstances, has freely given all that she had in possession for her present subsistence, which shews that her love and zeal are greater than theirs.

5 Soon after this, as he was going out of the temple, (*Mark* xiii. 1.) some of his disciples took notice with what vast stones and beautiful ornaments *Herod* had rebuilt it, (see the note on *John* ii. 20.) and with what rich presents the people honoured it; and they desired him to observe and reflect upon all this, that the dreadful sentence might not be executed, which he had just before pronounced against it. (*Matth.* xxiii. 37, 38.)

6 But he replied, Do the external pomp and grandeur of these things raise your admiration, and move your concern, that they may never be demolished? Alas! I assure you, the time is hastening apace, in which this stately building, with all its glory, shall be so entirely destroyed, that there shall be no remains, so much as to shew where it stood. (See the note on *Matth.* xxiv. 2.)

7 The disciples hearing this plain and peremptory declaration, asked him, how long it would be before the surprising things he had mentioned should come to pass, and by what evident signs they might know when to expect such alterations, as they supposed would put an end to the present state of things upon earth, and consummate the glory of his kingdom? (*Matth.* xxiv. 3.)

8 Our blessed Lord replied, Be very cautious that no man delude you by specious and false pretences: For before the accomplishment of the terrible desolations I spake of, various impostors will take upon them the character of the Messiah, each of them pretending, that, if *Israel* would obtain the expected advantages of his kingdom, they must repair to him, and that the time of deliverance from all their bondage and misery is just at hand: Give no heed to any of these seducers, for by their fair promises of what they will do for their followers, and by other stratagems and false appearances, they will deceive many, to their utter perdition. (*Matth.* xxiv. 5.)

9 But when ye shall have rumours of great tumults and

shall hear of wars, and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.

10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

11 And great earthquakes shall be in diverse places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 But before all these they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before, what ye shall answer:

and wars among the *Jews*, and between them and other nations, do not be surpris'd or affrighted at them, to the discouragement of your faith and holy profession: For all these troubles must precede the destruction of *Jerusalem*; but they will be some time before it.

10, 11 Then, by way of further explication of these events, he said to them, One body of *Jews* will take up arms against another, and *Gentiles* against *Jews*; and so civil and foreign wars will make dreadful havock in *Judea*: And, besides the miseries arising from hence, there will be terrible earthquakes, distressing famines and plagues, and surprising appearances in the air, such as comets and blazing-stars, which will strike a panic fear of some tremendous judgment as at hand*.

12 But, before all these public confusions, your enemies will discover a cruel temper, and raise up persecutions of all sorts against you; they will deliver you up to ecclesiastical courts, as if ye were the worst of apostates, and stir up kings and civil magistrates against you, as if ye were the vilest of criminals; and they will throw you into jails, and exercise all manner of severities against you for my sake †.

13 Nevertheless, (ðs) God in his providence, and by the influence of his Spirit upon your hearts, will over-rule all this to his glory, and your own and others good: For by means of these sufferings, and your Christian behaviour under them, ye shall bear an honourable testimony to me, to the truth, excellence, and power of my gospel, to your own faith and integrity in your profession of my name, and to your being assisted and owned of God in it; and ye will thereby have opportunities for preaching, clearing, and defending my gospel, so much the more, to the confutation of its enemies, to the conversion of many, and to the confirmation of my disciples in their most holy faith.

14 Since therefore your cause will quit cost, instead of being anxiously careful before-hand how to answer interrogatories, accusations, and inditements, either in ecclesiastical or civil courts; and, instead of being diffident about the issue, because ye are stran-

N O T E S.

* Thus historians tell us it was before considered as applicable to the time of the destruction of *Jerusalem*; and thus we may expect it to be in other nations, toward the end of the world. See the notes on *Matth.* xxiv. and the paraphrase on that chapter, and on *Mark* xiii.; where these and several other events are

considered as applicable to the time of Christ's coming to judge the world at the last day.

† The Acts of the apostles inform us that all these things were fulfilled in those days.

15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainfay, nor resist.

16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and *some* of you shall they cause to be put to death.

17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem com-

gers to the arts of pleading, let it be a settled point with you to commit the affair to me :

15 For I, your Lord and Master, will give you such a spirit of wisdom and courage, and will furnish you with such convincing proofs of the truth and excellence of my doctrine, and of its being your duty to profess and preach it ; and I will suggest such proper expressions for your defence, as the very worst of your malicious and subtle enemies shall by no means be able to withstand or contradict *.

16 But (δ;) notwithstanding all this, such is the direct contrariety of my gospel to the corrupt principles and practices of the world, that even the nearest relations and acquaintances will break through all the bonds of natural affection and friendship, to oppose you for owning and publishing it : So that kindred and intimate friends will deal perfidiously with you, and even your own brethren and parents will betray you into the hands of cruel persecutors, and be the means of putting some of you to death.

17 Yea, a malignant spirit against you will spread to such a degree, that the generality of men, even all the seed of the old serpent, will unite in their antipathy, opposition, and rage against you, because ye belong to me, and bear my name.

18 But, I tell you for your comfort †, surprising deliverances shall be wrought for you, whilst I have any work to do by you ; and if, after that, any of you shall fall by death for your faithfulness to me, it shall be only exchanging this mortal life for an immortal one ; and so in the balance of accounts all will be safe, and turn to your own profit.

19 And therefore whatsoever your danger or sufferings for my sake may be, do not be discouraged in yourselves ; and let not the terror of your adversaries discompose and ruffle your spirits ; but keep possession of your own souls in quietness and peace, in holy fortitude and calm resignation, with all long-suffering and patience, by a humble confidence, that, *As your days, so your strength shall be.* (Deut. xxxiii. 25.)

20 And now, that I may give you an immediate-ly preceding sign of the utter destruction of this magnificent

N O T E S.

* How remarkably was this fulfilled, when *Peter* and *John* were called to an account, about the cripple, before the rulers, elders, scribes, and others, with the high-priest, as met together in council! *Acts* iv. 5.—21.

† This may possibly refer to the remarkable preservation of the *Christians*

at the destruction of *Jerusalem*, when such vast multitudes of the *Jews* were slaughtered by the *Romans* ; or rather it may be considered as a proverbial expression, to denote the best of safety and advantage in times of danger ; for *Christ* had expressly said, (*ver.* 16.) some shall be put to death.

compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

21 Then let them which are in *Judea* flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter there-into.

22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 But wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days: for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

24 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.

nificant city and temple, whenever ye shall see the *Roman* forces laying siege to *Jerusalem*, and casting their lines about it, ye may assuredly conclude, that the time of this dreadful calamity is * very near.

21 Then let them that are in any part of *Judea*, flee for their lives into some distant mountains, or places of retirement, to hide themselves from the observation and fury of both *Jews* and *Romans*; and let those that are in the holy city, get out of it, before they be hemmed in; and let no one, who is in the fields or villages round about, venture to go into it, either from a vain imagination, as if he might be safest in such a place of strength, or from a covetous desire of carrying off some effects which he may have there: But let every one flee with all possible speed, as ever he would not fall in the common desolation.

22 For this will be the very time in which God's patience toward this provoking people will expire, and his righteous wrath will flame out upon them, that all the horrible desolations, so often threatened in the prophecies of the Old Testament, may be inflicted upon them, to their utter ruin.

23 But, since speedy flight will be so necessary to safety in those days, sad will their condition be, whose circumstances render them incapable of expedition, such as women with child, and those who have infants hanging at their breasts; it will be very difficult for them to escape: For that will be a time of extreme and spreading distress through all the land of *Judea*, and full vials of divine and human wrath will be poured out upon its inhabitants.

24 Civil wars among themselves, and the sword of the common enemy against them all, will make a dreadful slaughter among them; and such as escape the sword shall be led into captivity, for death, or slavery, in all the nations round about †. And *Jerusalem* itself shall be sacked and trampled upon with indignation and contempt, and shall be kept under the jurisdiction of the *Gentiles*, and never be rebuilt again with any grandeur suitable to its present state, till the glorious days shall come, which are appointed for the general conversion of the *Jews*, and bringing in of the fulness of the *Gentiles* ‡.

25, 26 And

N O T E S.

* It afterwards appeared that the siege was never raised, till *Jerusalem*, and the temple with it, was destroyed.

† Accordingly *Josephus* tells us, that the number of those who were taken captive by the *Romans*, during this war, was ninety-seven thousand, most of which *Titus* dispersed through the *Roman* provin-

ces, to be destroyed in the theatres, by the sword and wild beasts: But they that were under seventeen years of age were sold. *Vid. de Bel. Jud. l. 7. c. 29.*

‡ Our Lord hereby seems to intimate that then *Jerusalem* should be rebuilt, and the *Jews* gathered to their own country and city again; and that the *Gentiles*

25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

26 Mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads: for your redemption draweth nigh.

29 And he spake to them a parable, Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees;

25, 26 And at the close of the fore-mentioned dissolutions, the subversion of the *Jewish* government, religion, and laws, will be so great, that (as the prophet expressed these terrible revolutions, *Joel* ii. 31. and iii. 15, 16.) they may be represented under the figures* of the sun, moon, and stars, the heavens, the earth, and the sea being confounded, and the whole frame of nature dissolved; and then the nations of the earth, will be filled with consternation and distress; and the hearts of the unbelieving *Jews* will be utterly sunk and overwhelmed with anguish, in expectation of the dreadful miseries that are coming upon them: And at the close of like troubles toward the end of the world, there shall be, in a literal sense, a dissolution of the present frame of the heavens and of the earth. (*2 Pet.* iii. 10, 11.)

27 The unbelieving *Jews* themselves shall then see, though alas too late! that Jesus is indeed the only true Messiah; and he will appear in such a solemn manner, as shall fully convince every one of his great majesty, power, and glory, to the joy of his saints, and the confusion of his enemies: And thus it will be still more remarkably, when every eye shall see him personally appearing in the clouds of heaven, at his coming to the final judgment.

28 And when these signs of *Jerusalem's* destruction begin to appear, look upward by faith for protection, support, and a happy issue; and rejoice with exceeding joy, in the near prospect of approaching mercy to you; for whatsoever becomes of others, ye may be sure that your deliverance will then be just at hand, and that my kingdom shall soon be exalted: And when like tokens of the last general judgment shall be seen, let all my disciples rejoice in a believing confidence, that they shall quickly have complete deliverance from their sins and sorrows, and obtain salvation with eternal glory.

29 And for an illustration of these awful things, Christ further said, Observe how they may be represented by a similitude taken from the fig-tree, and all other trees †.

30 As

N O T E S.

Gentiles shall then no longer lord it over them; but all nations shall bow in unto them, and shall walk in their light, rejoicing in God's mercy to them, and sharing in all spiritual blessings with them.

* These expressions may be considered in a *metaphorical* sense, as relating to the destruction of *Jerusalem*; or in a *literal* sense, as they may relate to the dissolution of all things at the end of the world: And so I have represented the

meaning of these passages, according to these different ways of applying them.

† It was in the spring, just before the passover, that Christ spoke these words; and so, according to his custom, he took an occasion from the present season of the year, when all the trees were budding on the mount of *Olives*, where they then were, (*Matth.* xxiv. 3.) to make use of this similitude.

30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my word shall not pass away.

34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and

30 As ye now see all nature in its spring, and all the trees round about you breaking out in buds and leaves, and tender shoots; ye are fully satisfied, from your own observation of things, that the summer is just now coming on.

31 So when ye shall see the forementioned prognostics come to pass, be assured upon the credit of my word, that the destruction of the *Jewish* temple and city, religion and polity, to make way for the advancement of my kingdom in all its glory through the world, will be then just at hand: And the like may be observed in after-days, with regard to the dissolution of the world, to introduce the last and most exalted glory of the Messiah's kingdom.

32 As to the events which particularly relate to the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the calamities that shall precede it, I tell you for certain, that there are some now living, who shall not be carried off the stage, till they shall see every one * of them fully accomplished.

33 And as to the like events, which will go before the destruction of the world at the last day, I further assure you, that the present state of the visible heavens, and of the earth, shall certainly in due time be dissolved: But nothing, that I have foretold you, shall ever fail of a punctual accomplishment, though the precise time for these last things is not certainly known as yet †. (*Matth.* xxiv. 36.)

34 Since therefore the time for the dissolution of the whole frame of nature, and for the final judgment, will as certainly come, as the desolation of the *Jews*, but none knows when; see to it that ye never indulge luxurious and intemperate appetites, in eating and drinking to excess, nor give way to any sensual and irregular pleasures, which will bring great

N O T E S.

* In fact the apostle *John* and others did see and survive this dreadful catastrophe.

† This sense of these words seems best suited to the mixed design, which, as appears to me, our Lord carried on, through this discourse, to notify his coming to destroy *Jerusalem*, and to judge the world at the last day: For as one was a lively type of the other; so he here declares what in fact should be, with respect to the final alteration which is to be made upon the whole face of nature, and so passes on to what most directly and immediately relates to the general judgment, which would come as a snare on

all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth, *ver.* 35. and of which he says, *But of that day and hour knows no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.* *Matth.* xxiv. 36. thereby intimating, that as to the precise time, when that day will be, it was then a secret in his Father's own breast, which he had not revealed to any man or angel no, not to the Messiah himself, as man, at least not with any commission to reveal it to others at present: And answerable to this conclusion of Christ's predictions, relating to the final judgment, he discoursed at large on that subject in the next chapter. (*Matth.* xxv.) See the notes on *Matth.* xxiv. 35. and *Mark* xiii. 32.

and so that day come upon you un-
awares.

35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

37 And in the day-time he was teaching in the temple: and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount of Olives*.

38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

guilt upon the conscience, and stupify and unfit you for all spiritual and important concerns; and take heed that ye do not greedily involve yourselves in cares, projects, and pursuits after the riches of this world, which will ingross your time and hearts, and shut out better things, lest the day of God's dreadful vengeance should rush upon you before ye are aware, and when ye will be worst of all prepared for it.

35 For the solemn judgment of the great day, as well as that on *Jerusalem*, will certainly come with surprising and inevitable ruin to all careless, sensual, and worldly-minded sinners, in whatever part of the world they may be: And just as birds when they are caught in a snare, are frightened and flutter, but cannot get out; so they will be *snared in an evil time, when it suddenly falls upon them.* (Eccles. ix. 12.)

36 Be ye therefore always in a wakeful, circumspect temper, and strictly upon your guard against temptations to sin on one hand, and dreadful surprises on the other; and be instant in daily prayer for continual assistance unto the discharge of every duty, and departure from every iniquity, that ye may be found* bearing the character of those whom the Messiah shall adjudge to the honour and privilege of escaping, not only the vengeance which shall be executed in this world, but the sting of death, and the condemnation of the ungodly at his awful tribunal in the last day; and that ye may be deemed meet to stand in the congregation of the righteous, who shall be acquitted by him, and have boldness before him at his coming.

37 Now after Christ's public entry into *Jerusalem*, he constantly, for a little while, repaired to the temple by day, that he might preach there, and retired to the mount of *Olives* by night, that he might have the better opportunities for private devotion, in view of his approaching death, and that he might not be shut up within the walls of the city, and so be taken before his appointed time was fully come.

38 And in the morning, upon his return to the temple, the common people, either out of curiosity, or from a good opinion of him, flocked thither betimes in great multitudes, that they might be ready to attend on his ministry; so that he always had a crowded

N O T E.

* *Worthy*, in the scripture-sense of the term, sometimes relates to an honour put upon a person, as when it speaks of being counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ; (*Acts* v. 41.) and at other times it signifies meekness, and what is becoming, as when we are said to walk worthy

of God, and of the vocation wherewith we are called, and to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. (*1 Thess.* ii. 12. *Eph.* iv. 1. and *Luke* iii. 8.) And so to be counted worthy to escape, &c. is to have the honour of it, and to be fitted, or prepared for it.

crowded audience, though, alas! there were but few among them who received the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

What a critical notice does our Lord take of all our offerings, and of all the circumstances that attend them! And who can think of his awful predictions, and their accomplishment, and not read in them the Saviour and the God, as also the demolition of the *Jewish* frame of worship, with the temple at *Jerusalem*, and the establishment of a new dispensation of grace on its ruins! Obstinate sinners may well expect severe judgments upon earth, for persisting in their iniquities, and in their contempt of Christ and his gospel; and the heaviest destruction will certainly overtake them at the great day, unless they fly to Jesus, and cleave to him in opposition to all other pretended Saviours. Though heaven and earth shall pass away, his words shall never fail; but his threatenings against the wicked, as well as promises to his people, will have a sure accomplishment: And O how will his second coming be to the utter confusion of the one, and the unspeakable joy of the other! He faithfully gives his followers notice, before-hand, of their dangers and deliverances; and whatsoever tribulations may befall them, for his sake, from the greatest powers on earth, or from the hands of their nearest kindred and friends, why should they be terrified or discouraged at them? All shall be accompanied with special aids; and turn for a testimony of good account, to the honour of their Redeemer, the confutation of his enemies, and the comfort of their own souls: They may lift up their heads and rejoice; for their redemption draws nigh; and faith and patience will carry them safe through all difficulties, in their way to the better state, which shall succeed the dissolution of all things here. But O how dangerous are the cares, the pleasures, and excesses of life! and what need is there of constant watchfulness and prayer against them, and for an escape from the miseries, and an arrival to the blessedness spoken of in the word of God! And how happy will it be for those, who shall be enabled to stand till, and to stand at, the appearing of Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven, in all his majesty and glory! In order hereunto, may we have wisdom to discern the signs of the times, and our calls to answerable duties. And may we attend upon gospel ministrations in such a manner, as to hear that our souls may live!

C H A P. XXII.

Judas's betraying his Lord, 1,—6. Christ's eating his last passover, 7,—18. His instituting his supper, 19, 20. His discourse with his disciples, 21,—38. His agony in the garden, 39,—46. His being apprehended, 47,—53. Peter's denying him, 54,—62. And his trial and condemnation in the high-priest's hall, 63,—71.

TEXT.

NOW the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

PARAPHRASE.

AT this time, the fourth passover after Christ's baptism, at which, according to the determinate counsel of God he should suffer, was coming on within two days, (*Mark* xiv. 1.) and was called the feast of unleavened bread, because the *Jews* were to have no leaven in their bread or houses, during that solemnity.

2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might

2 And then it was that the sanhedrim, made up of the chief priests and doctors of the law, together with the elders of the people, men of great reputation for piety

might kill him ; for they feared the people.

3 Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve :

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

piety and learning, met to consult how they might most conveniently apprehend Jesus, in order to their putting him to death ; for they were under a difficulty about it, because of the extraordinary concourse of people at that season, who they knew had a high veneration and esteem for him, and who they were afraid would take his part, and rise up in arms to rescue him out of their hands ; and therefore they resolved to attempt it not by open force, but privately by stratagem. (*Mark* xiv. 1, 2.)

3 At the same time Satan, who had set them to work, stirred up the corruptions and covetousness of *Judas Iscariot*, one of the twelve apostles, and drew him into a treacherous design against his Lord ; (see the note on *John* xiii. 27.) and it pleased God to permit it, that by the over-rulings of a wise and holy providence, he, who was the true paschal Lamb, might die at the very time of the passover, and before many witnesses.

4 Accordingly this base and perfidious disciple, knowing where to find the chief priests, and the captains of the temple, whom they had called in to their assistance, went and proffered his service, by making a proposal about his own privately and effectually betraying Christ into their hands.

5 And they no sooner heard this, but were mightily pleased, and readily accepted the offer, it exactly falling in with their own scheme ; and to encourage and bind him to a performance of this project, they agreed to give him a sum of money, to the value of thirty shekels of silver. (*Matth.* xxvi. 15. see the note there.)

6 And, though this offer was of no more than the law appointed to be given for a slave, (*Exod.* xxi. 32.) this fordid, covetous, and vile-spirited wretch struck a bargain, and engaged to do his utmost to deliver Jesus into their hands, not doubting but he should be able to accomplish the horrid design : And from that time forward, he watched for an opportunity of letting them know the place of Christ's retirement, that they might privately come upon him, when none of the people should be present to make an uproar, or attempt his rescue.

7 Then came on the first day of unleavened bread, (*Matth.* xxvi. 17.) * on which the Jews were obliged by the law to kill the paschal lamb, in order to their

N O T E.

* It is observable that our Lord, who was typified by the paschal lamb, suffered at this passover for the redemption of his people ; and was seized on the very day (the fifteenth of the month *Nisan*) on which *Israel* were delivered out of *Egypt*. (*Numb.* xxxiii. 3.)

their eating it at the evening, which belonged to the following day.

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

8 And as our Lord came to fulfil all righteousness, he ordered two of his disciples, *Peter* and *John* by name, to go before him into *Jerusalem*, and there to get every thing ready for the passover, which he designed to celebrate in the city, together with his disciples, whom he had taken under his care and charge as his family.

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

9 And as they had no dwelling of their own there, they desired him to let them know at what house he would please to have them get things ready for that service.

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

10 And for a demonstration of his own foreknowledge and government of all events, as well as for their direction, he gave them this token, saying, When ye are got into the city, observe a man, whom ye will meet with, carrying a pitcher of water; and whatsoever house he goes into, follow him thither. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvi. 18.)

11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

11 And as soon as ye enter the house, tell the honest man who keeps it, that I, your Lord and Master, sent you to ask him for a proper room for me and my disciples, to eat the paschal lamb together.

12 And he shall shew you a large upper-room furnished: there make ready.

12 And ye need not fear his being offended, or his refusing you a suitable accommodation; for as soon as ye have told him this, he will immediately, without making any difficulty of the matter, conduct you to a large chamber, which is proper for your purpose: There prepare all that is needful in order to our celebrating that ordinance.

13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

13 Accordingly these two disciples, believing the words he had spoken, went, and found that every circumstance punctually answered his prediction; and in that room they made every thing ready against his arrival to eat the passover.

14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

14 And when, after sun-set, the latter evening came on, which was the time appointed in the law for the *Jews* to eat the paschal lamb, (see the note on *Matth.* xxvi. 20.) Jesus came to this house, and sat down with his twelve apostles to supper.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.

15 And whilst he was sitting with them round the table, he said unto them, I have most earnestly looked and longed for the time in which I might eat this my last passover with you before my death: I know my bitterest sufferings are now just at hand, by which I shall finish the great work of redemption; and such is my delight to do my Father's will, that I have as eagerly wished for this time of fulfilling it, as if no terrors were to attend it; and I am glad that it is

now so near, and that I have this opportunity of freely opening my heart, * and giving you some useful and comfortable counsel alone, just before I am to bleed and die for you, and to be taken from you.

16 For I say unto you, I will not anymore eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

16 For I assure you, that I shall never have an opportunity of eating another passover with you, till its types and figures shall be really accomplished in me, the true paschal Lamb, and their substance or antitype shall take place in that gospel-kingdom, which I am come to set up, and in which I will institute another ordinance to supercede this; nor till at length we shall delightfully commemorate, in the kingdom of glory, that greater redemption from sin and wrath by my death, which was typified by the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt*.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves.

17 And Christ, as was usually done by the master of the family at this feast, took a cup of wine into his hand, and gave thanks in a solemn manner to God his Father; and then drinking part of it, delivered the rest to his disciples, ordering them to hand it round, and partake of it in their turns.

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

18 For, said he, I again tell you, that I shall never have an opportunity of drinking the paschal cup any more, till this divine institution shall be superceded by a redemption from all spiritual and eternal evils, and by another ordinance in the gospel-state, to commemorate it, which was prefigured by that deliverance of *Israel*, in remembrance of which the passover was appointed, and has been observed to this day; and from henceforth I will rejoice with you in no other salvation, than that which ye shall enjoy with me for ever in the kingdom of glory. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvi. 29.)

19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

19 As soon as the paschal supper was ended, our Lord again took bread into his hands; and, setting it apart by thanksgiving and prayer for a religious purpose, he broke and distributed it among his disciples †, saying, (*1 Cor.* xi. 24.) This is what I appoint to be henceforth the memorial of my body's being broken, by terrible sufferings in your stead, as freely given up to death for your redemption, and made over to you for salvation: From this time onward to my second coming, eat ye bread, with faith, thankfulness,

N O T E S.

* It is observable, that at this time he delivered those excellent discourses to them, which follow in this chapter, and in the thirteenth and fourteenth of *John*; to which he also added those in the fifteenth and sixteenth of that Evangelist, as soon as he went out of the house to the mount of *Olivet*.

† He did not stand at an altar to offer a sacrifice to God, that his disciples might adore the bread; but he sat at a common table, and set it apart to sacred use, that they might take and eat it. See the note on *Mark* xiv. 22.

thankfulness, and joy, in perpetual remembrance of my dying for you, even as ye have hitherto eat the passover, in commemoration of *Israel's* deliverance from * *Egyptian* miseries.

20 Likewise also for the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

20 In like manner, after the paschal supper, and after eating bread in this new institution, he took a cup of wine in his hand †; and, having likewise solemnly set this apart for sacred use by thanksgiving and prayer, he gave it to his disciples, saying, Drink ye all of this: (*Mat. xxvi. 27.*) For I appoint that, from this time forward, your drinking wine, in this ordinance, shall be a perpetual memorial of the confirmation of the new covenant by my blood, as shed for the remission of your sins, instead of drinking wine, at the paschal supper, in commemoration of *Israel's* great deliverance ‡.

21 But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

21 But while they were celebrating the passover ||, (*Matth. xxvi. 21.* and *Mark xiv. 18.*) Jesus, knowing the most secret design of *Judas's* heart against him, took an opportunity to give them an alarming hint about it, saying, Behold, one of you, my most intimate and familiar friends, who are now sitting with me at table, will perfidiously betray me into the hands of mine enemies, according to that ancient prophecy, (*Psal. xli. 9.*) *Mine own familiar friend, which did eat of my bread, has lift up his heel against me.*

22 And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but wo unto that

22 And to tell you the plain truth, I, the Messiah, am just now going freely, and not by constraint, to the place, where I shall be apprehended in order to my last sufferings and death, according to the de-

terminate

N O T E S.

* As Christ had just now celebrated the paschal supper, which was called the passover; so, in the like sacramental language, he calls this bread his body: And this circumstance of itself was sufficient to prevent any mistake, as if this bread were his real body, any more than the paschal lamb was really the passover. See the note on *Matth. xxvi. 25.*

† Here is an undeniable figure, whereby the cup is put for the wine in the cup; and this is called the new testament in Christ's blood, which could not possibly mean, that it was the new testament itself, but only the seal of it, and the sign or memorial of that blood which was shed to confirm it.

‡ This appears to me to be a plain and easy account of the nature and design of this institution; and effectually overthrows the *Papish* doctrine of transubstantiation, which is contrary to the very nature of a memorial, as well as is full

of all imaginable absurdities, and direct contradictions.

|| It seems, by the way of the evangelists *Matthew* and *Mark's* placing and expressing Christ's discourse on this occasion, as if it was at the paschal supper, and not at the Lord's supper, that he gave this notice: For they both represent this intimation as made while they were eating the paschal supper, and bring it in before our Lord's proceeding to the institution of his supper: And they tell us, that he notified the person who would betray him, by saying that it was *he who dipped his hand with him in the dish*, which could relate to no other than the paschal supper, (*Matth. xxvi. 21, 23.* and *Mark xiv. 18, 20.*) And *Luke* himself here expresses it by Christ's saying, that the traitor's hand was *with him on the table*, which seems to refer rather to the manner of eating the passover, than the Lord's supper. See the note on *Mark xiv. 20.*

that man by whom he is betrayed.

23 And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

24 And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

25 And he said unto them, The Kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and

terminate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and various prophecies in the Old Testament, concerning me: But, though the wickedness of the traitor will be over-ruled, by the wisdom of God, to accomplish his own most gracious, holy, and eternal purpose for the redemption of the church; this is no excuse for that man's sin, who acts upon the worst of principles, without any knowledge of, or intention to fulfil this purpose; and therefore the most terrible of all woes belong unto, and shall be inflicted upon him, who, under a cloak of discipleship and friendship, will treacherously deliver me up to my crucifiers.

23 Upon Christ's giving so plain and moving a hint as this, all the disciples, except Judas, were shocked and grieved to think, that any among them should ever go into so base a villany against their Lord; they were humbly jealous of their own hearts, lest they should deceive them; and were exceeding solicitous to clear themselves, and to know who it was that should be guilty of this horrible wickedness, every one of them saying, Lord is it I? (*Matth.* xxvi. 22.)

24 A little before this time likewise, the disciples, having entertained carnal notions about Christ's kingdom, discovered great emulation, and entered into warm debates, which of them should have the highest posts of trust and honour under him; one and another pretending that the pre-eminence belonged to himself, either on account of his superior age, or talents, or interest in their Master's favour.

25 And * our Lord gave them a gentle reproof for it, saying, In the kingdoms of this world, among the heathens, who have no higher views than what relate to the present life, every one is aiming to be uppermost; kings and emperors are exceeding ambitious of authority and power over their subjects, and over one another; and they that have the greatest interest, influence, and power, and the largest purse, are most highly honoured, and readily submitted to; and in all this they would fain pass for common benefactors.

26 But such a temper and such views must not be indulged among you, the subjects of my kingdom, the nature and design of which is spiritual: If therefore any would be great and eminent under me, whatsoever

N O T E.

* I see no absurdity in supposing that our blessed Lord, upon washing his disciples feet, reminded them of his late discourse to them against aiming at pre-eminence: (*Matth.* xx. 25,—28. and

Mark x. 42,—45.) And this naturally accounts for *Luke's* placing this part of the history in a different order from those Evangelists.

and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

soever his standing, privileges, or attainments may be, he must not aim at worldly pomp and authority, but must be willing to condescend to persons of low degree, and submit to the meanest offices of love and kindness; and must labour to promote their edification, and help their joy, as if he himself were the youngest among his brethren, and were indeed their servant.

27 For ye should learn of me, who am meek and lowly of heart: Which is most honourable, he who sits at table, and is waited upon; or he who stands, and waits upon him? Ye will readily agree, that the pre-eminence belongs to the former of these: But I, your Lord and Master, am so far from taking state upon myself, or indulging mine own ease, that I have submitted to the form of a servant, and performed all offices of condescension, love, and service to you, as if I were your inferior*. If therefore ye would be truly great in my kingdom, follow my example in all possible condescension, meekness, and kindness towards one another, as there may be opportunities and occasions for them.

28 Ye have hitherto attended me in my trials, abasement, and sufferings, wherein ye have seen nothing like the pomp and glory of this world, or any affectation of it; nor have I given you any promises relating to it; and yet ye have not been discouraged from abiding with me: Go on then, notwithstanding the further sufferings ye may see in me, and undergo yourselves, to maintain your adherence to me, and the interests of my kingdom, in expectation of what is every way better than all the riches and grandeur of this life.

29, 30 And as my Father has appointed to me, in my office-character, a spiritual kingdom on earth, and a glorious kingdom on high†: I, in like manner, appoint unto you honours and blessings, of a spiritual nature, in my gospel-kingdom here, and in heaven hereafter; that ye may have the dignity and delight of intimate communion with me, like the nobles of a kingdom, who are admitted to eat and drink with their prince at his table; and that ye may have the honour and authority of publishing and enforcing the laws

N O T E S.

* It seems as if Christ was sitting at table when he spoke these words, and that immediately afterwards he rose and washed his disciples feet; an account of which we have, *John* xiii. 4, 5.

† These expressions seem to be primarily applicable to the twelve apostles, and

secondarily to all Christ's servants and disciples, whose spiritual powers, honours, and delights, are here represented in figurative terms, with respect to their advancement in the kingdom of grace here, and in the kingdom of glory hereafter.

laws of my kingdom on earth, to bind the consciences of all the tribes of *Israel*, and of publicly approving of my sentence upon them, and consenting to it as righteous, in the final judgment.

31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat :

31 And yet, to humble them for their contentions about dignities, our blessed Lord forewarned them of the offence which they would take at his approaching sufferings ; (*Mat. xxvi. 31.*) and, turning to *Peter*, he spoke to him, and by him to them all, saying with great earnestness, *Simon, Simon* *, attend to what I am going to tell you : The devil has an evil design upon (*υπερως*) you and the rest of my disciples ; and, being exceedingly desirous to have you all in his power, has asked leave to search and shake you, like wheat, when it is winnowed ; and, in a very little time, he will take advantage, from my sufferings and death, to hurry and fright you, that ye may fling up your profession, faith, and hope, and may forsake and reject me.

32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not ; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

32 But, as I know that his fiercest assaults and greatest prevalence will be on thee, *Peter*, I particularly assure thee of my having prayed for thee, that how terribly soever thy faith may be shaken, it may not be utterly and finally destroyed : And when thou shalt be recovered, by a sort of second conversion, from thy approaching fall, see that thou improve thine own experience for the counsel and caution of thy fellow-Christians and ministers, against temptation, and for their relief and comfort under it, and restoration after they may have been overcome by it.

33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

33 *Peter* replied with too much self-confidence, though with an honest heart, which meant as he said, Lord, I fear no temptations of Satan ; but am prepared for all events, and fully resolved to stand by thee, and take my suffering lot with thee, though it should be unto imprisonment, and death itself : Be my trials ever so great, I never will desert or disown thee.

34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice

34 Then, to warn him of the deceitfulness of his own heart, our Lord said, Notwithstanding all these high professions of resolution and courage, zeal and friendship, I tell thee, *Peter* †, that this very day on which we are now entered, even before the time
of

N O T E S.

* Christ here seems to call him by his former name *Simon*, and not *Peter*, which signifies a Rock, because what he was going to say to him was an argument of his infirmity, and not of his stability, or strength : And here is a plain allusion to the history of *Job*, chap. i. ii.

† Christ hereby shewed that he knew

Peter better than *Peter* knew himself ; and that, to humble him, he would suffer him to fall very foully, though he had prayed that his faith should not utterly fail. See the notes on *Matth. xxvi. 34.* and *Mark xiv. 30.* for reconciling the different ways, in which the Evangelists expressed the time here referred to.

thrice deny that thou knowest me.

35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

36 Then said he unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

of cock-crowing in the morning, thou wilt positively deny, three times over, that thou ever hadst the least acquaintance with me.

35 And, that he might still further lead his disciples to an expectation of a near approach of dangers and sufferings, he reminded them that, when he had formerly (*Matth. x. 9, 10.*) sent them forth to preach the gospel, he ordered them not to make any provision for themselves of money, or victuals, or of more shoes or clothes than they had on, or of weapons for their defence; but to depend entirely upon Providence for their supply and safety: And he asked them, whether, when they went out, in those circumstances, they ever suffered a want of any thing that was needful for them? to which they replied, No, none at all.

36 Then said he unto them, But now things will immediately take such a perilous turn, and ye will be so friendless and exposed, that ye had need have both money and food before-hand for the necessaries of life, and swords too for your defence against the enemies that are coming upon you: Yea, your danger will be so exceeding great, that ye would be glad even to part with your coats on your backs for a sword to defend you against it*.

37 For I tell you, that there are still ancient prophecies, concerning the Messiah's ignominious and bitter sufferings and death, which must be fulfilled in me; as particularly, that he must be looked upon, and treated as a transgressor, and must suffer and die under all the infamy of that character, in company with the vilest malefactors: For the time is now just at hand, wherein, according to God's eternal counsel, all divine predictions relating to my *bearing the sin of many*, (*Isa. liii. 12.*) must have their complete accomplishment, that I may finish the work which my Father gave me to do, and that all may end well for me and them.

38 Upon this the disciples, understanding Christ to have spoken literally of using the sword for defence against their enemies, said to him, Lord, we are ready to obey thy orders; see, here are two swords, amongst us: Shall we take care to get more, that we

H h 2

may

N O T E.

* It seems as if what Christ said, about getting swords, were to be understood not literally, as an order to buy them, but emblematically, as an intimation of dangers coming on, which would be so extreme, that the disciples had need be well provided against them, and would think that they could not repel

them, but by the power of the sword: For he afterwards said, (*ver. 38.*) that *two swords were enough*, which could not be true, if their armed enemies were to be resisted by force; and when *Peter* used a sword in that way, Christ reproved him for it. (*Matth. xxvi. 52.*)

may all be armed against any assault upon thee or us? But he having intended only to intimate, by the symbol of the sword, how great their danger was, replied, These two are sufficient to answer the instructive design for which I mentioned them: Let me therefore hear no more of your providing such sort of weapons for your defence and victory, as if my kingdom were of this world*.

39 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

39 After these discourses Christ went out of the room, where he had eaten the paschal lamb, and celebrated the Lord's supper; and, night being come on, he, according to custom, retired to the mount of *Olives*; and all his disciples accompanied him thither, except *Judas*, who before had gone from supper in order to his betraying him into the hands of the *Jews*. (John xiii. 30.)

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

40 And as soon as he arrived at a place called *Gethsemane*, (Matth. xxvi. 36.) which was at the foot of the mount of *Olives*, he found his disciples were heavy for sleep; and, to rouse them, said, This is not a time to indulge yourselves in sloth, while danger is so nigh at hand: Beg earnestly of God to keep you from, or in, the distressing trials, which are coming upon you, that ye may not be hurried into sin by them, but may be supported, and enabled to behave in a becoming manner under them, and carried safely through them.

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.

41, 42 Then having taken with him three of his disciples, (Matth. xxvi. 37. and Mark xiv. 33.) and having afterwards retired from these, to the distance of about a stone's cast, for secret prayer, he kneeled down, and with all humility and reverential fear, and with earnestness and tears, addressed his Father, (*Heb. v. 7.*) saying, O my heavenly Father, the near view I have of the terrible sufferings and death which lie just before me, and what I now begin to feel from the weight of thy hand, and the powers of darkness, is so shocking to my human nature, that, were it consistent with the eternal counsels of thy will, relating to thy glory, and the salvation of thy people, I should be glad to escape them: Nevertheless, I freely bow, and submit to thy disposal, renouncing all the will of the flesh, and desiring that not this will of mine,

N O T E.

It is too curious to inquire how these disciples came to have two swords among them: But it may be sufficient to say, that it was providentially ordered, to give our Lord an opportunity of using this emblem, and of leading his disciples to understand his meaning in it: And some tell

us, that it was customary among the *Galileans* to wear swords when they travelled, that they might defend themselves against the robbers and assassins which infested their roads; and as this was lawful, Christ might very well allow of it in his disciples, though he wore none himself.

mine, but that thy most holy will may be done, whatsoever it cost me.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

43 And immediately thereupon, an angel was dispatched from heaven, to encourage him in his work, by intimations that the issue of his sufferings should be to his own and his Father's glory, and that they should be crowned with a full reward.

44 And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

44 However, as his lively apprehensions of what he was to endure were enlarged; and as his soul then began to feel the terrors of the Almighty, that were due to the iniquities of his people*, his consternation and horror increased; upon which, prostrating himself on the ground, he prayed with still more vehement fervency, to the like purpose as he had before: And the agonizing conflicts and terrors of his mind were so amazingly distressing, that, though it was a cold night, and he was lying on the ground, his blood and animal spirits were thrown into such a violent fermentation, as opened the pores of his body in an extraordinary manner, and forced their way through them in a bloody sweat, which, being thickened by the cold, fell down in clods to the ground.

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

45 And after he had spent some time in these great conflicts, and in earnest supplications and prayers, he got up from his prostration, and returned to his disciples, who, he found, were all asleep, it not only being very late, but their spirits being also exhausted by grief, at what he had told them. (*ver.* 36, 37, 40. and *Matth.* xxvi. 38.)

46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

46 Then, reproving them in a gentle manner for their own caution, he said, Why do ye suffer yourselves to sleep at such a time as this, wherein I am so full of sorrow, and ye yourselves are so near to danger? Is this your love to me, and your care for yourselves? get up, and pray for help against this unseasonable drowsiness, and against the evils that are just at hand; lest ye be surpris'd unawares, and be overcome by the approaching trials.

47 And while he yet spake, behold, a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them,

47 And whilst our Lord was thus talking to them, behold, the very thing he was hinting came upon them; There immediately appeared a large party of soldiers, and of servants and officers, and others (*ver.* 52.) from the sanhedrim, all armed with swords and

N O T E.

* As their iniquities were laid upon Christ, and it pleased the Lord himself to bruise him, and to awaken the sword of justice against him, *Iſa.* liii. 5,—12. and *Zech.* xiii. 7. So, unless our great Lord had a present view and sensation of this, 'tis to me unaccountable, that he should be in such terrible distress before his ex-

ternal sufferings came upon him; especially considering, that, at this very time, an angel was sent from heaven to strengthen him, and that so many martyrs have thought of, and gone through as great corporal sufferings with undaunted bravery and triumph.

them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

45 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

49 When they which were about him, saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

51 And Jesus answered, and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

52 Then Jesus said

and staves; (*Matth.* xxvi. 47. and *John* xviii. 3.) at the head of which, that perfidious wretch *Judas*, one of his twelve apostles, appeared as their leader; and, according to the signal he had before agreed to give them, (*Matth.* xxvi. 48.) he marched directly up to Jesus, and saluted him with a kiss. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvi. 49.)

48 But, though Christ did not go about to avoid his sufferings, as knowing that the time appointed for them was then come, he reprimanded the traitor in such a meek and melting, and yet close and cutting manner, as one would think must have affected the hardest heart, saying, What, *Judas!* one of my old and intimate friends and acquaintance, who hast had so many proofs of my divine authority, goodness, care, and kindness, and never found any evil in me, Dost thou come hither to betray me into the hands of my implacable enemies, that they may cruelly destroy me? And what, art thou capable of doing this under the form of friendship, and by the tenderest symbol of love and peace? What canst thou think, *Judas*, of such aggravated hypocrisy, ingratitude, and treachery as this? or how couldst thou find in thine heart to be guilty of it?

49 Now when the disciples saw the design upon which this multitude came, with *Judas* at their head, and that they were about to seize their Lord; some of them asked him, whether they should draw upon the enemy, and use their swords in his defence? (*ver.* 38.)

50 And one of them *Peter* by name, being in too much heat and haste to wait for an answer, immediately drew, and aimed at the head of *Malchus*, one of the high-priest's servants; but, missing his stroke, cut off only his right ear. (*John* xviii. 10.)

51 But (*δε*) Jesus observing this, rebuked *Peter* for being so rash; (*Matth.* xxvi. 52.) and then, to appease his enemies, he said to them, Do not resent, but pass by this injury and affront, which one of my disciples hath offered without my order, and which I will immediately repair*: And thereupon, to shew his divine power and goodness, he touched the wounded man's ear, and instantly healed it.

52 After Jesus had shewn all this meekness, mercy,

N O T E.

* Some think that our Lord spoke to his disciples to be quiet, and make no further opposition, when he said *επιεισετε μου, permit, or suffer ye thus far*: But his healing the wounded ear immediately upon his saying these words, makes it probable that (as Dr *Whitby* observes)

he spoke to his enemies, to pacify them, that they might not revenge the affront, which they had so far suffered from *Peter's* hand; and he hereby shewed the excellence of his Spirit, who would forgive and heal his enemies, above that of *Peter's*, who wanted to destroy them.

said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders which were come to him, Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?

53 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.

54 Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 But a certain maid

cy, and power, he addressed himself to the chief priests and captains * of the temple, and to the elders of the people, who came along with them to apprehend him; and, expostulating with them, said, What means your coming armed with swords and clubs, in this manner to seize me, as if I were some desperate rogue, who must be taken by main force? Have I ever behaved like such a person, or appeared with any guard about me?

53 When I was so often, day after day, publicly teaching in the temple, ye had all desirable opportunities to seize me, if ye knew any evil by me; and yet none of you ever offered, in such an hostile manner, to make me your prisoner then: But I know that the time appointed of the Father, and foretold in prophecy, (*Mark* xiv. 49.) for my sufferings is now come; and therefore his over-ruling providence has taken off the restraints, by which he hitherto withheld you: This is the season in which he has determined to let you have your will against me, and to suffer the infernal powers of darkness to stir you up, as their instruments, to cut me off: I therefore readily acquiesce, submit, and yield myself up into your hands, and am prepared for the worst.

54 Then the soldiers, taking Jesus into custody, led him away like a criminal; and, according to their orders, carried him to the palace of *Caiaphas*, the high-priest, where, though it was so late at night, the scribes and elders of the people were gathered together, ready to sit in judgment upon him. (*Matth.* xxvi. 57.) And, the rest of the disciples flying, *Peter* followed him at a considerable distance, to see what would become of him.

55 And, some time after the company entered into the house, he got admittance too, where he found the servants sitting round a fire, which, the night being cold, they had kindled at one end of the hall to warm themselves, while the counsel were examining Jesus at the other; and *Peter* sat down with them †, hoping by that means to conceal himself, and to hear how things went with his Lord.

56 But there was a maid-servant of the high-priest's, who

N O T E S.

* Some suppose that these captains of the temple were captains of the several watches which the priests and scribes kept there; and others, that they were captains of the *Roman* soldiers, which usually kept garrison in the tower of *Antonia*, but, at the three great festivals, were placed at the porches of the temple to keep the peace.

† The evangelist *John* says, (*chap.* xviii. 18.) the servants stood there, and *Peter* stood with them. Some of them, it seems, were standing, and others sitting; and *Peter* being restless in his own mind, was likewise restless in his posture, sometimes sitting, and at others standing among them.

maid beheld him, as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

59 And about the space of one hour after, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him; for he is a Galilean.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him.
Before

who observed him, as he sat in company with the rest round about the fire; and, looking wistly at him, said, I am strongly persuaded that this man was one of the friends and followers of Jesus of Galilee.

57 At this, Peter's courage failed him; and being full of fear and surprize, he, in all hurry and confusion, denied the charge, saying with an air of confidence and resentment, Woman, you do me a great deal of wrong, I am a stranger to him.

58 Soon after this, a man * in the company looked at Peter, and taxed him home, saying, Whatsoever you pretend, you certainly are one of the followers of Jesus: But (δὲ) Peter, still full of surprize and fear, and under the power of temptation, denied it again, saying, Man, I tell you, it is no such thing, I do not belong to him, nor do I know any thing of him.

59 And, within the compass of about an hour after this, another of the standers-by was very peremptory in affirming, that Peter was one of the followers of Jesus of Galilee: For, said he, I know by his brogue that he is a Galilean; and besides this, he said he had seen him with Jesus in the garden, when he cut off the ear of one of the high priest's servants, to whom this person was related. (John xviii. 26.)

60 Then Peter, in the midst of the utmost terror and consternation, resolving still to brave it out, (as persons are too prone to do, when once they have incurred themselves with a lie) said, with still greater vehemence, and with shocking imprecations and oaths †, (Mark xiv. 71.) I tell you, man, I know nothing of the matter. And no sooner had he this third time denied that he knew Christ, but he heard a cock crow; it being early in the morning, which, by way of eminence, was called the time of cock-crowing. (See the note on Mat. xxvi. 34.)

61 Immediately upon this, the Lord Jesus, who was standing before the high priest, with his back toward Peter, and by his divine omniscience knew all that had passed, turned himself about, and in much mercy looked upon him, to reprove, shame, and humble him; and this was with such power, that it melted

N O T E S.

* We are told (Mat. xxvi. 71. and Mark xiv. 69.) it was another maid that charged Peter, when he, the second time, denied Christ; whereas Luke here speaks of this person as another man: But it is to be observed, that both Matthew and Mark say, the maid spoke concerning Peter to them that were there, or to them that stood by; whereas Luke mentions a

second's speaking directly to Peter himself, and that probably upon what he had heard this woman say concerning him; which takes off the seeming contradiction in these accounts.

† He probably heard volleys of oaths in the company he then kept; and, to render himself the less suspected, thought of confirming his denial in their own way.

Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice.

62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

63 And the men that held Jesus, mocked him, and smote him.

64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?

65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

66 And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes, came together, and led him into their council,

67 Saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe.

68 And if I also ask you, you will not answer me, nor let me go.

ed him into repentance: Then *Peter* instantly called to mind the warning which his Lord had given him, when he said, Before the time of cock-crowing is past, thou wilt three times over peremptorily deny me. (*ver.* 34.)

62 And *Peter*, finding how sadly this was verified, got out of the high-priest's hall, as fast as he could, that he might give free vent to the grief and anguish of his spirit, in some private place by himself; and there he poured out floods of penitential tears, with bitter lamentations and bewailings of his self-confidence, weakness, and wickedness, and of his shameful ingratitude to his dear Lord.

63 Jesus, in the mean-while, being under arraignment, in the high-priest's hall, the *subjects gathered themselves together against him*; (*Psal.* xxxv. 15.) the high-priest's servants, who had him in custody, insulted and derided, boxed and buffeted him*.

64 And, among other indignities, they hoodwinked him, and then, like children at play, sportfully smote him on the face, and, jeering his prophetic office, said, Come, you who pretend to know all things, tell who it is among us that strikes you.

65 And to these they added abundance of other blasphemous affronts, to ridicule and revile him, as if he were the fool of a play, and to abuse him with spittings and buffetings, and other rude and scornful barbarities, as if he were the most odious and contemptible wretch upon earth.

66 And a great part of the night having been spent in examinations, and in ludicrous and cruel treatment of our Lord, the *Jewish elders*, chief priests, and interpreters of the law, assembled together in full council, after a short recess, very early in the morning, and had him brought before them for further examination. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 1.)

67, 68 Saying, Do you indeed profess to be the true Messiah, who is the Son of God? (*Matth.* xxvi. 63.) Tell us plainly whether you do avow and stand to this or not. But (*&c.*) he replied, If I should affirm and demonstrate it ever so plainly, such is the obstinacy and malice of your prejudiced hearts, that ye would not believe me: And if I should ask you, what ye can object against the proofs I have already given of it, ye would neither give me a fair answer, nor agree to my being discharged; it is therefore to little purpose to say any thing to you about it.

69 How-

N O T E.

* This sort of ill usage is placed after no inconvenience in supposing that he was abused in this manner, both before and after his condemnation.

69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

69 However, this I will tell you, I, who am truly man, shall ere long be enthroned in majesty and glory at my Father's right hand, and my great power and authority will appear afterwards with undeniable evidence, in the destruction of your city, temple, and nation, and in the amazing progress of my gospel; and at last in arraigning you and the whole world at my awful bar: Then all your process against me now shall be tried over again; and ye shall be convicted, to your cost, that I am the Christ of God.

70 Hereupon they all cried out with tumultuous rage, What then, do you indeed set up for that Messiah and king of *Israel*, who is the Son of God*? And he abiding by his confession, though he knew he should die for it, replied, I do own that I am he, according to the just construction which ye make of my words †.

71 And as soon as they heard this, they, like a council that pretends to infallibility, cried out with insolence, and without asking how he could make his assertion good, or shewing the least remorse, or dread of his great power, (see the note on *Matth.* xxvi. 66.) Here is evidence enough for us, as an ecclesiastical court, to condemn him upon; why should we inquire after, or stand to hear any other witnesses? He has, by his own confession, thoroughly proved enough against himself; for we all have heard direct blasphemy from his own mouth.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

It is hard to say which is most to be wondered at, the lengths of wickedness, that the corruption of mankind, under the intigation of the devil, will carry them to, or the distress and ignominy, that Christ suffered for sin. Covetousness and treachery, infidelity and hardness of heart, malice and rage know no bounds, unless God restrains them; witness the desperate malignity, with which they vented themselves in betraying and conspiring against, apprehending and condemning, reviling and abusing the Son of God. And O what terrible agonies did he undergo in his soul, what fatigues in his body, what rude insults and ridicule in his name and character! But with what matchless patience and resignation to his Father's will, and meekness and compassion to his enemies, did he behave under them! And how amazingly did Infinite Wisdom over-rule the hour and power of darkness, for the accomplishment of ancient prophecies, to the glory of God, and the salvation of the Church!—Christ our passover was sacrificed for us; and under the gospel-state we have a better deliverance to commemorate, than that of *Israel* out of *Egypt*:
O

N O T E S.

* The council's question whether he were the Son of God, occasioned by his having spoke of himself as the Son of man, who should sit on the right hand of the power of God, shews that both these were known characters of the Messiah; one taken from his human, and the other from his divine nature; and that to own him, either as the Son of God, or the Son of man, was to own him as the Messiah, who was to be both God and man.
† If we compare this passage with *Matth.* xxvi. 64. and *Mark* xiv. 62. it appears that ye say that I am, and ye have said, are terms of the same import in the Jewish phraseology, with saying, I am: So that Christ hereby plainly declared himself to be in truth the Son of God.

O with what thankfulness, solemnity, and joy, should all his disciples profess their faith in a redeeming Saviour, and remember his dying love, in affection to his person, in obedience to his authority, and for the honour of his name! He will commune with them in ordinances of his own institution here, till he receives them to nearer intimacies and delights in his heavenly kingdom; and they who faithfully abide with him, in days of the greatest trial, shall lack nothing that is needful for them in this world, and shall sit on thrones of glory with him in that which is to come: But, as all that make a profession of Christ are not his true disciples, what a godly jealousy should we have over ourselves, lest we prove treacherous to him, or have ambitious or temporal views, unsuitable to the humility and spirituality, that belong unto his children! O the danger of self-confidence, and of entering into temptation; and the need of watchfulness, and earnest prayer for help against them! But, after all, the security of true believers lies in Christ's intercession for them; that, how much soever their faith may be shaken, it may not utterly fail: And when any of us have found its powerful influence for our recovery, how should we improve our own experience for the cautioning and strengthening of our brethren! —How great is the difference between the sins of believers, and others! They, like *Peter*, fall into sin by surprise, and under the hurry of temptation, contrary to their habitual dispositions and designs; and, a remembrance of it cuts them to the heart, and makes some of them weep bitterly: But others, like *Judas*, and the high-priest and council, commit iniquity with deliberation and choice, and persist in it with obstinacy and hardness of heart. And how far are they from all hope of recovery, and from sincere inquiries, who ask after Jesus, and his doctrine, only that they may strengthen their own and others prejudices against him! But he will hereafter appear, in all his majesty and glory, to the confusion of those that despise and reject him, as well as to the unspeakable joy of those that believe in him.

C H A P. XXIII.

Christ's trial before Pilate, 1,—5. His examination before Herod, 6,—12. His further trial before Pilate, 12,—25. His crucifixion, 26,—38. The different behaviour of the malefactors toward him, 39,—43. His death, and the miracles that attended it, 44,—49. And his burial, 50,—56.

TEXT.

AND the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.

PARAPHRASE.

THE council having condemned our blessed Lord in their ecclesiastical court, as a blasphemer, and finding themselves under a difficulty about their own power of putting him to death; (see the note on *John* xviii. 31.) they proceeded to bind him, as a malefactor; (*Matth.* xxvii 2.) and, the whole multitude attending them, went with him directed to the judgment-hall, to impeach him of high crimes and misdemeanors before *Pontius Pilate*, who, under the Roman emperor, was then governor of *Judea*.

2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying, that he himself

2 And, that they might render him obnoxious to the state, they entered a charge against him as an impostor, pretending that they could prove him to be, not only a notorious deceiver, who misled the people into pernicious notions of religion, but likewise a seditious fellow, who endeavoured to raise insurrections against the government, by dissuading the people

himself is Christ a king.

3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And he answered him, and said, Thou sayest it.

4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests, and to the people, I find no fault in this man.

5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.

7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged

from paying any taxes to the emperor, and setting himself up as King of *Israel*, in opposition to *Tiberius Cæsar*, whom they, on this occasion, professed to acknowledge as their lawful and only sovereign. (*John* xix. 15.)

3 Upon their urging this, *Pilate* thought himself obliged, as the *Roman* governor, to take some notice of the matter; and therefore he put our Lord to the question, saying, Do you indeed, as they allège, profess to be the King of *Israel*? To which he replied, What you say is in a certain sense true. I do indeed own myself to be the Messiah, and so *Israel's* King; but not such a king as to interfere with *Cæsar's* civil authority, or to invade his rights, and disturb his government in a seditious manner, as they maliciously and falsely accuse me; for *my kingdom is not of this world*, (*John* xviii. 36.) but relates only to spiritual and religious concerns.

4 When *Pilate* had heard Christ's defence, he went out of the judgment-hall to the chief priests, scribes, elders, and all the people, who would not venture in, lest they should be defiled, (*John* xviii. 28.) and said, Whatsoever ye may have to charge him with, relating to the religious doctrines he preaches up among you, which do not fall under my cognifance as a civil magistrate, I cannot see, upon examination, that he asserts, or attempts any thing seditious, or injurious to the government; and therefore it does not belong to me to trouble myself any further about him.

5 And when the *Jews* perceived that *Pilate* was desirous to dismiss him, they cried out with the more vehemence and furious outrage, saying, What, see no fault in him! We insist upon it, and can prove it, that he has taken abundance of pains to raise insurrections among the people, by his rebellious principles, through all parts of our land; and has spread his dangerous notions wherever he has gone, even from his head-quarters in *Galilee* to *Jerusalem* itself*.

6 When *Pilate* heard them mention *Galilee*, he hoped he had a fair opportunity to get rid of Jesus; and therefore inquired whether it were true that he was a *Galilean*?

7 And finding that his most usual residence was in that country, and that he lately came from thence, *Pilate*

N O T E.

* They seem to have mentioned his beginning from *Galilee*, to stir up *Pilate* so much the more against him, because the *Galileans* were notorious for their inclinations to rebel; and *Judas* of *Galilee* had before appeared in that country, and incited the people to throw off the *Roman* yoke, telling them that paying tribute to *Cæsar* was a sign of slavery; the account of whom we have in *Acts* v. 37.

belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time.

8 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.

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

Pilate thought that the cognifance of this case might properly belong to *Herod*, who was then governor of *Galilee*, and at this very time was come up to the feaft at *Jerusalem*; and therefore *Pilate* immediately ordered *Jesus* to be carried before him, that he might ease himself of this troublesome affair: God over-ruling this circumstance, by his providence, to accomplish a remarkable prophecy. (*Pfal.* ii. 2.*)

8 And *Herod* was mightily pleased at the sight of *Jesus*: For he had long wished that it might come in his way to see him, because he had heard much of his fame in his own country; (*Matth.* xiv. 1.) and now he hoped that his curiosity would be gratified, by being an eye-witness of *Christ's* performing some wonderful work in his presence.

9 Accordingly he put several questions to our Lord, relating to the miracles that were reported to have been wrought by him, with intimations how desirous he was, that, if he could do any strange thing, he would oblige him so far as to let him see it: But as *Jesus* knew that *Herod's* desire was not from any good inclination or design, but merely to give himself and his courtiers a little diversion, that they might have something to talk of, he would neither prostitute his divine power to such a vain and ludicrous humour; nor reply to any questions that were put to him about it.

10 And as the chief priests and *Jewish* doctors had exhibited clamorous accusations against him to *Pilate*; so they followed him to *Herod*, and were as noisy, bold, and urgent in the same charges there, fiercely and severely accusing him of publishing infectious and treasonable principles, that they might awaken *Herod's* fears, lest the people of *Galilee*, as well as of *Judea*, should be thereby influenced to make insurrections, and disturb the civil government.

11 Then *Herod* finding that *Jesus* would neither satisfy his curiosity, nor answer for himself, he, and his soldiers, by his encouragement, treated the Lord of glory with disdain; (*εξουθενητας*) they making nothing of him, set him aside as a weak and silly wretch, who could neither do nor say any thing worth minding, and was rather to be despised than feared: And therefore, instead of inflicting any capital punishment upon him, he and his guard made their game of him, derided and insulted him, and, by way of scorn and mockery,

N O T E.

* This is expressly taken notice of as fulfilled, when *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, with the *Gentiles*, and the people of *Israel*, were gathered together against

Christ, to do whatsoever *God's* hand and counsel determined before to be done, *Acts* iv. 26, 27, 28.

mockery, put him into a gaudy dress, which resembled the purple robes of princes, to ridicule his kingly office; as if all his claims of that nature were a sham pretence; and, after all these vile abuses, *Herod* sent him back again to *Pilate* to do what he would with him.

12 And the same day *Pilate* and *Herod* were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.

13 And *Pilate*, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people,

14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him;

15 No, nor yet *Herod*: for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

16 I will therefore chastise him, and release *him*.

17 For of necessity

12 And the mutual messages and civilites, that passed on this occasion between *Pilate* and *Herod*, were the means of reconciling them, one to the other, who * for some time before had been at variance.

13, 14 Now *Jesus* being brought back from *Herod*, who had slighted the informations laid against him, and passed no sentence upon him, *Pilate* summoned together the chief priests and elders, with the rest of the council, and the principal persons among the *Jews*, that had appeared to accuse him, and said unto them, Ye have had a fair opportunity of bringing this man to his trial; he has been already before me under the charge of being a pretender to the *Jewish* crown, and a fomentor of tumults and insurrections among the people; and ye see that I have given you fair play, I have openly examined him, and heard all that ye have to say; but, upon the whole, I cannot find that ye have made good your allegations against him.

15 No, nor has any thing of this nature been found upon him even by *Herod* himself, who, being one of your own nation, is better acquainted with your principles, laws, and customs, than I am: For, to oblige you, I sent you to have the cause tried before him; and yet, see how this man's innocence appears! he has ordered nothing to be done to him, that carries the least intimation, as if he thought him to have deserved death.

16 Therefore, for your satisfaction, and to avoid the shedding of innocent blood, I will order him to be scourged as if he were a criminal, though not guilty of a capital offence; and then I will discharge him, at your request, in honour of the solemn festival, which is now returned. This he said to appease the clamour of the people, and to spare *Christ's* life in a way of as much complaisance to them, as possible.

17 For the custom of those times made it necessary, that,

N O T E.

* Their former quarrels had probably been, either about the extent of their jurisdiction and authority, or on account of emulations that were between them, or of some encroachment which one had made upon the other. And perhaps *Herod* thought *Pilate* had invaded his rights by putting to death the *Galileans*,

who were his subjects, when they came up to *Jerusalem* to offer sacrifice, which seems to be referred to in *Luke* xiii. 1. But now they forgot their former grudges, and were reconciled into the friendship of this world, which was enmity with God. (*Jam.* iv. 4.)

fitly he must release one unto them at the feast.

18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us *Barabbas* :

19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate therefore willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why? what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.

23 And they were intant with loud

that, at every return of the passover, the governor of *Judea* should gratify the *Jews* with the release of a prisoner, whom they should desire to be set free.

18 But, instead of being pacified with this proposal, the chief priests and elders persuaded the people by no means to hearken to it; and thereupon they all cried out, as with one voice, Let this man be hanged; away with him from the earth, as one not fit to live; we insist upon it, that, instead of him, you would favour us with the release of *Barabbas*.

19 Now this *Barabbas*, whom they preferred to the holy Jesus, was a notorious malefactor, and was then in prison for a dreadful riot at *Jerusalem*, in which he was one of the chiefs, and had been guilty of murder, as well as of robbery and plunder. (*John* xviii. 40.)

20 *Pilate* therefore finding, by this monstrously base and unworthy demand, that their furious outcries against Jesus proceeded from bitter malice and envy, was the more desirous, if possible, to set him at liberty; and expostulated with them again, persuading them to desist from their impetuous clamours, and to be satisfied with his being smartly corrected by scourging, which was a proper punishment for such as opposed their laws.

21 But they cried out with still more noise and fury, Crucify him, crucify him; let nothing short of that worst of deaths, which belongs to the vilest slaves, be inflicted upon him, who pretends to be our king.

22 And *Pilate* seeing still more thoroughly into their wickedness, and being loth to comply with it, argued with them again a third time, saying, Why do ye so tumultuously call upon me to order an innocent man to be crucified? What capital crime have ye been able to prove upon him? for my part, upon the strictest examination, I cannot see that, according to our law, he has done any thing for which he deserves to die, much less to be put to the infamous death of the cross: And therefore, if ye will be satisfied with it, I will (as I said before) order him to be scourged, and then discharge him*.

23 But, (ðs) instead of yielding to his arguments and entreaties, they grew more furious still; and, urging

N O T E.

* As *Peter*, a disciple of Christ, dishonoured him by denying him thrice, though he believed him to be the Son of God; so *Pilate*, a heathen, honoured Christ by owning him thrice to be innocent, though he did not believe in him: And it seems to me that it was after this

third plea for Christ, and before sentence was passed against him, that *Pilate* ordered him to be scourged, designing thereby to move the pity of the *Jews* toward him, and so to prevent their further insisting on his being crucified. See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 26.

loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified: and the voices of them, and of the chief priests, prevailed.

24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

25 And he released unto them, him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

26 And, as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.

27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

28 But Jesus, turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jeru-

ging him with repeated, loud, and tumultuous clamours, they proceeded to such insolence at length, as even to demand that he should condemn him to crucifixion: And the people, together with the chief priests and rulers, pressed him with such vehemence, and high threats, (*John* xix. 12.) that, though he believed Jesus to be innocent, he had not virtue enough to resist their unrighteous importunity, and to overcome his own fears of a further mutiny, and of being exposed to *Cæsar's* resentment.

24 And so *Pilate* yielding to what he took to be the necessity, as well as the iniquity of the times, passed sentence upon Christ, according to their request, though directly contrary to his own reason and conscience.

25 And to curry favour with the *Jews*, and go through stich with their dirty work, he, in violation of all right and justice, complied with all their demands, both in discharging that notorious villain, *Barabbas*, who was then in prison for a real and known riot and murder, and in condemning the sinless Jesus, and putting him into their power to see the sentence executed upon him. (*Matth.* xxvii. 26. See the notes there.)

26 Hereupon they, together with the *Roman* soldiers, led him as a criminal to be crucified: And though at first they obliged him to carry his own cross; (*John* xix. 17.) yet finding that, through the fatigues he had lately undergone, his natural spirits and strength began to fail, they were afraid of losing the cruel pleasure of seeing him publicly and shamefully executed; and therefore, meeting with one *Simon*, a *Cyrenian*, who was coming out of the country into the city, they seized upon him, and forced him to undergo the irksome drudgery of carrying Christ's cross after him to the place of execution. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 32.)

27 And, as they were going thither, vast multitudes of people crowded after him to be spectators of his crucifixion; and among others there were many women, who wept bitterly, as they went, to see a person of his innocence, worth, and usefulness, going to be put to so miserable and ignominious a death: Some of them being moved thereto by the common principles of humanity and compassion, others by the respect which his fame, or their own knowledge of him had raised in their minds toward him, and others by a peculiar affection to him.

28 But Jesus turning his head, and seeing the bitter lamentation of some that were near him, was moved with pity toward them, though he himself was in

Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

in such distressing circumstances, and said, Ye daughters of *Jerusalem*, my friends, do not weep and take on so much for me, who am entirely resigned to my Father's will in all these sufferings, and freely undergo them for his glory and the salvation of my people; but turn the tide of your sorrow into tears of lamentation, for yourselves, and your dear offspring, on account of the sins which, in a little time, will bring the heaviest judgments upon the inhabitants of your city, whether they be young or old.

29 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.

29 For, observe what I say, the days of God's vengeance hasten apace, in which he will execute such terrible wrath on this city and nation, for these and all their other crying abominations, that, instead of reckoning children a blessing, it will then be a sort of common proverb, Happy would it have been for us never to have been born, and happy are those women that never bore and nourished any children to be involved in the dreadful calamities which it would pierce their hearts to behold.

30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

30 Yea, this wicked people, in their anguish and despair, will then wish to be speedily cut off, and even buried alive under the ruins of their mountains, rather than be exposed to the further extreme miseries, which they will find to be unavoidable: And such as refuse to take refuge in the Messiah, shall, like those trembling and amazed sinners of old, (*Hos.* x. 8.) call in vain to the hills and mountains to screen and shelter them from the fierce anger of the Lord.

31 For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

31 For as dry wood is fitter for the flames than that which is green: So if these *Jerusalem* sinners bring such distress upon me, who am innocent, and have deserved no evil at their hands; how dreadfully will it be repaid upon themselves, who are laden with iniquity, as fuel fully prepared for wrath? If the *Romans* are suffered, by the instigation of these *Jews*, thus to abuse and put me to death, who have never done any thing to offend them; what fury will not God suffer, and even stir them up to shew, in the just punishment of this people, who will provoke both him and them? And if divine Justice proceeds with such severity against me, who have no guilt of my own, but am only come to be a sacrifice for the sins of others; what will become of those heinous transgressors themselves, whose iniquities will be upon their own heads, through their rejecting me?

32 And there were also two other malefactors led with him to be put to death.

32 Now to put the greater indignity upon Christ, which God over-ruled for the literal fulfilment of that ancient prophecy, *He was numbered with transgressors*, (*Isa.* liii. 12.) his enemies led him in company with two infamous malefactors, who lay under sentence

sentence of death for robbery, that he might be crucified together with them, and the people might be induced to think that his crimes were as great and injurious to the public as theirs.

33 And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors; one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

35 And the people stood beholding: and the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ the chosen of God.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him,

33 And when they arrived at mount *Calvary*, which signifies the place of a skull, (see the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 33.) there they nailed him through his hands and feet to the cross; and then set it up, between the two notorious thieves, they hanging one on each side of him, as if he were the worst criminal of the three. (See the second note on *Matth.* xxvii. 26.)

34 Then he discovered a most exemplary, compassionate, and gracious temper, even to his barbarous crucifiers, saying, Father, lay not this iniquity to their charge; and instead of revenging my blood upon them, which they are shedding, let it plead for their obtaining repentance and remission of sin: For though their guilt be exceeding great and aggravated, there is room for a pardon, since they do not know that they are crucifying the Lord of glory. And whilst he was thus pitying and praying for them, the four soldiers, who were his most immediate executioners, were busy in dividing his cloaths, which were their perquisite: But, as his upper garment was all of one piece, they cast lots who should have it, and so punctually, though not designedly, fulfilled the prophecy, (*Psal.* xxii. 18.) where it is said, *They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

35 At the same time the common people standing by, looked at him, and spoke of him, with scorn and derision; and the chief priests and elders, notwithstanding the gravity of their characters, joined with the mob in insulting and ridiculing him, saying, He pretended to heal diseases, cast out devils, raise the dead, and bring salvation to *Israel*; let him now shew his miraculous power in delivering himself from the cross*; if he be indeed the Messiah, as he vainly boasts, now is his time to give proof of it, by saving himself from death.

36, 37 The soldiers, that attended his crucifixion, likewise abused and vilified him; and, instead of com-

N O T E.

* They said this to insult him, to incense the people against him, and to justify themselves in bringing him to this shameful death. But had he added this miracle to all his others, such were the obstinate prejudices of their hearts, that they would not have believed in him: And yet, if Christ had designed only to

confirm his doctrine, and not to make an atonement for sin, his delivering himself from the cross, after he was nailed to it, would have undoubtedly answered that end, much more than his undergoing death itself could be supposed to do it. See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 42.

him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And a superscription also was written over him, in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 And one of the malefactors, which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, re-

compassionately giving him some cooling or intoxicating cordial to ease his pains, they came and offered him vinegar to drink; (see the note on *John* xix. 28, 29.) and, in a way of scornful insult, they challenged him to free himself from the tortures and the death of the cross, and thereby prove himself to be *Israel's* Messiah.

38 And, further to expose him to the ridicule and resentment of the people, *Pilate*, according to the *Roman* custom of specifying the crimes of malefactors at their execution, wrote a title of this import, *Jesus the King of the Jews*; and this was placed over his head in *Greek*, *Latin*, and *Hebrew*, the three chief living languages of the day, that strangers, as well as *Jews*, might be able to read it: But God over-ruled the inscription to the honour of his Son, it being in fact a declaration of the real truth of his character, and an intimation of the near concern, which *Jews* and *Gentiles*, persons of all languages and nations had in it.

39 One of the thieves also, that were crucified with him, being insensible of his own sin, and of the innocence, worth, and dignity of Christ, reproached him as if he were an impostor, crying out, with daring insolence and mockery, If you be the Messiah, as you pretend, come, let us see what you can do to deliver yourself and us from our miserable and dying circumstances. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 44.)

40 But the other thief's heart being touched, and melted by distinguishing grace, was made deeply sensible of the enormity of his own guilt, and brought to believe in Jesus as the true Messiah; and therefore, calling to his fellow-criminal and sufferer, he severely reproved him, saying, What desperate and insolent language is this? How dare you be so horribly wicked, and cast off all fear of God, and of further provoking him, just as you are going to appear at his awful bar; since you are suffering under a sentence of death, as well as Jesus and I?

41 And as for you and me, it is highly just in God, and in the government too, that we should undergo all the punishment inflicted upon us; for the notorious crimes we have been guilty of deserve it: But as for this righteous and holy person, he suffers wrongfully, having committed no fault at all, nor done any thing unworthy of his great and glorious character: See with what meekness, patience, and mercy, toward his very enemies, he behaves under all their injuries and affronts!

42 And having thus, by confessing his own crime, given glory to God, and rebuked his companion in

remember me
when thou comest
into thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus
said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee,
To-day shalt thou
be with me in para-
dise.

44 And it was
about the sixth
hour, and there
was a darkness o-
ver all the earth
until the ninth
hour.

45 And the sun
was darkened, and
the veil of the
temple was rent in
the mids.

fin, he then, directing his speech to Jesus, confessed his faith in him, and implored his grace, saying, Lord, I believe that thou art indeed the Messiah, and Saviour of all who trust in thee, and that thy sufferings will issue in an advancement to thy heavenly kingdom. O, when thou art exalted upon thy throne of glory there, remember me in the greatness of thy mercy, and grant that I may dwell with thee for ever * !

43 Jesus, in the riches of his condescension and grace, replied, Thy petition is granted; I assure thee, that this very day, as soon as ever you breathe your last, your soul shall be with me in that state of blessedness, which the separate spirits of the righteous enjoy in the heavenly mansions, and which is a paradise of divine delights, much better than the earthly paradise, which man was expelled for his apostacy from God.

44 By this time it was full noon, which, according to the *Jewish* way of computation, was the sixth hour of the day; and then there was a thick darkness over all the land of *Judea*, and other countries, which continued till the ninth hour, or, according to the *Roman* way of reckoning, three o'clock in the afternoon. (See the note on *Mark* xv. 25.)

45 And this darkness was occasioned by a miraculous eclipse of the sun, as if that great luminary blushed to behold the wickedness of Christ's crucifiers, and the extremity of his sufferings. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 45.) And another prodigy attending his death was, that the hanging between the sanctuary and the holy of holies was torn asunder from top to bottom, as an intimation, that the holiness of the temple was abolished, that the formerly veiled mysteries were explained, that the partition-wall between *Jews* and *Gentiles* was broken down, (*Eph.* ii. 14.) and that a way was opened by the blood of Jesus for all true believers, of what nation soever, to have free access into the holiest of all, even heaven itself. (*Heb.* x. 19, 20.)

46 And

N O T E.

* Here was a surprising degree of knowledge, faith, repentance, and other graces, and abundance of good works, as their fruit, in this thief's public confession of his sin, reproof of his fellow-criminal, and honourable testimony to Christ, and profession of faith in him, whilst he was in such disgraceful and suffering circumstances, as were stumbling even to his disciples. This shews the power and sovereignty of divine grace,

and is a good argument against despair; but is no encouragement to any to defer their faith and repentance to the last hour, since, as far as appears, this was the first time that this criminal had an opportunity of knowing any thing about Christ; and his conversion was designed to put a peculiar glory upon the Saviour at his death, whilst his enemies derided him, and his own disciples either denied or forsook him.

46 And, when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and, having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.

49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off beholding these things.

50 And behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just:

51 (The same had

46 And about three o'clock, to shew how willing he was to yield himself up to death, (see the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 50.) he cried out with a strong voice, in the words of *David*, (*Psal.* xxxi. 5.) *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.* q d. Father, the work is done; I now make the offering of my soul to thee, and pay it down as a price of redemption into thine hand, in confidence that, according to covenant-agreement between us, I shall receive a full reward; and I commit my departing spirit to thy faithfulness, care, and love, in full dependence that it shall be received to glory, and re-united with my body to dwell with thee for ever. And, as soon as he had thus spoke, he resigned his last breath, to teach and encourage his disciples to die submissively and in faith, after his example, with the word of God in their mouths.

47 Now when the *Roman* officer of the band, that had the care of his execution, saw the great eclipse, and the earthquake, and observed Christ's holy, meek, and heavenly behaviour, during his crucifixion, he, the soldiers therein joining with him, could not help saying, to the divine glory, that he verily believed Jesus to be an extraordinary holy man, and even the Son of God, (*Matth.* xxvii. 54.) though he had been charged with blasphemy, and crucified for asserting it.

48 And the generality of the multitude there present, when they saw all the affecting things that attended his death, were struck with grief and remorse at the thoughts of what had been unrighteously done to such an innocent and excellent person; and went away from the sight smiting their breasts, in token of their bitter lamentation and trouble on that account, and in fear of what might be the dreadful consequence to themselves and others.

49 There were likewise a great number of his acquaintance and disciples, and among them several women, who, out of their great affection, had attended him in his ministry and labours, even as far as from *Galilee*; these stood among the spectators, most of them at a great distance from the cross, looking upon their suffering Lord with mournful hearts and weeping eyes.

50, 51 And as he was put to death before many witnesses, in circumstances which punctually accomplished several prophecies concerning him; so it is observable, that Providence ordered his burial to be made *with the rich in his death*, according to the prediction in *Isa.* liii. 9. There was a man of distinction

had not consented to the counsel and deed of them :) he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews; (who also himself waited for the kingdom of God :)

52 This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

54 And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.

55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

unction and character, *Joseph of Arimathea* *, who was a member of the great council, and a man of probity and religion, who also expected the Messiah's appearing at this time to set up his kingdom in the world, and was a secret disciple of Jesus, though for fear of the Jews, he did not publicly own it: (*John* xix. 38.) This man, when his Lord was examined, judged, and condemned by the sanhedrim, would by no means consent to their cruel and unrighteous consultations, and proceedings against him.

52 And he was spirited to shew an honourable respect to Christ, even whilst he lay under the weakness and disgrace of a crucifixion: For, as soon as he was certainly known to be dead, *Joseph* took courage and went to *Pilate*, begging a grant of his body, that he might have power to dispose of it, and so might prevent its being ignominiously buried with the two other criminals that were executed with him.

53 And having obtained this request, he immediately went to the cross with the governor's warrant; and, un-nailing the body, took it away, and wrapped it up in a clean-sheet, and then placed it in a new tomb, which had been cut in a solid rock, and in which no corpse had ever been interred before; so that the sepulchre could not easily be broke into, nor could any other body be mistaken for that of Jesus, which, with other circumstances of laying a great stone to stop up the door, and setting a seal upon it, and a watch before it, was ordered by Providence for the more unexceptionable evidence of Christ's resurrection, when it should come to pass.

54 Now all this was done on the sixth day of the week, the day before the Sabbath; and so much expedition was used in it, that these affairs might not break in upon the religious services of that holy day, which, it being toward sun-set, was then coming on.

55 And, during all these transactions about the crucifixion and interment of our Lord, the good women, who had attended him from *Galilee*, followed him sorrowing, first to his cross, and afterwards to his funeral, and particularly observed the sepulchre, where his body was laid, and in what manner it was deposited there.

56 And,

N O T E.

* *Arimathea* was probably *Ramah* in the tribe of *Benjamin*, which is spoken of in *Job*. xviii. 25. It was also called *Samuthaim*, and was the place where *Samuel* was born, (1 *Sam.* i. 1, 20.) Some suppose that *Joseph* was one of *Pilate's* council, and others that he was a *Decurio*, or one of the ten chief men that

were set over the affairs of a *Roman* colony: But all the circumstances related concerning him seem rather to intimate that he was a *Jew*; and its being said, that he consented not to the counsel and the deed of the sanhedrim, intimates, that he was one of them, or one of the high-priest's council.

56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath-day, according to the commandment.

56 And, immediately after this, they went their way to get and mix costly spices and (*μύρα*) sweet oils, for an embalment of the body of Jesus; and the next day, being the Sabbath, they, in obedience to the command of God for resting from servile works thereon, deferred going to perform that office of respect to him.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How worthy is our dear Redeemer to be received and owned as our Saviour and our King! But how great is the power of prejudice against him! It slights and derides him, because it does not gratify curiosity, and answer unreasonable demands; it raises evidently false accusations against him, prefers the vilest of men, and temporal interests to him, and cannot be satisfied that he should reign, or that his name and interest should live in the world. But how did God over-rule all the designs and management of his enemies, for fulfilling the scriptures concerning him; and publicly own him by the prodigies that attended his death! How did he constrain the heathen judge, centurion, and soldiers, that were concerned in Christ's crucifixion, to bear an honourable testimony to him; and make the multitude of spectators, as well as his disciples and friends, smite their breasts in bewailing him! And how were the hearts of high and low inclined to shew tokens of the greatest respect to him! But O the weakness and depravity of human nature, even when it appears to be best disposed! How many, like *Pilate*, seem to be well affected toward Christ, convinced of his worth, and inclined to favour his righteous cause; and yet through importunity and fear, and through the temptations of this world, violate all the sacred bonds of right and truth, conscience and honour, in their behaviour towards him!—What a day of lamentation and distress was that in which our blessed Lord was crucified; how terrible to him, and with what holy mourning should his people reflect on what their sins then cost him! But our affections may be touched at the moving story of the barbarous usage he met with, and of his dying love, without an effectual change upon our hearts, and without true faith in him, or love to him; and if, after all, we reject him through unbelief, our lamentation will one day be dreadful for ourselves, on account of our neglects of him, and opposition to him. Ah how little do sinners think what they are doing, while they reject Christ! and yet their ignorance is attended with so many aggravations, as make it highly criminal, and need forgiveness: But how much more aggravated still are sins, committed against light and evidence! What dreadful hardness of heart do these bring upon the sinner; and what insupportable wrath do they expose him to! and yet how compassionate and gracious is a suffering and interceding Saviour, toward the worst of his enemies! How ready to forgive them! And how free and distinguishing is his grace in bringing one malefactor to faith, repentance, and eternal life, and that at the last hour, whilst another is left to persist in the desperate wickedness of his own heart, to his eternal perdition! And when grace makes an effectual change, what confession of sin, and of the justice of our sufferings for it; what honourable thoughts of Christ, and grief at the iniquity of fellow-criminals; what compassion for them, and endeavours to reclaim them; and what concern about, and applications by faith to the Lord Jesus for salvation, will it produce in us! But late examples of mercy should never encourage any to presume.—These souls of ours are immortal; and if we have an interest in Christ, they go, immediately after death, to be glorified with him. With what composure, therefore, in a dying hour, may the believer commit his departing spirit into the hands of a reconciled God and Father, through the great Redeemer, and after his example, in humble confidence that he will accept, and own, and receive it to glory!

C H A P. XXIV.

The resurrection of Christ, as declared to the women, 1,—8. As reported to the disciples, 9,—12. As made known by Christ himself to two of them who were going to Emmaus, 13,—35. To the rest of them assembled together, 36,—49. And, last of all, at his ascension to heaven, 50,—53.

TEXT.

NOW upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN the Jewish Sabbath was ended, (see the note on *Matth.* xxviii. 1.) the women, who on the evening before that day had prepared spices and ointment, went and carried them to Christ's sepulchre, about sun-rising of the first day of the week, in hopes of an opportunity for using them in embalming his dead corpse: And some other good women, having been acquainted with their design, attended them to testify their affection, and indulge their grief, and to assist in the work.

2 And when they arrived at the place, they, to their great surprize, found one of their chief difficulties removed, in that the great stone, which they had seen placed at the mouth of the sepulchre, was rolled away by an angel. (See the paraphrase on *Matth.* xxviii. 2.)

3 Then the women came up with a design of going into the sepulchre; and, (*εισελθουσαι*) as they were entering in, they looked and saw that the body of their Lord was removed. (See the notes on *Matth.* xxviii. 2. and *Mark* xvi. 5.)

4 And while they were thereupon exceedingly troubled, in thinking what might become of it, they were surprized with the appearance of two angels, in the form and likeness of men, who (*επιστησαν*) presented themselves near to them, and were arrayed in robes of illustrious light and glory; and, being two, were sufficient for a valid, as well as honourable testimony, to their great Lord. (See the last note on *Matth.* xxviii. 2.)

5 At this amazing sight the women were filled with terror, as sinful mortals are apt to be, under a consciousness of guilt, at any extraordinary appearance; and in the reverence, awe, and surprize of their minds, they bowed themselves exceeding low, with their faces toward the ground, still looking about for the body of Jesus: Then one of the angels, speaking in the name of both, (*Matth.* xxviii. 5. and *Mark* xvi. 6.) said unto them, Why do ye take so much pains

pains in coming hither to find a person in a sepulchre of the dead, who is really alive?

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words.

9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

12 Then arose Peter,

6, 7 Jesus, whom ye thus carefully are searching after, and who was dead, is actually risen; and ye need not wonder at this, but should rather have believed and expected it, considering what he himself often told you before-hand about it. Do not ye remember how again and again, and particularly when he was with his disciples in *Galilee*, (*Math.* xvi. 21. and xx. 19. and *Luke* ix. 22, 44.) he assured them that, according to the determinate counsel of God, he must be given up into the hands of wicked men, and be put to death by a crucifixion, and that on the third day he should rise again?

8 Upon their being reminded of this, they recollected what they had formerly heard of their Lord's own predictions about it; which was a great evidence that he was risen indeed, though it did not fully silence their doubts. (See the note on *John* xx. 2.)

9 And, according to the direction given by the angels, they immediately departed from the sepulchre to carry the astonishing tidings of all that they had seen and heard to the eleven apostles, and to any other disciples whom they might meet with there, they themselves being struck with a mixture of fear and wonder, as not well knowing what to believe. (*Mark* xvi. 7, 8.)

10 Now the names of these women, who were the first witnesses of the resurrection of Christ, and the first messengers of it to the other disciples, were *Mary Magdalene*, out whom he had cast seven devils; and *Joanna*, the wife of *Chuzza*, *Herod's* steward; (*Luke* viii. 2, 3.) and another *Mary*, who was the mother of *James* the less; (*Mark* xv. 40.) with the other women, who attended them to his sepulchre*. (*ver.* 1.)

11 And when they came and delivered their message, the disciples were so full of prejudices against the doctrine of Christ's resurrection, so thoughtless about it, so ignorant and unbelieving with regard to the intimations he had given of it, and so overwhelmed with dejection, disappointment, and despair, that they looked upon these women's report as a silly, fanciful, weak, and unlikely story, and could not give any credit to it.

12 However, (*de*) *Peter*, upon hearing this strange

N O T E.

* These were the first witnesses and messengers of his resurrection, to shew the condescension of Christ, and to take

off all suspicion, as if either force or fraud had been employed in the management of this important affair.

Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre, and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

13 And behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about three-score furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden, that they should not know him.

strange account, hastened away to the sepulchre, together with *John*, (*John* xx. 2, 3.) to see whether there were any appearance of its being true; and going in, (*John* xx. 6.) he saw the linen cloaths in which the body of his Lord had been buried, but could not find the body itself. And when he had thoroughly searched the sepulchre, and observed that the orderly position of the burial-wrappers had no appearance of such haste or hurry, as might be expected in clandestinely removing the dead corpse, he returned full of astonishment and perplexity of mind, not knowing what to conclude from all these circumstances; nor yet understanding and believing the scripture prophecies, or Christ's own former words about his resurrection. (See the note on *John* xx. 8.)

13 Soon after these things, observe another remarkable testimony to this great fact. Two other of Christ's disciples were walking together that very day on which he rose from the dead, to a certain village called *Emmaus**, which was about seven or eight miles distant from *Jerusalem*.

14 And as they were on their journey the conversation turned upon the late sufferings and death of Christ, and upon the reports, which they had that morning heard, concerning his being risen again.

15 And while they were thus talking over the mournful story of his death, and arguing about the probabilities or improbabilities of his resurrection, he, knowing their hearts, and the straits they were in, graciously took that opportunity to come and join company with them, like a stranger who was going the same way, that he might manifest himself to them.

16 But as he designed for a little while to conceal himself, that he might give them the fairer occasion of telling their own sense of things, and might afterward, with the greater advantage, reprove, convince, and comfort them; so he miraculously affected their sight in such a manner, that they had not a just discerning of him, and little suspected him to be their Lord †.

17 And

N O T E S.

* They might be going thither, either upon business, or on a visit, or rather to get from the noise and heats, insults, reproaches, and dangers of their enemies, with a design of retiring still further into *Galilee*, because of the disappointment they had met with, and the confusion they were in, relating to their crucified Lord and Saviour.

† This is very consistent with its being said (*Mark* xvi. 12.) that he appeared

in another form to them; for this alteration upon the air, or upon the organs of sight, gave his appearance a different form from its own: But that the distinguishing form of his body, and features of his face themselves, were not altered, is evident, because then there would have been no occasion to withhold their eyes from knowing him; and as soon as that obstruction was removed, they knew who he was.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word, before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

17 And he, like a fellow-traveller providentially cast into their company, asked them in a courteous and friendly manner, What are ye so earnestly talking about in your journey, that gives you so much uneasiness, as discovers itself in your countenances, language, and behaviour? Pray be so kind as to tell me, that I may sympathize with you, or offer something for your relief.

18 Then one of them, named *Cleophas**, replied, Do you ask what makes us so sad? Alas! we have cause enough for it; and methinks you might easily imagine what it is: Surely you, who seem to have come directly from *Jerusalem*, cannot but have heard the dismal news, which all the city rings of, relating to the most shocking and amazing transactions that have fallen out there, within these two or three days last past. If you are ignorant of these things you are certainly the only person there that is so.

19 Our Lord, making himself look still more like a stranger, answered, What surprising and melancholy things do you mean? To which *Cleophas* replied, Why, if we must tell you, we mean the cruelty, even to the most shameful death, that has been exercised upon him who was commonly called *Jesus of Nazareth*, and who, to say the least, was certainly a great prophet, as appeared by the excellent, heavenly, and holy doctrine, which he preached, and by the many great and glorious, merciful and divine miracles, which he evidently and often wrought to confirm it: So that he was highly owned and honoured of God, and had obtained a great reputation and esteem among the generality of the people.

20 And yet, alas! to go on with the account, it is notorious that the chief priests and elders of the people, not being able to bear the purity of his doctrine, and its opposition to their authority and interests, were so full of envy against him, that they apprehended him, tried and condemned him in their ecclesiastical court, as an impostor and blasphemer; and then, delivering him up to the *Roman* power, they accused and prosecuted him, as a seditious person, and an enemy to *Cæsar*, till they got a sentence of death passed upon him, and took care to see him actually crucified. Is not this a very sad and affecting

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N O T E.

* This *Cleophas* seems to have been *Alpheus*, who was the husband of *Mary*, the mother of *James* the less, which *Mary*, attended Christ to his cross, and went that morning with *Mary Magdalene* to the sepulchre, as appears by comparing *ver. 10.* with *Matth. x. 3.* *Mark xv. 40.* and *John xiv. 25.* And *Eusebius* tells us from *Hegesippus*, that *Cleophas* was the brother of *Joseph*, the reputed father of our Lord. *Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. 3. cap. 11.*

ing case, enough to make any one's heart ache to think of it ! You therefore need not think it strange that we are troubled in our reflections upon it, and talk about it.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and, beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

21 But even this is not all with respect to *us*, who have met with a dreadful disappointment: For we own ourselves to have been two of his disciples, and to have received, and firmly depended upon him, as the Messiah, the Saviour of *Israel*, expecting that in a little time he would have set up his kingdom with great power and glory amongst us: But what are all our hopes come to now? alas! they are dead and buried with our crucified Master. And yet there are some circumstances which throw us into vast perplexity, between hope and fear: We remember he talked something about his rising again on the third day; but, though that day is now come and far spent, (*ver.* 29.) none of us have seen any thing of him.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre:

22, 23 We have indeed (*αλλα και*) heard something this very morning, which looks a little like his being risen; but this increases our perplexity, as not knowing what to make of it: For some good women, who were his affectionate disciples, surprised us with an account, that they went to his sepulchre a little after break of day, with a design to embalm his body; and when in order thereunto they searched for it, they could not find it: Hereupon they came back to several of us full of this story, like persons in an ecstasy of wonder, mixed with fear and joy, and added withal, that, to their further amazement, they had been favoured with a vision of angels, who informed them that their Lord was really risen again: But we are apt to look upon all this, as merely the fancy of weak and credulous women, it not being likely to us, that angels should be sent with such an important message to them, rather than to the apostles of our Lord.

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, That they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them which were with us, went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not.

24 And yet we have had a further confirmation, that by some means or other his body is removed from the sepulchre: For, immediately upon this report, some of our number, two persons particularly, being desirous to see what appearance of truth there might be in it, ran with all speed to his tomb, and were themselves eye-witnesses that, as the women had said, the body of Jesus was not there; but, alas! they neither saw him alive, nor heard what was become of him, as might have been expected, if he indeed were risen from the dead: And therefore, upon the whole, we are in great confusion and fear, lest all hopes of this kind be vain; we doubt the news of a risen Saviour is too great and too good to be true.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken !

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ?

27 And, beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went : and he made as though he would have gone farther.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us ; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And

25 Then our Lord, though still concealing who he was, thought it high time to reprove and instruct them, saying, How prodigious is your folly *, and your backwardness of heart to reflect, and depend upon the various testimonies of God, by the ancient prophets, concerning these very things ! Had ye but considered and believed them, ye could not have been so distrustful and suspicious about these events as ye are, but would have been well satisfied that your crucified Saviour is risen from the dead.

26 Was it not necessary for the divine honour, according to the clearest determinations of prophecy, and the eternal counsel of God made known therein, that the Messiah should undergo the sufferings, reproaches, and death, which of late have befallen your Lord, and that afterwards he should rise again to enter upon his kingdom, and to be exalted in a state of immortal glory, suitable to his own merit and dignity ? Why then should ye be stumbled at his ignominious death and sufferings, or doubt of his resurrection to complete his great designs ?

27 And having thus referred them to the Old Testament-writings, he began with the five books of *Moses*, and then went on to the succeeding prophets, and other parts of scripture, particularly reciting and explaining the principal types and prophecies, that related to his own sufferings and death, resurrection and glory, and thereby proving that they were all necessary in their proper place and order.

28 Whilst our Lord was talking to them, in this instructive and moving manner, concerning himself, and still seemed to be a stranger, they arrived at *Emmaus*, whither they were going ; and when the disciples stopped at a certain house there, Jesus made no offer of turning in with them, but behaved as if he were travelling further, that he might give them an opportunity, either of letting him go, or of desiring his continuance with them.

29 But they were so affected with his excellent and reasonable discourse, that they could by no means think of parting with him ; and therefore importunately entreated him to favour them with more of his good company, urging that it grew too late for him to go much further, and that they should be extremely

N O T E.

* They were fools, as they refused proper evidence, and acted against their own comfort and interests by their inadvertance and unbelief. And Christ's calling them so, by way of just reproof, for their conviction and recovery, is no breach of

his own rule, (*Mat.* v. 22.) where he forbids calling our brother fool, which is to be understood of doing it, by way of causeless contempt and injurious reproach, to censure and expose him.

And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them.

ly obliged to him, if he would please to tarry with them: And he, who is always ready to be found of them that seek him, yielded to their importunity, staying some time with them*.

30 And a supper having been ordered for their refreshment, he, sitting down at table, took bread, and asked a blessing upon it, and then brake and gave it to them to eat, just as he had used to do at ordinary meals, as well as at miraculous and religious feasts.

31 Hereupon they, beginning to suspect who he was, looked at him more intently; and, the obstructions to their sight being then removed, they saw plainly that it was Jesus himself; and as soon as they were thoroughly satisfied of this, and consequently that he was indeed risen from the dead, he suddenly slipped away from them †.

32 And, immediately upon his disappearing, they, reflecting on all that had passed, said, each of them in their turns, and with mutual agreement, What an instructive, quickening, and comforting discourse had we from our blessed Lord, as we came along in the way hither! with what force and sweetness did he explain the scriptures to us! how home did he bring things to our case and consciences! and what divine energy was his words attended with! Were they not spirit and life? Did not we feel their power? and did not our hearts glow with a divine and heavenly warmth while we heard them? How strange is it, and what fools were we indeed, that we should not understand him, nor perceive who he was then, or should ever think that any but he could have spoke in such a suitable and effectual manner to us!

33 And, being full of rapture and joy at this discovery of Christ, they presently got up from table, and, late as it was, hastened away with all speed back again to Jerusalem, to give vent to their own transports, and to comfort the hearts of their brethren; and there they found the greatest part of the eleven apostles, with others that used to associate with them, assembled together. (See the note on *Mark* xvi. 14.)

34 And

N O T E S.

* There was no dissimulation, as some have suggested, in our Lord's conduct on this occasion; for he only behaved herein, just as common rules of civility would have obliged any stranger to do, that he might not seem to thrust himself upon other company, but might leave it to them to invite him or not, determining in his own mind to stay with them, upon their discovering a desire of further conversation with him.

† He might, at that instant, make himself invisible to them by a miraculous interposition of a cloud upon their eyes, or upon his body, to conceal it from their view till he got out of the room; by which he gave them to understand, that they were not expect such a continuance of his company with them in his risen state, as they had been used to before his death.

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

35 And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

38 And he said unto

34 And the two disciples, at their entering the room *, heard some of the company saying, O blessed tidings ! we have had several reports that our dear Lord is risen from the dead ; and *Simon Peter* has had the honour of a visit from him.

35 Then the two disciples, still further to confirm their faith, gave them a particular and full narrative of all that had passed between Christ and them that afternoon, in their way to *Emmaus*, and how, when they got thither, he plainly discovered himself to them, while they were sitting together at table, and he, like the Master of the feast, was breaking the bread, which had been provided for their refreshment.

36 And whilst all these disciples were thus conferring about the resurrection of their Lord, in a private house, *the doors of which were shut for fear of the Jews*, (John xx. 19.) Jesus himself appeared on a sudden among them, and pronounced all happiness upon them ; thereby assuring them that he came, not to resent their late unworthy treatment of him, when they all forsook him in his extremity, but to satisfy them of his resurrection, and of his abiding love to them, and to comfort and bless them.

37 But instead of being delighted with this appearance, they were surpris'd, and terribly frighted at it, because Christ came so unexpectedly among them, and without making any noise, though the doors were shut. And, in the hurry of their thoughts, forgetting the many proofs they had formerly seen of his divine power, and the several evidences they had but just before received of his resurrection, they presently fancied it was only a spirit, which formed the appearance of a body among them †.

38 Then, to quiet and satisfy them, he, in a free and

N O T E S.

* The construction of the *Greek* (αεγεντας being the accusative case) plainly shews that these were the words, not of the two disciples that came from *Emmaus*, but of some of the company which they found at *Jerusalem*, who were either speaking in this manner one to another ; or else saluted the two disciples as soon as they appeared, with the good news they had received from *Peter* : And we learn from 1 *Cor.* xv. 5. that Christ was seen of *Simon Peter*, before he was seen of the twelve apostles ; by which it is evident that Jesus, in his wonderful condescension and grace, had taken an opportunity on the former part of that day to shew himself to *Peter*, that he might early relieve his distresses and

fears, on account of his having so shamefully denied his Lord ; though where, or in what manner this was done is not recorded. See the note on *Mark* xvi. 13.

† It is vain to inquire how Jesus came among them, the doors being shut, or to imagine that his body penetrated other bodies ; since it was as easy to his divine power to open a door indiscernibly, and without noise, as to have come in at a door opened by some other hand ; and to pretend that his body penetrated any door or wall, without opening or breaking it, is to suppose that his body was not a real *human* body of flesh and bones, though the reality of its being so was the very thing which he designed by this appearance to convince his disciples of.

unto them, Why are ye troubled; and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39 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.

40 And, when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.

41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb.

43 And he took it, and did eat before them.

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which

and friendly manner, said to them, What means all this confusion, which discovers itself in your countenances and behaviour? and why do ye give way to such unreasonable fears and terrors, as I know distract and distress your minds, as if what ye saw were an imaginary and not a real body? but to convince you of the contrary,

39 Observe the marks of my crucifixion, and examine my hands, and feet, and side; (*John* xx. 20.) look carefully upon my body, and feel it with your own hands for your satisfaction, that it is I myself, your Lord and Master, who am risen from the dead: For a spirit, with all the appearances it can make, has not such a corporeal substance, as may be seen and felt, and distinguished to be a body of flesh and bones, and as your own eyes and touch may prove this to be, in which I now appear before you.

40 And at the same time he held out his hands and his feet, and shewed them his side, (*John* xx. 20.) that they might both see and feel the scars of the nails which had fastened him to the cross, as well as of the spear that had pierced his side; which proved, beyond all contradiction, that there could be no deceit in the appearance he then made to them; who had been so long acquainted with him, and had so lately seen him crucified.

41 And while their ecstacy and astonishment were so great, that they hardly knew what to believe, he, to give them more time, and still further evidence, asked them to set something before him, that he might eat in their presence.

42 Then they gave him a part of such fare as they had with them, which was a piece of broiled fish, and of an honey-comb.

43 And though his risen body had no need of animal refreshment, yet he eat part of this food in their company, for the confirmation of their faith, and to give an advantage to their future testimony concerning him*.

44 Our Lord having, on this, and afterwards on other occasions, given them unquestionable proofs that he was really the same person whom they formerly u-

fed

N O T E.

* The apostle *Peter* afterwards insisted on this part of the evidence, that he was *shown openly to his disciples, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.* (*Acts* x. 41.) To ask what became of this food after he had eat it, is as useless and over-curious, as to ask what became of the meat which the angels eat with *Abraham* and *Lot*.

(*Gen.* xviii. 8. and xix. 3.) But as *Christ* eat with his disciples on this occasion only to demonstrate his resurrection; so he could easily dissolve the food, or discharge it invisibly by his divine power, as soon as he had eat it, since the state of his risen body did not need it for nourishment and support, as the same body, whilst it was mortal, did before his death.

which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

fed to converse with, proceeded, time after time, till his ascension, to give them more clear and extensive instructions, than ever before, concerning the necessity and design of his sufferings, death, and resurrection, saying, These are the very things which I intended to suggest to you, by the several intimations I heretofore gave you, whilst I was daily conversing with you: I then assured you, that every thing relating thereunto must be accomplished, which had been anciently foretold * in the several parts of the Old Testament concerning me, as the Messiah; and now ye see they are all exactly come to pass.

45 Then, as he had before opened the scriptures to some of his disciples in a doctrinal way, and made their hearts burn within them †; (*ver.* 27, 32.) so he furthermore took off the veil from all their hearts, by the special illumination of his Spirit, who removed the darkness, doubts, and prejudices of their minds, that they might readily apprehend, and fall in with the true meaning of the scriptures, especially in what related to their accomplishment in him.

46 And in this manner he evidently demonstrated to them, that, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, and according to the eternal counsel of God, with respect to his own glory, and the salvation of his people, it was necessary that he should die for their sins, and rise again for their justification:

47 And that, upon this foot, the great evangelical doctrines of ingenuous repentance of all iniquity, and forgiveness of sins through faith in him, as inseparably connected in the gospel-dispensation, should be published by his authority, power, and efficacy, and in the virtue of his merit, among all sorts of people, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, beginning at the city of *Jerusalem*: And this he particularly took notice of, that, according to ancient prophecies, the word

of

N O T E S.

* The general division of the books of the Old Testament, in those days, was into these three parts. (1.) The *Law*, which contained the five books of *Moses*: (2.) The *Prophets*, which contained not only those books that were merely prophetic, but those likewise, which were historical, and were wrote by prophetic men: And (3.) The *Hagiographa*, which contained divine hymns, and moral instructions for the conduct of life, and went under the general title of the *Psalms*, because these were esteemed as the most eminent, and were placed at

the head of that sort of writings: And so Christ, by mentioning these three, took in the whole of the Old Testament, which, in several places, spoke of his sufferings, and of the glory that should follow.

† Though the two disciples hearts burned within them while he opened to them the scriptures; yet there was more warmth than light; and it doth not appear that they duly understood those scriptures, or believed in a risen Saviour, according to them, till after they came to *Emmanuel*.

of the Lord might go forth from thence ; that the Jew^s might have the privilege of the first-born ; that the elect of God among them might be called in great numbers there, as the first-fruits of the gospel-ministry ; that Jesus might the more evidently prove himself to be the Son of God, and the true Messiah, at that very place where he was crucified ; that the glad tidings of salvation might have the quicker spread from thence to other countries ; and that the greatest of sinners, even such as were concerned in his crucifixion, and all others, to whom this gospel should be afterwards preached, might be encouraged to hope in the riches of divine grace through him, for their recovery and salvation.

43 And ye are witnesses of these things.

48 And ye, said he, my apostles and disciples, are the persons whom I appoint to bear witness in your ministry, that, according to what ye yourselves have seen and heard, all things which were predicted of old, concerning the death and resurrection of the Messiah, have been punctually accomplished in me.

49 And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

49 And, for your encouragement, observe, Soon after my ascension to heaven, I will shed down the Holy Ghost upon you in an extraordinary manner, according to my Father's promise ; (*Joel* ii. 28.) and therefore I order you not to go forth immediately to preach the gospel, but to continue, for a while, waiting together at *Jerusalem*, till ye shall have this plentiful effusion from the throne of the Majesty on high, to enrich you with all needful gifts and graces, and supernatural powers, for the work on which I send you, and to confirm your testimony, and succeed you in it.

50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany : and he lift up his hands, and blessed them.

50 Having in this manner given them many infallible proofs of his resurrection, and various instructions relating to his kingdom and their ministry in it, he, at the end of forty days, conducted them out to the mount of *Olivet*, which lay in a tract of land called *Bethany*, not far from the village of that name * ; and having brought them thither, he, lifting up his hands toward them, as *Aaron* did toward the people, (*Lev.* ix. 22.) authoritatively and effectually commanded a blessing upon them, to shew his affection

N O T E.

* The town or village of *Bethany*, where *Lazarus* dwelt, and was raised from the dead, was about fifteen furlongs from *Jerusalem* : (*John* xi. 18.) But there was a tract of ground called by that name, which reached from thence to the mount of *Olivet*, within a Sabbath-

day's journey of *Jerusalem*, which is supposed to have been about eight furlongs : And this was the place to which Christ led his disciples, and from which he ascended, as appears from *Acts* i. 12. *Vid.* *Lightf. Her. Hebr.*

affection to them, and to assure them of what they might further expect from him.

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

51 As soon as he had taken this gracious and solemn farewell, he left them, and visibly ascended up into heaven by his divine power; they all looking at him, till a glorious *cloud received him out of their sight.* (Acts i. 9)

52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

52 And as he was ascending, they, beholding his glory, adored him as their God and Saviour, and went back to *Jerusalem*, according to his order, being filled with exceeding joy in reflection on what they had seen, heard, and felt, and in expectation of an accomplishment of his parting promises, which would issue in the advancement of his kingdom on earth, and in their being at length received up to glory after him.

53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

53 And they attended religious services in the temple*, day by day, resorting thither at the hours of prayer, and blessing God, in repeated praises, for the glory he had displayed in their crucified, risen, and exalted Redeemer: And in this manner they continued waiting in faith and hope of their Lord's making good his promise of the Holy Ghost. *Amen*, said they; *Amen*, says the writer of this gospel; and *Amen*, says every true believer: So let it be, and may God be ever magnified for all this!

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What sure and blessed tidings are the resurrection of Christ! And how often does he surprise the most unlikely and unworthy with such discoveries of himself as they are apt to think are too great and good to be true! But early seekers of him shall find him; and while they are converting together about him, he will honour them with his presence, open their understandings, and make their hearts burn within them to their exceeding joy: Though their hopes may sometimes be ready to fail, yet in due season he will make himself known to them, and clear up what the scriptures say concerning him, as a suffering and exalted Saviour; and they that are importunate for his abiding with them, shall be favoured with further manifestations of himself to them; and when they find him to the satisfaction of their own souls, they cannot but be desirous that others should be comforted with their comforts. But O the folly of unbelief, as it lies against the clearest evidence, and against our own best and truest interests! How groundless are the fears of Christ's disciples; and yet how does he condescend to their infirmities to relieve them! And how endearing is the constancy of his love, who, after all, will bless them,

N O T E.

* Some suppose that all this while, the disciples dwelt, and continued together for supplication and prayer, in some upper chamber or apartment of the temple, by the permission of some priest or Levite, to whom it belonged; and that what is here called their being *διεπαύοντες εν τω ιερω* continually in the temple, praising and blessing God, is much of the same import with what is said, (Acts i. 13, 14.) about

their going *εις το υπερωον* into an upper room, and *κατακειμενες* abiding and continuing with one accord there, in prayer and supplication: And admitting this, the seeming difference between those two passages is easily reconciled, since all the buildings in the temple were called the temple. (2 Kings xi. 2, 3.) See this argued *pro* and *con* in Hammond and Whitby on Acts i. 13.

them, and send the promised Spirit to them, that they may be fitted for every trial and service to which he calls them ! Yea, how exceeding and abundant are the riches of his grace to the worst of sinners, like those of *Jerusalem*, that had imbrued their hands in his blood ! And what blessed grounds of hope are there even for such, that they may obtain repentance, and remission of sins through faith in his name ! And O how should our faith and hope, hearts and affections follow the ascended Head and Redeemer into heaven, looking after him, adoring and worshipping him, blessing God for him, living in daily expectation of all needful blessings from him here, and of ascending up to him in our own persons hereafter, that where he is, there we may be also ! Amen and amen : So let it be to every one of us.

A PRACTICAL

A PRACTICAL E X P O S I T I O N

OF THE E V A N G E L I S T J O H N,

IN THE FORM OF A P A R A P H R A S E.

C H A P. I.

The Evangelist's testimony concerning the eternal Godhead, the office and incarnation of Christ, 1,—14. John the Baptist's testimony concerning him, 15,—37. And Christ's calling of several to be his disciples, 38,—51.

TEXT.

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

PARAPHRASE.

IN the beginning* of the world, when God created the heavens and the earth, a Divine person, styled emphatically the *Logos* † or word, necessarily existed; and so the Word was co-eternally present with God ‡ the Father, and the Word himself, though

N O T E S.

* The first *Socinians* understood this of the beginning of the gospel; and so interpreted all that follows, as relating to the gospel-reformation: But a bare reading of the following verses with attention, is sufficient to confute that interpretation, as exceeding unnatural and forced; accordingly there are few, if any now, that plead for it.

† The term *Logos*, translated *word*, signifies wisdom or reason, as well as word; accordingly Christ is called both the *Wisdom*, and the *Word* of God. (*Prov.* viii. and *Luke* xi. 49. *Rev.* xix. 13.) He is the *Wisdom of God*, say several of the fathers, considering him in his pre-existence before all worlds; and so he is compared to silent thought resting in the mind: And he is the *Word of God*, considering him in his incarnate state; and so he is compared to outward speech, whereby he reveals the Father to us. And that this word is more

than an attribute, or operation of the Father, is evident from the personal characters under which he is spoken of in this and several following passages, where he is expressly called *God with God*, (ver. 1, 2.) is distinguished from *John the Baptist*, (ver. 8.) is said to *come after him*, and to *come to his own*, (ver. 11, 15.) to be *the only begotten of the Father*, to be *made flesh*, and to *dwell among us.* (ver. 14.)

‡ The term *God* in this passage is plainly meant of God the Father, as personally distinguished from the Word; though he is not here called the Father, because the Evangelist had not yet spoke of Christ under the title of the Son: And this *Word*, who in the close of the verse is called *God*, was with God; not as one God with another God, but as one divine person with another in the same God-head.

though personally distinct from him, was in a strict and proper sense God *, partaking of the same divine nature and essential perfections with the Father.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

2, 3 This divine person had all along an inseparable existence with God the Father, not only before he was born of the Virgin, but even from everlasting, before there were any creatures, he being the author of all made things whatsoever: So that by him, as their Creator, they were brought forth into being; and without his efficiency no one of them, from the highest to the lowest, was formed at all †.

4 He not only created all inanimate, but likewise all animate things, whether of the sensitive or rational life, and that by a vital principle, which was originally and necessarily in himself; and this was the spring and source of all kinds and degrees of life, that are communicated to others, and particularly of all the reason and understanding, that is, or ever was found among men, and of all that can be called the light of life.

5 The light of natural conscience, which proceeds from God the Word, glimmers amidst the moral darkness that is brought upon the minds of men by sin; but this darkness is so great, that it overpowers and

N O T E S.

* The chief objection against this interpretation is, that in the *Greek* the article is added to the word *God*, when spoken of the Father, which is left out when applied to the Son: But this is no more than the rules of grammar made proper to determine the nominative case in the sentence, which, if the article had been added, would have been more naturally rendered, *God was the Word*, than *the Word was God*; and there are several places in this very chapter, where the word *God* is applied to the Divine Being absolutely, or to the Father personally, without the article, as particularly *ver. 6, 13, 18.* At other times 'tis applied with the article to the Son; (*chap. xx. 28.*) and at others, even to false gods: (*Acts xiv. 11. and 2 Cor. iv. 4.*) So that no stress can be laid upon the omission of the article here. And that Christ was properly God by nature, and not by office, is evident, because he was God before any creatures were made, and consequently before any dominion could be exercised over them.

† 'Tis not sufficient to object against this, that *by him* denotes only an instrument, or under-agent, in the making of all things, and not properly the efficient

or author of them: For an instrument or under-agent to God, in creation-work, do not agree to any notions of creating power, which must be strictly and properly divine and infinite, and is always spoken of in scripture; as immediately and entirely peculiar to God, *who stretched forth the heavens ALONE, and spread abroad the earth BY HIMSELF*; (*Isa. xlv. 24.*) and *of him, through him, or by him, (ὁ θεός) are all things.* (*Rom. xi. 36.*) And Christ is spoken of, as the *Lord*, or *Jehovah*, who, by his own proper efficiency, *in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens* are said to be *the works of his hands.* (*Heb. i. 10.*) These exalted characters of the *Logos* cannot agree to any, the most glorious creature that can be imagined, since that must be a *made* being, and all such beings are here distinguished from the *Logos*, who made them; and therefore he cannot be himself made. Nor can they, I think, agree to a supposed pre-existent, created soul of Christ; since the Divinity and the power, here, and in the following verses, ascribed to him, are distinguished from all made things, and are peculiar to Godhead, as will appear in the Evangelist's further account of them.

and stifles it, instead of being overpowered by it : And the light of revelation, which he communicated with a gradual increase through various dispensations of grace, shines now at length in all its lustre amidst the darkness of a degenerate world ; but such is the blindness of mens hearts, that they naturally do not understand it, but shut their eyes against it, hate and oppose it, and will not receive it, having *loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.* (Chap. iii. 19, 20.)

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

6 The opening of the last and clearest of these dispensations began in the ministry of *John the Baptist*, who was really a man and no more, though an extraordinary one in his birth, gifts, qualifications, and remarkable sanctity, and a man, who was thereby proved to be sent of God, that he might be the forerunner of the glorious person before spoken of.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

7 This *John* came among the *Jews*, as a witness from God, and for God, to speak of Christ, and point them to him, as a divine person, in whom *were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, and who was just ready to appear, and diffuse a glorious light among them : And the great design and tendency, of his testimony was, that through his ministry, as a moral and appointed means, all sorts * of men might be induced to believe in Jesus, as the proper object of their faith, (*ver. 12.*) whether they were *Pharisees, Sadducees*, or the common people among the *Jews*, or publicans and soldiers among the *Gentiles*.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

8 It might be truly said of *John*, that, by the clearness of his preaching, the fervour of his spirit, and the holiness of his life, he was ministerially, (*ο λυχνος*) a burning and shining light. (John v. 35.) But, as he himself confessed, he was not that divine person, who, by way of eminence, is (*το φως*) the light, from which all others are derived, but was sent of God, to shew him to the people, who really was so, and to assure them that he, as the Sun of righteousness, was then rising upon them.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

9 This matchless person was, by way of eminence and excellence, *the true light*, in opposition to the false lights of the *Gentile* philosophers, and the corrupted, as well as the faint typical light of the *Jews* ; and in distinction from *John the Baptist*, and the apostles,

N O T E.

* *All men*, in this place, cannot possibly mean every individual of mankind, because the Evangelist here speaks of the design of *John the Baptist's* personal ministry, to prepare Christ's way, which

ministry was confined to the land of *Judea*, and but few, comparatively speaking, heard his testimony. See the notes on *ver. 19.* and *chap. iii. 16.*

postles, who bare a more direct witness to him, and derived their light, from him. He is indeed the original fountain-light, from whom all kinds of natural and divine knowledge are communicated to every man, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, who has been partaker of them in former ages, or now is, or ever shall be so, to the end of the world*.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

10 By him, as was said, (*ver. 3.*) the whole creation was formed, and he has ever since been present in the world by his Being and Providence, *upholding all things by the word of his power*; and by several dispensations of light and grace in different degrees through all ages. And yet such is the blindness, sensuality, and depravity of mankind, that the *Gentile* world neither understood nor owned the characters of Deity, which he impressed on his works, as the Creator of all things; nor did the generality of men observe and believe the characters of grace, which he discovered by tradition, or by his word, as the only Saviour.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

11 Yea, in the fulness of time, he personally appeared, in his incarnation and ministry, among the *Jews*, and manifested himself with more abundant light and power, by his doctrine and miracles to them, who were his own people and property, not merely in common with the rest of the world, by right of creation, but likewise in a more peculiar manner, as he was the God of *Israel*, and they were his covenant and professing people, and his own kindred *according to the flesh*: (*Rom. ix. 4, 5.*) And yet so ignorant, obstinate, and perverse, were the generality of them, who were thus his own, that they wilfully rejected their Creator, their covenant-God, and their kinsman, broke through all their natural and special obligations to him, and would not receive him as their Messiah.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

12 But there was a remnant, according to the election of grace, (*Rom. xi. 5.*) who embraced him as the free gift of God, with hearty approbation of him, and of the way of salvation alone by him, as their prophet, priest, and king, and with an entire trust and dependence upon him for themselves, that they might have life through him: And on all who thus by faith received him, he bestowed (*ἐξουσίαν*) the dignity

N O T E.

* Or these words may be rendered, *He was the true light, which, coming into the world, enlighteneth every man.* And so *coming into the world*, refers not to every man, but to *Christ* the true Light, who is usually stiled *ερχομενος* he that

cometh; and then it most peculiarly relates to his appearing in the world to spread the light of the gospel among *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, or amongst all that are enlightened by it.

nity and prerogative, right and privilege of being the children of God; not in name and title only, but in noble dispositions and enjoyments, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, weaker or stronger believers *, they being *all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.* (Gal. iii. 26.)

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

13 He, as the fountain of honour, bestows this glorious privilege on them, who are new begotten, or born again, (*οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων*) not by natural descent or pedigree, from *Abraham*, nor by the blood of circumcision, which was the sign and seal of *Israel's* covenant-relation to God; nor by the intention of parents in begetting them, nor by the ceremonial observances of *Jewish* carnal ordinances, nor by any inclinations of corrupt nature, which, in a moral sense, is called flesh; nor is it according to the way of man's willing, in adopting such as are in themselves worthy to be his heirs for want of natural issue, nor according to any principles of a natural man, whereby he gives a turn to his own will, nor yet according to the mere power of moral swasion, which one man may use with another: This spiritual birth does not proceed from any of these principles, which are indeed either contrary to it, or insufficient to produce it; but, on the other hand, it is entirely of God, as the free, sovereign, and efficacious cause of that divine and heavenly principle, which is infused into believers by regeneration, that they might live in all righteousness and holiness to him.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory,

14 And in order to the saving design, for which God the Word appeared on earth, he was made man, by assuming human nature into personal union with himself †; and he tabernacled in flesh with a divine presence

N O T E S.

* Though formerly the adoption pertained only to the *Jews*; yet under the gospel-state, it is no longer confined to them, believing *Jews* and *Greeks* being *all one in Christ Jesus.* (Gal. iii. 28.) And as the *name* of Christ is often put for Christ himself, according to the discoveries we have of his person, offices, works, and benefits in his word: So to believe in his name, is to believe in him, which is the same with receiving him, as it is expressed in the former part of the verse.

† The term *flesh* is often used in scripture, by a *Synecdoche*, for the whole man, as in *Matth.* xxiv. 22. *Acts* ii. 17. and *Rom.* iii. 20. and several other places; and so the *Word* or *Logos*, being made flesh, is the same in sense with his being

made man, or having a true human soul, as well as body: But his human nature is most usually called flesh, or a body, to express his infinite condescension and grace in taking upon him, even the meanest part of man, with all the natural infirmities of the body; to shew that he came to recover that flesh from corruption, which, by *Adam's* sin was made obnoxious to death, and that not the soul only, but the body likewise should be raised to eternal life; and to assure us, that he had a true human body, or real flesh, in opposition to such as, in early days, pretended that it was only a phantom or appearance of flesh. But his being made flesh, was not by his divine nature's being changed into the human, but by the human nature's being personally

glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

presence and glory, like the Jehovah of *Israel* in the * Shechinah, as all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in the temple of his body, with a continued abode for a season amongst us men, and amongst us particularly who were his disciples, till at length he removed from earth to heaven: And his appearance amongst us, was full of grace, in opposition to the law, as a ministration *full of wrath and terror*, and as, at best, only a *shadow of good things to come*; and it was full of substance and *truth*, as he thereby completely answered all his own engagements, and was *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes*, and as all the promises, types, and prophecies were fulfilled in him: And though his divine glory was veil'd by his tabernacling in flesh amongst us, yet it was not lost, nor totally hid; but we, his disciples, were *eye-witnesses of his Majesty*, and beheld by faith, as well as with our bodily eyes, some radiant beams, which discovered the Saviour and the God: We saw the glory of his divine wisdom, power, holiness, and grace, which, on various occasions, displayed themselves in him; we saw the glory of his Godlike miracles, and of his sovereign way of performing them; we saw the glory that shone in his transfiguration, resurrection, and ascension to heaven; (*θεωροῦμεθα*) we steadfastly considered and observed it with the closest attention, and highest wonder †, as the glory that was really becoming the

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united with the divine in himself; by which personal union he did not cease to be what he was before, *viz. God*, but became what he was not before, *viz. man*; and so both natures constituted but one person in him, God-man. Accordingly it is said, that he was made, or became flesh, as *Adam* was said to be made, or became a *living soul*. (Gen. ii. 7.)

* *Εσκηνοσεν εν ημιν*, he dwelt amongst us, evidently refers to the *Shechinah*, in which God dwelt, in the tabernacle that was pitched among the *Israelites*, and was a figure of the incarnation of Christ, and of his abode for some time on earth, by which God's appearance, in the manifestation of his glory among men, was the most visible and remarkable that had ever been made before.

† The particle *as* in this place, is not designed to signify a bare resemblance of the Son of God, but what was really becoming him, and was proper to him: Thus we say of a king when he acts up to character, or appears like himself, he acts as a king, or he appears as with the

majesty of a king: And the scripture often uses such forms of speech to declare the reality of things, and their suitability to character. See *Matth.* xiv. 5. *2 Cor.* iii. 18. and *Eph.* v. 8. And how naturally does this mixed consideration of Christ as God-man, and as Mediator between God and man, account for all the high and low things that are spoken of him; for all the absolute characters of divine glory, that are ascribed to him as God, and for all the characters of weakness and dependence, that are ascribed to him as man; for all the exalted powers and honours that are said to be given to him as God-man Mediator, and for all the infinite capacities he has to receive those donations from his Father, and to exercise the powers, and wear the honours, that belong to him in that consideration of him! And how aptly does this mixed view of Christ account for all those passages of scripture, that on one hand speak of him absolutely as God, whilst he is considered in his original nature, and essential perfections and rights; and

the Son of God, and was proper and peculiar to him, who is originally the same in nature with the Father, and eternally begotten of him, in such an inconceivable manner, as none ever was besides him.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me, is preferred before me; for he was before me.

15 * Of this wonderful person *John the Baptist*, that great and extraordinary prophet, was only the forerunner, to give notice of his coming, and lead the people unto him: This he freely owned was all the honour he pretended to; and in the abundant zeal, and fervour of his Spirit, he lifted up his voice, to proclaim the incarnate God, saying to the people, after he had seen Jesus at his baptism, The long looked-for Saviour is now come; he whom I have shewn to you is the very person of whom I before told you, that he indeed appears after me in the exercise of his ministry, but is every way my superior in himself, and in his office too; he is so not barely in my esteem, but likewise in the account of his Father, and of all the prophets who wrote of him; and he shall be so in the account of all those whom he will send to bear witness to him, and of all that believe in him: And it is highly fit that he should be preferred before me; for he had an eternal existence as a divine person with the Father, and was set up from everlasting in his office-character, before all worlds, and therefore undoubtedly before I bare witness of him, and before I was born.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

16 And as † he is superior in dignity to *John*, so he is in fulness and sufficiency to all apostles and New-Testament believers; he receives nothing from them, but they derive all from him: For as he has an essential fulness of all divine perfections, as the God who inhabits the man Jesus; so he has a communicative fulness treasured up in him, by the Father's appointment and his own merit, as the head of the church: And of this inexhaustible fulness all of us, who believe in him, have received, and continue to receive, all

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and all those places on the other hand, that distinguish him from God, whilst he is spoken of in his office, as Mediator in human nature between God and man.

* This and the next testimony, (*ver. 19. &c.*) which *John* gave to Christ, seem to have been during the time of our Lord's temptation in the wilderness: For as soon as he was baptized, he was led by the spirit into the wilderness; (*Mat. iv. 1. and Luke iv. 1.*) and *John* saw Jesus coming to him *again*, the next day after the priests and Levites from *Jerusalem* had been with him at *Bethabara*, (*ver. 28, 29. of this chapter.*)

† Some suppose that this and the two further verses are *John the Baptist's* own words, as appears by the variations of the words themselves, and the propriety of their application to Christians, rather than to *John's* hearers, who were mostly ignorant of Christ, and had, at that time, received little or nothing from him; as also by the agreement of the sixteenth and seventeenth verses, with what the Evangelist had said, *ver. 14.* and further says, *ver. 18.* and 1 *John iv. 12.*

spiritual blessings, multiplied one upon another, according to our capacities and wants, as an empty vessel receives the water that is poured into it from the fountain; and we receive abundance of grace, as a beggar receives an alms, from the treasures of his grace, heap upon heap, according to the measure of his gift; and all that we derive from his fulness, is answerable, in nature and kind, to the grace which is in him; so that it bears the image of his grace, as the wax does of the seal, line for line*.

17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

17 This divine person is likewise superior to *Moses*: For he has done more than that famous law-giver could do; and the glory of his ministration excels that which was under him. *Moses* indeed, as a minister of the law, delivered the mind and will of God to the *Jews*, in a manner suitable to their circumstances, in a ministration of death and condemnation, and in obscure types and figures, which were insufficient to make the worshippers perfect: But the incarnate Son of God is the Lord and giver of the better things of the gospel, has brought in the richest and plainest discoveries of divine love and grace, and is the real substance of all Judaical types and predictions, as they are accomplished in and by him; and all the great and good things, which he is come to bring in, proceed from his grace, and have their performance from his truth, in a ministration of life and righteousness.

18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

18 Yea, this adorable person is superior to all creatures whatsoever, and his revelation excels all that any other could be supposed to make. No mere man could ever see the invisible God, who is a Spirit, and no mere creature, (*ουδεις*) not one, whether man or angel, was ever privy to God's counsels, as they lye in his own mind, or ever knew any thing of them but by revelation: But the Eternal Word, having communion with the Father in Godhead, and in counsels, perfectly understands him, and all his designs; he being, in an ineffable and peculiar manner, his only begotten Son, of the same nature with the Father, and infinitely dear to him, is, as he always was, and will be, intimately present with him, and thoroughly acquainted with his whole heart, like a bosom-friend, *the Father being in him, and he in the Father.* (John xiv. 10.) He accordingly has revealed all that is known, or was needful to be known concerning him, and particularly relating to his infinite wisdom

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* These I take to be the most genuine senses of this expression. The reader may see several other interpretations in *Lightfoot* on the place.

wisdom and grace in the redemption and salvation of lost sinners; whatever the prophets of old, and his forerunner *John*, have said about these things, was by his Spirit; and now he himself has come to make still further discoveries of them in his own personal ministry, and with still greater evidence and extent by his Spirit in the apostles, whom he sent forth in his name.

19 And this is the record of *John*, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from *Jerusalem*, to ask him, Who art thou?

19 And *, at another time, *John the Baptist* gave the following testimony concerning *Jesus*, when the great council of the *Jews* at *Jerusalem* sent to him: They having heard much of *John's* fame, and how he was honoured among the people, for the strictness of his life, the excellence of his doctrine, and the solemnity of his baptism, deputed some of their number, who were priests and Levites, men of high account for their piety and knowledge in the law, to examine him about the character he assumed, and to demand of him whether he professed to be the *Messiah* or not.

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the *Christ*.

20 To this inquiry *John* answered in plain terms, and with great earnestness, freely confessing, and by no means denying the truth; and (see) what he so strongly confessed was, that he neither was, nor ever pretended to be the *Messiah*, nor would have any one entertain a thought of him as if he were.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou *Elias*? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

21 Hereupon they further asked him, What then do you profess to be? Are you the great prophet *Elijah the Tishbite*, who our doctors say is to appear in person immediately before the coming of the *Messiah*? to this he answered, No, I am not that *Elias* whom ye expect. They replied, Are you then *Jeremias*, or any one of the ancient prophets, (*Matth.* xvi. 14.) who before the coming of *Elias* we expect will rise from the dead? to which he frankly answered again, No, I am not.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us: what sayest thou of thyself?

22 Then, like persons that knew not what to think of him, they said, If you are none of these, who do you pretend to be? we insist on a direct answer, that we may know what account to give of you to the sanhedrim, by whose authority we are come, and to whom we must make our report. As for us, we cannot imagine who you are, or by what authority you take upon you at this rate; tell us therefore in plain terms what you call yourself, and what sort of commission it is that you pretend to.

23 To

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* They who take the foregoing verses to be *John's* testimony, suppose that this record refers to what was there said: But I rather think that the history is here re-assumed, and that this refers to what follows, in the discourse between *John* and the messengers from *Jerusalem*. See the notes on *ver.* 15, and 16.

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

23 To this, their peremptory demand, *John* replied, I am the Messiah's harbinger, whom *Isaiab*, (chap. xl. 3.) described in prophecy, as *the voice of him that cries in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high way for our God.* Ye see that I appear in the wilderness, and not in populous places, like one who seeks his own glory; and my special commission is to lay myself out with zeal and fervour, in rectifying the errors of the people, and making way, by my doctrine and baptism of repentance, for their receiving the Messiah, who is *Israel's* Jehovah, and whom I openly proclaim, as just ready to appear among you.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

24 Now it is to be observed, that these messengers from the council to *John*. were of the sect of the *Pharisees*, who were a captious sort of people, wonderful tenacious of their ceremonies and traditions, and such proud self-justiciaries, as thought they needed no repentance.

25 And they ask him, and said unto him, why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

25 And therefore they expostulated with him, saying, If this is all that you pretend to be, what is the reason of your making so many profelytes, and baptizing them, into your new doctrine? A mere harbinger surely has no right to set up for himself as you do, and to make such extraordinary innovations as these: Since then you confess, that you are neither the *Messiah*, nor *Elias*, nor *Jeremiah*, nor any other of the ancient prophets raised from the dead, we wonder at your presumption, and would fain know by what authority you do these things.

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

27 He it is, who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

26, 27 *John* replied, Ye greatly mistake the matter: I do not make disciples to myself, nor baptize them into the profession of any new doctrine of my own: I only baptize with water, as a sign and emblem of a better baptism. But there is one, who already lives among you, and lately stood at *Jordan* in the midst of you, (*μετος δε υμων εστηκεν*) though he has not yet fully appeared in his public character, and ye have not known him; he will shortly baptize his disciples with the Holy Ghost; and my great business is to consign the people over to him, that they may receive him, and his doctrine, together with all the supernatural gifts, and graces, and blessings of his kingdom: He is that Divine Person, of whom I have before publicly declared, (*ver. 15.*) that, though he succeeds me in the manifestation of himself, and in the exercise of his office; yet he is infinitely more excellent than me, and had an eternal existence before me, who does not deserve to be employed in the meanest office about him, no, not so much as to take

take off his shoes : But as I, though unworthy, have the honour of God's commission to be his forerunner, according to *Isaiah's* prophecy, I have sufficient authority in this manner to make disciples unto him, and this is all that I pretend to.

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

28 This conversation, between *John* and the messengers from *Jerusalem*, was held publicly at *Bethabara*, which signifies *the house of passage*, and lay a little beyond that part of *Jordan*, where people used to go over it, and which was the place where *John* had been for some time baptizing the multitudes that came to him.

29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world !

29 The next day after this, *John* seeing *Jesus*, who then returned back from the wilderness, (see the note on *ver. 15.*) pointed to him, and said to the people then present, Behold, here is the very person of whom I have spoke so much, now appearing before your eyes ; look with attention upon him, and look by faith unto him, for the remission of sins ; receive, admire, and prize him, who is, by way of eminence and preference to all others, the Lamb of God ; this is the true and only effectual propitiatory Sacrifice, chosen, set apart, and sent of God, devoted to him, and accepted by him, and prefigured, as by all the typical sacrifices of atonement, so particularly by the paschal lamb, and those that were offered *for a continual burnt-offering, every morning and evening.* (*Exod. xxix. 38, 42.*) Behold, God has now provided a most excellent Lamb for himself, which is no other than this holy, meek, and humble *Jesus*, *a lamb without blemish and without spot, who was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world. but is now manifested,* (*1 Peter i. 9, 20.*) to take away the guilt and punishment, power and pollution of all sin, both original and actual, and that with abiding efficacy from every one, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, that believes in him*.

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man

30 This is the great Messiah ; see there he comes, of whom ye have heard me say before, that a mighty man, (*αυγ*) *the man of God's right hand, whom he has made strong for himself, and the man his Fel-*

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* The terms *world*, *all men*, and the like, when used to denote the persons concerned in the saving benefits of *Christ's* death, most generally signify in the writings of the New Testament, and particularly of our Evangelist, not every individual of mankind, but all nations, inclusive of *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*. (See the notes on *ver. 7.* and *chap. iii. 16.*) A very early intimation of which

was given in *John the Baptist's* ministry, when he declared that *all flesh should see the salvation of God* ; and when the *Roman* soldiers and publicans came to be baptized of him. (*Luke iii. 6, 12, 13, 14.*) And here he seems to speak of the Lamb of God, as taking away the sin of the world, in opposition to the typical lambs that were offered in the stead of the *Jews* only.

man which is preferred before me; for he was before me.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

Fellow, (Psal. lxxx. 17. and Zech. xiii. 7.) was just ready to appear after me, as his forerunner; a man every way superior in excellence, dignity, and authority, to myself, and indeed God as well as man, and therefore infinitely to be preferred to me; for he had a divine and eternal existence before I had a being.

31 And, to tell you the truth, in all the former part of my life and ministry, I had no manner of personal acquaintance or correspondence with him, to bias me in his favour, or to give me the least opportunity of concerting any measures with him, about going before him, to give testimony concerning him: But, according to my commission from above, I at first only declared (as ye all know) that the Messiah would quickly appear among you; and the reason of my baptizing with water into the faith of him was, to awaken your expectation of it, and to prepare the way for a more particular and express discovery of him afterwards to his people *Israel*, that they might then take special notice of him, and might own and believe in him.

32 And the way in which I myself came to know this very person to be the Messiah, was by the heaven's opening in my sight, and the Spirit of God descending in a visible appearance, and hovering over Jesus, after the manner of a dove, till it rested upon his head. (See the note on *Matth.* iii. 16.)

33 Before this time, I again insist upon it, that I had no manner of personal knowledge of him: But the same God who commissioned me to baptize with water, revealed to me likewise, when Jesus was coming to my baptism, that I should presently know the true Messiah by a certain miraculous token, saying, On whomsoever you shall see the Spirit visibly descending, and resting upon his head, he, and no other, is mine anointed, who shall baptize his disciples with the Holy Ghost.

34 Accordingly, I plainly saw the Spirit descending and lighting in that visible form upon Jesus, and, at the same time, heard a voice from heaven, which gave a still further testimony to him, saying, (*Matth.* iii. 17.) *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:* And being hereby fully satisfied, that the extraordinary signal before given was then exactly answered, I immediately did, and could not but declare, that this very person, who now appears among you, is indeed the eternal Son of God, and the true Messiah; and thenceforward I have, on all occasions, solemnly repeated that testimony concerning him.

35 Again, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples;

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

35 On the day immediately after this, *John* was again teaching and baptizing the people; and two of his disciples, who were not only hearers but believers of his doctrine, were with him:

36 And, Jesus passing by in their sight a second time, *John*, designing particularly to make him known to those two disciples, fixed his eyes upon him, and said to them, in the hearing of all the company, Observe, there the person now appears again: See, there he walks; look by faith to him, who, as I yesterday told you, is ordained and sent of God to be the only true propitiatory Sacrifice, as a spotless Lamb of his own providing, that ye might believe, and receive remission of sins through him.

37 And, upon hearing *John* repeat these words, the two disciples looking were enlightened, and their hearts were touched and moved to go after Jesus, that they might be particularly acquainted with him.

38 Then he, who observes and encourages the first motions of the soul toward himself, turned about; and seeing them come after him, began a free and friendly conversation with them, saying, What is the design of your thus following me? What is your petition? Come, tell me what ye want, and it shall be done unto you. They replied with great esteem and veneration*, Rabbi, by what we have heard from *John the Baptist*, we look upon you to be a great Master in *Israel*, and beg leave to wait upon you at home, or wherever you lodge or stay any time, that we may be further acquainted with you, and fully instructed in the things that belong to our peace.

39 Thereupon Jesus, to shew his willingness to receive all that come to him, affectionately invited them to go along with him, that, according to their desire, they might have his company and counsel, might know where to have recourse to him, and might see by the meanness of his habitation, that no great things for this world were to be expected from him: And they, encouraged by his grace, went and saw his place of abode, and were so taken with him, that they thought it good for them to be there; and they tarried with him all the remainder of that day, it being then, according to the *Roman* way of reckoning, about ten o'clock in the morning †.

40 Now

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* *Rabbi* was a title of high respect, by which it was usual to compliment the doctors or teachers of those days; and these disciples of *John* saluting Christ under this appellation, was at once an honourable way of addressing him, and an

intimation of their desire to be taught by him.

† It seems that this Evangelist, writing after the destruction of *Jerusalem*, commonly uses the *Roman* computation of the hours of the day, as here, and in

40 One of the two which heard *John speak*, and followed him, was *Andrew*, *Simon Peter's* brother.

41 He first findeth his own brother *Simon*, and faith unto him, We have found the *Messias*, which is, being interpreted, *The Christ*.

42 And he brought him to *Jesus*. And when *Jesus* beheld him he said, Thou art *Simon* the son of *Jona*: thou shalt be called *Cephas*, which is, by interpretation, *A stone*.

40 Now one of the two disciples of *John*, who was induced in this manner to follow *Jesus*, by what they had heard their master say concerning him, was *Andrew*, the brother of *Simon*, who was afterwards surnamed *Peter**.

41 *Andrew's* heart being much affected with the convincing and engaging discoveries that he had received in his converse with *Jesus*, immediately went in search of his friends and relations, that he might bring them into an acquaintance with *Christ*: And first of all meeting with his brother *Simon* †, he told him, with great earnestness and ecstasy, That he and another of *John's* disciples had been directed by their master to, had been in company with, and were fully satisfied that they had at length found the great and promised Redeemer of *Israel*, who, in the *Hebrew* language, was stiled the *Messiah*, which is of the same signification with the *Greek* word, the *Christ*, or the anointed ‡.

42 And *Andrew*, having recommended the Saviour in the best manner he could to his brother *Simon*, conducted him to *Jesus*; who, taking particular notice of him, shewed that he thoroughly knew him, though a stranger, saying, Your present name, which signifies a hearer or learner, is *Simon*, and you are the son of *Jonah*: But hereafter you shall be more commonly known by the name of *Cephas* in the *Syriac*, or of *Peter* in the *Greek* tongue, which signifies || a rock or stone; and so will better express your

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chap. iv. 6, 52. and xix. 14. and so the tenth hour is ten o'clock in the morning: But others think, with *Dr Lightfoot*. that he follows the *Jerwish* computation, and so make the tenth hour to be four o'clock in the afternoon; and the doctor supposes that these disciples abode with *Christ* all that night, and that the next day was the *Sabbath*, which they likewise spent with him. But the former account appears most probable to me, as more agreeable to this *Evangelist's* way of reckoning the hour in other places. See the note on *Mark* xv. 25.

* And the other probably was *John* himself, the writer of this gospel, who usually conceals his own name. This disciple and *Andrew* were called before *Peter*; and *Andrew* was the means of bringing *Peter* to *Christ*, instead of *Peter's* bringing him.

† Or this first finding of *Peter* may relate, either to *Andrew's* finding him before the other disciple had met with him; or before that other disciple had found

any of his own friends to bring them to *Jesus*: For as soon as the grace of God reached these disciples hearts, they were desirous that it might spread in the hearts of all their friends too.

‡ As the ancient prophets, priests, and kings, were anointed to their respective offices, this title, being by way of eminence applied to our Lord, intimates that they were types of him, and that God his Father anointed him with his Spirit above measure for the discharge of all those offices.

|| It is observable that this *Evangelist* gives us the interpretation of the *Hebrew* and *Syriac* words in the *Greek*, more frequently than any of the other evangelists; the reason of which seems to be, that he wrote after the destruction of the *Jerwish* nation, and after many of the *Gentiles* were called, when the *Greek* was more commonly used, and those other languages were less known than they had been before.

your religious temper and behaviour, as a firm believer in me, a stedfast maintainer of my gospel, and a patient sufferer for it.

43 The day following, Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

43 Our Lord, having now begun to make disciples to himself, was so intent upon this work, that the very next day he went into the province of *Galilee*, to search and find out his sheep: And there, meeting with *Philip*, he first began with him, and, in his preventing mercy, said to him, Come along with me, yield yourself up to my authority and grace, counsel and conduct, and follow my example; and his words were attended with such divine light and power, as made an effectual impression upon *Philip's* heart; so that he was immediately brought over to Christ, and became one of his disciples.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

44 Now this *Philip* lived at *Bethsaida**, which was situated on the east of the lake of *Gennesareth*, and was a very wicked place; (*Matth. xi. 21.*) and yet even here God had some chosen vessels, *Andrew* and *Peter* being likewise inhabitants of this city, and called from thence.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

45 *Philip* having been fully convinced that Jesus was indeed the Christ, as the other disciples had been before, he likewise presently went to seek out some of his friends, to whom he might communicate the glad tidings; and, meeting with *Nathanael*, said in a transport of joy to him, I with some others have at last certainly found out the person, having been first found of him, whom we have earnestly longed to see, even the true Messiah, whom † the books of *Moses*, and the rest of the prophets described by those very characters which we find in him! It is ‡ Jesus of *Nazareth*, the son of *Joseph*.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

46 *Nathanael* supposed *Philip* to mean, that Jesus was born at *Nazareth*; and knowing from scripture-prophecy, that the Messiah was to come forth from *Bethlehem*, (*Mic. v. 2.*) and being under the power of a common prejudice against *Nazareth*, (see the note on *chap. vii. 52.*) he objected to this account,

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saying,

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* *Bochart* in his *Geogr. Sacr.* speaks of *Bethsaida*, as signifying a house of fishing: *Dr Lightfoot* in his harmony says, it was a place of hunting, because it stood in or near the tribe of *Naphtali*, which abounded with deer: And this, which was at first but a little town or village, was afterwards changed by *Philip the Tetrarch* into the state of a city, which he called *Julia*, in honour of *Cæsar's* daughter.

† It is probable that our Lord himself

had referred *Philip* to the predictions of the law and the prophets concerning himself, and had explained them in his discourse with him.

‡ Though *Bethlehem* was the place of Christ's birth, and not *Nazareth*, where he afterwards dwelt; and though he was only the supposed son of *Joseph*; yet, as he was commonly called Jesus of *Nazareth* the son of *Joseph*, *Philip* described him by that name, and this occasioned *Nathanael's* prejudice against him.

saying, How is it possible, that any considerable prophet, and especially the great and only Saviour of *Israel*, should come out of such a mean, despicable, and wicked town as *Nazareth*? *Philip* being ignorant of the true state of the case, and not knowing how to solve this difficulty, replied, Come along with me, and talk with him yourself, as I have done, and he will certainly answer this, and every other objection, that you can raise against him: Whereupon *Nathanael*, being desirous to know the truth, so far laid aside his prejudices, as to go and converse with Jesus himself.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an *Israelite* indeed, in whom is no guile!

47 And when Jesus saw *Nathanael* approaching, he spoke of him to the company with high commendation, saying, Observe, and admire the man who is now coming to me; he is a true son of honest *Jacob*, plain-hearted like him, an inheritor of his spirit, as well as a descendant from him by birth; he is, what an *Israelite* should be*, a man without prevailing or allowed hypocrisy in his dealings with God, or with his fellow-creatures.

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that *Philip* called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.

48 *Nathanael*, being within hearing, was much surpris'd at this high encomium, and said, to our Lord, How is it possible for you, who are a perfect stranger to me, and, I suppose, never once saw me before, to know who or what I am? How can you tell my character, and what I am in heart and truth? alas! I fear I do not deserve the praise you have given me. Jesus replied, How much soever you may wonder at this, and how low thoughts soever you have of yourself, I have thoroughly known you long before we had any personal interview; and to satisfy you of this, I will tell you of what none but God and yourself were privy to, which is, that before *Philip* met you, and asked you to come to me, I observed you, and saw the inmost temper and thoughts of your heart, at a certain remarkable season, (you know when) while you retired to a private place under a fig-tree, and there was employed in religious exercises †.

49 *Nathanael*

N O T E S.

* Our Lord here seems to refer to *Nathanael's* private retirement for religious exercises, (ver. 48.) where no human eye saw him, and to his willingness to come to him and judge for himself, notwithstanding the mistaken prejudices he had conceived against him; for Christ knew all that had passed between *Philip* and him. He likewise seems to refer to *Nathanael's* known character among his neighbours; otherwise this good man's

modesty and humility would hardly have allowed him to ask, how Jesus knew him under that character.

† Our Lord here seems to remind him of some solemn secret transactions, that passed between God and him, when he was under a fig-tree, in which *Nathanael's* own heart was conscious of its being most sincerely and unreservedly devoted to him; and so the reminding him of this was an evidence of Christ's omniscience,

49 Nathanael answered and said unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered, and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending

49 *Nathanael* being fully convinced of Christ's divine knowledge, as the searcher of the heart, by this evident and affecting instance of it, answered with profound humility and reverence, Worthy art thou of the title of Rabbi, in the highest sense possible; my prejudices against thee are all overcome; and, by what thou hast now told me, I am thoroughly satisfied, that thou art more than a mere man: I verily believe thee to be the Son of God, and the promised Messiah, *Who shall sit on the throne of David, and reign over the house of Jacob for ever*; (Luke i. 32, 33.) as such I receive thee, and trust in thee for all salvation.

50 To this noble confession of his faith, Jesus replied, with an air of approbation and wonder, Hast thou so high and stedfast a faith in me, as the Son of God, and the Saviour of *Israel*, because I told you what I knew and observed of you in one instance only, relating to your secret retirement under the fig-tree? Great is your faith: And, for your further encouragement, you shall have still much more extraordinary and assuring proofs of my knowledge and power to confirm it.

51 And thereupon he said to him*, I, the Amen, who am Truth itself, certainly assure all of you, my disciples, that in a little time ye shall see the accomplishment of *Jacob's* vision in me. As he *beheld the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder set upon the earth, the top of which reached to heaven*:

N O T E S.

science, and of his own integrity: And it is highly probable that *Nathanael* was then reading, or meditating upon, and considering the meaning of *Jacob's* dream, (*Gen. xxviii. 12.*) which our Lord recites, and explains as referring to himself, (*ver. 51.*) and thereby satisfied *Nathanael's* enquiries about it, and gave him an undeniable proof of his knowing what were then the particular thoughts of his heart.

* It is observable that our Lord here changes the number, from the singular to the plural, (*λεγει αυτω' Αμην ομνη λεγω υμιν*) which shews that this was said to all the disciples, as well as to *Nathanael*. *Verily*, or *Amen*, was never used by any under the Old Testament, but in the form of a wish; and in that manner the *Jews*, and afterwards Christians often used it, and sometimes doubled it at the close of their prayers. But our blessed Lord constantly used it at the beginning of a sentence, and in the form of a solemn asseveration, to intimate that he is the *Amen*, (*Rev. iii. 14.*) and the *God*

of truth. אלהי אמן (*Isa. lxx. 16.*) and that therefore his own authority was sufficient to confirm what he said; and it is peculiar to this Evangelist to represent Christ, as doubling the asseveration, though he himself probably used it singly. But the reason of the apostle *John's* repeating it, in this manner, might be to express the double sense that is included in our Lord's use of the single word, the true meaning of which, as proceeding from his mouth, is, that He who is Truth itself, speaks the truth; and so the double form of expression being best adapted to keep this Evangelist's great point in view, relating to the divinity of Christ, he constantly represents it in that form. And I have accordingly, for the most part, kept up its meaning through the paraphrase; though perhaps, as says Dr. *Lightfoot*, St. *John* being to write for the use of the *Hellenists*, might write the word in the *Hebrew* letters, wherein Christ used it, and in the same letters wherein the *Greeks* used it.

ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

heaven: (Gen. xxviii. 12.) So while I, the Mediator between God and man, am in my human nature on earth, my Godhead reaches to heaven; and ye shall see such manifestations of my glory, in the great and wonderful miracles I shall work, in the divine wisdom and knowledge I shall display, and in the friendly intercourse I shall set on foot between God and men, that all things in heaven and earth shall as evidently appear to be under my command, as if ye saw the angels of God perpetually coming and going from heaven to me, and from me to heaven, to carry on a correspondence between my Father above, and me the * Son of man here below; and as if they were visibly bringing messages to me, and executing orders according to my will: And some time hence †, ye shall really see the angels, in a literal sense, attending to pay their honours to me.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How solemn and sublime, magnificent and awful, is the account here given of our blessed Lord, as God co-eternal with the Father, a distinct and yet inseparable person from him, and as intimately present to him, as thought is to mind; as the Creator of all things without restriction or limitation, the proper fountain of life and honour, and the true light, who was in the world to illuminate, uphold, and govern it, ever since it was created by him; and as the object of faith, the divine author of evangelical truth, whose own, *Verily I say unto you*, demands our faith and obedience, and who is the discerner of the thoughts, and the ruler of the heart! How adorable is the constitution of his incarnate person, as the eternal Word made flesh, the Son of God and the Son of man! And what dignity and honour does his divinity put upon his condescension, who tabernacled in flesh among men! full of grace and truth; and died a sacrifice to take away their sins! Behold this Lamb of God; look to him and be saved; look and love, and follow him. And O how should we exalt him, and abase ourselves before him, as thinking it honour enough to be employed in the meanest services for him! How evidently divine were the testimonies given to this wonderful person! To him give all the prophets witness, and the eternal Father himself discovered him to *John*, and miraculously owned him from heaven, by an express notification and infallible signal at his baptism; and, to prevent all possible collusion in *John's* testimony, the wisdom of Providence ordered

N O T E S.

* Though *Nathanael* owned our Lord to be *the Son of God*; yet he called himself *the Son of man*, to shew his own great humility, and to check his disciples' expectation of temporal grandeur in his kingdom, as also to let us know that he was the promised Messiah, foretold under that title, (*Psal.* lxxx. 17. and *Dan.* vii. 13.) who was to be as truly man as God, and that it was most suitable to his state of humiliation, to call himself by his lowest name. Accordingly, he usually spoke of himself in this stile, as the Son of man, though others did not use it concerning him: His enemies did not, that they might not seem to own him under this known character of the Messiah; and his disciples did not, lest they

should seem to speak too little of him, who was so glorious in himself, and in their eyes.

† This the disciples saw at the ascension of our Lord; but as the word *απαρτι*, rendered *herceafter*, properly signifies *henceforth*, which intimates that this discovery of Christ's glory was just then commencing; and as the angels, that attended him at his ascension about three years afterwards, are no where said to ascend and descend upon him, I rather prefer the metaphorical sense of this passage, which, from the very time of his speaking these words, immediately began to be fulfilled in his miracles and preaching, with increasing light and efficacy.

ordered that he himself should not personally know Jesus, till he came to be openly manifested to *Israel*. How excellent is a gospel-ministry, which leads us not to man, but to Christ, as God-man Mediator, the great Prophet of the church, and the only propitiation for sin, that all who believe in him might receive of his fulness, grace for grace, and as the author of all the efficacy of gospel-ordinances by the baptism of the Spirit! And yet alas, how many remain in darkness, in the midst of noon-day light; and how many of his own professing people reject him and the gospel! But, blessed be God, there are some that receive him with a true and saving faith, by an assent and approbation of the mind, and by a full consent of the will: And O how great is their happiness! they are made partakers of the dignity and privilege of sons of God by adoption, and of a divine nature by regeneration, as the gifts and effects of sovereign grace, which begins with us before we begin with Christ. We are indeed brought to know and believe in him by the ministry of his servants: But, it is a divine power, going forth with his word, that sweetly overcomes the soul, and makes it willing to follow him; and he will ever encourage early and earnest enquiries after him: Whatsoever objections or prejudices they might before have in their hearts against him, how will a true acquaintance with him effectually cure and answer them all! The soul that finds Christ, finds enough in him to determine it to abide with him; yea, they that, relying on his testimony, believe in him, shall see still greater things, for his glory, and their own consolation and establishment. And O how happy is it to have his approbation of us, as *Israelites* indeed, in whom there is no prevailing deceit, or allowed guile! And what a grateful and generous turn does the grace of God give to the temper of a man's heart! He wants to have Christ exalted in every soul, and fain would have all his acquaintance, friends, and relations, as well as himself, brought to a saving knowledge of him, and interest in him. And how securely may we depend upon the infinite merit of his blood, commit our all to him, and surrender up ourselves entirely to his authority, guidance, and grace, as God manifested in the flesh, and as able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God the Father by him!

C H A P. II.

Christ turns water into wine at Cana of Galilee, 1,—11. Goes to Capernaum, 12. Goes from thence to keep the passover at Jerusalem, where he casts the traders out of the temple, vindicates what he had done, and declines trusting himself with pretended disciples, 13,—25.

TEXT.

AND the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there.

2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

PARAPHRASE.

THREE days after Christ's coming into *Galilee*, and beginning to gather disciples there, a wedding was celebrated at a village called *Cana*, in that country, at which *Mary* the mother of Jesus was present*.

2 Our Lord likewise, being at that time in the neighbourhood, with the few disciples he had called, was invited, as they also were for his sake, to the marriage-entertainment; and that he might not refuse the common offices of civility and friendship, nor slip so seasonable an opportunity of putting an honour upon

N O T E.

* It is probable that this was a marriage of some near relation of *Mary*, because she is not spoken of as an invited guest, as Christ himself and his disciples

were; and because she concerned herself so much about a recruit of wine for the feast.

upon marriage, as the ordinance of God, he accepted of the invitation for himself and them.

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

3 When by this increase of company there was not wine enough for all the guests; the mother of our Lord, being concerned at a disappointment of that nature, on such a joyful occasion, told him privately that the wine provided for the entertainment was just spent; intimating that it would be kind in him to supply the present necessity, which she apprehended he could easily do, and which, he having just begun to appear in his public character, she hoped he would do*.

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

4 Jesus replied, Though I am willing to pay all becoming filial duty to you, and to do good on all proper occasions to others; yet, what obligation am I under to regard this motion, for exercising my divine power, which I have not, as your son, but as the Son of God †? You are not to meddle in the affairs of my kingdom; nor are you to suppose that I must obey you, as my mother, more than any other woman, in performing miraculous works: Besides, the time ‡ for the public manifestation of my glory, is not yet fully come, whatsoever I may do more privately, in the mean-while, among my friends: Leave this matter therefore entirely to me.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

5 Hereupon *Mary*, his mother, silently submitted to the reproof; but, though he seemed to be angry, she hoped in his power and goodness, and desired the servants in waiting, to obey any orders that he might give, without disputing or objecting against them.

6 And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins a-piece.

6 Now as the *Jews* were wont to have vessels in their houses to keep water, which they daily used, and especially at their public entertainments, for washing hands and cups, and for various ceremonial purifications, some of divine, and others of human institution, there were in this house six large jars, or cisterns of stone, each of which contained two or three large measures ||.

7 Jesus

N O T E S.

* As she could not be a perfect stranger to the greatness of his power, of whom she had heard such magnificent things spoken by angels and inspired men; so it is not improbable but that, during his private life, he had miraculously relieved the wants, either of his own family, or of some of his friends, though care was taken to prevent its being known abroad.

† What a reproof it this to the idolatry of the papists, in praying to the Virgin *Mary* to command her Son!

‡ I take this intimation to relate, rather to the time of his openly manifesting his glory shortly after at *Jerusalem*, (ver. 13, &c.) than, as some suppose, to the time of turning the water into wine, as soon as the other wine should be quite spent, this interval being so very small.

|| What these (*μετραι*) firkins were, is very uncertain to us, who know so little of the ancient *Jewish* measures: But all agree that the water-pots, which held two or three of them, must be of a pretty large size.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now.

11 This beginning

7 Jesus therefore, to clear his designed miracle from all suspicions of fraud, spoke to the waiters themselves to fill the six stone jars with common water: And they, remembering *Mary's* advice, readily complied with his directions, filling them up to the very brim.

8 And when they had done this, our blessed Lord, as the sovereign God of nature, who could work his miracles how, when, and wherever he pleased, by a mere act of his will, ordered the servants to draw out of the vessels, and carry some of the liquor to the person * who had the management of the feast, that he might taste of it; and they did so.

9 But though the servants, who at Christ's command put in water and † drew out wine, saw the wonderful change which was made, in that it was no longer water but wine; yet the manager of the feast knew nothing of the matter, nor whence the servants had it: And when, upon tasting, he found it to be more pleasant and generous wine than they had drunk before, he called out to the bridegroom;

10 And, returning the thanks of the company to him, he said, The usual custom at feasts is to begin with the richest wine, while the palate is nice, and can relish it with the greatest pleasure and advantage; and afterwards, when the guests have drunk enough to pall their appetites and raise their spirits, a poorer sort of wine is generally set before them, which will easier go down, and be less intoxicating: But you, Sir, though our wine has all along been very good, have, by an uncommon generosity, furnished us now at last with some, which is every way better than any that we have drunk before ‡.

11 This miracle, at the wedding in *Cana of Galilee*,

N O T E S.

* The governor of the feast was either the chief guest, who sat at the upper end of the table, or one whose office, like the *Symphiarchus* among the *Greeks*, was to take care that there were neither any want, nor any irregularities or excesses. See *Light. Harm.*

† If Jesus turned all this water into wine, it is not to be supposed that the whole of it was drunk at that time; but that a considerable quantity was left for the use of the family, and for an abiding proof of the miracle, which had been wrought in this supernatural change upon the water: Of perhaps, as the widow's pot of oil increased in the pouring of it out; (2 *Kings* iv. 4,—6.) so this water was turned into wine in the draw-

ing it out of the vessels; and Christ ordering them all to be filled, might be only to intimate that, whatsoever quantity of wine there should be occasion for, he could easily supply the want without restraint.

‡ This is a very different case from the pretended transubstantiation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ: For the most competent judges saw and tasted that, after this change, the water continued no longer what it was before, but was really and evidently wine. Whereas, after the *Papish* consecration, every capable judge sees and tastes that the elements continue to be what they were before, not flesh and blood, but bread and wine.

ning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

12 After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples; and they continued there not many days.

13 And the Jews passover was at hand; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money, sitting :

liee, was the first that Jesus performed, after his entrance on his public ministry; and by this he gave a clear proof to the whole company of his divine power, which now began to break forth, as a pledge and earnest of what would be more illustriously displayed afterwards: And the disciples, whom he before had called, and who were present at this manifestation of his glory*, were hereby confirmed in their faith in him as the true Messiah.

12 After this, our Lord went to *Capernaum*, which lay about a day's journey eastward from *Cana*, and was the place, where, after a few months, (see the note on chap. iv. 1.) he had his most usual residence; (*Matth.* iv. 13.) and hither his mother, and his other relations, (see the note on *Matth.* xii. 46.) together with his four or five disciples, which he had before called in *Galilee*, went along with him, to observe what further discoveries he would make of his power and glory †. But their continuance together there at this time, was only for a few days.

13 And the reason of this was, because the first passover after Christ's baptism drew near; and, being made under the law, he, in obedience to its appointment for all the males of *Israel*, repaired to *Jerusalem* as usual, that he might celebrate the approaching festival there.

14 When he came thither, he, having entered on his public office, went directly to the temple, to engage in prayer and preaching; and as he passed through the court of the *Gentiles*, he found the people had turned that holy place into a market, stored with oxen, sheep, and doves, and the like, which were exposed to sale there for sacrifices: He likewise found several stalls of persons, who traded in bills of exchange, and in furnishing those with half-shekels, that were to offer them for the service of the sanctuary. (*Exod.* xxx. 12,—16.)

15 And

N O T E S.

* This could not be said of the miracles wrought by any of the prophets and apostles: They did not therein manifest their own glory; for it was not by their own power or holiness that they did them; they only manifested the glory of that God, whose power alone wrought those wonderful works. But Christ, in the performance of his miracles, manifested his own glory as God, together with his Father's glory, as his great deputy in our nature: He was their proper efficient cause, by virtue that went out from him; and he most usually wrought them in a sovereign, Godlike manner,

with an air of independent power and divine Majesty, by a thought as well as by a word, according to his pleasure, just in such a manner as the eternal Father himself might be expected to act, had he been incarnate; and all this was a manifestation or display of Christ's own divine glory, as the fulness of the Godhead thereby appeared to dwell in him.

† His relations themselves seemed to be affected at the sight of his first miracle, however afterwards, some of them, at least, (*chap.* vii. 5.) slighted his wonderful works, when the frequency of them took off their surprise at them.

15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers money, and overthrew the tables;

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

17 And his disciples remembered that it was written. The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

18 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou dost these things?

15 And as this was a profanation of the temple, occasioned by the avarice of the priests, who had their share of rents and fees for the people's standing there, our Lord, making a * whip of small cords, drove away the oxen and sheep; and at the same time turned out all the traders with them, and threw the stalls of the bankers, with the money upon them, down to the ground.

16 And that he might not set the doves a-flying, to the loss and injury of their owners, he ordered them to remove their goods from thence, saying, I can by no means allow that the temple, which, by the appointment of my heavenly Father, is peculiarly dedicated to his service, and to the honour of his name, should be turned into a place of common traffick, to the disturbance of those who come to worship here, and to the prostitution of this sacred house to covetous and worldly views. And his divine power impressed the spirits of all the traders with such an awe of his majesty and authority, that they submitted to his commands, though he had no human aid to enforce them.

17 And his disciples observing with what undaunted courage, and fervent zeal for the glory of God and the purity of divine institutions, he exposed himself to the rage of his most powerful enemies, called to mind that prophetic passage, relating to the Messiah, (*Psal. lxxix. 9.*) where it is said, *The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up*; and, seeing this so remarkably fulfilled in Jesus, they were confirmed in their belief that he could be no other than the true Messiah.

18 The common people of the Jews being hereby disturbed in their profitable trade, and their chief priests and rulers being highly displeased, both at the loss of their own gains, and at this open attack upon their prerogative, who pretended to have the only right of ordering all things about the temple and its services, joined together in objecting against the lawfulness of his taking upon himself to do, what they could not deny but was lawful, and commendable in itself to be done; and therefore they expostulated with him, saying, By what authority have you done this? If you pretend to an immediate commission from God for it, where are your credentials? By

P p 2

what

N O T E.

* Christ probably found these cords in the temple; which might be such as had been used by the owners of the cattle, either to drive or lead them thither: And as it was not lawful to bring a staff

into the temple, he used a scourge, which seemed to have been in the emblematical, rather than in the forcible way.

what miraculous works do you prove it, that we may believe it?

19 Jesus answered and said unto them. Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

19 Our Lord Jesus having just before given a very surprising proof of his divine power, by the awful and irresistible influence he had exerted upon all their minds; and knowing that their design in this demand was to cavil, rather than to receive conviction, did not see fit to gratify their perverse humour by working a miracle at that very instant; but referred them to one in figurative terms, which ere long would be the greatest of all others, saying, *Destroy * this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*: By which he meant, that, as they had profaned that sacred place, and he had by his own power cleansed it from their defilements; so they would wickedly destroy his human body, of which the temple was a type; and then, by a still more eminent act of his own divine power, he would, in the space of three days afterward, certainly raise it up again from the dead, and thereby undeniably demonstrate himself to be the Son of God. (*Rom. i. 4.*)

20 Then said the Jews. Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

20 Then these rulers and people of the *Jews*, taking it for granted that he spoke literally of the temple at *Jerusalem*, cried out, in a way of indignation, contempt, and scorn, This strong and magnificent edifice, though many thousands of hands were employed in the work continually, was no less than † forty-six years in building; and what! if it were now to be demolished, do you pretend that you alone could erect it again, in so very short a time as three days? This is absolutely impossible, and a ridiculous conceit indeed.

21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

21 But though, if he pleased, he could easily have done what they took to be so very absurd; yet it is certain that he spake only of the death and resurrection of his body, which was the true temple of God, prefigured by that at *Jerusalem*, as he was holy to the

N O T E S,

* 'Tis more than probable that, at speaking these words, he pointed to his own body, or gave some other intimation by which a careful observer might discern his referring to it: And it seems as if the *Jews* themselves had either then, or afterwards, some notion of what he meant, though to serve a turn they put another construction upon it. See the note on *Matth. xxvii. 63.*

† Great pains have been taken by several learned men, to shew that the time spent in building *Zerobabel's* temple, was just forty-six years; and that the same number of years had run out in

rebuilding it, from the time that *Herod* began the work, to the time when these words were spoken, the temple, or at least its out-buildings, not being then quite finished: But whether it were exactly so or not, it no way affects the credit of the sacred history, which only gives a true relation of the sense of the *Jews* about this matter; and it seems that it was then forty-six years, from the time when *Herod* began to build it: Accordingly they mentioned it to suggest the absurdity of Christ's pretending that, if it were again destroyed, he could build it up again in three days.

the Lord as the true Shechinah, even all the fulness of the God-head dwelt substantially in him, and as he is the grand appointed medium of all communion between God and his people, and all the acceptance of gospel-worship depends on its relation to him.

22 When, therefore, he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

22 This therefore being his real meaning in that remarkable expression, the Spirit of God, after his resurrection, brought it to the remembrance of his disciples in its true light; and they reflected upon it, as a prediction of what was then clearly accomplished, and were abundantly confirmed in their faith in him thereby, and by comparing the Old Testament-prophecies of the Messiah's death and resurrection with these and other words in which Christ himself had foretold them.

23 Now, when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast-day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

23 Now whilst our blessed Lord tarried at Jerusalem, daily preaching and working miracles, (*ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ*) during the whole time of the paschal feast, many of his hearers, when they came to see how his excellent doctrine was witnessed to by his wonderful deeds, could not but own that he was at least some great prophet sent from God; they assenting to his doctrine as true, and to his miracles as divine.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men;

24 But as these were only temporary, or at best weak and unsettled believers, who professed their faith in Christ, under the power of a sudden surprise at his mighty works, he was too wise and cautious to trust his person in their hands, or to converse too freely and familiarly with them; because he was perfectly acquainted with the very heart of every man, and so foresaw that few, if any of these upstart disciples could be depended upon; but that some of them would be turbulent and mutinous in attempting to set him up for a temporal king, that others would be so discouraged and offended at his sufferings and reproaches, as to desert him, and that others would betray him into the hands of his enemies.

25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

25 And his divine knowledge of all men's make and frame, of their present and future principles and designs, temper and dispositions, motives and actions, was so entirely immediate and intuitive, that he had no occasion for any information about them from any one whomsoever; or for staying till they appeared in external behaviour, to direct his judgment about them: For he infallibly knew of himself before-hand, the sincerity or hypocrisy, the weakness or wickedness, the courage or cowardice, and all the most secret thoughts and turns that ever were, or would be, in the heart of every man; so that there was no imposing upon him.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

What happy weddings are they that are graced with Christ's presence ! and how innocently may friends feast together, when they manage with a due regulation under his eye ! In all our wants he is able to give us the best supplies ; but we must not go about to prescribe to him in our expectations from him, lest he say to us, What have I to do with you ? The way to receive any favour from him is, to follow his directions and commands, who will, in due time, shew us his glory ; and the more we see of this, the more firmly will our faith be established in him, and the more we shall want to be with him. And O what solemn and exalted thoughts should we have of him, whose miraculous works were manifestations of his own glory, who vindicates the honour, and maintains the purity of divine institutions, without injuring civil property, who knows all that is in man, and can overawe the spirits of his most sturdy enemies, and who had all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in his human body, as in its temple, and by his own power raised it from the dead ! What an undoubted confirmation is all this of his divine character and doctrine ! and yet how perverse is unbelief in its opposition to him ! and how soon is a carnal heart offended at a reformation of worship and manners by his single authority ! But how should a remembrance of these things, and a comparing them with ancient predictions concerning him, encourage our faith in him, and engage our obedience to him ! and with what godly jealousy should we see to it, that we be sincere in our professions of his name, and attendances on public worship after his example ; since he, whose eye is always upon our hearts, perfectly knows whether we be so or not, and will treat us accordingly !

C H A P. III.

Christ's discourse with Nicodemus about regeneration and faith in himself, 1,—21. John the Baptist's discourse with the people concerning Jesus, 22,—36.

TEXT.

THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

² The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW among the many, who professed to believe in Jesus at *Jerusalem*, there was one man of great note and eminence, namely *Nicodemus*, who was of the sect of the *Pharisees*, the most bigotted, proud, self-conceited, and superstitious of all other sects among the *Jews*; and was one of their rulers, being a member of the sanhedrim. (*Chap. vii. 50.*)

² This man, whose principles, as a *Pharisee*, lay in direct opposition to the doctrine of Christ, and whose power, as a ruler, made him capable of acting against it, was nevertheless convinced by his miraculous works, that there was something extraordinary in him: And therefore being desirous of further satisfaction, and yet ashamed to be seen in company with him, and afraid of the resentment of his brethren of the great council, in case they should know it, he went privately to Jesus in the night, and said to him, *Rabbi*, (see the note on *Matth. xxiii. 7.*) It is evident by the wonderful things you have done, and many of the people, as well as I, are well satisfied, that you are a great prophet sent immediately from God

God to us ; for without doubt the amazing miracles, which you have wrought in confirmation of your doctrine are such, as it is absolutely impossible for any man to perform, unless he were in an extraordinary manner assisted and approved of God : Be pleased therefore to inform me of the chief points that you are come to teach.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

3 Jesus replied, I, who am Truth itself, assure you, one of my principal doctrines is this, that no man, considering his present state of corruption and degeneracy by the fall, can truly understand or enjoy the blessings of that kingdom of grace which I am come to set up here, and of the kingdom of glory, which it leads the way to, and will issue in hereafter, unless he pass under a new birth, by a supernatural power from above * : Meaning thereby, that whatsoever may be any man's moral attainments, religious advantages, or external privileges, all will be ineffectual to his partaking of the blessings of grace here, and glory hereafter, except his heart and life be thoroughly changed in their principles, course, and ends, and he become a new man, by the regenerating operation of the Spirit of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old ? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born ?

4 But *Nicodemus*, taking Christ's words in a literal and carnal sense, answered, What ! am I to suppose, that after one has descended from so worthy a progenitor as *Abraham*, and has lived so long as I have in the world, he must be conceived again in his mother's womb, and be a new-born infant as at first ? This is surprising doctrine indeed ! it seems an impossibility, even by any power of God himself ; I can neither understand it, nor imagine what could be the advantage of it.

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

5 Our Lord replied, It is not a corporal, but a moral and spiritual birth that I speak of : And I, whose words are truth, solemnly assure you, that every man, be he young or old, must be renewed in the spirit of his mind, and have a new vital principle formed within him, by the powerful agency of the Holy Ghost, which like water, cleanses and refreshes the soul, and produces fruits of righteousness in the life, and is signified by *John's* baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins, and by the washing with water, which is to be used henceforward, as the initiating ordinance of God's covenant : In this sense, I say, every one must be born again from above ; or else

N O T E.

* *ἄνωθεν*, here translated *again*, properly signifies *from above*, and is frequently used in that sense, and particularly in *ver. 31.* and *chap. xix. 11.*; and

so Christ intimates, that this new birth is wrought by a supernatural power from heaven.

else he cannot be capable of enjoying the spiritual and saving blessings of my kingdom.

6 That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.

6 Were it possible, according to your gross notion of things, for a man in a natural sense to be born of his mother again, this would indeed be of no advantage to him in his spiritual concerns: For as nothing can rise higher than its principles; so whoever is born, though it were ever so often, of fleshly parents, who are themselves corrupt, must be himself corrupt still; (*Job* xiv. 4. and xxv. 4.) and whatsoever proceeds from him, according to this his depraved nature, must be depraved too, and so unfit for the kingdom of God. But, on the contrary, whoever is new formed, in all the powers and faculties of his soul, by the regenerating Spirit, is himself a spiritual man, possessed of a principle, which is suited to the holy nature of its author; and whatsoever he does by that principle, and according to it, is of a spiritual nature too, and so he is made meet for the holy duties and enjoyments of the gospel-state, and for the inheritance of the saints in light.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

7 Do not therefore wonder that I spoke of this great work of heart-changing grace in such strong terms, and laid such stress upon it, as absolutely necessary to your own, or any other person's being a happy subject of my kingdom; and do not think it impossible to be thus born again.

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

8 Though you are not able to conceive how, or in what manner it is to be brought about, that is no objection against the thing itself: For, even in the world of nature, there are manifest effects, the immediate cause of which, and the manner of their production, you are utterly ignorant of; and so there are in the world of grace; as for instance, the wind blows when, and wherever the God of nature orders it, without confinement or controul; and you feel its force, and hear its sound, by which you are fully assured that there is such a thing as the wind; though you are not able to assign the causes of its blowing at one particular time more than another, or from one determinate point to its opposite, rather than in another course; and though you cannot account for the manner of its motion, how it begins and ends, how it proceeds, or what becomes of it: So the Holy Spirit, who in scripture is compared to the wind, (*Cant.* iv. 16.) works like a free agent, with wonderful power and sovereignty, upon some men's hearts rather than upon others; and they themselves are evidently sensible of the thing by its happy effects upon them, by its enlightening, quickening, sanctifying, and comforting their souls; though they are not
able

able to conceive by what manner of secret operation he produces these effects, nor to what glorious heights and issues he will carry them.

9 Nicodemus answered, and said unto him, How can these things be?

9 *Nicodemus* having been trained up in the self-sufficient notions of a legal pharisaical righteousness, and being ignorant of the corruption of his own heart, and of the powerful operations of the Spirit of God, was full of prejudices, and objected against this doctrine, even in its spiritual sense, as unreasonable and unlikely, saying, I am still as much at a loss as ever to conceive your meaning. How is it possible that these things can be true? For my part, I can never believe such incomprehensible and unintelligible mysteries.

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things.

10 Jesus replied, Are you not only, as an *Israelite*, daily conversant with the oracles of God; but are you likewise one of the great *Rabbies*, whose business * it is to explain them to others; and yet cannot you take in what I say about a new birth in a moral and spiritual sense, relating to the thorough change which must pass upon the soul? what a shame is this † to one of your character? And how defective, trifling, and useless, have all your knowledge and instructions been, while you are ignorant of so necessary and important a truth, which you might and ought to have learnt from what the scriptures say of God's *sprinkling clean water, and giving a new heart and a new spirit*, (Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26.) and of a *nation's being born at once*? (Isa. lxvi. 8.)

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen;

11 I, who am the faithful and true Witness, solemnly assure you, that, as to what I speak from my Father, and under the anointing of his Spirit, who speaks these things together with and by me, and that,

N O T E S.

* By a master in *Israel* is meant a teacher of the law to *Israel*, either as a public preacher in their synagogues, or in their divinity schools; or as a member of the sanhedrim, who undertook to explain the law, and determine its meaning: *Nicodemus* was one of these, and probably a divinity-professor too, who, like *Gamaliel*, taught it in their schools; and all these were called *Rabbies*.

† Our Lord, say some, expressed his admiration, that *Nicodemus* should be so ignorant of his meaning about the new birth, and should think it an impossible thing; because the *Jews* themselves used to speak of baptized proselytes as new-born infants. But as all their notions about that sort of new birth, related only to external, ceremonial, and

pharisaical purifications, those notions rather hindered, than forwarded his conceptions of that internal, spiritual birth, which Christ spoke of; and therefore it was no such matter of wonder, that *Nicodemus* was not led by these notions to understand our Saviour's meaning, as it was that he should be so entirely ignorant of it, though he was professedly an expounder of the word of God, in which this doctrine was so clearly revealed. And this shews that, by being born again, *Nicodemus* himself understood our Saviour to mean much more than being baptized with water; otherwise his notions of proselytes by baptism must necessarily have taken off all his amazement at, and objections against, this doctrine of the new birth.

seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven.

that, according to what the inspired prophets of old, and my forerunner *John the Baptist* have said before, we * certainly know these things to be true, and in various methods bear witness to them: And yet such blindness and prejudices have spread through your own and others minds, that neither you nor they understand, believe, and embrace our doctrine, which is so infallibly true, so plainly delivered, and so divinely testified.

12 If therefore I, with all this concurring evidence, have discoursed of the nature and necessity of a work of grace, which must be wrought and experienced in the souls of men upon earth, in order to their salvation: And if I have familiarly illustrated the matter in language taken from earthly things, which ye are daily acquainted with, such as a human birth, and the wind; and yet ye cannot take in, and give your assent and consent to what I say; how much less would ye be able to understand and give credit to my testimony, were I to declare unto you the still more sublime mysteries of my gospel, relating to the dignity of my person and offices, the glorious design of my incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, and exaltation, and relating to the spiritual nature of my kingdom, and the blessedness of the world to come? were I to talk to you of these heavenly things in a stile suitable and proper to their own nature; how amazing and stumbling would they be to your carnal minds?

13 Now to instance in some of these, no mere man whatsoever has entred, or can enter into the secrets of God's heart in heaven, relating to the great mysteries of salvation, so as immediately and perfectly to understand them, and make them known to others: But this privilege is peculiar to the Messiah, who is spoken of under the character of the Son of man, (*Psal. lxxx. 17. and Dan. vii. 13.*) and † always had

N O T E S.

* Here Christ changes the number from *I* and *thou*, to *we* and *ye*, to add the greater weight to his testimony, and to aggravate the unbelief of all that reject it: By *we* who testify, some have thought he meant himself, together with the ancient prophets and *John the Baptist*, who preached the same doctrine, others suppose he meant himself, together with his Father and Spirit, who had been spoken of in the foregoing verses, and, who testified these things by him, and together with him. And by *ye*, who receive not our witness, might be meant *Nicodemus*, together with his

brethren of the great council, and the generality of the *Jews*.

† The *Socinian* sense of the words, *He ascended up to heaven*, as signifying his local ascension thither, to be fully instructed into the mind and will of God, before he entered on his public ministry, is entirely unscriptural and groundless, there being no hint of it in any other part of the word of God; and it is as entirely needless, because he was unmeasurably anointed with the Spirit at his baptism, as well as had the divine nature dwelling in him: If therefore this passage is to be understood of a local ascension,

it

had an existence in heaven as the Son of God, and who came from thence into an incarnate state, that he might reveal God's counsels to men, and even now, while in his human nature he is on earth, still continues in his * divine nature to be in heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up :

14 And I further tell you, that, great and divine as the Messiah is in himself, he must be put to an ignominious death, in order to his bringing salvation to sinners, according to an eminent type of him under the law : For as when the children of *Israel* were bitten by fiery serpents in the wilderness, *Moses* made a serpent of brass in their likeness, though without their venom, and set it on a pole in the midst of the camp, as God's ordinance for healing all that were wounded, and should look to it for a cure ; and as they that did so were perfectly healed, how weak soever their sight, and how great soever their wounds might be. (*Numb.* xxi. 6,—9.) So the Messiah, who appears in the likeness of sinful flesh, though there really is no sin in him, must be lifted up on the cross, and, in consequence thereof, be afterwards exalted in heaven, and proposed as God's ordinance in the gospel, for sinners to look to by faith for salvation :

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

15 That every one, of what rank, degree, or nation soever he be, who, under an affecting sense of his sinfulness and obnoxiousness to divine wrath, shall, according to God's appointment, look to, and humbly trust in him alone for salvation, may be healed of his soul's diseases, may be delivered from his perishing condition under the guilt and power of sin, and may be made partaker of eternal life ; and whoever

Q q 2

shall

N O T E S.

it expresses in prophetic stile what certainly would be after Christ's resurrection, as if it were already past, in like manner as it is said in prophecy, (*Psal.* lxxviii. 15.) *Thou hast ascended on high ;* and so these words of our Lord intimate, that though *Enoch* and *Elias* had ascended to heaven, yet no man had ascended, by his own power and merit, to open heaven's gates for the reception of sinners, as he should. But these words seem rather to refer to *Deut.* xxx. 11, 12. where it was said of the commandment of God, *Who shall go up to heaven, and bring it to us ? i. e.* who shall enter into God's secret counsel, and learn it by immediate knowledge in heaven ? And so what Christ here said of himself is of like import with what *John the Baptist* had said concerning him, *chap.* i. 18.

* As the divine and human natures were united in the person of Christ, at-

tributions are made of the properties of one nature to him, whilst he is spoken of under a title which relates to his other nature. Thus when it is said, (*1 Cor.* ii. 8.) *The Lord of glory was crucified,* and (*Acts.* xx. 28.) he is called *God, who purchased the church with his own blood.* The meaning is not that he, as the Lord of glory, was crucified, or, as God, shed his blood, as if the divine nature could be crucified and bleed ; but that the person, who was the Lord of glory in one nature, was crucified in the other ; and the person, who was God in one nature, redeemed the church with his own blood, which belonged to his other nature : So when it is said, *The Son of man is in heaven,* the meaning is not that he, as the Son of man, was there whilst he was on earth, but that he, who was here in his human nature, was there in his divine.

shall thus with the heart believe in the only true Messiah, though his faith be ever so weak, he shall certainly be saved, how great or many foes his sins have been.

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

16 For the great and blessed God, even the Father, who delights in mercy, looking with compassion upon the lost and miserable state of mankind, under their dreadful apostacy, conceived such a surprising, matchless design of mere love and grace, from all eternity, toward sinners of this wretched, guilty, and rebellious world *, not of the *Jews* only, but of the *Gentiles* also, that he freely gave his dearly beloved and only begotten Son, to be his salvation to the ends of the earth, and gave him up to be crucified, and thereby made a propitiation for their sins, that whoever shall by faith cordially receive and trust in him, as the Son of God and the Redeemer of lost sinners, may not perish for or by his iniquities, but have a full remission of them, and be delivered from the wrath to come ; and not only so, but may be entitled to, and in due time put in possession of everlasting blessedness and glory.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world ; but that the world through him might be saved.

17 For God, according to this gracious design, has now at length sent his own Son into this lower world, not, as the *Jews* through the power of their prejudices and self-love suppose, to pass and execute a sentence of condemnation upon all others beside themselves ; but that persons of all nations may be effectually saved from the ruins of their apostacy, and blessed with eternal life, even all and every one of them, that shall believe in him.

18 So

N O T E.

* To understand what is meant by the *world* in this and the following verse, we are to consider that it is used in opposition to the prevailing notion of the *Jews*, as if God loved only their own nation, and the Messiah would come to save only them, and to pour confusion upon all other nations for their sakes : And therefore when this word is used, especially in the writings of this Evangelist, to express the objects of God's love, and of the benefits of Christ's redemption, it commonly signifies the world, as inclusive of the *Gentiles*, to guard against that vain conceit, and to shew that the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom were not to be confined to the *Jews* ; but to have an equal respect to *Gentiles* of all sorts together with them. And as *Nicodemus*, like the rest, was full of that conceit, our Lord used this expression to correct it, and to give him a larger view of

the gospel-salvation, as extending to other nations, as well as themselves : And so it intimates that all the elect among the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, are the objects of this great love of God, in the gift of his Son for their salvation : For the world here spoken of, is the world which God designed to be *saved through him* ; (ver. 17.) and these are the same with those that should *believe in him*, and are opposed to those that, not believing in him, *should be condemned*. (ver. 18.) Now these may be called the world, because they are originally of this fallen world of mankind, in opposition to fallen angels, and are scattered through the whole world, *Rev. v. 9.* and even through those nations of the earth, which, by way of distinction from the *Jews*, are stiled the world, in *Rom. xi. 12, 15.* See the notes on *chap. i. 7, 29.*

18 He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already; because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

21 But he that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made

18 So that things are now brought to this point, that whosoever, *Jew* or *Gentile*, believes on the Son of God, as manifested and proposed in the gospel, is freed from the condemning sentence of the law, its curse standing no longer in force against him: But whosoever rejects, or neglects the crucified Saviour, remains under a sentence of condemnation; and persisting therein to the end, he shall certainly be cast in the day of judgment for all his iniquities, and especially for the great sin of unbelief, in refusing his only remedy; because, notwithstanding all the light, endearments, and obligations of this last dispensation of grace, he has not by faith embraced God's own eternally begotten Son, and the only method of salvation brought in and revealed by him.

19 And this is the greatest and surest cause of men's ruin, and the highest aggravation of their sin and misery, that, in this glorious dispensation of mercy, the way of salvation opens, and is shortly to be set with the clearest evidence before them, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*; and yet the *Jews* prefer their vain traditions and corrupt glosses on the law, and the *Gentiles* their ignorant devotions to an unknown God; and both one and the other prefer their own dark, superstitious, carnal, and mistaken notions of religion, to the pure light of the gospel: And the real reason of this is, because these spiritual, heavenly, and holy doctrines lie in direct contradiction to their beloved lusts and evil practices, which they will by no means abandon, and which their self-flattering and erroneous conceits put them upon indulging.

20 For every one that is wedded to his sins, and resolved not to part with them, has a secret enmity in his mind against the truths of divine revelation, that oppose and condemn them; and, as they are deeds of darkness, he does what he can to stifle convictions, and shun the light of that knowledge, which exposes his darling corruptions in their shameful, hideous, and dangerous forms, lest his conscience should be so stung with remorse, as not to dare any longer to gratify them, and take such pleasure, as he used to have, in acting according to them.

21 But * an upright man, who desires to be approved of God, is sincerely willing to be searched and tried, and to know the Divine will, how contrary soever it may be to his own natural notions, inclinations,

N O T E.

* As light was before opposed to error and mistakes; so doing the truth is here opposed to doing evil, and respects a

man's acting with sincerity and godly simplicity, in opposition to his being influenced by a love of sin.

made manifest that they are wrought in God.

22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

23 And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salem, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized:

24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

25 Then there arose a question between some of John's

tions, and worldly interests; and he lies open to conviction, that whatsoever he thinks, says, or does, may be regulated, and appear with evidence, to his own mind and conscience, as well as to others, that it is the effect of the regenerating power of God, according to his will, and to his glory, and that it proceeds from the vital union and communion which he himself has with God.

22 When our Lord Jesus had thus discoursed with *Nicodemus*, who afterwards appeared to be a real convert, (*chap. vii. 50, 51. and xix. 39.*) he retired from *Jerusalem* to the country of *Judea*, together with those disciples whom he designed to make his constant attendants, and to call to the apostleship: And he continued there, they accompanying him, for some time, preaching the gospel, working miracles, and converting many, whom he thereupon baptized, not by his own hand, but by the ministry of those disciples. (*Chap. iv. 2.*)

23 And at the same time, while Jesus was thus employed in *Judea*, *John* continued still to preach to the people, and to baptize them into the faith of him who now appeared openly among them. But, that he might not seem to combine with Jesus, he did not associate with him, but went on with his work in distant parts, and removed to *Enon* * near *Salim*; because there were many streams of water, which made it a convenient situation for baptizing all the people that might be wrought upon by his ministry: And they came, and were baptized by him there.

24 For all the transactions of Christ, hitherto rehearsed, passed before the time of *John's* being committed to prison by *Herod*, on account of the reproach which he gave him for marrying his brother *Philip's* wife. (*Matth. xiv. 3.*)

25 And while both Jesus and *John* were thus engaged in different places, some of *John's* disciples, and some of the carnal *Jews* entered into a debate,

on

N O T E.

* Expositors are much at a loss about this *Enon*, because it is no where else mentioned in scripture, nor found in the geography of the ancients: Some apprehend it was on one side of *Jordan*, and others on the other: Some think that it was a town or city; others that it was a river; and others, that it was a large tract of ground full of fresh springs and small rivulets of water; and that as *Enon* signifies a fountain, so the words, *because there was much water*, or as *ουδατα πολλα* more literally signify, *because there*

were many waters, give the etymology of the word *Enon*, or the reason why that place was so called, rather than the reason why *John* baptized there: The argument therefore drawn from hence for baptizing by dipping, is very uncertain, because none of these rivulets might be deep enough for that purpose: And because such an open country, overspread with small streams, was very convenient for baptizing vast multitudes, placed in proper order by way of pouring water upon them.

John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

on this occasion, about the preference of *John's* baptism to the legal and pharisaical purifications, that had been long in use; his disciples pleading that their master's baptism was to be preferred to all those washings and cleansings; and the *Jews*, on the other hand, contending that his baptism was needless, or at best insufficient for purification, because there was another person who had pretended to set up a new and better baptism, and was more followed than their master; and that therefore there would be no end of going into dangerous innovations, but that it would be much better to abide by their ancient customs*.

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

26 And *John's* disciples being puzzled with this difficulty, for want of having duly attended to what he had so often told them concerning Christ, applied to him, saying, Master, the man who not long since came like a disciple to you, and was baptized by you on the other side of *Jordan*, and to whom you gave a most honourable testimony to recommend him to the people; this very man, to the surprize of many, has taken an advantage, from your high encomiums, to set up already for himself, and to baptize and make disciples in his own name: He even supplants you in your work; and the people are so fond of him, that they generally run after him, while you take no care to restrain them: This sinks your credit, especially among your enemies, who hereupon object against the authority, the usefulness and sufficiency of your baptism; and as for us, we are troubled to think that any other should arise to lessen you, and cannot tell what to say to these things.

27 John answered, and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

27 *John* replied, This is no just objection against my office, nor ought it to be a trouble to you: There is no inconsistency between Jesus's baptism and mine, which tend to the same end; mine is only subservient to his, and his improves and perfects mine; as I bear witness to him, so what he is now doing proves the truth of my testimony concerning him; and whether ye consider the matter with relation to him or me, it is all of God †: For neither could I have done what I have, in pointing the people to him, as the long-looked-for Messiah, who was just ready to appear, and in baptizing them into the faith of him; nor could he have done the still greater things, which he does

N O T E S.

* This appears to have been the subject of their debate, from the question which *John's* disciples hereupon put to him in the following verse.

† Some refer this to the commission

which Christ and *John* received for their several offices; and others, to the people receiving and entertaining what they did, by virtue of their respective commissions; and we may take them all in.

does under this character, in baptizing and making disciples to himself, without a commission from heaven; and the objection, which his enemies make against him and me on this account, as well as your own stumbling at it, after all that I have so often, and so plainly told you before-hand about him and myself, is an evident demonstration, that no man can heartily embrace the plainest doctrines of divine revelation, unless he be enlightened and enabled from above to understand and receive them.

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

28 I appeal to my former testimony on this head, which might have satisfied you: Ye yourselves may remember, and ought to bear me witness, that I was so far from pretending to be myself the Messiah, that I frankly and openly declared before you and all the people, (*chap. i. 19, 20, 23.*) that *I was not the Christ*, but was only his forerunner to prepare his way, according to ancient prophecy concerning him and me.

29 He that hath the bride, is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled.

29 A bride, every one knows, is the peculiar property of the bridegroom; but the bridegroom's friend has the honour and the pleasure of doing all that in him lies to help forward the match, and court for him: He herein cheerfully pursues his directions, and rejoices when the bridegroom tells him, that he has at length obtained the virgin's consent, and espoused her to himself. So Christ is the Bridegroom of the Church, which is to be for him, and for no other: But I make no pretences to such an interest in her; I have only acted the part of his hearty friend, who wish well to his cause, and have been laying out myself, with all alacrity and faithfulness, in wooing the people for him, by telling them what a great and glorious person he is, on what a blessed design he came into the world, and how willing he is to receive and save all that cordially consent to be his: And now I exceedingly rejoice to hear that he is already enthroned in so many hearts, and I gladly deliver them all over to him, who has the only right to them.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

30 It is necessary that Jesus should increase in the manifestations of his glory, and in the number of disciples to be made to him, and that I should decrease in my reputation among men, and in the importance of my office as a forerunner to him, who will no longer have any occasion for my testimony: His honour will eclipse mine every day still more and more: and when my work shall cease, his will ever abide with rich and growing advantage; and it is highly fit that it should be thus.

31 He that cometh

31 He being of divine original came down immediately

meth from above, is above all: he that is of the earth, is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven, is above all.

diately from heaven, and therefore is infinitely superior, in his person and administration, to all others: For as I and every other prophet that appeared before me, had our original from the earth, like our first common father, we being of earthly parents, and of an earthly frame; so we naturally are most affected with, and speak of earthly things, and can of ourselves say nothing of heaven, but in a gross and earthly manner; and what we speak of the things of God, even under some degrees of inspiration, is low and flat, and favours of the earth, if compared with the sublime mysteries of Infinite Wisdom, as they lie in God's own mind: But this divine person naturally speaks of heavenly things, and that in the most surprising and exalted strains, like himself, like one intimately acquainted with them, as they lie in the divine counsels, and as they are in themselves; and so he, who came down from heaven, is every way superior to me and all other prophets whatsoever.

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

32 And the doctrines, which he reveals and delivers with divine authority, are no other than * he has been originally and thoroughly acquainted with, by his intuitive knowledge of God; like one who lay in the bosom of the Father, and was in counsel with him about them; and even his human mind has seen and heard them, by the immediate illumination and dictates of the Spirit, which dwells unmeasurably in him. Though ye therefore are apt to be grieved and filled with envy at his having so many disciples, none of them embrace his blessed and glorious gospel, from any principle naturally in themselves; and alas! the number is comparatively small, and next to none, that heartily entertain, or believe and receive it:

33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.

33 But every one of the happy few that believe in him according to his word, thereby subscribes, and puts his *Amen* to the truth and faithfulness of God himself, as believing that he has fulfilled his promises concerning the Messiah, and speaks the most important truths by him, and that he will certainly fulfil all the rest of his promises to his people through him, in whom they are all yea, and amen, to the glory of God.

34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth

34 For this divine Person, who was sent by God the Father immediately from heaven, not only declares the mind and will of God at certain seasons, relating to some particular points; but, having all the

N O T E.

* This may relate either to the original knowledge of Christ's divine mind, as God over all, who came down from heaven, (*ver. 31.*) or to the acquired know-

ledge of his human mind, as God gave not the Spirit by measure to him; (*ver. 34.*) and I have taken them both in.

giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him.*

the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him, he doth this in every thing that he says, and is come to make known the whole of that revelation, which is ever to be communicated to the sons of men: For God, who gave his Spirit only in certain degrees, and on special occasions to other prophets, *Moses* himself not excepted, has, in an unlimited manner, anointed Jesus, in his office-capacity, with the Holy Ghost, who resides perpetually in him as an infallible and abiding principle of truth, holiness, and goodness; it having *pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.*

35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

35 Yea, such is the infinite superlative love of the Father to his own Son, as he is of the same nature and perfections with himself, and as he freely came to do his will, that he has committed to his management all affairs, relating to the kingdoms of providence, grace, and glory, that he may subdue his enemies, distribute all blessings amongst his people, and judge angels and men at the last day.

32 He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

36 The conclusion of all then plainly comes to this, that whoever receives the doctrine of Christ, and trusts in him according to it, as the Son of God, and the Saviour of sinners, has a right and title to eternal life, together with the beginnings, securities, pledges, earnest, and foretastes of it, which shall certainly issue in his completely enjoying it: And, on the contrary, whoever wilfully rejects Christ, and finally persists therein, shall never be admitted to that blessed life; but, whilst he obstinately continues in unbelief, all his sins are bound upon him with high aggravations, a righteous sentence of wrath stands out in the law of God against him, and he daily lies exposed to a dreadful execution of it; so that, unless it be prevented, through faith in the Son of God, there is no remedy, but divine wrath must certainly come upon him to the uttermost, and he must bear it for ever.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How could any one do such miracles as Christ did unless he and his doctrines were owned of God! and how plain and important were the doctrines of regeneration and faith in him, which he preached as necessary to salvation! And yet how natural is it for carnal minds to misjudge of spiritual things, to disbelieve them, and to be prejudiced against them, because, after all, there will be something incomprehensible in them! For who can tell the reason, and the manner of the sovereign and Holy Spirit's acting upon, and effectually changing one sinner's heart rather than another's? Or who can tell how the divine and human natures are personally united in the God manifested in flesh, who, as the Son of God, always was in heaven, whilst, as the Son of man, he was only upon earth! And O how surprising is the thought of the Lord of glory's being lifted up on the cross, that he might be proposed in the the gospel as a proper object for a sinner's faith, and that we, under a sense of guilt and danger, as wounded by sin, might look to him, and be as effectually

tually healed of our soul's diseases, as Israel were of their desperate wounds by looking to the brazen serpent in the wilderness! And how inexpressibly rich and free is that love which is the original cause of salvation, and has displayed itself in the gift of Christ to our world, to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, that whoever believes in him, whether it be with a weaker or stronger faith, may have everlasting life! With what esteem, and preference to all others, should we think of the dear and only Saviour, who was originally from above, and was anointed with the Holy Ghost, for office-performances on earth, without measure, who is the object of the Father's highest love, and who is the great Lord and Husband of the church, and is Head over all things for its welfare; and what an honour and delight is it to be instrumental in espousing souls to him! What his servants do in holy ministrations, by his authority, is as valid as if it were done personally by himself; and they should go on in his work according to the ability and opportunity he gives for it, without envying others that excel them in gifts and graces, and succeeds, as knowing that no man can receive any good thing for the service of others, or the benefit of his own soul, unless it be given him from above; for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. But, alas! how much more are formalists in religion concerned about an external baptism and purification, than about being baptized with the Holy Spirit, and having an experience in themselves of a real work of heart-changing grace!—How great is the sin of unbelief! It rejects the testimony of God concerning his Son, and is envious at Christ's glory; and it proceeds from unreasonable prejudices against him, from a love of evil ways, and unwillingness to be reformed, and from a hatred of the pure light of God's word, lest it should disturb the soul's peace and pleasure in an indulgence of beloved lusts! and how dreadful are its effects, as it binds all a man's other sins upon him, refuses his only remedy, and subjects him to condemnation and wrath with the highest aggravations of guilt! But O the excellence of true faith! It receives the Lord Jesus, sets to its seal that God is true, and depends upon his faithfulness for the performance of all that he has said about his Son, and said to us in a way of grace and mercy through him; it rejoices in the prosperity of his interest, in the espousal of souls to him, and in every thought of his being exalted; it proceeds from a desire of coming to the light of God's word, and from the discovery that is thereby made of the sinner's own vileness, and of the relief there is in Christ for him, and from a willingness to be saved from his sins, as well as from the curse of the law, and the wrath of God; and by means of this faith the sentence of condemnation is reversed, and the soul is entitled to eternal life. Which of these states is mine? and in which of them am I like to be found at death and judgment?

C H A P. IV.

Christ goes from Judea into Samaria, 1,—6. His discourse with the woman of Samaria, 7,—26. The effect it had upon her, 27,—30. His discourse with his disciples, 31,—38. Many Samaritans believe in him, 39,—42. And he goes to Galilee, and heals a nobleman's son there, 43,—54.

TEXT.
WHEN there-
fore the Lord
knew how the
Pharisees had heard
that Jesus made
and

PARAPHRASE.
JESUS having staid and preached a considerable
time in *Judea* *, it was no longer safe for him to
continue in that country: For, as nothing could be
hid from him, he knew that his most powerful and ma-
licious enemies, the *Pharisees*, when met in council

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* It seems that he continued there about half a year, or more, he having gone into *Judea* soon after the passover, (*chap. iii. 22.*) and returned to *Galilee* four months before harvest, *chap. iv. 35.*

and baptized more disciples than John,

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.)

3 He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near

at *Jerusalem*, had received informations, and were provoked to hear that he made more profelytes, and entered more disciples into his religion by baptism, than ever *John* had done before him; though in reality, Jesus himself, for good reasons, baptized none with his own hands, but only by the ministry of his disciples * : And therefore as he ordered his servants when they should be persecuted in one city to flee to another; (*Matth.* x. 23.) so, the course of his ministry not being yet fulfilled, nor his disciples fit as yet to be exposed to hardships and dangers, he retired from *Judea* into *Galilee*, where the Pharisees would be less disturbed, and less capable of observing him, or of doing any thing against him, and where *John's* ministry had prepared his way, and *John's* imprisonment, by this time, had made room for him. (*Matth.* iv. 12. and *Mark* i. 14.)

4 And, as *Samaria* † lay between *Judea* and *Galilee*, there was a natural necessity of Christ's going through some part of that country in his journey to *Galilee*, unless he would take a compass round about; and, as he had special work to do in *Samaria*, there was a moral necessity of his going through it, that he might bring some of his sheep there into his fold.

5 Accordingly, in his passage through those parts, he went to a *Samaritan* city called *Sychar* ‡, bordering upon a piece of land, which the patriarch *Jacob* bought of the sons of *Hamor*, and gave at his death

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* We may suppose Christ to have taken this method, that he might maintain the dignity of his own character, as Lord of the Church, and every way superior to *John*, who was merely a servant, and baptized only with his own hands, without commissioning others for it; as also that he might not seem to act with impropriety, and to seek his own honour, by baptizing in his own name; that he might shew himself to be sent, not to baptize with water, but to the more excellent work of preaching the gospel, and baptizing with the Holy Ghost; that he might prevent disputes and emulations amongst his disciples, on account of some being baptized by himself, and others only by his commissioned servants; and that the validity and efficacy of baptism might not be supposed to depend on the worthiness of the person who administers it, but only on the authority and blessing of Christ upon the administration according to his will.

† *Samaria* was inhabited by *Gentiles*, mixed with apostate *Jews*: And that mungrel people received the law of *Moses*, and worshipped the God of *Israel*; but denied the divine authority of the rest of the Old Testament, and mingled many heathen idolatries and superstitions in their worship. See *Prid.* Connect. 8vo. Vol. I. pag. 30,—33.

‡ This *Sychar* is supposed to be the same with *Shechem*, which is mentioned *Josb.* xxiv. 32. and in several other places of the Old Testament; but which the *Jews*, in their enmity to the *Samaritans*, called by way of reproach *Sychar*, which signifies the drunken city: And near to this was the valley of *Achor*, which was given as a door of hope, with respect to the calling of the *Gentiles*. (*Hos.* ii. 15.) The first specimen of their believing in Christ was now to be given here; and here (as *Dr. Lightfoot* observes from *Gen.* xxxiv. 9. and xxxv. 2.) were made the first profelytes to the church of *Israel*.

to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

death to Joseph, as an inheritance for him and his children, and in which Joseph's bones were buried. (*Gen. xlviii. 22.* compared with *Josb. xxiv. 32.*)

6 Now in this ground, near the city, was a certain well, which by long tradition was called Jacob's well*: And our Lord being a man of like natural weakness of body and animal spirits with other men, and having, suitable to his state of humiliation, travelled as usual on foot, he was tired and spent with his long journey, and therefore, like a weary, hungry, and thirsty traveller as he was, he sat down by the side of the well to rest him; and it was about six o'clock in the evening. (See the note on *chap. i. 39.*)

7 Whilst he was there, the providence of God so ordered it, that a certain woman came from the neighbouring city to fetch water from thence: And as Rebecca, Rachel, and Zipporah, got their several husbands, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, by going to draw water at a well, (*Gen. xxiv. 11, &c.* and *xxix. 2, &c.* and *Exod. ii. 15, &c.*) so this woman unknowingly met with Jesus at this well, that she might be espoused to him. In order to which he, in the greatness of his condescension and preventing mercy, began first with her, saying, Pray give me a little water to quench my thirst.

8 And this was a proper opportunity for asking such a favour, and talking with her alone: For as he did not ordinarily live by miracles, and had no friend in Samaria to entertain him, he had sent his disciples into the city to buy food for himself and them.

9 Then the woman, knowing him by his speech and habit to be a Jew, replied with wonder and scorn, How comes it to pass, that you, who are a Jew, should thus unusually, for people of your nation, condescend so far as to ask, or to be willing to receive any kindness at my hands, who am a Samaritan? Or how can you imagine that I should comply with your desire by giving you so much as a drop of water for your relief, whatsoever your necessity may be? for it is well known that there is such an old and irreconcilable grudge between the Jews and Samaritans †, that one will neither ask, nor receive the least civility

N O T E S.

* Jacob's well is no where else spoken of in scripture; and it is uncertain why it was so called, whether because he dug it, or whether only because he was the proprietor of it, and used it for himself and family, (*ver. 12.*) or for what other reason.

† The Jews and Samaritans were in-

veterate enemies to one another, on account of ancient injuries that had passed between them, and of their different temples and religions; and the enmity had rose to such an height, that they treated one another with the utmost abhorrence and contempt. And though in cases of necessity they sometimes traded together;

civility of the other ; nor, if he would, will the other shew it to him.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink ; thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

10 Jesus answered, If you had but known how important a gift the great God, of his own mere love and grace, has bestowed upon sinful men, and * now presents to you in sending me hither ; and had you but known what sort of person I am, who have asked you to give me a little water to drink, you would soon have laid aside your prejudices against me, as a *Jew* ; and, instead of refusing so small a request, would yourself have immediately become an earnest suitor to me, and I would not have upbraided or repulsed you, but would readily and freely have given you the most excellent living water ; thereby meaning his Spirit, who was promised under this metaphor, (*Isa.* xlv. 3. and *Exek.* xxxvi. 25, 27.) and whose gifts and graces are more refreshing to a necessitous, thirsty soul, than the best water can be to a weary, drougthy body.

11 The woman saith unto him. Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep : from whence then hast thou that living water ?

11 The woman understanding Christ to speak of spring-water in a literal sense, and being ignorant of his power and grace, replied in a way of disdain, You, Sir, give me the most excellent spring-water ! that is a likely matter indeed : What occasion then had you to ask for any of mine ? As for the water of this deep well, you cannot possibly come at it ; for you have no vessel to draw with : Where then do you pretend to get the fine living-water you talk of ?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle ?

12 Besides, though you seem to speak great things of yourself, and I know not who you are ; yet I suppose you are not a greater, a wiser, or more holy man than the patriarch *Jacob* was, from whom we *Samaritans*, as well as you *Jews*, claim a descent as his posterity : And he, as tradition informs us, left us this well, as the best for its water in all the country, he

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together ; yet they refused all acts of friendship, humanity, and common civility to each other, as the last words of this verse intimate, compared with ver. 8. Many learned expositors suppose these to be, not the words of the woman, because they think there was no occasion for her to mention a thing so universally known to both nations ; but the words of the Evangelist, which he added for our better understanding the reason of her question to our Lord : And yet, as this was a pertinent support of her question, I cannot see why she herself might not alledge it : For the more the fact was known, she might think it

the more to her purpose to remind Christ of it.

* Some think that by the *gift of God* is here meant the Holy Spirit, who is spoken of in the close of the verse, under the metaphor of *ὕδωρ ζῶν* living-water, which was a *Hebrew* phrase for spring-water, *Gen.* xxvi. 19 : But others take it to be meant of Christ himself ; and this seems most natural to me, because in the next words, which may be taken as explanatory of these, he evidently speaks of himself, who would give this living-water ; and because in the foregoing chapter (*ver.* 16.) he had spoke of the great love of God in giving him.

he himself, and his children, as well as his cattle, having made use of it, and been refreshed by it: How then can you propose to give me better water than this?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

13 Jesus answered her, saying, You are under a great mistake in imagining that I spake of common water, like this of *Jacob's* well, which, how much soever it may be esteemed and used, can only refresh the body, and that but for a little while: For when any one has drank ever so freely of this water, he will soon grow as thirsty as ever*; and many other wants will still attend him to render him unhappy; and though he drink it ever so often, it will not make him immortal, but after all he will languish and die.

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

14 But the blessing which, under the figure of water, I spake of giving, is so excellent in its nature, that whoever is made partaker of it, shall find such abundant and abiding satisfaction in it to his soul, as will take off all insatiable appetites and inclinations for other things; so that he will think this alone sufficient for his happiness; and though he will be desirous of still more of this, yet he shall never so thirst for it, as to languish or perish for want: But the living-water which I will give him, shall abide in him, as a perpetual and sufficient source for his supply, and shall daily spring up in fresh supports and consolations to an overflowing, till all his wants and uneasinesses shall be entirely removed, and all his desires shall be completely satisfied in the enjoyment of eternal life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

15 But the woman still, like *Nicodemus* in the case of the new birth, (*chap. iii. 4.*) understood Christ in a gross and carnal sense, as if he meant some extraordinary water of the elementary kind; and therefore replied †, Sir, I beg, if you are able, that you would let me have some of this wonderful water, that I may have no further occasion to give myself the trouble of coming time after time to fetch any from this well.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

16 Our Lord, finding how her mind was over-spread with ignorance, stupidity, and insensibility of her spiritual wants, waved any further explanation of his meaning about this living water; but proceeded

N O T E S.

* *Thirsting again, and never thirsting*; are here to be understood of such a thirst as makes one faint, languish, and die, for want of sufficient relief; as where it is said of *Israel*, (*Isa. xlviii. 21.*) *They thirsted not, when the Lord led them through the wilderness, i. e.* though they were very thirsty, they did not pe-

rish for thirst, being miraculously supplied with water, to satisfy their drought.

† She said this either with scorn, as supposing what he mentioned to be ridiculous and impossible; or with seriousness, as thinking that he spoke of some unknown benefit pertaining to the body.

ed to awaken a sense of guilt in her conscience, and then to discover himself to her as the Messiah, that the riches of his grace might be the better understood, and the more valued by her : And to introduce this merciful design, he said to her, Go home, and fetch your husband to me.

17 The woman answered, and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband :

17 The woman, though she lived adulterously with a man, as if he were her husband, immediately replied, Why do you talk of bringing hither my husband ? I am a single person, and have none ; thereby designing to evade a discovery of her reproach, and any further conversation on that head : But as Christ, by his infinite understanding, perfectly knew all the circumstances of her life, he answered, What you say is very true, you have indeed at present none that can justly be called your husband, whatsoever you may have pretended among your neighbours.

18 For thou hast had five husbands ; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband : in that saidst thou truly.

18 For you have indeed had successively five*, that were your lawful husbands ; but the man, with whom you at present cohabit, is not so ; it is an adulterous life that you lead with him : You have therefore owned the real truth in saying that you have now no husband at all, and you have so far done well.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

19 The woman's conscience being touched with this close reproof, and yet willing, as far as possible to shift it off, and divert to another subject, she replied, Sir, as I cannot suppose that any man hath ever acquainted you with my manner of life all my days, I verily believe, by the particular account you have now given of it, that you are some extraordinary prophet.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain : and ye say, That in Jerusalem is the place where

20 I would therefore gladly know what you have to say upon a grand question in debate, between the *Samaritans* and the *Jews*, about the worship of God. We, the *Samaritans*, insist upon it, that mount *Gerizim* †, on which our temple is built, and which is not far

N O T E S.

* Some suppose that she had buried five husbands successively ; others that she had been divorced from five for her adulterous practices, or had by indirect means, contrary to law, obtained a divorce from one or more of them, that she might cohabit with another man, as if he were her husband : But I rather think the first of these suppositions to be the most probable, because Christ seems to allow that those five were her lawful husbands.

† There was a temple on mount *Gerizim*, and the occasion of building it was this : Soon after the rebuilding of the temple at *Jerusalem* under *Darius* the

Persian, one of the sons of *Jehoiada* the high-priest, whom *Josephus* calls *Manasseh*, having married the daughter of *Sanballat* the *Horonite*, *Nehemiah*, that great reformer obliged all who, contrary to the law, had taken strange wives, to put them away, or to quit the country : Whereupon *Manasseh*, being unwilling to part with his wife, slew to *Samarita*, and with many others in like circumstances, settled under the protection of *Sanballat*, who was governor of that place : And *Sanballat*, at his instigation, built a temple, on mount *Gerizim*, like that at *Jerusalem*, and in opposition to it ; and *Manasseh* was the high-priest there.

From

where men ought to worship.

far from this well, is the place where sacrifices and offerings are to be presented to the Lord, and our ancestors have all along stuck to this place of worship; and on the other hand, ye, the *Jews*, as earnestly plead, that *Jerusalem* is the only place where sacrifices are to be offered, and practise accordingly. Be pleased to inform me which of us are in the right, and which in the wrong.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at *Jerusalem*, worship the Father.

21 In answer to this, Jesus said to her, Woman, as you own me to be a prophet, observe and believe what I am going to say. How important a controversy forever this has been hitherto between the two nations, it will soon be entirely put to an end: For ere long all sacrifices themselves shall be abolished, and none shall be offered by any appointment of God to him, who is worshipped under the notion of a Father*, either by you at mount *Gerizim*, or by the *Jews* at *Jerusalem*; and then all religious distinction of places will cease, and God may be acceptably worshipped every where alike.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the *Jews*.

22 However, to come to your point, I must tell you, that hitherto the *Jews* have been right, and the *Samaritans* wrong, as to the place which God had appointed for offering sacrifices: As for you *Samaritans*, your notions of God, and your worship of him, are corrupted by the heathenism of your ancestors, *Who knew not the manner of the God of Israel*; (2 Kings xvii. 26.) and the homage you pay him is not according to his institution, but according to your own inventions; and so it is all ignorant, superstitious, random work, without a divine warrant and rule †. But as for us *Jews*, who have the sacred oracles entire, have had the benefit of a succession of prophets, and pay our religious homage, according to divine prescription, we are acquainted with the true God, who is the object of our worship; and we know where, and in what manner it is to be performed,

N O T E S.

From that time forward *Samaria* became the receptacle of all discontented and apostate *Jews*, and bitter contentions were carried on, from age to age, between the two nations about the true place of worship; the *Jews*, that had not revolted, pleading for *Jerusalem*, as the place which God himself had expressly appointed for the temple, and honoured with his special presence; and the *Samaritans* pleading that *Abraham* and *Jacob* built altars on mount *Gerizim*, and offered sacrifices there, long before the temple was built at *Jerusalem*; that God himself had appointed mount *Gerizim*

(Deut. xxvii. 12.) for blessing the people; and that *Josbua* had built an altar there, for the support of which notion they had corrupted their copy of the pentateuch. See *Prid.* Vol. I. p. 415, 421. &c

* *God* and *the Father* are put promiscuously in this context for each other, which intimates that by the *Father* is here meant, not the first Person in the Trinity only, but the Divine Being.

† And some have thought that the *Samaritans* still continued to worship the true God, rather as a local deity, like the gods of the heathens round about them, than as the God of the whole universe.

ed, and upon what grounds we proceed therein: For the promises of salvation in a particular manner belong to the *Jews*, as his covenant-people, the means of salvation are found among them, and the Saviour himself, according to the promises, proceeds from them, and comes first of all to bless them, in turning them from their iniquities.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

23 But the time is just at hand, when, under a new dispensation of grace, the worship of God shall be no longer performed by burnt-offerings and sacrifices, nor salvation be restrained to the *Jews*, as has been the case hitherto; but the acceptable worshippers of the Divine Being, who is the common Father of all mens spirits, as well as the peculiar covenant-Father of his people, are those who, wherever, or of what nation soever they be, serve him, not in ceremonial observances, but in spiritual ordinances, with their whole hearts, in an exercise of spiritual graces, and by the aid and influence of his Spirit, according to his own appointment: For God requires, owns, and approves of such worshippers; and though the number of them is small, he will form and find such as these by the grace of that dispensation, which is already begun to be set up, and shall hereafter mightily prevail in the world.

24 God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.

24 For God is an infinitely pure and perfect Spirit, an incorporeal, invisible, intelligent, free, and active Being, possessed of all possible perfections; and therefore they that would worship him acceptably, and suitable to his spiritual nature, must worship him after a spiritual manner, in the sincerity of their souls, and with believing, spiritual, and holy dispositions, by the assistance of his Spirit, and in conformity to his revealed will.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

25 The woman having nothing to object against this answer, and yet not being fully satisfied with it, replied, How far what you say may be true, I am not able to determine; but I am persuaded that, according to the general expectation of this age, among the *Samaritans* as well as *Jews*, the Messiah, who is by way of eminence called the Anointed, is just ready to appear; and when he comes, he will certainly adjust all our disputes, clear up our doubts, and give us a perfect revelation of God's mind and will about these things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee, am he.

26 She being thus brought to express her faith in the Messiah, as ready to appear, and her willingness to receive instruction from him, Jesus took that opportunity to manifest himself to her, saying, I assure you that the Messiah, whom you expect, is already come; and you now see and converse with him: For

I, who have been talking in this close and convincing manner to you, am he.

27 And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

27 Immediately upon this, the disciples returned from the city, where they had been to buy provisions; (*ver.* 8.) and they, being under the power of national prejudices, were much amazed to find him discoursing in so * friendly a manner, as he seemed to be, with a poor ordinary woman of *Samarita*: However, such was their reverence of their Lord, and satisfaction in whatsoever he thought fit to do, that none of them durst find any fault with him, or ask him what he wanted of that woman? or why he so freely conversed with her?

28 The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

28 Our Lord having so expressly, and with such convincing evidence, told this woman of his being the Christ, and the conference between him and her breaking off by his disciples coming up to them, she, in the greatness of her joy and zeal to make him known to others, ran back to the city in great haste, leaving her water-pot behind her †; and in a sort of rapture said to all she met with;

29 Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

29 I bring you blessed tidings of the Messiah, whom we are all expecting as just ready to appear; I have certainly had a long conversation with him, in which he, though a stranger, told me abundance of such secret passages in my life, and impressed a sense of them with such power upon my conscience, as I am very sure none but the Messiah himself could do: I am therefore fully convinced that this is he, as he himself likewise told me: However, do not take my word for it; but come along with me, and I will conduct you to him, that ye yourselves may talk with him, and judge whether such an extraordinary person as this be not the Christ.

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

30 Upon this surprising report, though made by so inconsiderable, infamous, and unlikely a woman, multitudes of the citizens readily went with her to see and talk with Jesus, that they might satisfy themselves concerning him.

31 In the meanwhile his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

31 While the woman was gone to call her neighbours, and Jesus and his disciples were alone, he seemed so far to forget his weariness and want of food, as to discover no inclination to eat; and therefore they importuned him to it, saying, Master, we

S f 2

beg

N O T E S.

* Possibly at their coming up, they heard him saying to her, *I that speak unto thee am he*: If so, it might increase their wonder to think that he should make himself known with greater openness and freedom to her, than he was wont to do to the *Jews* themselves.

† She left her water-pot, either as not thinking of it, or not willing to incumber herself with it, or as desiring that Christ should make as much use of it as he might have occasion for in her absence.

beg that you would please to refresh yourself with the provisions we have brought, after your long fasting, and great fatigue in your journey hither.

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

32 But, his heart being set upon the good work that lay before him, he replied, I have much better food to eat than yours, which ye little think of; meaning that the great business he had begun, and was going further to engage in, for the salvation of the *Samaritans* souls, by bringing them to know and believe in him, was inexpressibly more desirable, entertaining, and delightful to his mind, than the most necessary and agreeable repast could be to his body, though he were ever so hungry.

33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?

33 His disciples not understanding what he meant, but supposing that he spoke of corporal food, said in a sort of surprise one to another: What! has this woman, or some other person privately brought him any provisions, while we were gone to buy some? what meat is this that he speaks of?

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

34 Jesus knowing how they mistook him, and what they whispered among themselves, corrected their error, saying to them; The meat I spake of is not of a corporal, but of a spiritual nature, and is to be understood in a figurative sense: What I mean by it is this; No gratification of the most hungry appetites of the body can afford me so much satisfaction, as I find in fulfilling that special will of my heavenly Father, for which he sent me into the world, and sent me hither, by bringing about the conversion of these *Samaritans*.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

35 Then, to explain himself still further, he added, Is not this, literally speaking, the seed-time, in which the husbandman is sowing his corn, and from which ye commonly reckon four months before the harvest will come, when he hopes to reap the fruit of his labour? And does not even this distant prospect make him diligent, and give him a great deal of pleasure, in casting his seed into the earth? But, said he, (the *Samaritans* just then appearing, and flocking toward him) Behold! the spiritual harvest of souls, which lies before me, is much nearer at hand: I have no sooner begun to sow by the conversation I had with the woman, who is just gone from me, but I am ready to reap; and to allude to the white appearance of the corn-fields when harvest is near at hand, look yonder, (pointing to the *Samaritan*;) see what vast crowds are coming out of the town, many of which shall soon, by means of my preaching, believe and be gathered in to me: The converting of these is that necessary and important business, which I take so great delight in.

36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together.

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for, the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

36 And this is a specimen of the pleasant work, in which ye shall be employed, The time is now at hand for gathering in of people unto the promised Shiloh; and as the labourer, who sows and reaps, receives a reward from his master, so shall ye from the Lord of this harvest: He will own you, and give you a noble satisfaction in the very service itself; and hereafter ye shall reap the most precious fruits of it, in the eternal salvation of your own and their souls, that shall be converted by your ministry: And then both ye, and all the ancient prophets, and *John the Baptist*, yea, and the Lord of the harvest himself, who have gone before you in sowing the good seed of the word, shall rejoice together in the numberless souls that shall be gathered to him, and they shall be your joy, and crown of rejoicing, in the day of his glorious appearing. (1 *Thef.* ii. 19.)

37 And, for your greater comfort and encouragement, I tell you, that the common proverb, *One sows, and another reaps*, shall be remarkably verified, to your advantage, in the great success of your labours, for which both I and my servants, who prophesied of me, have prepared the way by our preceding ministrations.

38 I am about to send you (*αποστειλω*) with a commission to preach the gospel; and when ye go into one place and another, ye shall be the reapers of this spiritual harvest, which was sown by others, and is now ripened for you to gather it with richer abundance, than either I by my personal ministry, or any of my former servants by their preaching, ever did before you. So that ye will have the advantage and the increase of all preceding labours, as well as of your own, and be instruments of perfecting the blessed work, which they only began, to the conversion and salvation of multitudes of souls*.

39 But, (*ετι*) to return, the *Samaritans* of *Sychar* having heard the amazing account that the woman gave of Christ's divine knowledge, and of the power with which his words came to her heart, and of the declaration he made to her concerning himself, many of them were wrought upon, by means of her testimony, to believe that he really was the true *Messiah*,

N O T E.

* As the writings of the prophets, the preaching of *John the Baptist*, and of our Lord himself, laid the foundation of the numerous conversions that were made by the ministry of the apostles among *Yews* and *Gentiles*, and had facilitated their work, and in a manner half done it to

their hands, especially among the *Yews*: So the number of converts in a few years, under the ministry of the apostles, vastly exceeded all that had been made for many ages before, under the ministry of the prophets, and of *John the Baptist*, and of Christ himself.

fish, who they expected would soon appear in the world.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

40 And this faith of theirs had such an effect upon them, though they were *Samaritans*, that they hastened with great desire, to converse with him themselves; and when they came to him, they were so affected with what they saw and heard, that they laid aside their prejudices against him, as a *Jew*, and earnestly entreated him to go into their city, and continue for some time at least with them, that they might shew him tokens of respect, and receive his heavenly instructions about their own salvation: And as he is good to the souls that seek him, so he went into their city, and staid two days preaching to them, and there, by giving an earnest of his mercy to the *Gentiles*.

41 And many more believed, because of his own word.

41 And, whilst he was at that place, many others, who were not convinced by the woman's testimony, were brought to believe in him, when they themselves came to hear his excellent doctrine, and feel the power of his grace upon their own hearts*.

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

42 And both the fresh converts, and those that had before believed upon the woman's report, said to her, Now our faith is not founded upon your testimony: For we ourselves have heard such divine and important things from Jesus, and they have come with such evidence and authority to our minds and consciences, as fully assure us, that he is in truth the promised and long-looked-for Messiah, even the Saviour, whom we, as well as the *Jews*, may claim an interest in, and in whom, as God promised to our Father *Abraham*, all nations shall be blessed †.

43 Now, after two days, he departed thence, and went into Galilee:

43 Now when he had spent two days at the city of *Sychar*, preaching and converting many there, he pursued his intended journey from thence to *Galilee*; but declined going to *Nazareth*, where he was brought up, and which lay in that country.

44 For Jesus himself

44 For as himself had declared ‡, when at the beginning

N O T E S.

* It does not appear that he wrought any miracles here: But the blessed effect of his preaching to this people was surprising; and he can as effectually convert the worst sinners, and the most unlikely to be wrought upon, without miracles as with them, whenever he pleases to set home his word with power upon their hearts; but without this, the greatest of all miracles will have no saving effect.

† Thus *the world* in this place, as well as in many others, is only made use of to comprehend *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*. See the note on *chap. iii. 16*.

‡ He said this with respect to *Nazareth*; (*Luke iv. 16,—24.*) and we are told, (*Matth. iv. 12, 13.*) that at his coming into *Galilee*, when he heard of *John's* being cast into prison, he leaving *Nazareth*, went and dwelt in *Capernaum*: Unless we suppose our Evangelist to refer to his not going thither, it will be very difficult to make out the connection of this with the foregoing verse: But upon this supposition it stands easy and plain thus, He went into some parts of *Galilee*, but not into the town of *Nazareth*.

himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

ginning of his ministry he preached there, Even a true prophet, who really comes with a message from God, is nevertheless seldom esteemed and regarded among his former acquaintance, with whom he was brought up in low life, and who are apt to form their opinion of him by what they have all along known of his family, education, and circumstances in the world, rather than by the plainest evidence of his eminent qualifications, and divine authority.

45 Then, when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

45 Therefore, passing by *Nazareth*, he went into other parts of *Galilee*, and many of the people there joyfully entertained him, because they had before been much affected with his doctrine and miracles, which they had heard and seen at *Jerusalem*, when they were last there to celebrate the passover: (*chap. ii. 23.*) For it was their constant custom to go up to that city every year, at the time of that solemnity, in obedience to God's command.

46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

46 So Jesus, finding that there was work for him to do, went and preached in several towns and villages in that country; and among others, he again visited that *Cana*, which lay in *Galilee*, where some time before he had miraculously turned water into wine: (*chap. ii. 11.*) And during his abode at this place, there was one of *Herod's* nobles*, whose son lay sick at *Capernaum*.

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

47 And this man, great as he was, and that in a wicked court, having heard of the fame of Jesus, and of his being come out of *Judea* into those parts of *Galilee*, was so concerned for his son, and had so much faith in the power of Christ, that he took a journey of about fifteen miles from *Capernaum* to *Cana*, to pay his respects personally to him: And when he saw him, he humbly begged with great earnestness, that he would please to go home with him, and work a cure upon his son, whose disease was so desperate, that at his Father's leaving him, he was looked upon as a dead child, past hope of recovery by any human means whatsoever.

48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

48 Hereupon our blessed Lord said to him †, I plainly perceive how it is with you *Galileans*: Though my doctrines and behaviour be ever so heavenly and holy; and many of you have seen my miracles at *Jerusalem*, (*ver. 45.*) yet ye will not believe

in

N O T E S.

* This nobleman seems to have been either *Chuzza*, *Herod's* steward, mentioned *Luke* viii. 3. or else *Manaem*, who had been brought up with *Herod*, mentioned *Acts* xiii. 1.: But whether he were so or not, it is probable that he was

an *Herodian*, and one of *Herod's* courtiers. who had received good impressions from *John the Baptist's* ministry.

† Christ's saying this to him, together with the rest of the company, intimates that he was a *Jeru.*

in me, as the *Samaritans* did upon hearing my discourses, (*ver.* 42.) unless ye see my divine power exerted in performing some wonderful works in your own country.

49 The nobleman faith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

49 The royal courtier nevertheless persisted in his humble address to Christ, saying, Lord, as I believe thou couldst heal my child, wert thou with him, I beg that thou wouldst go along with me now without delay, lest he be dead, and past any possible recovery before we get to him.

50 Jesus faith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

50 Jesus, to honour the faith of this nobleman, and to help its infirmity in thinking that Christ's corporal presence was necessary to the cure, intimated to him, that he had power in himself to heal his son in an instant, by a mere act of his will, wherever he was, saying, Depart in peace; I now at this distance restore your son to health, and assure you that he is alive and well: Upon this, the faith of the child's father was so strengthened, that he depended on Christ's word, and went home to see, and rejoice in the happy event.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

51 And, whilst he was on his journey back to *Capernaum*, some of his servants, who were sent to acquaint him with the good news, met him on the road, and told him that his son was perfectly well again.

52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend: and they said unto him, yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

52 Then, for the further confirmation of his faith, he ordered them to tell him exactly at what time his son began to grow better, supposing that the distemper went off by degrees: And they replied, that he did not gradually recover, as is usual in such cases; but that, to their joyful surprise, the fever left him all at once, and he became perfectly well in an instant the last night, as near as they could remember, at seven o'clock. (See the note on *chap.* i. 39.)

53 So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house.

53 Hereupon the nobleman recollecting the precise time when Jesus said to him, *Thy son liveth*, found that, at that very instant, his son was suddenly and miraculously healed; and he believed that Jesus, who could work such a miracle, afar off, as well as near at hand, was the true Messiah: And when, upon coming home, he saw that his dear child, whom he left at the point of death, was indeed restored to a state of perfect health, and when he and the eye-witnesses of the recovery had compared notes about it, his own faith was still further established; and all his family, after his example, believed in the Lord Jesus.

54 This *is* again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.

54 This was the second miracle that Jesus wrought in *Galilee*, upon his coming out of *Judea* into that country, where he had been some months before at *Cana*, and turned water into wine. (*Chap.* ii. 7,—11.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

Into what a low and humbled state did our blessed Lord come! How was he surrounded with troubles and dangers, and denied the refreshment of a little cold water! What toilsome journeys did he take on foot! and how, being a man made like unto his brethren, did he suffer weariness, hunger, and thirst! How laborious was he in his work, setting us an example! and how does Providence subvert the design of his grace, by throwing things into such a course as is necessary for meeting with the appointed objects of saving mercy! and when he meets with them, how tenderly, and yet how closely does he deal with their consciences; and what a glorious harvest of souls does he gather to himself! When once they are brought in earnest to enquire after him, he will graciously afford them his presence, and will manifest himself to them, that they may have an experimental acquaintance with him, which is best of all. And O what a free and rich gift of God, in preference to all others, is Christ in himself, and in the esteem of them that savingly know him, though they were naturally ignorant of him, and much more desirous of temporal advantages, than of the spiritual blessings that come along with him! But O amazing condescension and grace, that God, who is a Spirit, will seek worshippers among such carnal creatures as we are! And blessed be his name that he will accept of gospel-worship, without distinction of places, wherever it is performed in spirit and in truth.—What delight does our Lord Jesus take in glorifying his Father, and doing good to immortal souls! and what abundant encouragement have his servants to go on with his work! They, like their blessed Saviour, shall be received by some, while they are rejected by others: The pains of those, that have gone before them, prepare their way, and make their work the easier to them; and after they themselves are dead and gone, many shall reap the advantage of the seed they sowed among them! Their labour is indeed great, like that of sowing and reaping; but they shall have the pleasure of being instrumental in gathering souls to Christ, and shall receive a glorious reward, to their everlasting joy. But, alas! how do prejudices against the ministry we sit under, hinder our profiting by it! It is well for us if afflictions themselves are sanctified, as means of bringing us, like *Herod's* courtier, to Christ: He will then give us the desire of our hearts, and even exceed our faith and hope, and still further confirm them in him. Happy the great men and nobles of the earth, that are brought to know and believe in Jesus, for the saving of their souls. And happy masters of families, whose faith is followed by all that are in their houses, and who, by comparing experiences with them, gain strength and establishment in their spiritual concerns! Whenever Christ displays his power and goodness in these, or any other instances, how should we record it to his praise, and to the encouragement of our own and others souls!

C H A P. V.

Christ cures a man on the Sabbath-day, who lay at the pool of Bethesda, and had been lame thirty-eight years, 1,—9. The Jews quarrel about it, 10,—16. Christ vindicates himself by asserting his own divine character as the Son of God, 17,—31. Proves this by the testimony of John the Baptist, of his own miracles, of his Father, and of the Old Testament scriptures, 32,—39. And charges the Jews with various faults which they were guilty of, 40,—47.

TEXT.

AFTER this there was a feast

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER our blessed Saviour had healed the nobleman's son in *Galilee*, one of the annual feasts * returned,

NOTE.

* It is highly probable that this feast was the passover; for it seems that the evangelist *John* particularly recited the

four passovers, in their order, that were between Christ's baptism and death: The first, in *chap. ii. 13.*: The second, in

feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now there is at Jerusalem, by the sheep-market, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water: whosoever then first, after the troubling of the water, stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

5 And a certain man was there, which

returned, at which all the males of *Israel* were obliged to appear before the Lord at *Jerusalem*; (Exod. xxiii. 17.) and Jesus went thither, as usual, that he might pay obedience to the law.

2 Now there * was in *Jerusalem*, near the sheep-gate, (*ἐπι τῆ προβατικῆ*) a certain bath or pond of water, called in the common dialect, used among the *Jews*, *Bethesda*, which signifies, The house of mercy or kindness; and, adjoining to this, were † five cloysters, or covered walks, whose roof was supported by columns, for the pleasure and convenience of the people, and especially of those that came to wash in this pool.

3 In these cloysters abundance of distempered people lay, some blind, others lame, and others sinew-shrunk, and the like, who came or were brought thither, and continued waiting there, in hopes of being healed by the water of that pool, when it should be put into a supernatural motion, as it had sometimes been.

4 For God, to awaken the expectation of *Israel*, that he was about to return to them in visible tokens of his favour, after they had been withdrawn for several ages, and to encourage persons attending on any means of his appointment for conveying blessings to them, had of late sent an angel at some particular seasons, to give a discernible motion to the water of this bath, which immediately thereupon became of a healing nature, in a very extraordinary manner, not for the curing of all that might go into it, but only of any one person ‡, who stepped in first after the moving of the water, that the Divine Power and sovereignty might be the more remarkably seen in the cure; and how desperate and long continued, or of what kind soever the disease of this person might be, he was instantly and effectually healed.

5 And among many others, that lay in these cloysters waiting for the happy opportunity, there was one

N O T E S.

in this place, or no where: The third, in *chap. vi. 4.*: (see the note there) And the fourth, in *chap. xiii. 1.* *Vid. Lightfoot. Hor. Hebr. pag. 554. and Harm. pag. 664. &c.*

* The Evangelist's mentioning this in the present tense seems to be an intimation, that he wrote his gospel before the destruction of *Jerusalem*.

† These, says Dr *Lightfoot* in his *Harmony, p. 661.* were such walks as are in the Royal Exchange at *London*.

‡ This shews that the virtue of this water, was not owing, as some have sug-

gested, to a mixture of the blood of the sacrifices, which ran into this pool, and to a motion which some messenger from the sanhedrim, or from the priests, put the impregnated water into, nor to any other natural cause whatsoever: For then its virtue would not have been restrained to the healing of the single person who first stepped in; and no natural virtue could be effectual to cure all, one as well as another, of the different sorts of diseases here mentioned; and therefore every cure by this means must be entirely miraculous.

which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but, while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath.

10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath-day; it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed.

11 He answered them, He that

made one man in such deplorable circumstances, that he had lost the use of his limbs for thirty-eight years past.

6 When our blessed Lord came among these miserable objects, he took particular notice of this distressed man; and knowing in himself, that he had continued so many years in this lamentable condition, his pity was moved toward him; and that he might raise the poor creature's expectation of a cure, and give him an opportunity of declaring before the people how much he needed it, Jesus going up to him said, Are you really desirous to be healed of your distemper?

7 The lame man having no notion of Christ's healing him, but hoping that now, at last, a kind friend was come, who might assist him in getting into the water, answered him, Sir, the very design of my coming hither is to wait, and try in the best manner I can, for a cure: But alas! I am so poor, that I cannot hire a servant, and so neglected and despised, that I cannot find a friend to put me into the pool immediately upon the moving of its waters; and whilst I am crawling toward it, some other diseased person always gets the start of me, jumps in before me, and receives the benefit, which is obtained only by him, who gets in first; and so hitherto, I have not been able to succeed in my desire.

8 Hereupon Jesus designing to work a miraculous cure upon him, and therein to conform to the rule that had been settled by Providence at *Bethesda*, for healing only one person at a time, said to the lame man, in a way of sovereign authority, Get up, and, taking your bed upon your back, carry it hence, as a proof that your health and strength are perfectly restored.

9 And such almighty power went forth with this word of command, that the poor man was entirely healed in a moment, and received strength to enable him to obey Christ's order, which he accordingly did by taking up his bed, and carrying it away in the sight of all the people: And the time when this miracle was wrought, and this evidence given of it, was on a Sabbath-day.

10 When therefore some of the *Jews* observed that the man, who was healed, walked along the streets with his bed upon his back, they were offended at it, and quarrelled with him about it, saying, This, you know, is the Sabbath, and it is a profanation of this holy day, for you to carry your bed, or any burden whatsoever: How dare you then be guilty of such a great and public sin?

11 The man replied in vindication of himself, What I do is by the express command of the very person

made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk?

12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk?

13 And he that was healed, wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in *that* place.

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole.

person who miraculously healed me in an instant, and enabled me for it; I could do no less than obey him, after he had wrought such a great and merciful cure upon me; and surely he, who did it, merely by speaking a word, must needs be some holy and extraordinary prophet, and would never bid me do any thing that is sinful.

12 Then they, suspecting that Jesus had done this, made no inquiry about the miracle; but, passing over that, said, with a taunting, wrathful, and contemptuous air, to him that was healed, Pray, what man * is he, who durst presume to authorize your so notoriously breaking God's law, by carrying your bed on the Sabbath-day?

13 But (δε) the healed man could not inform them who it was, he having never before seen Jesus, who had been thus gracious to him: For as soon as Christ had cured him, he withdrew into the crowd, to conceal himself among them, there being a vast multitude at that place, and then slipped privately away, that he might prevent the confusion which was like to arise from his being cried up by some for the miracle he had wrought, and cried down by others for doing, and ordering this man to do, what, as they superstitiously pretended, was a breach of the Sabbath.

14 Afterwards the poor man, being dismissed, went to the temple †, to offer thanksgivings to God for his miraculous recovery, and to shew that he paid a religious regard to the Sabbath, notwithstanding what had been suggested to the contrary: And Jesus going thither, as he was wont, met with him there; and speaking to him again, said, Behold how, in the riches of divine and distinguishing mercy, you have been delivered from your late sore affliction, contrary to your own expectations or deserts: Take heed that you do not knowingly commit any sin hereafter, lest, by an abuse of this endearing instance of God's goodness, you bring upon yourself worse miseries than ever you yet felt, to the ruin of your immortal soul.

15 At this second interview the man found who it was that had so miraculously healed him; and he imprudently, though with a good intention to do honour to his great Physician, went to some of the chief of the Jews, and told them that Jesus of Nazareth

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* They seemed to call him a *man*, by way of contempt, to insinuate that he was no more than a man, and therefore could have no authority to order that to be done which they presumed to say was a violation of the law of God.

† This was probably on the same day, as soon as he had disposed of his bed.

reth was the person who had * miraculously wrought the great cure upon him.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done the things on the Sabbath-day.

16 But the *Jews*, instead of admiring so undoubtedly and merciful a miracle, which was an evident demonstration of Christ's divine power and goodness, were provoked at it, and took occasion from thence to set themselves with the greatest malignity against him, and even to thirst for his blood, because he had healed the lame man †, as well as ordered him to carry his bed, on the Sabbath, which they called such an open profanation of that sacred day, as was worthy of death.

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

17 But our Lord, to defend what he had done, said to them, Though God, my Father, has instituted a Sabbath for man, ye must all own that he nevertheless has all along, from the creation hitherto, continually performed his providential works of power and goodness on the Sabbath, as well as on other days; and I, his Son, partaking of his nature and perfections, am undivided in operation from him: Our work and authority are the same in the preservation and government of all things; and therefore as none can pretend to say, that what my Father does on the Sabbath, is any breach upon the holy rest of that day; so there is no just ground to object against what I have done, who am a co-worker with him, as if it were a violation of the Sabbath ‡.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his

18 The *Jews*, at the hearing of this, were still more abundantly enraged, and determined to do their utmost to put him to death, because he had not only done what they insisted was a profanation of the Sabbath, but, to justify himself, had added the highest blasphemy to impiety, by calling God *his own proper*

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* It is observable that the *Jews*, in their question. (*ver.* 12.) took no notice of the miracle, but only asked what man had ordered this person to take up his bed and walk: But the man, in his account of Jesus took no notice of his ordering him to carry his bed, but only of his making him whole; which shews that the information this man gave was not from any ill will to Christ, as their inquiry was; but that he designed it for the honour of his great Benefactor.

† It was Christ's working the miracle, rather than his ordering the man to carry his bed, that stung the *Jews*, and put them upon taking occasion to charge him with breaking the Sabbath, as appears from our Lord's answering only to this ground of the charge, which in course would confute the whole of it.

‡ This way of our blessed Lord's arguing, from his Father's working to his own, plainly intimates that he speaks of himself as one with his Father in nature and operation; otherwise the argument loses its force, and beauty: For if a mere creature, who only receives a commission from God, as for instance, a prophet or an apostle, were to say, God does whatever he pleases, and therefore I have a right to do whatever I please likewise on the Sabbath-day: Who would not see the reasoning to be inconclusive and absurd? But understanding our Lord to speak of himself, as one in nature and operation with the Father in all his works, the argument is irresistible; and it is evident from the following verse, that the *Jews* understood him in this peculiar and exalted sense.

his Father, making himself equal with God.

19 Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doth, these also doth the Son likewise.

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that he himself doth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

per Father, (πατέρα ιδίον) in so peculiar and eminent a sense, as amounted to no less than a claim of equality in authority, power, and operation with God himself*.

19 In answer to this, our blessed Lord was so far from blaming the *Jews* for wresting his words, that he went on to vindicate them in the most sublime sense that could be put upon them, saying, I, who am Truth itself, solemnly assure you, that the union between the Father and Son, is so singular and essential, and they are so undivided in their actions, and in their privacy to each other's designs, that the Son can do nothing of his own head, or separately from the Father, without his consent and co-operation, but only concurs with the Father in all the works, which, by his intimate acquaintance with him, he sees him doing: For all things that the Father himself effects, in the continual agency of his Providence, (*ταυτα*) the very same does the Son also perform, by his co-operation with him; and that (*ομοιως*) in the very same manner, with the same divine power and authority, with which the Father himself performs them: So that the Father no more does them without the Son, than the Son without him.

20 For they being as much united in will and affection, as in nature and power, the Father has such an infinite complacency in his Son, that he delights in communicating counsels with him, and in laying open all his designs and operations to him; so that no one thing, that is done by the Father, is ever hid from the Son †: And, in the further course of his dispensations,

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* The *Jews* themselves often called God their Father, and would never have found fault with, much less charged blasphemy upon any, that came to them under the character of a prophet, for using the same stile: And therefore they must be supposed to understand our Lord, as speaking of God, as his Father, in a sense superior to any covenant or office-relation, and in a sense so peculiar to himself as to intimate his partaking of the same nature and perfections with him; or else there would have been no room for their imagining or suggesting, that by this claim of relation to God as his Father, he made himself equal with God.

† If, as some think, *the Son's doing nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do, and the Father's loving him, and shewing him all things that himself does, &c.* relate to his office-character

as the Messiah: Then these expressions are to be understood with respect to his doing nothing in the execution of his office, but by commission from his Father, and nothing but what the Father, by the unction of his Spirit, intimates to him that he should do; and the Father's *shewing him* these things, as to be done by him, is an undeniable proof of the Father's approbation of him, and pleasure in him, and in all that he does as Mediator: And were we to take it in this light, what our blessed Lord here says about his *doing what things soever the Father does, and in the same manner* with him, and his Father's *shewing him ALL things that himself does*, represents him as receiving such an high office from his Father, and such powers for discharging it, as he could not be capable of exercising, unless he were the Son of God in so high and proper a sense, as to be

dispensations, he will shew him in real events of his power and goodness, and will perform by him, and together with him, much greater works than healing a lame man, that those of you, who shall believe, may be filled with holy wonder and praise, and that others of you, who will nevertheless continue obstinate in your unbelief, may be astonished, and even confounded at them.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them: even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

21 For, to instance in some of these greater works, which the Son does in the same manner with the Father, and which he could not do in the execution of his office, as the Messiah, unless he were partaker of the divine nature: As it is undoubtedly the peculiar property of God to raise the dead, and restore them to life, and the Father has done, and whenever he pleases can do this; even so, by the same power and authority, and with like sovereignty, the Son quickens them, who were dead in trespasses and sins, to a spiritual life, and raises them to corporal life again, who were literally dead, whenever he will*.

22 For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

22 For God the Father does not reserve merely to himself, nor exercise immediately by himself, even that prerogative of deity, which consists in ordering all the concerns of providence and grace here, and in managing the final judgment hereafter; but has put the immediate exercise of these divine powers into the hands of his incarnate Son.

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

23 And this he has done to this end, that, instead of any one's being stumbled and offended at the incarnation and humiliation of the Son of God, all men might be induced, by his bearing and executing this high commission in human nature, to pay the same religious adoration, worship, and obedience to him, as they are obliged to pay to the Father himself: And the Father so peremptorily insists upon this, as

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be partaker of the same divine nature and perfections with the Father, and to be intimately one with him. But it does not appear to me that it could be said of Christ, merely as the Messiah, especially in his state of humiliation, that *whatsoever things* the Father did, the *very same* did the Son, and that in the *same manner*; or that the Father shewed him universally *all things* that himself did: And therefore I rather incline to the sense given of it in the paraphrase, as relating to the Son, considered in his original nature, who as such was capable of performing all those works which belong to his office, in as divine and God-like a manner, as the Father himself

would have done had he been incarnate.

* It seems to me, as if Christ, in this and the next verse, speaks of raising and quickening the dead, and of all judgment being committed to him; in an extensive view, as relating both to the administration of his kingdom in this world, and to his raising the dead, and passing the final sentence upon all mankind in the world to come; and that, in the following verses, he enlarges upon each of these articles distinctly, as we shall see when we come to them: Otherwise it may be difficult to account for his repeating expressions of this nature so often in so short a discourse. See the note on ver. 25.

to account that, after such a revelation of the Messiah, whoever does not in this manner honour the Son, does not truly honour the Father himself, who glorieth in having such a Son, and has sent him with all authority to exert these peculiar prerogatives of deity, that he might be owned and homaged as a Divine Person.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

24 I, the faithful and true Witness, who have told you that all judgment is committed to me, do solemnly assure you, that the rule, by which I proceed therein, is this, Whoever hears, attends to, and heartily receives my doctrine, particularly with relation to my being the Son of God, and the true Messiah; and whosoever believes on my Father, who hath sent me to exercise those divine powers, as the Messiah, has a right and title to, and the beginnings, principles, and earnest of eternal life; and he shall never fall under the condemning sentence of the law, or be cast in the future judgment; but is already translated from a state of condemnation to death, into a state of justification of life: And in order hereunto,

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.

25 I, who am Truth itself, assuredly tell you, that the time is just at hand, and is even already begun, when they that are dead in trespasses and sins shall hear the voice of the Divine Messiah, as speaking by his * word and Spirit with powerful energy, to quicken them to the obedience of faith; and every one who thus hears it, shall live for ever: And, as an emblem of this, his mighty power shall soon be seen in raising some persons to life, who were corporally dead; and both these are alike easy to him.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

26 For as the Father is the fountain of life, who has it necessarily, and in the most perfect manner in himself, and communicates it to all the living; so in the dispensation, whereby he has constituted his own essentially living Son to be the Messiah, he has granted to him †, that in his incarnate state, and in the execution

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* The gospel is called Christ's voice, (*chap. x. 16.*) and of this he says, *The words that I speak, they are are spirit, and they are life;* (*chap. vi. 6.*) and he soon gave a visible representation of his quickening power, in his raising several persons to life that were literally dead, before his own death, and at his own resurrection: So that what he here says about *raising the dead*, and in *ver. 27.* about *executing judgment*, seems evidently to refer to the power which he then was beginning to exercise in the administration of his kingdom in this world; be-

cause these are distinguished from the general resurrection and judgment at the last day, which are spoken of *ver. 28. 29.*; (see the note on *ver. 21.*) and because it was prophesied, that the Messiah *should execute judgment and justice in the earth*, and that, *in his days Judah should be saved, &c.* and he *should be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*, *Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.*

† Some judicious expositors think, that the Father's *giving to the Son to have life in himself* relates to the eternal and inconceivable generation of the Son, by which.

cution of his office, he shall have this life in himself, with authority to communicate life to others, in raising them from the dead, by his own fund of quickening power, which is inherent in himself.

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

27 The Father has likewise committed a judicial power to him, in his office-capacity, to save his favourites from wrath, and execute righteous vengeance on his enemies, (*Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6.) because, being the Son of God, he condescended to take upon him human nature, that he might bear and discharge the office of the Messiah, for the salvation of those that receive him, and for the destruction of those that reject him; and so men might live or die, and be justified or condemned by the authority of one, who partakes of their own nature, as he is the Son of man.

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

28, 29 Let it not be thought strange by any of you, that I speak of the Son's doing the things before-mentioned very quickly, in the administration of his kingdom on earth: For I will tell you of still much greater and more surprising things of this kind, which he will do at the end of the world. The great day is coming, when all the individuals of mankind, who now are, or by that time will be dead and buried, shall hear his powerful and awful voice to raise them out of their graves, and to bring them before his judgment-seat: Then all the good and holy, that shall be found to have proved the sincerity of their faith by their works, shall be quickened by his Spirit, as the Head of the body, and shall be adjudged to a glorious and blessed state of immortal life; and all that shall have persisted in their sins, and lived and died workers of iniquity, shall be raised by his power, as Lord of all, and shall receive a dreadful sentence of condemnation, to their utter and everlasting ruin.

29 And shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

30 I can of mine own self do nothing:

30 The sum therefore of what I insist upon, in my defence against your accusation, is this*, I am that

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which the same perfection of life was necessarily communicated to him, as is in the Father himself: But others understand it of an economical communication of life to the Son, as man and Mediator, founded upon, and answerable to, his original participation of the same divine life with the Father. And I rather incline to the last of these senses, because of the close connection there is between this and what is said in the following verse, about the Father's giving him authority to execute judgment, both of which are brought in as proofs, not of what our Lord had said about his doing all things in the same manner that the Father does them,

(*ver.* 19.) but of what he had said in the immediately foregoing verse, about the Son's quickening the dead, in the administration of his kingdom; and because it seems to me that his being the *Son of man* is added at the close of the next verse, (*ver.* 27.) as the reason of both these donations.

* *Dr. Clarke* observes, that the same words are repeated here which began the discourse *ver.* 19. There they are *ου δυναται ο υιος ποιεισιν απ' εαυτου ουδεν*, the Son can do nothing of himself; and here they are, *ου δυναμαι εγω ποιεισιν απ' εμαυτου ουδεν*, I can of mine ownself do nothing, which shews that our Lord here resumes,

thing: as I hear I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

that Son of God, who is partaker of the same divine nature and perfections with the Father, and has taken upon him the office of the Messiah to do those great things, which none but such a Son of the Father could possibly perform; and therefore I can do nothing of myself separately from, much less in contrariety to him: But, according to what I am originally and perfectly * acquainted with as his Son, and according to the instructions which I receive from him as the Messiah; so I proceed in the administration of all the affairs of my kingdom, both in this world, and in that which is to come: Whatsoever therefore I do, cannot but be right and just, because I therein neither aim at, nor pursue any private will of my own, different from, much less in opposition to that of my Father; but have the strictest regard in every thing to what is entirely agreeable to his mind and will, and to the commission, for the discharge of which he has sent me into the world.

31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

31 I indeed readily acknowledge, that, if I only affirm these things concerning myself, and can produce no credentials to support my testimony, this alone is not a sufficient proof of its truth, according to the usual course of men's judging; and therefore I will not rest the matter here, but proceed to other evidence.

32 There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

32 There is another person, even † *John the Baptist*, who expressly said concerning me, *This is the Son of God*; (chap. i. 34.) and I know that his testimony is certainly true, and dare appeal to it as such; nor can ye yourselves justly object against it, since ye owned him to be a prophet, and submitted to his baptism under that character.

33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.

33 Yea, so high was your opinion of *John*, that, even when ye were met in council at *Jerusalem*, ye sent priests and Levites with a solemn message to him, to inquire who he was, as doubting whether he himself were not the Messiah; and he honestly and plainly declared the truth, without favour or affection, saying, *That he was not the Christ, but that I am he who came after him, and am preferred before him, because, in my divine nature, I was before him.* (Chap. i. 19,—30.)

34 But I receive not

34 But I have no need of being beholden to his, or

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fumes, and returns to the head of the discourse.

* *Hearing* is in this place put for the most intimate and exact knowledge of a thing.

† Some suppose that by this *other*, who

bore witness of Christ, is meant God the Father. But his witness is expressly mentioned *ver. 37.*; and both the construction and connection of this sentence most naturally lead us to understand our Lord, as here speaking of *John the Baptist*.

not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

36 But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

37 And the Father himself which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

or any man's testimony whatsoever, to establish my divine and mediatorial characters, having still higher evidence to produce: Nevertheless, I am willing to remind you of what *John* said concerning me, not for mine own sake, but for yours, in condescension to your weakesses and infirmities, that I might reason with you upon your own principles, and that no proper means might be omitted for your conviction and salvation.

35 Though *John the Baptist* was not (*το φως, chap. i. 8.*) that true light, which was to come into the world, to enlighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of *Israel*. (*Luke ii. 32.*) but was only (*ο λαμπρος*) a lamp, or subordinate light; yet he was really a great man, full of holy zeal and wisdom in his doctrine and life, which were admirably suited, under the influence of divine grace, to warm the heart, and enlighten the mind: And ye were so affected with them, at his first appearing among you, that, for a little while, ye esteemed and received him as an eminent prophet, and were even in a transport of wonder and joy at what ye saw in him, and heard from him, till he came to reprove you sharply for your sins, and to give a plain testimony to me; then indeed your language was, *he has a devil.* (*Luke vii. 33.*)

36 But I have still much more clear and unexceptionable testimonies to produce than that of *John*: For the evident miracles, which I have begun already to perform among you, and the still greater works, which I have told you I am commissioned by my Father, and shall go on to do, till I have perfected all that belongs to my office; these wonderful works themselves, which I myself do by my own power, are so great, so good, and holy, and so undeniably divine, as to carry plain credentials of my being, in the highest sense, the Son of the Father, and the true Messiah, whom he has sent into the world.

37 Yea, to advance yet further, God the Father himself, whose Son I am, and from whom I have my office-power, has directly bore witness to me, by *the heaven's opening, and the Spirit's descending like a dove and lighting upon me*, and by an audible voice immediately from heaven at my baptism, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* (*Matth. iii. 16, 17.*) That was a very extraordinary testimony to me, such as suits your own desire of a sign from heaven; and none of your nation, how highly soever ye have been favoured of God, have at any time before heard the Father himself speak with

an audible voice, or ever seen a visible appearance * of his glory.

38 And ye have not his word abiding in you; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

38 And though he has now given testimony to me in this immediate manner, as well as formerly by his prophets; yet his word, in either of these ways of delivering it, makes no lasting impression upon you, to engage your faith in me: For, after all, ye will not believe in me, who am thus plainly proved to be sent of the Father.

39 Search the scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

39 Ye *Jews* profess † to search the secret writings of inspired men, and are indeed often conversant with them, as they are read in your synagogues every Sabbath-day, as many of you get some portions of them by heart, and as they are studied by your learned rabbies to put their own glosses upon them: But carefully examine them again, read and search them to the very bottom, and impartially observe what they say, that ye may understand the mind and will of God in them, which concerns every one of you, whether learned or unlearned. I appeal to these authentic records, and ye cannot justly refuse this appeal; for ye yourselves apprehend and profess to believe, that in them is contained the true doctrine of eternal life; yea, so high is your opinion of them, as to think, according to a prevailing corrupt notion among you, that he, who has the words of the law, is safe for heaven: Now these very scriptures are my witnesses; they, in their types, promises, and prophecies, point to me, and say the very same things, in effect, that I have said of myself, and that my Father has said by a voice from heaven, concerning me.

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

40 And, notwithstanding all this evidence, your pride and prejudices, carnality and wilful obstinacy, are so great, that ye will not receive, apply to, or trust in me, that ye might have pardon and peace, life and blessedness, and all salvation by me, in whom alone it is to be found.

41 I receive not honour from men.

41 I neither need, nor have, nor seek after the applause of men; nor do I affect that external pomp and

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* *Εἶδος* rendered *shape*, signifies an appearance or representation. And as many of the *Jews* heard the Father's voice, and saw the visible representation he made at Christ's baptism; and, as after this, they heard a voice to him from heaven, (*chap. xii. 28, 29.*) what is here said seems to relate, not to these particular persons, but to the nation of the *Jews*; and strongly intimates that this was a peculiar privilege, *which none of their ancestors* were ever favoured with; and, by consequence, that all the voices

and appearances of God, under the Old Testament, were not of the Father, but of the Son, as presages of his incarnation: Otherwise it could not be said that the *Jews* had never before heard the Father's voice at any time, nor seen his appearance in a visible representation made by him.

† *Ἐρευνᾶτε* may be rendered either indicatively, *ye do search*, or imperatively, *search ye* the scriptures, and I have taken in both senses.

and grandeur which ye look for your Messiah to appear in : My only aim is to advance the glory of God in the salvation of his people.

42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

42 But this is so far from recommending me to you, that, on the other hand, it is a strong prejudice in your minds against me : For how plausible soever your pretences of piety may be, to the deceiving of yourselves and others, I can see into your very hearts, and I well know, that ye have no sincere affection to God and godliness ; but that the love of this world is predominant in you, and that therefore ye reject me.

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not : if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

43 I am come to you with a commission from my heavenly Father, to promote his glory, and a spiritual salvation from sin and wrath, and have produced several unexceptionable witnesses, to establish my divine and office-characters ; and yet because I oppose your vices, and do not appear with worldly pomp, nor give you expectations of secular riches, honour, and power, ye will not believe in me : But if, on the contrary, any false prophets, or false christ's arise, and do not remonstrate against your sins, but set up with high pretences of delivering you from the *Roman* yoke, and of aggrandizing you in the world, though they bring no credentials from God of their acting by his authority, ye would readily entertain and follow them *.

44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only ?

44 How then is it possible that, with this carnal temper of mind, ye should believe in me, whose kingdom is not of this world, who make no magnificent appearances or pretences, but am despised of men, and teach the most self-denying doctrines ? your corrupt hearts can never receive me, while ye are full of worldly ambition, extremely fond of the applauses of men, and will pay no honour to any but those from whom ye expect to receive it again, and while ye have no value or concern for the spiritual, substantial, and eternal honours, which God alone can, and will put upon his favourites.

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father : there is one that accuseth you, *even* Moses,

45 But though, for your conviction, I thus freely charge these crimes upon your consciences in rejecting me ; do not imagine that the design of my coming into the world is to spy out and aggravate your faults, and to lodge a plea against you to my Father for

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* Thus they followed *Theudas*, who boasted himself to be some body, and *Judas of Galilee*, who drew away much people after him. (Acts v. 36. 37.) And afterwards in the reign of *Adrian* the Roman emperor, they followed *Barcho-cab*, who set up for the Messiah, and

spoke of nothing but wars and triumphs over their enemies. *Enseb. l. 4. c. 6.* And see Bishop *Kidder's* Demonstration of the Messiah, *Part I. p. 14.* and *Part III. p. 165.* and the places referred to in *Josephus* there.

Moses, in whom ye
ye trust.

for them : No, my direct and principal work lies in the merciful, and not in the severe way, in being an advocate for, instead of an accuser of mine enemies : And indeed there is no occasion for my appearing against you : For there is another that does this, even *Moses* himself, in whom ye place your greatest confidence, and by whose law ye expect to be saved : This great prophet does already by his writings indite, and condemn you for your unbelief ; and he will be a terrible witness against you, to your utter confusion at the great day.

46 For had ye
believed *Moses*, ye
would have belie-
ved me : for he
wrote of me.

46 For notwithstanding all your boasts of *Moses*, and sheltering yourselves under his name, if ye had really attended to, understood, and heartily believed his writings, ye could not but have received me, and transferred your trust in him to me : For all the types and figures in his law, and all the prophecies which he recorded, evidently pointed to me, and are fulfilled in me.

47 But if ye be-
lieve not his writ-
ings, how shall ye
believe my words ?

47 But if ye will not give credit to, nor be convinced by what *Moses* himself has said concerning me, though ye have so high an opinion of him, and acknowledge his writings to be of divine authority ; how can it be supposed that ye should pay any regard to what I say, against whom ye have the most inveterate prejudices, and whom ye treat with sovereign contempt, and resolve to run down as an impostor ?

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

Who, that wants to be healed of spiritual diseases, which are worse than any that can afflict the body, would not wait at the pool of ordinances for supernatural influence to effect the cure ! And how often does Christ prevent the soul with his mercy, before it knows him ! His word is with power, and when once he says, Thou art made whole ; with what satisfaction may we yield the obedience to his commands, with regard to the Sabbath, and every thing else which he enables us to perform, whatsoever others may object against it ; and how concerned should we be to sin no more ! And O what a divine and suitable Saviour is our blessed Lord, who is truly the Son of man, and yet with inconceivable peculiarity and dignity the Son of God, possessed of the same nature and essential perfections, and undivided in operation with the Father ! He knows, wills, and does all the very same things, and performs them with the same divine power and sovereignty as the Father himself ; and in the execution of his office, as Mediator, he acts like the absolute Lord of life and death, whether natural, spiritual, or eternal, quickens the dead, exercises an universal providence for the good of the Church, examines all causes, and distributes eternal rewards and punishments in such a manner as none but God himself could be capable of : How evidently therefore are all divine honours, in the nature of things, as well as by the Father's own demand, to be paid to his Son equally with himself ! How faithful, as well as able, is Christ to discharge his high and important commission, for the glory of God, and the salvation of all that come to him ! And since his forerunner *John the Baptist*, his own miraculous works, his heavenly Father, and Old Testament-prophecies unite in their attestations to him ; what surer ground can we have for putting our trust in him ? How carefully should we search the scriptures, which contain all things necessary to salvation, and particularly testify of him ! And yet, alas ! how criminally blind and obstinate are sinners hearts, who, though they own the divine authority of the sacred oracles, do not heartily believe

believe and approve of their plainest sense and meaning ; and who, though they sit under a ministry which is like a burning and shining light, are still as dark and cold under it as ever, and only admire it for a season, without being changed by it ! It is unbelief that prevents the efficacy of God's word upon their souls, so that it does not abide in them ; and their great miscarriage lies in their unwillingness to come to Christ for life, and chusing rather to trust in the law, or any thing else, than in him for salvation : And how many other sins doth unbelief include ! what disaffection to God, disregard to his word, prejudices against the Redeemer, and readiness to give credit to any other rather than to him ; and what inordinate love to this world, and preferings of the applauses of men, to the approbation of God and to the honour that comes from him only ! O dreadful accusation, that lies in the inspired writings now, and will be brought in the awful day of account against unbelievers, for this great and complicated sin ! But how happy is it to be enabled, by the quickening Spirit, so to hear and believe, as to pass from death to life, and never come into condemnation ! and how wide and manifest will the difference be between the righteous and the wicked, when all must come forth out of their graves, some to the resurrection of life, and others to the resurrection of damnation : O joyful day to the saint, and terrible day to the sinner !

C H A P. VI.

Christ's feeding five thousand with five loaves and two small fishes, 1,—14. His walking upon the water of the sea, 15,—21. His discourse with the people at Capernaum concerning himself, as the bread of life, occasioned by the miracle of the loaves, 22,—59. His disciples dissatisfaction at this discourse, and his reproof of them for it, 60,—65. The apostacy of many from him, and the adherence of others to him on that occasion, 66,—71.

TEXT.

AFTER these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias.

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

PARAPHRASE.

A GREAT while after * the fore-mentioned miracle, and discourse relating to it, our blessed Lord retired again into *Galilee* by water, making a coasting voyage on the sea of *Galilee*, which is also called the sea of *Tiberias* ; and he landed on the same side of the lake, in a desert place, within the territories of *Bethsaida*. (Luke ix. 10.)

2 And abundance of people, observing which way he steered his course, flocked after him, some out of curiosity to see more of his miracles, and others in hope of getting a cure for themselves, or their diseased friends, rather than from any desire of instruction by his heavenly discourses ; they being generally influenced hereto, by what they had seen of the wonderful cures he had wrought on some distempered persons.

3 And

NOTE.

* As those things passed at the feast mentioned *chap. v. 1.* this must be a great while afterwards, whatever that feast were ; and if, according to the note there, that was the passover, this must be near a year after it ; (*ver. 40.*) And

so our Evangelist passes over the following transactions of that year, which had been recorded by the other Evangelists in *Matth. v—xiv.* and *Mark ii—vi.* and *Luke vi.—ix.* chapters, for the order of which consult the Harmonists.

3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5 When Jesus then lift up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat.

6 (And this he said to prove him : for he himself knew what he would do.)

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley-loaves, and two small fishes : but what are they among so many ?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place.

3 And Jesus, seeing them gather about him, went up with his disciples to a neighbouring mountain ; where, as the *Jewish* doctors used to sit when they preached, he set himself down on the rising ground, to speak to them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that needed healing. (Luke ix. 11.)

4 And as the passover, one of their most solemn feasts, was then near at hand, the multitude was the greater, because the people on that occasion were generally travelling from all parts to *Jerusalem*.

5 When therefore our Lord observed the vast number of people that came after him, and the disciples had desired him to dismiss them, in order to their getting some refreshment, which could not be expected in that desert place, he had compassion upon them, but told his disciples that there was no necessity of sending them away on that account ; (*Mat.* xiv 15, 16.) and then turning to *Philip*, who was an inhabitant of *Bethsaida*, (*chap.* i. 44.) he asked him how, or by what means, provision might be made to suffice so great a company.

6 Jesus put this question to him, not as one at a loss what to do ; for thus he had already determined in himself ; but only for the trial of *Philip's* and the other apostles' faith, about his own miraculously feeding them.

7 But they were so far from having any expectation of this kind, that even *Philip*, who had been with him, and seen his miracles from the beginning, instead of saying, Lord, thou canst easily furnish a table in the wilderness, replied, It will be impracticable for them to be fed here : For it would cost more than we can be supposed to have with us, to buy a sufficient quantity of food, so much as to stay the stomachs of so great a company as this ; two hundred pence would go but a little way toward it. (See the note on *Mark* vi. 37.)

8, 9 Then another of the apostles, *viz.* *Andrew*, the brother of *Simon Peter*, gave Christ an account, that they had only five loaves of barley-bread, and two small fishes in the custody of a youth, who was with them : But alas ! said he, what will these do toward feeding such a vast multitude ? It would be only baulking their expectations to offer a distribution of so small a pittance among them all.

10 However, our Lord designing to work a miracle for their relief, commanded his disciples to order the people to sit down on the ground, it being well covered with grass : Accordingly the disciples, without any further disputing, obeyed the word of command, in hopes of some good event ; and the people, following

place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.*

13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley-loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.

15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king,

following their directions, placed themselves in several ranks, by hundreds and fifties, to the amount of five thousand men. (See the note on *Mark*. vi. 40.)

11 Then our blessed Saviour took bread and fish into his hands, to intimate that he designed to feed the multitude with them; and, having in a solemn manner (as he was wont to do at his meals, setting us an example) acknowledged God as the author of all mercies, and begged his blessing on the food for the nourishment of those that were to partake of it, (see the note on *Matth*. xiv. 19.) he divided the bread and the fish into pieces, and delivered them into the hands of his apostles, who, by his order, distributed them to the several ranks of the people, as they sat on the grass; and the quantity was so exceedingly increased by his miraculous power, that every one eat till he was fully satisfied.

12 And to shew that there was enough and to spare; when none of the company could eat any more, he ordered his disciples to gather together the broken remains of the bread and fish, that there might be no waste of the food, though it cost them nothing, and that they might learn frugality in the midst of plenty, and not squander away the bounties of Providence, in hopes of living upon repeated miracles without necessity.

13 Accordingly, in obedience to his word, they cheerfully set themselves to pick up the scraps of bread and fish, (*Mark* vi. 43.) that remained, after the multitude had eat to the satisfaction of the utmost cravings of their appetites; and the overplus was so great, that it filled twelve baskets, every disciple, having one for after-use, and therein an abiding proof that the increased quantity was real bread and fish. (See the note on *Matth*. xiv. 20.)

14 This was so plain and undeniable a miracle, which the whole multitude saw, and of which they shared the benefit, that it carried a conviction to their minds and consciences of Christ's wonderful power, and even forced them to cry out, He who has thus amazingly fed us, certainly is the true Messiah, who, according to ancient prophecies, they expected would appear in the world about this time, and that, as they thought, for the deliverance of *Israel* from all their enemies round about them.

15 When therefore Jesus observed that, according to their gross and carnal notions about the Messiah, as a temporal prince, they were entering into a confederacy to set him up, and proclaim him for their King, and even to attempt, in a violent manner, to oblige him to take that character upon himself,

king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

16 And when even was ^{now} come, his disciples went down unto the sea.

17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum: and it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

18 And the sea arose, by reason of a great wind that blew.

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship; and they were afraid.

20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the

self, he got out of their way*: For having first ordered his disciples to embark, and go back over the sea of Galilee toward Bethsaida, (*Mark* vi. 45, 46.) lest they should join with the multitude, and encourage them in these temporal views, he went up the mountain again, to spend some time alone in prayer.

16, 17 And it was just about the shutting in of the evening, when the disciples went to the shore, and took boat to pass over the lake toward Capernaum, which lay not far from Bethsaida: After this it soon became dark, and Jesus was not then come to them; but, designing a trial of their faith, he continued still for some time in his retirement on the mountain.

18 In the mean while there was a very great sea, by means of a storm of wind, which beat against them, and blew with such exceeding fury, that there was extreme danger, in all human appearance, of their being utterly lost.

19 In this condition they worked hard with their oars, (*Mark* vi. 48.) till the fourth watch, which was a good while after midnight; (see the note on *Matth.* xiv. 25.) and in all that time they had reached no further than about a league, or a little more, it being by computation about twenty-five or thirty furlongs: And then, in the midst of their distress, they saw Jesus walking upon the surface of the water, as if it had been dry land, and making up toward their vessel, to which he was coming in his great compassion to save them; but as they could not distinctly discern him, through the hurry of their own minds, and for want of more light, they imagined that it was an apparition; which made them cry out for fear, lest some evil spirit were come to finish their destruction.

20 But he soon took pity upon them, and discovered himself to them, saying, with his usual voice, and tenderness toward them, It is I, your Lord and Master, who am here, and not any evil spirit, as ye suppose; do not frighten yourselves as if mischief would befall you; all is safe and well; I am come for your deliverance.

21 Then they, being satisfied that it was Jesus, dismissed their fears, and gladly took him into the boat, in confidence that all their danger was over, and that they should soon reach the shore, now they had

N O T E.

* Their present inducements to this attempt seem to have been, that they thought themselves to be a sufficient number for him to begin with, and thought him capable of maintaining the greatest army, that should list under him, by miracles, without any charges: But he perceiving this withdrew.

the ship was at the land whither they went.

22 The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there save that one whereunto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone ;

23 (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks)

24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum seeking for Jesus.

25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither ?

26 Jesus answered them, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the

had got him with them : And so it proved ; for immediately the storm ceased, (*Matth.* xiv. 32.) and they arrived safe in the vessel to the place they were bound for.

22 The next morning many of the people on the other side of the lake returned ; and, being still intent on setting him up for their king, they diligently searched after him in all the places thereabout ; and, not finding him, wondered what was become of him : For they had observed, that, when the disciples took water in the evening, there was then no other boat besides that in which they went, and that they put off alone, Jesus himself not going along with them.

23 However, they afterwards found several other boats, which came that morning from *Tiberias*, and arrived in the neighbourhood of that place, where, the day before, they had been miraculously fed, the Lord Jesus having first, according to his religious custom, craved a blessing upon the food to sanctify it for their use. (*Ver.* 11.)

24 When the people had sought for Jesus in vain on that side of the lake, and could find neither him nor his disciples there, they suspected that, by some means or other, though they knew not how, he might be gone to *Capernaum*, towards which they saw the disciples steered their course over night, and which was his usual head-quarters. And therefore, being eagerly desirous to see him again, they resolved to go by water in these boats to that city, and see whether they could not meet with him there.

25 And finding him, as soon as they landed on that part of the shore, they were surpris'd to think how he got thither, it being unlikely that, in so short a time, he could take such a large compass as to walk it by land, and there being no other boat the night before, but that in which the disciples went without him : And therefore they said to him, Master, when, or by what possible means, was it, that you got hither so soon before us * ?

26 Our Lord made no reply to their curious question ; but knowing the corrupt design of their hearts in following him, took occasion to divert the discourse to a more suitable and important subject, saying, I, the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, assure you, that I am no stranger to the true reason of your thus earnestly seeking after me : It is not because

X x 2

N O I E.

* It seems by what is said *ver.* 59. that they found him in the synagogue, whither he used to resort wherever he went, and where it was most likely for them to meet with him.

the loaves, and were filled.

27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered them, and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? what dost thou work?

cause ye are so convinced by my miracles, and particularly by that which ye yesterday saw me perform, as to believe in me for eternal life; but it is only because I gave you a full meal to refresh you, without any cost or charge, which raised your carnal expectations of some further temporal advantages from me.

27 Take heed therefore that your chief sollicitude and care, concern and labour, be not thus eagerly laid out to obtain refreshment for your mortal bodies, or any worldly benefits, which are insufficient for your true happiness, and in a little time must perish together with your bodies themselves: But let your governing aims, inquiries, and pains, be for the spiritual food of your immortal souls, and for the blessings that pertain to eternal life, and will make you happy for ever, which I, the Messiah, will freely give to every one of you that believes in me: For this is the great end for which I am come, and for which God my Father has so manifestly authorized me, by his testimony from heaven, by the visible descent of his Spirit upon me, and by concurring with me in the many unquestionable miracles, which I perform to confirm my commission from him.

28 Hereupon the people, some in a way of contempt, and others of more serious inquiry, said to him, Pray, what are we to do to obtain that sort of bread, which you speak of labouring for; or what works can you tell us of, that are more acceptable to God, and necessary to eternal life, than those which he requires of us in the law of *Moses*, and which we think are sufficient to secure the divine favour, and our own everlasting happiness?

29 Jesus in reply said to them, The great and important duty, which I am come to point out to you, and which leads the way to all others, and is necessary to the acceptance of your persons, and of all your obedience, and which therefore God commands, approves, and is the author of, is this, That ye cordially embrace, and yield yourselves up by faith to me, as the true Messiah, according to the discoveries which I am come to make of myself, and of the way of salvation by me.

30 Then the people, being prejudiced against him for not answering their worldly expectations, slighted the many wonders he had wrought at *Capernaum*, as well as the miracle of the loaves, which they admired on the preceding day; and expostulated with him, saying, Since you pretend to teach a better doctrine than *Moses*, and to set up for the Messiah; what divine token do you produce of your authority, equal to that which he gave of his, that we, being eye-

eye-witnesses of it, may be thereby induced to believe you? What extraordinary miracles do you perform to support these high pretences?

31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

31 As for what you did yesterday in feeding five thousand of us, that was a very small matter compared with *Moses's* feeding a much greater number, even all our fathers in the wilderness, with more excellent food, according to what is written; (*Psal.* lxxviii. 24, 25.) *He gave them*, not such mean fare as barley-loaves and fishes, but *manna, the corn of heaven. and they did eat angels food to the full*; and that not for a day only, but for forty years together: Give us therefore some miraculous sign equal to this, if you would have us forsake *Moses* for you.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, *Moses* gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

32 Jesus replied, Since you mention that bread, I, who am Truth itself, assure you, that the *manna*, which was given under the ministrations of *Moses*, and which indeed not he, but God * himself gave unto your fathers, fell not from the highest heavens, but only from the clouds, or the region of the air, to support their mortal lives for a season: But my Father, in sending me, freely gives those of you, who by faith receive me, the most excellent and important bread from the highest heavens, from whence I am come, for the spiritual nourishment of your souls unto everlasting life and blessedness.

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

33 For this, which was typified by the *manna*, is, by way of eminence, that excellent and divine provision, which God himself has made for his family, and which he has sent down † from the heaven of heavens, for the spiritual life of an innumerable multitude of perishing sinners, not merely of the *Jews*, to whose use the *manna* was confined, but of the *Gentiles* also, (see the note on *chap.* iii. 16.) and for nourishing them up to eternal life, which is infinitely preferable to this mortal life.

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

34 The *Jews* not understanding Christ's meaning, but either grossly apprehending that he spoke literally of some extraordinary bread, or at best having only some general and confused notions that he intended something which would supply their worldly wants, and make them exceeding happy, said to him with great

N O T E S.

* We do not find that *Moses* had any concern in procuring the *manna*, or that he so much as prayed for it.

† Ο καταβαινον, *he which comes down*, might in this place be better rendered, *that which comes down from heaven*: For though our Lord certainly meant it

of himself; yet he did not explain his meaning by applying the metaphor of bread particularly to himself, till the people, in the next verse, discovered their mistaken conceit, as if he spoke of some material bread in a literal sense, or at least their ignorance of what he really meant.

great earnestness* and respect, Lord, feed us continually with this bread, which has such wonderful properties; and we shall then readily own that you excel even *Moses* himself.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst.

35 Jesus replied, Ye are much mistaken, If ye think that I spake of any extraordinary bread in a literal sense, or of any temporal happiness whatsoever: I only took occasion from your following me for the loaves, and talking so highly of the *manna* in the wilderness, to represent myself, and the benefits I bestow, under the figure of the most excellent bread; and my plain meaning is, that I am of divine original, and am come down from heaven, in my incarnation, to give spiritual life to dead souls, and to nourish them up in knowledge and grace, comfort and holiness, to eternal life †: So that whoever applies by faith to me, and receives me into his heart, shall never perish for want of necessary and seasonable refreshment to his soul, as a needy man pines and dies with corporal hunger or thirst.

36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

36 But alas! I have already told you, (*ver. 26.*) that though ye have seen me, and the miracles which I perform, and been forced to own them to be wonderful; yet, through the carnality of your hearts, ye are so fond of worldly advantages, that you will not embrace or believe in me, when I speak of myself, as come to bestow all spiritual blessings unto everlasting life.

37 All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

37 However, there are some who will believe and be saved, even all whom the Father ‡ by eternal agreement has given to me, as my charge, my property, and my reward; every one of these shall certainly be inclined and enabled to come by faith unto me: And whoever he be, that, under a sense of his guilt and unworthiness, necessity and danger, shall betake himself to me, and trust in me for all salvation, how many and how aggravated soever his sins have been, and how great soever his discouragements in himself may be, I will on no account whatsoever reject or refuse him; but will readily embrace him, and
shew

N O T E S.

* Some have imagined that they said this in a way of derision, as supposing that what our blessed Lord spoke of was a ridiculous conceit of something which was impossible to be done. But by the respectful way of their addressing him, it seems to me, with others, that they were serious, though very ignorant in this request, and that therefore in the following verses he so clearly explained his meaning in its reference to himself.

37th verse, is the same as believing in him: For the people were already come in a corporal manner to him; and it cannot be said that the blessings here promised shall be given to all that so come to him.

‡ Here it is, *all that the Father giveth me*; and *ver. 39.* it is, *all that he hath given me*: The sense is the same, and may intimate that the Father gave them to Christ by an eternal act, which abides and never shall be revers'd.

† Coming to Christ in this, and the

shew him all the mercy he needs for pardon and peace, sanctification and final salvation.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

38 For I did not come from heaven into this lower world at uncertainties, or to carry on any private design of my own, separately from my Father: But the very business, on which I am come, is punctually to execute his will, who hath sent me to act the part of a Saviour.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

39 And it is the resolution and good pleasure of my Father who sent me, that of all the numberless persons, whom he has entrusted to my care, I should neither neglect, nor be deprived of any one of them, nor lose any part of them; but should recover them from all the ruins of their apostacy, and raise them to a glorious immortality, at the consummation of all things, that they may be completely happy in soul and body for ever.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

40 And as this is the secret purpose and delight of my Father who sent me; so it is his revealed will, which I am come to publish, that all who, being convinced of their need of me, and of my sufficiency for their help, look by faith to me, and depend upon me, as the true Messiah, for a whole salvation, shall be made partakers of eternal life: And I will certainly accomplish his will and word, by the working of my mighty power, in raising up their mortal bodies from the grave, and in putting their whole persons in full possession of endless glory and blessedness at the last day.

41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

41 The Jews now plainly perceiving from this explication, that by the bread, which came down from heaven, Christ meant himself, and his spiritual benefits, found themselves utterly disappointed in their worldly expectations from him; and, having no relish for spiritual blessings, they were disgusted and cavilled at him, under pretence that he assumed an extravagant honour to himself, by asserting that he came down from the highest heavens, which could be said of no mere man whatsoever.

42 And they said, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

42 And to support their prejudices, they, taking for granted that he was begotten and conceived like other men, said one to another by way of scorn and contempt, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, a poor carpenter? and are not we ourselves acquainted with both his father and mother, who have nothing extraordinary in them? How then can he have the face to pretend to us, who so well know his original on earth, that he descended from heaven?

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur

43 Jesus therefore, knowing their perverse misrepresentations and arguings among themselves, answered saying, All this is groundless cavil, which ye unrighteously

Murmur not among yourselves.

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on

righteously stir up in one anothers minds, and turn into a prejudice against me, as if, because my reputed father, and my real mother, according to the flesh, are known to be mean persons on earth, it were impossible that I should have an higher original from heaven.

44 The true reason of your unbelief and murmurings on this head, lies in the corruption of your own hearts, which despises and opposes spiritual things, and which nothing but a divine power can subdue; and, as I said before, that all whom *the Father giveth me shall come to me*: (ver. 37.) So I now further tell you plainly, that no man whatsoever, in his present state of degeneracy, is able to divest himself of the natural blindness, enmity, and carnality of his heart, and savingly to believe in me, unless my heavenly Father, who has sent me, persuade and enable him by his Spirit, to depend upon me for salvation, in that way which I am come to reveal: And I will take effectual care of every one that is thus brought to believe in me; and, at the end of time, will certainly raise up his mortal body to immortal life and blessedness.

45 And what I am saying is, in effect, the same that was foretold in the writings of the prophets, relating to the gospel-church, where it is said, (*Isa. liv. 13.*) *All thy children shall be taught of the Lord,* and (*Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.*) *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord.* This makes it evident, that all *Sion's* children, or those who are given to me of the Father, must be drawn by his efficacious illumination and influences, in order to their coming to me; and that every one, who not only hears and is taught his will concerning me, by the ministry of the word, but is likewise under these internal drawings, will certainly believe in me.

46 But do not mistake me, as if I would intimate that any man hath seen, or can see the Father himself, or is to expect an immediate teaching from his own person: This can be said of none but the only begotten Son, who is partaker of the divine nature: (see the note on *chap. i. 18.*) He indeed has a most intimate and perfect acquaintance with the Father himself, and, as lying in his bosom, knows his mind and will immediately from himself; and it is by the Son and Spirit that the Father teaches others.

47 And, as he now speaks by me, I, who am Truth itself, solemnly assure you, that whoever, as a lost and perishing sinner, believes in me, as the only

on me hath everlasting life.

48 I am that bread of life.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

ly Saviour, is partaker of a life, which in its nature is everlasting; he has already the principle, beginnings, and earnest of eternal life, and has such a sure title to it, that he shall, in due time, as certainly enjoy it in all its perfection, as if he were already in full possession of it.

48 I therefore plainly tell you again, that I myself, in my office-character and benefits, am that true, living, and life-giving bread, which I have been speaking of; all the springs of spiritual life are in me, and it is by virtue derived from me, that believers are made alive to God in this world, and continue so, till they obtain everlasting life in the world to come.

49 As for the *manna* in the wilderness, which, ye so highly magnified, what is that, when compared with this living bread? your ancestors were indeed miraculously fed by it in a barren wilderness; but what is become of them all? they are long since dead like other men: It could not keep them always alive upon earth; nor was there any virtue in it to give them life in another world: Nay, notwithstanding their eating of it, many of them died, for their murmurings and unbelief, by an immediate stroke of God's wrath; and few of them lived to enjoy the promised land.

50 But, on the contrary, the living bread, which I declare myself to be, and which I have told you came down from the highest heaven itself, is of such a divine and excellent nature, that whoever does what, in the language of metaphor, may be called feeding upon it, shall escape the wrath of God, and never die the second death.

51 I am come down from heaven to be all that, which I have been discoursing of under the notion of living bread: And as the body is nourished by the food that is eaten; so whoever, with a spiritual appetite, receives me into his heart by faith, his soul shall live in the best sense, and never die; and his body, though it die, shall be raised again to eternal life: And still more particularly to inform you of what it is in me and my performances, that has this immortal virtue to a believer, I tell you it is my own body, or human nature, which I, in a way of special operation, have assumed into personal union with my divine nature, and which I will freely give up unto the worst of deaths, for the redemption of those, who have deserved, and exposed themselves to it, that I may bring spiritual and eternal life to sinners of this lost world, including *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*. (See the note on *chap.* iii. 16.)

52 The Jews therefore strove amongst themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

52 Though this way of Christ's expressing the benefits of his incarnation and death was evidently figurative, according to the usual and well-known stile of the eastern nations; and though what the Jews had suggested about the *manna* naturally gave a fit occasion for this manner of representing them; yet they perversely disputed, with great heat among themselves, against it, still taking his words in a literal sense, and saying, by way of cavil and scorn, How is it possible that this man's flesh should be eaten like bread; or that he should give it for us to feed upon it? This is monstrously ridiculous and absurd; and would be unnatural and savage to the last degree.

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

53 Then our blessed Lord, knowing what a stupid and carnal turn they wilfully gave to his words, replied, What I have said is so far from being ridiculous and absurd, according to my declared meaning in it, that I, the faithful and true Witness, solemnly assure you, unless in a moral and spiritual sense ye do that, which may be figuratively called eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of the incarnate and dying Redeemer, and unless ye be united to him by faith, and made partakers of the virtue of his atoning death for the remission of sins, and the refreshment of your souls, ye have no principle of spiritual life in you, nor any right or claim to eternal life, nor shall ye ever enjoy it.

54 Who so eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

54 But, on the contrary, whoever by faith receives me, who am come to redeem lost sinners by my sufferings in the flesh, and by shedding my blood, has already the principle and earnest of, and a sure title to eternal life; and I will certainly bring him, soul and body, to the full possession of it, at the consummation of all things.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

55 For my body, which shall be broken, and my blood, which shall be shed for the remission of sins, have such virtue to procure reconciliation and acceptance with God, together with sanctification and comfort here, and eternal salvation hereafter, that whoever by faith applies them to himself, and has communion with me therein, shall find them to be the best of food and drink for the refreshment of his soul, in a much more sublime, effectual, and eminent sense, than his eating and drinking any corporal repasts can be for the refreshment of his mortal body.

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

56 This may be illustrated in the following manner: As by eating and drinking material provisions, they are digested, incorporated, and become one with the body, for the support and comfort of its present frail life: So he who by faith receives me, together with

with the benefits of my death, into his heart, is thereby united with me, as a member of my mystical body; I dwell in him by my Spirit, and he dwells in me by faith, for all the purposes of maintaining and nourishing his spiritual life, till it shall reach its utmost perfection in heaven.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

57 So that as the Father, who has life in himself, has given me commission, and I thereupon, in my mediatorial character, have life * from him for the execution of my office: In like manner I, who have also life in myself, will communicate spiritual life to those who by faith receive me, that they may live with me for ever.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread, shall live for ever.

58 This therefore, upon the whole, is my meaning; I myself, in these considerations of me, am that true and living bread, which had its original in heaven, and descended from thence, and with which the *manna* in the wilderness is no more worthy to be compared, in point of excellence, than a type and shadow is with its antitype and substance: For when your ancestors eat of that bread, their mortal lives only were sustained by it for a while, they being all long since dead; but every one who receives me by faith, shall have an immortal life, which being begun in grace, shall be maintained and cherished, till it be perfected in eternal glory †.

59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

59 These things were delivered, not to a select company in private, but, according to Christ's usual custom, publicly in the synagogue, before all sorts of hearers at *Capernaum*, after he returned thither from

Y Y 2
N O T E S.

* Christ's *living by the Father* seems to relate to his life as man and mediator; because it is here spoken of as the consequence of his Father's sending him; and a believer's living by him is represented as bearing an analogy to his living by the Father.

† It appears from the whole of this discourse, that the eating, here spoken of, cannot relate to a sacramental, much less to a corporal and carnal eating and drinking the real body and blood of Christ, according to the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation: For these things were said a considerable time (a year at least) before the Lord's supper was instituted, and were then spoken of in the present tense, as necessary to eternal life. But as it is shocking to suppose that all, who died between this time and the institution of that ordinance, were lost for ever; so it is an unreasonable and pernicious stretch of charity to suppose that all, in every succeeding age, who eat and drank ex-

ternally of the Lord's supper, are certainly saved. Besides, the *Papist* doctrine, founded on this discourse, is very barbarous to the laity, whilst it denies them the cup, which it calls the real blood of Christ; for *drinking his blood* is here represented to be as necessary to eternal life, as *eating his flesh*. But to understand this in a proper and literal sense, is to put as gross a construction upon Christ's words, as the carnal *Jews* themselves did, when they said, (*ver. 52.*) *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* And our blessed Lord himself all along shews, that his discourse is to be taken in a spiritual sense, and that eating and drinking, in this case, are of the same import with *coming to him, or believing in him*, (*ver. 35.*) Accordingly he tells us, (*ver. 63.*) that to understand his words literally, profiteth nothing; but that all their advantage proceeds from the *spirit and life* that attend them, and are signified by them, or are communicated by their means.

the wilderness, where he had miraculously fed the multitude, that followed him to this city, because *they had eat of the loaves, and were filled.* (Ver. 26.)

60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying, who can hear it?

60 Now as he had a great number of disciples at large, who often attended his ministry, and made a profession of his name; so many of them, whose hearts were not right with him, were highly offended at what he had said about his being the bread that came down from heaven, and about the necessity of eating him, in order to their living by him: They that still took these things in a literal sense, thought it a monstrous and savage doctrine; they that took them in a figurative sense, as Christ explained them, thought that he blasphemously assumed to himself a divine original and operation; and they that knew not what construction to put upon his words, thought there was something so mysterious in them, that no man in his wits could receive them; and so they heavily complained, one to another, that he preached such doctrine, as was not fit for any man to believe, or even to hear.

61 When Jesus knew in himself, that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

62 *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

61, 62 When Jesus, by his own divine omniscience, knew what secret whispering and disturbance his words had occasioned among them; he said, Does this stumble you, and hinder your embracing me? there is no just cause of your being offended at it: For, as to your prejudice against what I said about my coming down from heaven, suppose some of you should see me, the Messiah in human nature, ascend locally into that holy place, where I had an existence before my incarnation; would not this be as strange and unlikely a thing as my coming down from thence? And yet this, in a little time, some here present shall be eye-witnesses of: Why then should ye be so incensed against me, for saying what is full as probable, and easy to be done as this, which will also be a confirmation of that?

63 It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

63 And as to your other prejudice against what I said about eating my flesh, and living by me, that is to be understood only in a spiritual and not in a carnal sense: For as in nature, only the soul and animal spirits quicken the body; so in grace, it is only the operation of the Spirit of God, that quickens souls to a spiritual and eternal life; and eating my flesh, in the gross and literal sense, were it practicable and proper, would be of no manner of advantage for the life of souls: The words therefore, that I have been speaking, relate to spiritual things, and are the means of conveying the Holy Spirit, whose influence, as the fruit of my death and ascension to heaven, is effectual unto spiritual and eternal life.

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning, who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

64 But I know that some of you, who profess to be my disciples, do not heartily believe in me, and therefore are ready to cavil at my doctrine, and put the most absurd and perverse construction on my words. And Jesus might well say this; for he perfectly knew all along, from the very first of their pretences to own and follow him, whose hearts were not right with him, and which of the twelve apostles themselves would not only prove to be insincere, but would likewise basely betray him.

65 And, said he, because I knew that there were false-hearted pretenders among you, therefore, for your conviction and caution, and for distinguishing real from nominal believers, I told you before, (*ver.* 44.) that no man can savingly believe in me, unless my Father efficaciously draw him by his Spirit, and thereby give him strength and grace to enable him to come to me, in a spiritual manner, for everlasting life.

66 Upon Christ's repeating what he had said before about the absolute necessity of divine grace, and that with such a close application to them, who had professed discipleship to him, many of them were stung and offended at it, that they immediately revolted from him to the world, to their pharisaical teachers, and to their own sinful and self-deceiving ways; and never more returned to attend on his ministry, nor ever made any further profession of him.

67 On occasion of this great apostacy among them, our Lord, for the trial of the twelve apostles faith, and to give them a proper opportunity of professing it, said, in an affectionate and moving manner to them, See how many have forsaken me! will ye also follow their example? Tell me what are the thoughts and purposes of your hearts about this matter?

68 Then *Simon Peter* replied, in the name of the rest, as in charity believing that they were of the same mind with himself, Lord, whatsoever others do, we dare not think of leaving thee: For to whom should, or can we go, with safety and advantage, but to thee? Shall we go to the world? that can never be a satisfying portion to us: Shall we go to the service of sin? that will certainly ruin us: Shall we go to the *scribes* and *Pharisees*? they will mislead and deceive us: Shall we go to any schemes of our own, or others framing for happiness? they will surely disappoint us: Shall we go to *Moses*, and trust in the righteousness of the law? he could not help us, but would send us back to thee: Or shall we go to *John the Baptist*? he turned us over to thee: 'Tis thou, and

and thou only, that teachest the true doctrine of eternal life, and art able and willing to give us life, as thou thyself hast told us in this discourse; we therefore are determined to cleave to thee.

69 And we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

69 And from what we have already seen of thee, and heard, and learnt, and felt from thee, we firmly believe, and are fully satisfied, that thou art the true bread of life, even that promised Messiah, whom we expected, and that eternal Son of the only living and * true God, who, as a divine person, camest down from heaven.

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

70 Hereupon our blessed Lord, to caution them against self-confidence on account of this noble confession of him, and against being stumbled, when afterwards one of their own number should prove a traitor to him, replied, Do not ye know that I, the Son of God, have separated and called you, my twelve apostles, to bear witness to the truth of what ye have now confessed concerning me? And yet even one of you is still under the power of Satan, and will act his part in treacherously delivering me into the hands of mine enemies.

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

71 He hereby particularly meant *Judas Iscariot*, who was the son of one *Simon*, though he did not then think proper to mention him by name: For he certainly knew that this wretch, being one of the twelve apostles, would, through the instigation of the devil, abuse his familiar acquaintance with his Lord, by turning it into a means of betraying him.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

What a wonderful and divine Saviour is our blessed Lord, whom God the Father has sealed! He is the eternal Son of the living God, who came originally from heaven, and having died in human nature upon earth, is gone back to heaven, and lives there for ever. He searches the secrets of our hearts, and knows the most private murmurings and transactions of our souls: His almighty power can multiply our store for the body here, and raise it up to an immortal life hereafter; and he, who, like the great God of the universe, trode upon the waves of the sea, and turned the storm into a calm, can easily quiet a troubled soul, saying, It is I, be not afraid.—Of how much greater importance is it, that we be partakers of spiritual blessings to eternal life, which Christ, as mediator, has all authority to bestow, and will give to them that come by faith to him, than that we enjoy the best of perishing things, pertaining to these mortal bodies! And yet, alas! how much more pains will men take for the meat that perishes, than for that which endures to everlasting life! And how backward are they to seek this better food, by that faith, which God requires, and graciously works in all that obtain it! What excellent and living bread is a crucified Jesus to miserable souls! He, by his flesh and blood, has purchased the best of life for them, and by his word and Spirit speaks it to them, and feeds, comforts, and nourishes them to eternal life. Who, that knows any thing

N O T E.

* God is here stiled the *living God*, not to distinguish the nature of the Father from that of the Son, but the nature of the true God from that of all false gods; and Christ is called, by way of pe-

culiar eminence and propriety, the Son of this living God, to intimate that he, as the Son, partakes of the same divine life and perfections with his Father.

of his own wants, and of Christ's worth, would not say, Lord, evermore give us of this bread? How should we hunger and thirst after him, as perishing creatures, that need his salvation; and with what readiness should we receive him by faith, with application to ourselves, that we may live by him! And O what rich encouragement have the worst of sinners to believe in him, who is the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, and has given the strongest assurances, that he will in no wise cast out any that come to him; but will give them the beginnings, earnestness, foretastes, and securities of eternal life, will take care of them, and all their concerns, and raise up their mortal bodies to a glorious immortality, equal to that of their souls, according to the will of his heavenly Father! How unreasonable and perverse then are the prejudices and murmurings that sinners harbour in their hearts against him! 'Tis because they entertain wrong and unworthy thoughts of his person and offices, wisdom, power, and grace, and of the way of salvation by him, and prefer earthly and carnal, to spiritual and heavenly things: O how necessary are God's special drawings, by the internal light and influence of his Spirit, as well as by his word, to enable us to believe in Jesus to the saving of our souls! We shall understand spiritual things in a carnal manner, and never get over the natural enmity of our minds and hearts against them, unless we hear and learn of the Father to come to Christ. But how many soever reject him through wilful unbelief, some shall be brought to saving faith in him: His Father's gift of them to him shall never be revoked; his precious blood shed for them shall not be spilt in vain; his own and his Father's heart are unitedly engaged to secure their happiness; they shall be taught of God, and come to his Son; and none of them shall be lost, but he will raise them up at the last day. Wherever else we seek for salvation, we shall certainly fall short of it; and who knows what degrees of treachery and wickedness they may be suffered to go into, who once begin to forsake him? But the apostacy of others should be so far from stumbling us, that it should make us cleave the faster unto him; and when he says to us, Will ye go away also? we should say to him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

C H A P. VII.

Christ refuses to go with his kindred to Jerusalem, 1,—9. Goes privately afterwards, 10,—13. Preaches in the temple, and discourses with the Jews, in the midst of the feast of tabernacles, about his doctrine, 14,—18. About their charge of his breaking the Sabbath, and going about to kill him on that account, 19,—24. And about himself, 25,—36. His gracious invitation to sinners, on the last day of the feast, 37,—39. The different reception he met with, 40,—44. And the angry debates of the Pharisees about the officers, not apprehending him, 45,—53.

TEXT.

AFTER these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

2 Now the Jews feast

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the things mentioned in the foregoing discourse, our Lord stayed a considerable time in *Galilee*, and travelled about from place to place, preaching the gospel, and doing good: For, the season appointed of the Father for his death not being yet come, he thought it imprudent to appear, as he was wont, in *Judea*, because the Jews there were grown so inveterate against him, that they resolved to take him off, as soon as possible, either by popular fury, or by form of law.

2, 3 But, after a while, the Jewish feast of tabernacles drew near, which was instituted, and continued

feast of tabernacles was at hand.

3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

4 For there is no man that doth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly: if thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.

5 For neither did his brethren believe in him.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

ed to be observed, as a memorial of *Israel's* dwelling in tents in the wilderness, and was one of the three great feasts, at which all the males were obliged, by God's command, to appear before him at *Jerusalem*: (Deut. xvi. 16.) Christ's near kinsmen therefore, (see the note on *Matth. xii. 46.*) observing that he delayed going to that solemnity, put him upon it, saying, Now is your opportunity to make a figure in the world; stay no longer in this poor, obscure country, but go to the more populous towns and cities of *Judea*, and hasten away to the great metropolis, that by your preaching and wonderful works, you may make converts of men of reputation and learning there, and may encourage all your disciples, who at this time are repairing from every part of the nation thither, and will be ready at hand to favour any designs that you may set on foot.

4 For no man, who understands his own interests, is so imprudent, as to do things in a private corner of the country, while, like you, he aims at gaining a public reputation by them. If therefore you are able to do any extraordinary works, to establish your authority, as you profess to do here in *Galilee*, your wisest way is to perform them in the most famous places, and on the most public occasions, that men of note and sense, as well as the populace, may see and examine them, and be convinced by them.

5 But how plausible and innocent soever this advice of his relations might appear, it proceeded from mean and unworthy thoughts of him: For they did not believe him to be the true Messiah, but suspected that he only aimed at the applause of men, and at setting up for the head and ringleader of a party; and therefore they urged him in this manner to go to *Jerusalem*, that he might be detected by men of greater penetration than themselves.

6 Jesus (*οὐκ*) therefore answered them, Ye are much mistaken in your thoughts about me and my designs: As I know that many in *Jerusalem* are contriving to take away my life, before the time is come for me to resign it*. 'Tis not proper that I should appear openly there at the beginning of the feast, and thereby needlessly give them an opportunity of concerting measures for my destruction: But it is otherwise with you: Ye have nothing to fear from their persecutions,

N O T E.

* Some have thought that this might likewise be meant of its not being his time yet for leaving *Galilee*, because of some further work, which he had first to do there: But what is added in the next

verse about the world's hating him, as the reason of his not going to *Jerusalem* just then, seems to favour the other interpretation rather than this.

7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast, for my time is not yet full come.

9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode *still* in Galilee.

10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

persecutions, and therefore may go without any danger to yourselves, whenever ye please.

7 The men of this world have no reason to be enemies to you, who are like themselves in their principles, temper, and designs, and never care to say any thing to offend them: But they have the greatest aversion to me, and seek my ruin, because I freely and faithfully tell them their own, and oppose and condemn their beloved lusts and sinful ways, for their reformation.

8 Repair ye therefore to *Jerusalem* as soon as ye will, that ye may be there at the beginning of the feast: I shall not keep you company, nor indeed go yet a while; for I must wait a little longer before it will be prudent for me to be seen there.

9 By this answer he sent them to attend divine ordinances, though they were persons of a carnal unbelieving heart; but, as they did not like his presence among them, he would not honour them with it: And, having thus dismissed them, he, keeping to his resolution, still continued some days in *Galilee*.

10 But soon after those relations, according to the flesh, had set out on their journey, he likewise went after them, to celebrate the feast of tabernacles, that he might honour the institutions of God, and fulfil all righteousness. But he went very privately, to prevent noise and tumult, and all appearance of vain-gloriousness, as also to avoid giving umbrage to the government, and to escape the hands of such wicked men as might lie in wait to murder him.

11 In the mean while, the *Jews* expecting him at the feast, and finding that he did not come with his kindred, there was great inquiry after him, they all wondering what was become of him, or where he had hid himself; some being desirous to hear his excellent discourses, and see his wonderful works, whilst others were watching for an opportunity to get him into their power, that they might put him to death.

12 And this occasioned an universal talk, and warm debates about him; some insisted that he certainly was at least an honest, worthy, and useful man, whose doctrine was heavenly, whose life was holy, and whose miracles were all merciful and engaging; and they murmured at the chief priests, *scribes*, and *Pharisees*, for reviling and opposing him: And others, on the contrary, cried out against him, as an impostor, who deluded the people, asserted himself to be equal with God, and profaned the Sabbath by working his cures on that day; (*chap. v. 18.*)

and they murmured at his friends, for taking his part, and shewing him any countenance.

13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him, for fear of the Jews.

13 However, as the run of the chief men was cruelly against him, none, that had a good opinion of him, durst venture to speak their minds freely and publicly in his favour, lest they should provoke the rulers of the Jews, to take them up, and persecute them for his sake.

14 Now about the middle of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

14 Now though, for wise reasons, (*ver.* 6, 7.) Christ did not think fit to appear openly at the beginning of the feast; yet about the third or fourth day of that solemnity, which lasted seven days, (*Lev.* xxiii. 34.) he, to shew that he was not afraid of his enemies, went boldly to the temple, when he was little expected, and preached to the people in full assembly, they being then more at leisure to hear him, having, according to custom, spent some days in their booths.

15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

15 And his discourse was with such scriptural evidence, with such profound judgment, and with such gravity and authority, that his hearers stood amazed at it; and some of them said, in a way of high approbation and applause, and others in a way of detraction and contempt, as if he got his knowledge by some evil art, How is this man able to talk at such an uncommon rate about the things of God, and the holy scriptures*, since he never went abroad for learning, nor was educated by any of our famous rabbies in the schools of the prophets at home?

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

16 Jesus perceiving their astonishment, and what an invidious turn some of them gave to his manner of preaching, replied, for the establishment of his friends, and confutation of his enemies, I did not learn the doctrine, which I teach, by any human assistances, nor is it a private invention of my own head †; but it is originally from God my Father, who communicated it to me, as the Messiah, by his Spirit, with which he anointed me above measure, and who sent me to publish it to the world, not for gaining applause to myself, but for the advancement of his honour and glory.

17 Whether

N O T E S.

* Γραμματα the word here translated letters, seems to signify the scriptures, in which Moses (εγραψεν) wrote of Christ. *Chap.* v. 46.

† Though, considering Christ as God, his doctrine was his own as well as his Father's; yet, he here evidently speaking of himself as man and the Messiah, his doctrine, under that consideration of him, was not his own, but his Father's

that sent him: And it became him, in his state of humiliation, and under the character of a prophet, to speak of it in this light, according to what God had said unto Moses concerning him, (*Deut.* xviii. 18.) *I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him.*

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

17 Whether ye will believe this or not, yet whoever is heartily desirous to lay aside his prejudices, and to go into humble, serious, and impartial inquiries into the will of God, by meditation, reading, hearing, and prayer, that he may learn and practise it, he shall find enough in the nature and tendency of my doctrine to recommend it; he shall experience such powerful, sweet, and holy effects of it, and such further assistances of the Spirit, as will enable him to judge, with entire satisfaction to himself, whether it really be a divine revelation, as I aver; or whether it be the private sentiment and contrivance of an impostor, as my enemies suggest.

18 He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

18 Such an one will readily think thus with himself: An impostor, who forms his own schemes, and vents his own imaginations to deceive the people, will, contrary to the method that I have taken, calculate his doctrines, and pursue measures to raise his own reputation and interest in the world, and to suit the corrupt principles and taste of men, that they may fall in with him, and set him up for their head and leader: But, on the other hand, he who, like me, is wholly intent upon the glory of God, from whom he professes to be sent, and preaches such doctrine, and lives at such a rate, as evidently tend to humble and reform mankind, to oppose their selfish, worldly spirit, to correct their errors, to root out their corruptions, and to turn them from all iniquity to God, that they may serve and glorify him; this person cannot possibly be a cheat; he is faithful to God, and to the souls of men; and it is plain that he is truly what he professes to be, and that there is no falsehood in his doctrine, or fraud in his management: Thus ye would judge concerning me, were ye really willing to know and do the will of God.

19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

19 But ye are so far from this, and such is the contrariety of your hearts to God, that though ye profess a mighty zeal for the law of *Moses*, as delivered to you by divine authority; yet all ranks and orders among you are shameful transgressors even of this law: Otherwise, why, in direct contradiction to one of its express and unalterable precepts, do ye seek to murder me?

20 The people answered and said, Thou

20 The common people*, especially those that came from the country to the feast, knowing nothing of

N O T E.

* The *people* here seem to be different from those, that are afterwards said to be of *Jerusalem*, (ver. 25.) and knew something of the designs of the *scribes* and *Pharisees* against Christ. But if it

were otherwise, their wickedness is further aggravated by joining known falsehood to their blasphemous reflection on him.

Thou hast a devil : who goeth about to kill thee ?

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision, (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers,) and ye on the Sabbath-day circumcise a man.

23 If a man on the Sabbath-day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken ; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath-day ?

24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

of the plot against him, and being under the influence of their rulers, cried out in a great rage, You talk like a mad-man, or one possessed of the devil : Who intends or attempts to murder you ? we cannot think that any have formed such desperate designs against your life.

21 Our Lord, thereupon, referred them to the transactions of the last passover, (*chap. v. 8,—16.*) saying, I sometime ago wrought a miraculous work of mercy, in curing a poor cripple, with only speaking a word, which ye could not but admire ; and yet ye were all amazed at my doing it on the Sabbath-day, and some of you sought to kill me on that account, as if I had thereby broken the law of *Moses*. But how unreasonable your charge on this head was, ye may easily judge from what is commonly practised, without any scruple, among yourselves.

22 To * this purpose observe, *Moses* delivered to you the ordinance of circumcision, or rather, by the command of God, continued to enjoin it upon you ; for it was not first instituted under *Moses*, but was originally a privilege which God appointed to be the token of his gracious covenant with *Abraham*, and his seed long before ; (*Gen. xvii. 10, 11.*) and according to this institution, if the eighth day from the birth of a male, prove to be the Sabbath, ye count it lawful to do every thing that is necessary for circumcising him then.

23 Now, if in obedience to a ceremonial appointment, which was grafted into the law of *Moses*, ye circumcise a child, and use the means that are proper for healing the wound thereby made upon him, and all agree, that the law of the Sabbath is not thereby broken, how unreasonable and perverse is it, that ye should be enraged with bitterness against me, (*εμοι χολασι*) for only speaking a word, and thereby not barely curing a slight wound, but restoring a poor miserable creature, who was all over diseased, to perfect health on the Sabbath-day ?

24 Take heed therefore of partiality in judging (*κατ' οψιν*) with respect of persons ; do not indulge your prejudices against me, on account of my low and mean appearance, nor in favour of your chief priests and rulers, on account of their specious pretences, and of the authority which they have gained over you ; and

N O T E.

* *Δια τουτο*, the words here rendered *therefore*, signify *for this cause*, which, as some have conjectured, might be joined to the last verse thus, *παντες θαυμασιε δια τουτο*, ye all wonder at me *for this*,

i. e. for doing this work on the Sabbath-day : But taking it as the beginning of this verse, it may be rendered *to this purpose*, as in the paraphrase.

and do not rashly censure what I have done, by giving an invidious turn, to a bare outward resemblance of breaking in upon sabbatical rest: But carefully examine, and compare things together, that ye may judge according to truth and equity; and if ye will but attend to the real merits of the cause, ye never can condemn me as a Sabbath-breaker, in any consistency with your own practice.

25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill?

26 But lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him: do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

27 Howbeit, we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple, as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

29 But I know him, for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

25, 26 Then some of the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, who were not entire strangers to the malicious consultations of the *scribes* and *Pharisees* against Christ, hearing him talk with such undaunted courage, said one to another, Is not this the man, whom they have been inquiring after, that they might put him to death? Strange, that they do not immediately seize him! But, instead of that, see how publicly he appears, and what liberty he takes in his discourse! and yet nobody molests him, or offers either to answer him, or to put the least check upon him. What, are our rulers at last convinced, that he is indeed the true Messiah, and therefore let him alone, and so tamely suffer him to run them down?

27 However, we can never be of that mind; for we know the parentage and relations of this man, the place where he was born, and what his education has been, which are all mean and contemptible: But we are assured from scripture concerning the Messiah, that when he appears, it will be as one, who, like *Melchizedek*, is without descent, whose goings forth, have been from everlasting, and whose generation no man can declare*.

28 Then our blessed Lord, knowing what they perversely objected against him, raised his voice in the temple; and speaking with great earnestness and zeal for his Father's glory, said, Ye indeed know my earthly parentage, and that I am sprung up from among yourselves; and yet my office, as well as original, is much higher than ye apprehend: I have not taken this honour to myself; but my Father, who is faithful and true to all his promises of and to the Messiah, has sent me; of him ye are grossly ignorant, and therefore will not receive me.

29 But I am intimately acquainted with him, and have a perfect knowledge of his mind and will; nor can it be otherwise: For I am from him by a peculiar and eternal generation, and am come, as the Messiah,

N O T E.

* All this was true with respect to Christ's divine nature, and office-authority; but not with respect to his human nature, the scripture having plainly fore-

told his tribe and family, and the place of his birth; and therefore these *Jews* reasoned fallaciously upon this head. See the note on *chap. ix. 29.*

lish, immediately from him, who has sent me with authority to reveal the way of salvation.

30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

30 Upon Christ's so plainly asserting his divine authority, some of the company, and especially the rulers, were incensed to such a degree against him, that they were exceeding desirous to seize and make away with him: But their spirits were surprisngly overruled, to prevent their meddling with him, or doing him any harm for the present, because the time appointed for his sufferings and death was not yet come.

31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

31 And one great means of restraining them was, that many of the common people believed on him, and said, for the confirming of each other's faith, and condemning those that opposed him, Surely this must needs be the Messiah; for it could not be expected, whenever he should come, that he would perform more wonderful works than this person has, to bear witness to him.

32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him: and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

32 When this sort of discourse among the people in his favour, and in displeasure against his enemies, came to the ears of the *Pharisees*, it prodigiously nettled them, they fearing lest his credit and authority should rise in the esteem of the populace, to the utter sinking of their own: And therefore they and the chief priests consulting together, and resolving to take as speedy a course as possible to put a stop to him, dispatched some of their public officers, with a strict charge to take the first opportunity they could get with safety, for apprehending and bringing him before them, when assembled together in council.

33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.

33 In the mean time, Jesus, knowing what orders had been giving to the officers, said to the multitude, and to them at their arrival, I must yet for a little while continue preaching and working miracles among you; and all the malicious designs and attempts of mine enemies, which I am fully apprized of, cannot prevent it: But the time that my Father has further appointed for me on earth is very short, and as soon as that is expired, I shall readily return to him, who sent me hither.

34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.

34 After this, ye will earnestly wish, but, alas! too late, that the Messiah would appear among you, which is, in effect, wishing for me, who am he; ye will seek my favour in vain, when, at the last extremity, your calamities in this world and the next are coming upon you: For ye shall not find me to your comfort; nor can ye ever follow me to that blessed place, where I am*, either to enjoy me, or to persecute me again.

35 The

N O T E.

* Christ's so frequently saying, whilst on earth, *where I am*, when he spoke of

35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

36 What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

35 The carnal Jews not understanding our Lord's meaning, who herein spake of his death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, seemed to be in great surprize,^o saying one to another, Whither does this man pretend to retire, that we shall not be able to find him, or get at him? What, will he stroll among the Jews that are dispersed through heathen countries, to see what he can do with them, now he is disappointed here? or will he turn preacher to the poor sorry Gentiles themselves, that are spread all over the world, upon finding himself rejected among the Jews?

36 What can he mean by saying, That we shall seek him, and want to find him, but shall not be able; and that he will get somewhere or other out of our reach, so that we cannot possibly follow him thither? surely we can go any where, as well as he.

37 The officers not having executed their commission from the chief priests and Pharisees, (ver. 32.) our Lord went on unmolested; and on the eighth day, which was the last day of the feast of tabernacles, and a high day*, he stood up and preached to many, that had disregarded all his former discourses, and might never hear him again: And in allusion to their custom of drawing water, and praying for rain on that day, he said to them with great fervour of spirit, and elevation of voice, If there be any among you that is destitute, and really desirous of true happiness, like one, who, feeling the pain of thirst, longs for drink, let him come by faith unto me as the only Saviour, that he may be refreshed and satisfied.

38 Whoever, under a sense of his own indigence, and incapacity to get relief any where else, shall believe in me as the Christ of God, for all salvation, let his distress and unworthiness be ever so great, he shall have such an abundant, increasing, and continued supply of blessings from me, as shall be like a fountain of water, ever springing up in his heart, and flowing out in plentiful streams of righteousness, for his own comfort and others good, according to what the scripture has said about rivers in the desert, and dry land becoming springs of water, and about God's people being like a spring, whose waters fail not. (Isa. xli. 18. and xliii. 19. and lviii. 11.)

39 And

N O T E S.

of his being in heaven, intimates his perpetual presence there in his divine nature, though his going thither was a future thing, with respect to his human nature.

* On this day there was the greatest concourse of people, and they were then wont to fetch water from the pool of

Siloam, part of which they used for drink-offerings, and the rest they drank themselves with joyful acclamations, in remembrance of God's miraculously giving water out of the rock to their fathers, when they dwelt in booths in the wilderness; and on this day they offered up solemn prayers for seasonable rains.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

40 Many of the people therefore when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the prophet.

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

39 And (*δὲ*) the meaning of Christ in all this, was, that they who should cordially embrace him by faith, in his whole character, for all salvation, should, after his resurrection, and ascension to heaven, receive a rich communication of the gifts, graces, and consolations of the Holy Spirit, who would be like a fountain of refreshing, cooling, cleansing, and fructifying water in them; and would make them abundantly useful to others: For a plentiful effusion of the blessed Spirit was not yet granted in so remarkable and extensive a manner as it was to be afterwards, because he was to come as the fruit and evidence of Christ's exaltation to his mediatorial throne, when he should have the glory of sending his Spirit, and the Spirit should have the honour of his own peculiar work in glorifying Christ, by extraordinary attestations to his gospel, by numerous conversions of *Jews* and *Gentiles* to him, and by a rich abundance of light, grace, and joy in them that believe.

40 Upon hearing this authoritative, gracious, and endearing discourse, many of the common people were greatly affected with wonder and esteem: Some of them said, This is unquestionably a true prophet of the Lord, and indeed that very prophet, whom we expect to be the immediate forerunner of the Messiah.

41 Others of them went further, and said, This is the very Christ himself; what he says and does in so majestic, compassionate, and divine a manner, could never proceed from any other than him. But in opposition to these there were others, who taking it for granted, that our Lord was born at *Nazareth* in *Galilee*, because he was brought up there, were prejudiced against him, and said, No, no, he cannot be the promised Messiah; for who ever heard that he, like this man, should have his birth in any part of *Galilee*? (See the note on *ver.* 52.)

42 Are we not assured from express testimonies of scripture, (*Isaiab* xi. 1. and *Micah* v. 2.) that the Messiah is to spring from *David*, the son of *Jesse*, and to be born at the very town of *Bethlehem*, where *David's* own parents dwelt? (*1 Sam.* xvi. 1.)

43 In this manner, as our Lord himself predicted, (*Luke* xii. 51.) there were various opinions, and warm debates about him, some being for, and others against him: Some esteeming him as a prophet, others as the true Messiah, whilst others stuck to their old prejudices, and being misled by a vulgar error, as if Jesus had really been born at *Nazareth*, rejected and opposed him.

44 And some of them

44 And among these there were some who would willingly

them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

48 Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him?

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

willingly have taken him into custody, and carried him before the council; but none of them, no, not the officers themselves, who were sent to seize him, (*ver.* 32.) were suffered to offer any violence to him, he laying a restraint upon their spirits.

45 At length the officers returned to the chief priests and *Pharisees*, and not bringing him along with them, they severely reprimanded them, saying, What is the reason that ye have disobeyed our express orders, in not bringing Jesus as a prisoner before us, who have sat in council waiting for him?

46 The officers answered, We went with as much desire and resolution to seize him, as ye yourselves could wish for; but as soon as we came to hear him preach to the people, our hearts failed us at once; and the longer we heard him, the more we were struck with wonder and awe, and the more afraid were we of offering any violence to him: For never did we hear any man talk like him; it was with such surprising evidence and power, majesty and sweetness, as were enough to make every one in love with him: Surely none of the ancient prophets, no, not *Moses* himself, ever spoke in such a convincing and engaging manner as he did; and the people were generally of the same mind concerning it with ourselves.

47 Then the *Pharisees*, full of indignation and wrath, replied, What, are ye so weak and foolish, as to fall in with the silly thoughts of a giddy mob about him? Could ye suffer yourselves after all that ye heard us say, and even while ye went with authority from us to take him, to be imposed upon by such a notorious cheat as this? We thought that ye might be depended upon as men of more sense and spirit, than to be thus deluded by him.

48 Pray think a little, Do not ye know, that not one of your superiors for wisdom, learning, and reputation, authority and piety, whose judgment ye ought to be determined by, hath ever given the least credit to him? Have any of the members of the sanhedrim, who are the only judges of a true and false prophet, or any of the *Pharisees*, who are men of the greatest eminence for sanctity and knowledge in the law, ever believed in him, or shown him the least countenance? And are ye wiser and better than these?

49 But this poor, mean, vulgar, senseless rabble that ye talk of, who are stupidly ignorant of the scriptures, and abandoned of God, and who lie under his wrath and curse, are the only people that ever thought well of him, or ever owned him; they are an execrable mob, easily made fools of; and will

ye be as great fools as they? In this manner the council endeavoured to enslave the consciences of the officers, to take off the good impressions that had been made upon them, and to prejudise them against Christ and his gospel.

50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them.)

51 Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doth?

50, 51 Hereupon that *Nicodemus*, who had gone in a private manner to Jesus by night, (*chap. iii. 2.*) being present as a member of the council, and being very uneasy at this dishonourable, unjust, and furious method of procedure, took a little more courage than formerly, and expostulated with them, saying, Brethren, what are we doing? Is it not an unreasonable and illegal way of acting, contrary to the righteousness of our law, and to all rules of equity, for us to pass judgment upon any man whatsoever, and especially upon one who makes such plausible pretensions to a divine commission as Jesus does, before we have heard what he has to say for himself, his doctrine, and behaviour? Surely we ought to be very cautious how we censure, or proceed against him, till he has had an opportunity of speaking in his own defence.

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

52 The council not being able to confute *Nicodemus's* reasoning, resolved to run him down with heat and passion, and false suggestions, instead of arguments, saying, in reply, What! are you, like the ignorant multitude, one of the *Galilean* party, and an advocate for a man who sets up for a prophet, and yet was born in *Galilee*? Pray search the scriptures, and see what they say; and then you can never believe that he has the commission from God which he pretends to: For, according to them, no prophet ever was, much less can the Messiah be a native of that country*.

53 And every man went unto his own house.

53 Upon this, the council finding themselves embarrassed, and hoping for a fairer opportunity, when *Nicodemus* might be absent, adjourned to another time, and every man returned home.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Doth the world hate any of us; or are our nearest kindred our enemies, for opposing their corruptions, and adhering to the truths of the gospel; and are we exposed

N O T E.

* Here they took the vulgar error for granted, about Christ's being born in *Nazareth of Galilee*, and would not give themselves the trouble of an impartial inquiry, to set themselves to rights about it, though they might have been easily satisfied that he was born at *Bethlehem*, from the public register there, and from the genealogies of the family of *David*, as well as from himself and his disciples: And it was not true that

no prophet arose in that country; for *Jonah* was of *Gath-Hepher* in the tribe of *Zebulun*. (2 Kings xiv. 25. and *Josb. xix. 13, 16.*) And *Nahum* was an *Elkashite*, (*Nah. i. 1.*) of the town called *Elkes*, which *Jerom* on the place says, was in *Galilee*, there being a village of that name there to his days. And *Reiland* maintains, in his sacred geography, that *Thibse*, the town of *Elijah the Tishbite*, was in *Galilee*.

posed to disgrace and danger for it? Our blessed Lord went through the same before us, for our encouragement and example. But as none could destroy him, till his time was come; so we are immortal men, till God has done his work by us; and yet as he avoided needlessly exposing himself to mischiefs, and sought proper opportunities of carrying on his great design in the world; so should we, till God shews us that our time is come, wherein we ought to resign our lives to him. How certainly divine are all the doctrines of Christ in their original! It is only for want of knowing him and them, and impartially judging concerning them, that any make exceptions against them: But he will maintain the credit of his own character, truths, and ways, to his own and his Father's glory, and to the confusion of his enemies; so that, even they themselves being judges, never man spake like this man. What if, generally speaking, men of high rank and figure do not believe in him? That is no objection against him, whose kingdom is not of this world; and the people that know and receive him, how vulgar soever they may be, are so far from being cursed, that they, of all others, are truly blessed: And how easily can Jesus over-awe the stoutest hearts, even of rough and boisterous officers, to take off their edge against him, and gain a testimony from them to himself! How can he spirit persons of the most timorous tempers, even a *Nicodemus*, to speak bravely for him, and to plead with such force of argument, as to stop the mouths of gainsayers! And how easily can he disappoint the devices of the crafty, that their hands shall not perform their enterprize! It is a dreadful case to seek occasions against the Lord, or even to be willing to get rid of his presence, and to be left to go alone to sacred ordinances without him. O how glad would they one day be to find Christ, and to be made partakers of his salvation, who now despise and reject him! They shall die, as he did; but ah! he is gone, where no unbelievers can ever follow him, and be with him, to behold his glory. But how amazing is his grace to them now, that have often slighted and set themselves against him! He still lifts up his voice to a disobedient and gainsaying people, and invites their coming to him for the richest supplies of all that they stand in need of: And whoever is at last made sensible of his own wants and miseries, and comes by faith to the great and only Saviour for relief, shall find a hearty welcome. And O how precious and abiding, how abounding and ever-satisfying are the blessings of his Spirit and grace, which may be looked for from an exalted Redeemer! They shall never be taken away or fail, but shall continue and increase till they be perfected in eternal life and glory.

C H A P. VIII.

Christ's treatment of the woman taken in adultery, 1,—12. His preaching himself as the light of the world, and vindicating his doctrine, 13,—30. His asserting the freedom of his disciples, and answering the cavils of the Jews against it, and their glorying in Abraham as their father, and his escaping out of their hands, 31,—59.

TEXT.

JESUS went unto the mount of Olives:

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord, as was customary with him, retired from *Jerusalem* in the evening to the mount of *Olives*, that he might refresh himself, and spend some time in private devotion, and might avoid popular tumults and surprisings in the night.

2 And, taking the day before him, he returned early to the temple, where great multitudes of people flocking to him, as usual, he sat down like one having authority, and preached to them.

A a a 2

3, 4 Whilst

unto him; and he sat down and taught them.

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the mids,

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

7 So when they con-

3, 4 Whilst he was thus engaged in his work, some of the *scribes* and *Pharisees* interrupted him by bringing a woman before him, that he might sit in judgment upon her, who had been guilty of adultery*: And when they had placed her, as a criminal, in the presence of all the people, they addressed him with a feigned air of respect, saying, Master, this woman, whom we have brought before you, is charged with adultery, by witnesses that surprised her in the very act.

5 Now this being so vile an abomination, *Moses* in the law expressly commanded, that if persons, at the time of their committing it, were actually married, they should die for it, and that if they were only espoused to an husband, they should be stoned to death. (*Deut.* xxii. 22, 23, 24.) But as you claim authority from God to make alterations in our law, or at least to interpret it in a different manner from us, we desire to have your judgment upon this case.

6 They applied in this manner to him for no other reason, than to seek an advantage against him, as an enemy to the authority, either of *Cæsar*, or of their own law†. But Jesus, knowing their artful and malicious design, stooped, and looking downward‡, wrote with his finger on the floor, as if his thoughts were so deeply engaged another way, as not to hear what they said to him.

7 The *scribes* and *Pharisees* supposing that they had

N O T E S.

* Perhaps it was very lately that she had been guilty of this crime in one of their booths, during the feast of tabernacles, at which time the hearts of some might be made too merry by plentifully eating and drinking.

† If he should declare for the law of *Moses*, and encourage the people to stone this woman; they might hope it would give them a plausible handle to reproach him for cruelty, and therein acting contrary to his pretences of being the Messiah, who was to be meek and lowly, and bring salvation; and for partiality in ordering so severe a punishment to an adulteress, though he had freely admitted persons of that character to converse with him; or they might think it would give them a fair opportunity of accusing him to the *Roman* government, as an abettor of tumults, and of judicial power, independent of its authority: And if, on the contrary, he should declare against the people's stoning her, according to the rigour of *Moses's* law, they might hope to incense the people against

him, as an enemy to their law, and as a favourer of sin, and of the worst of sinners: And if he should turn them over to the judgment of the *Roman* government; they might think to expose him to the rage of the people, as an enemy to their liberty.

‡ Many have been the uncertain conjectures of learned men about what Christ wrote; and if he really wrote any sentence on the dust of the floor, it was most probably that which he afterwards pronounced. *He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.* But perhaps he only made a shew of writing on the ground, as was usual with some wise men to do, in those days, when a question was proposed which they thought not proper to answer. Or, as others have supposed, Christ by that action designed to intimate to the querists, that they must attend to what is written. *Vid. Lamp. in loc. & Marckii exercitat. 13^o. ad selectt. text. N. Test.*

continued asking him, he lift up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

had now brought him into a labyrinth, out of which he could not tell how to extricate himself, repeated their question with vehemence, and pressed him closely for an answer, till at length he raised himself up, and replied, I am far from reflecting on the law, and from vindicating, or lessening the abominable crime of this woman: But as, by another institution under *Moses*, the witnesses hands should be first upon the criminals, that are to be put to death; (*Deut* xvii. 7.) and as it is exceedingly out of character, for any to be zealous in punishing the sins of others, while they themselves are guilty of as bad, or worse; ye would do well to consider, which of you shall begin the execution of the law upon her: If any one of you that are come hither to accuse, and witness against her, can in his own conscience clear himself of guilt before God, let him be the man who shall cast the first stone at her*.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

8 Our Lord having in this manner wisely escaped the snare which they had laid for him, and, at the same time, reprov'd them for their hypocritical pretences to an extraordinary zeal against sin, while so much guilt lay upon themselves, and they were pursuing measures to murder him, he left them to pause and think on what he had said; and, without waiting for an answer, stooped down again, and wrote with his finger on the ground, as before, that he might seem to take no further notice of the matter, and give them an opportunity of sneaking away, and fancying that he would not observe it.

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

9 And as all their consciences were struck with horror, by a secret power that set these words home upon them, and they thereupon could not but accuse themselves of one heinous crime or other, if not of the very same that this woman had been guilty of, they were ashamed to plead innocence, or to proceed in a demand of justice against her, and were afraid lest, if Jesus spoke again, he would say some severer thing to them: And therefore instead of applying to him, as they ought, for cleansing from their own sins, they silently slipped away from him, one after another; the eldest, who might be conscious of most guilt, going out first, and the younger following them, till they were all gone, and there was no body left with him †, but

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* He said this, not to discountenance a legal process, or bearing witness against, and executing justice upon offenders, by such as are conscious of guilt in themselves; but to move compassion to the persons of criminals, as far as the

law and justice admit of it, and to put the correctors of others vices, upon impartially censuring, and correcting their own.

† Christ's being left alone signifies his be-

but the woman and the people, who, with his disciples, were there before attending on his ministry.

10 When Jesus had lift up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

10 The woman still standing before Christ to hear what sentence he would pass upon her, he raised himself up again, and seeing none of her accusers there, said to her, Woman, what is become of all the men who brought you hither to me? Have none of them pronounced, that you ought to be stoned to death for your sin?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

11 She, treating him with respect, answered, No, Lord, not one of them has taken upon him to declare any such thing: Then Jesus, who came not to condemn the world, nor to exercise a judicial power in punishing criminals, but to save them that believe in him, replied, Nor do I take that office upon myself; go about your business, and let your present escape from deserved punishment put you upon taking heed that you do not return to the like, or any other iniquity again, lest in the great day of account you come under a more dreadful sentence and execution than that of stoning to death*.

12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

12 Our blessed Lord having in this manner quitted himself of the woman and her accusers, re-assumed his discourse to the people, in which he spoke of one great design of his coming into the world, saying, I am the Sun of righteousness, a light to lighten the *Gentiles*, as well as the glory of *Israel*, who, having all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in myself, am come to direct sinners into the way of life and salvation, by my word and Spirit: And whoever believes in me, and follows my guidance, shall not go on in ignorance and error, to mislead him from the way of duty and happiness, or in the darkness of sin and spiritual death; but shall have the saving light of a renewed life here, and of eternal life hereafter.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

13 Some of the *Pharisees*, that were mingled with the people, and were enraged to see how their brethren had been baffled by him, answered, You indeed, prompted by ambition, speak great things concerning yourself; but your own bare affirmation signifies nothing: No body is obliged to believe it, nor would it be admitted, as valid, in any court of judicature whatsoever.

14 Jesus

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being rid of all the company of the *scribes* and *Pharisees* that had brought the woman before him, so that none of them remained in the temple to give him any further trouble: For the woman was standing in the midst of the people, in whose presence she had been placed before Christ, (*ver.* 3.) and he

immediately afterwards went on preaching to them. (*ver.* 12.)

* It does not appear to me that this woman was a penitent, or that Christ forgave her sin; but only that he dismissed her, as not thinking it proper to take upon himself the office of the civil magistrate in condemning her.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go: but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

15 Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man.

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

14 Jesus replied, Though this be true in ordinary cases, and according to the usual course of proceedings in law; yet it is otherwise in the case of divine messengers, as ye yourselves owned when ye sent to *John the Baptist*, saying, *Who art thou? What sayest thou of thyself?* (Chap. i. 22.) And as light is self-evident, so my testimony, about my being the light of the world, is sufficient to gain credit with every one that duly considers and understands the nature and tendency of my doctrine, and the circumstances in which I appear to confirm it: It is true in itself, and worthy to be believed, and I have authority to assert it; for I am infallibly sure, and have demonstrated to you, that I came from, and am going to the Father: But ye wilfully disregard the evidences I have given of it, and so do not understand that my original and commission are from heaven, or that I am to return thither; and therefore ye receive not my testimony.

15 Ye judge and condemn me only from carnal considerations, according to your secular views, and according to the means of my external appearance in the flesh, as that is unlikely to answer your ends: But as I do not so much as meddle with civil judgment, relating to any person whatsoever, as ye have but now seen in the case of the woman taken in adultery; so I neither pass sentence of condemnation, nor execute vengeance upon any one now, as I shall hereafter: No, my present work is all of the merciful strain, as I am come to call sinners to repentance, and to seek and save that which is lost.

16 And yet, were I to undertake the office of a judge at present in condemning criminals, and proceeding in a judicial manner against you for not believing in me, my sentence would be just and valid: For my Father and I have such a mutual in-being*, as to be inseparable one from the other, so that I am never alone; and what I say is not from any private judgment

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* His Father is in him, and he is in the Father; (*chap. xiv. 10, 11.*) and so the Father is no more alone without the Son, than the Son is without the Father. (*Prov. viii. 22, 23, 30. and John i. 1, 2.*) His Father and he were not one and another God, but one in Godhead, though distinct persons, and therefore inseparable from each other: And though the Son came from the Father in a certain dispensation, for the assumption of human nature, and acting in office upon earth, as God is sometimes said to come from heaven, for particular manifesta-

tions of himself; yet Christ did not leave the Father, or the Father leave him, any more than God leaves heaven, when he is said to come down to this earth: And that our Lord here speaks of himself, as not being alone with regard to his divine nature, seems evident, because in the next foregoing verse but one, he had spoke of himself in that high consideration of him, saying, *I know whence I came, but ye cannot tell whence I came;* whereas, with respect to his human nature, he had before allowed that they knew whence he was. (*Chap. vii. 28.*)

judgment of my own, apart from that of my Father; I therein only concur with him, who, by various means testifies that he has sent me, and demands your faith in me: There is therefore no room to except against any declaration of mine.

17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for

17 Besides, it is a settled point by your own law, which is indeed God's law, that the evidence of two credible persons is sufficient for establishing affairs of the greatest consequence. (*Deut. xvii. 6.*)

18 Now here are two witnesses to the truth of my assertions: I am one, who, as a divine person, declare the commission which I have received as the Messiah: And my Father is another, who sent me into the world to execute it, and whose testimony ye yourselves must own is beyond all contradiction true; he has declared the same concerning me by the voice of his prophets, and by a voice from heaven, as well as by other means; and therefore your own rule of judgment, as contained in the law, demands your assent to the truth of what I say concerning myself, and all things else*.

19 Then the *Pharisees*, not being able to return a fair answer, replied, in a way of ridicule and insult, Pray, what father is this, that you pretend to have, besides *Joseph*, a poor carpenter? Where is he? Call your witness, which you lay so much stress upon. Jesus answered again, Though I, who have been so long among you, have frequently explained whom I mean by my Father; yet such is your wilful blindness, obstinacy, and perverseness, that ye are still ignorant of my person and office, and of my heavenly Father, from whom I am come unto you: If ye had but known me, who am the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and one in nature, counsel, and operation with him, ye would have seen the perfections of my Father shining forth in me, and would have known the relation, in which he stands to me as his Son, as well as the high commission, which I bear as the Messiah from him†.

20 Christ freely and openly spake these convincing and cutting things, whilst he was discoursing in that part of the temple where the boxes were kept to receive the money, which from time to time was offered for religious uses: And though at this place the priests and rulers had chief authority, yet their spirits,

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* I take both these into the paraphrase, because Christ is speaking of the truth of his judgment, as well as of his own character.

† Here our Lord plainly intimates that

his Father and he were distinct persons, as they were two witnesses; and yet were one in essence and divine perfections, as the knowledge of him includes the knowledge of the Father.

for his hour was not yet come.

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go ye cannot come.

23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath, I am from above: ye are of this world, I am not of this world.

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

spirits, and those of all his enemies, were so restrained and over-awed, that, how desirous soever they were of it, none of them durst venture to offer any violence to him, the time appointed of God not being yet come for his last sufferings and death.

21 Then Jesus, knowing the rancour of their hearts against him, went on with another discourse to them, saying, as he had the day before, (*chap. vii. 33, 34.*) I am going ere long to my Father, from whom I came; and hereafter, ye would be glad to have me, as the Messiah, among you, to save you from all your miseries, and will earnestly seek after that privilege: But all will be then in vain; for, as ye obstinately reject me by unbelief, ye shall die under the power and guilt of that your sin (*εν τη αμαρτια υμων*) which will bind all your other iniquities upon you, to your utter destruction, by the righteous judgment of God in this world, and to your everlasting condemnation in the next: And the gates of the blessed kingdom, to which I am going, will be shut against you; so that ye will not be able to follow me thither, either to fetch me back from thence, or to partake of my glory there.

22 The unbelieving Jews seemed to be amazed at this, and yet to make a jest of it, saying one to another, What a strange odd way of talking is this! What, does he think of laying violent hands upon himself to get out of the reach of his enemies, and so prevent their murdering him? or what else can be the meaning of this whimsical expression, I am going to a place, whither ye cannot follow me?

23 Our Lord perfectly knowing their thoughts, as well as their perverse discourse, further explained himself to them, saying, The reason why ye cannot follow me, is this: Ye are not only men of earthly extraction, but, like your mean original, are persons of a worldly, carnal spirit and temper, whose hearts are set upon things below; whereas I not only am of divine original, and came from heaven, but my temper and views are directly contrary to, and subversive of yours; I am dead to this world, and my affections are set on things above, whither I am going;

24 And therefore I told you, (*ver. 21.*) that ye shall utterly and dreadfully perish for and in your iniquities, and particularly your unbelief, which leaves you under the power of all other sins: For if, through the carnality, hardness, and impenitence of your hearts, ye will not believe that * I am he, who should

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* *That I am he*, is in the Greek *ει εγω ειμι*, *that I am*, which some suppose refers to that name of God, (*Exod. iii. 14.*) where he calls himself *I am*. But

should come a light into the world, (*ver.* 12.) as the only Saviour, there is no help or hope, but that ye must be cut off in your sins, by the righteous vengeance of God upon your city and nation in this world, and by a still more terrible destruction in the world to come.

25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning.

26 I have many things to say, and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When

25 Hereupon, as they before had said with a taunt, (*ver.* 19.) *Where is your Father?* So now, with the like temper of mind, they cried out, Who are you that speak so great things of yourself? What do you pretend to be, that we upon our peril must believe in you? To this he replied, I insist upon it, that * I am what I have all along said of myself from the very beginning of my ministry, even the Son of God, and the true Messiah; (*chap.* iv. 26, and v. 17,—27.) how much soever ye despise me.

26 I could easily charge you with many more crimes than I have, to aggravate your infidelity, and lay you under condemnation; and ye hereafter will hear of them, and be judged by me for them: But not to mention things now, which are unsuitable to the present design of my office, and would be lost upon such hardened creatures as ye are, I shall only tell you that he, by whom I am sent to make known his mind and will, is incontestably true to his promise concerning my coming, and to me and them that believe in me, as he also is to his threatenings against those that reject me: And whatsoever I say openly in, and to the world, is with all faithfulness, exactly according to the commission that I have received from him whose authority is uncontrollable, and cannot be trampled upon with impunity.

27 Now, though in all this Christ so manifestly asserted his divine original and mission; yet so great were their blindness and prejudices against him, that still they did not understand him to speak of God's being his Father, and of his receiving his commission from him; but, as he had told them before, (*ver.* 19.) *They neither knew him, nor his Father.*

28 Jesus therefore said unto them, How ignorant soever ye now are of me, and though in a little time ye

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in this place it rather seems to be an elliptical form of speech, with respect to his being the Messiah, as this very expression is undoubtedly to be understood, (*Mark* xiii. 6.) *Many shall come in my name, saying, οὐ εἰμι ἐγώ, that I am, i. e. the Christ; and (Acts* xiii. 25.) *John said οὐκ εἰμι ἐγώ, I am not, i. e. he, or the Messiah.*

* It is not easy to give an exact gram-

matical construction of the *Greek* τὸν ἀρχὴν ο, τι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν, which some render, I am *the beginning*; others adverbially, *From the beginning, which I also say, i. e. continue to say unto you*; and so it may be taken as Christ's asserting his own eternal existence as God, antecedent to any human original, according to *John* i. 1, 2. and *Rev.* i. 8.

When ye have lift up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone: for I do always those things that please him.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye

ye will procure my crucifixion, who appear among you as the Messiah, and will think that ye have thereby effectually ruined me and my cause; yet, as this will really be the direct step to my exaltation, so ye shall be afterwards convinced*, either by happy or dreadful experience, that I am he who was to come, and that, according to what I now say of myself, I do nothing as a private person of my own head, and nothing separately from my Father; but that I faithfully declare every thing exactly according to the instructions, which I, as man and Mediator, have received from him, and that all my promises and threatenings shall be punctually fulfilled.

29 In the mean-while, my Father, who sent me into the world, is ever present with me by an essential union, and by an unmeasurable unction of his Spirit, to assist, accept, and own me in his work: He has not deserted me, or withdrawn the demonstrations of his favour from me: For the whole of what I do is at all times, and without the least variation, entirely agreeable to his will, and delightful to him.

30 When Jesus spake these words, it was with such evidence and power, as brought many of the Jews to believe that he bore a divine commission, or at least to profess † their faith in him.

31 But our blessed Lord knowing that some of them were weak in faith, and that others were only hypocrites, who, under all their pretences of discipleship to him, still sought to destroy him, (*ver.* 37.) said to the whole multitude of them that professed to believe in him, If ye really embrace, and adhere to my holy doctrine in your judgment and choice, and persist in a cordial belief of it, and subject your whole souls to it, then shall ye be proved and owned to be my disciples in truth, as well as in name.

32 And ye shall still further be enlightened, confirmed, and satisfied about the certainty, excellence, and importance of my gospel; and by its means shall ye obtain the most glorious freedom from every thing that is enthralling, mean, and miserable.

33 Then some of them, who had professed to believe in him, taking it as an high affront, that he should speak as if he thought them to be slaves, said to him, in a vaunting manner, We are the descendants of the famous patriarch *Abraham*, who being

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* The means of this conviction were the destruction of *Jerusalem* afterwards. the signs and wonders that should attend the death and resurrection of Christ, the effusion of his Spirit, and spreading of the gospel, and the judgments of God in

† It appears from the whole of the following discourse betwixt Christ and them, that some of them were very far from being sincere believers.

Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

a sovereign prince, and a man in covenant with God, entailed all civil and religious freedom upon us, as our birth-right; and we never lost it by being * enslaved to any foreign power, or governed by any laws but our own. What therefore can you mean by pretending to make us free, who are in right and fact so free already.

34 Our Lord replied, How great soever your boails of liberty are, I, who speak the truth, solemnly assure you, that whoever, like you, is a worker of iniquity, (*ο ποιων την αμαρτιαν*) is the worst of slaves under the guilt and power of sin; he, notwithstanding all his pretended claims under *Abraham*, is a servant of corruption, to his own perdition.

35 And the servant of sin, though he be the natural seed of *Abraham* †, like *Ishmael*, the son of *Hagar* the bond-woman, shall be cast out of God's house and family, and from all its privileges, as *Ishmael* was, and as all the carnal unbelieving *Jews* shall be: But the Son of God, who is likewise, by way of eminence, the seed of *Abraham*, and the son of the promise, in whom all nations shall be blessed, continues as the first-born, lord and heir in his own house for ever; and every one that claims under him, as *Abraham's* seed through faith in him, according to the promise, shall abide in the family as a son, and inherit the noblest freedom with him.

36 If therefore I, who am the Son of God, and Lord of mine own house, shall bestow the noble freedom upon you, which I spake of, ye shall be (*οτως*) substantially and eminently free in your own spirits, and

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* It is surprising that they should have the confidence to assert so downright and known a falsehood, as that *they never were in bondage to any man*: For they had been notoriously in bondage for many years to foreign powers in *Egypt* and *Babylon*; and were at this very time tributaries to the *Romans*, and under great restraints of their liberties from them.

† The sense of this verse, considered as a general maxim, is plain and obvious enough with respect to the privilege of a son above a servant; and yet it is very difficult to fix its determinate meaning, as it stands here in connection with the contexts, and particularly with *the servant of sin*, mentioned in the foregoing verse, and with *the Son*, spoken of in the verse following. But that, which I have given, seems to be its most easy and consistent sense; For it keeps up the same

idea of the *servant of sin* and of *the Son*, as mentioned in the preceding and following verses; and, at the same time, shews the difference between the servants of sin and the true children of God, (who are *Abraham's* seed through faith in Christ) with respect to the bondage of the one, and the freedom of the other; it likewise keeps up the view of Christ's answer to the vain plea of the carnal *Jews*, that they were *Abraham's* seed: And it agrees with the apostle's representation of *Ishmael's* being cast out, as *the son of the bond-woman*, who should not be heir with *the son of the free-woman*, and with his representation of *Isaac*, as the son of the promise, who was there in a type of Christ, and of all true believers in him. (*Gal. iv. 28,—31.*) And this sense of the words lies in a plain and natural connection with the following verse.

and in all your religious concerns; free from the guilt and dominion of sin; free from the law as a covenant of works from all its burdensome ceremonies, that yoke of bondage, and from its dreadful curse; free from the prevailing blindness and prejudices of your own minds and hearts, and from the tyranny of Satan; free in your access to God, communion with him, and actings for him; free from the sting of death, and the victory of the grave; and at length free from every kind of evil, and in full possession of all the glory of your adoption: So that all other freedom is as nothing compared with this, and is mere slavery without it.

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed: but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

37 And, as to the other part of your plea, that ye are *Abraham's* seed, I very well know, and readily own, that ye are his natural descendents; but I likewise know, that notwithstanding this, ye are far from giving into his faith, disposition, and obedience, and are full of unworthy inclinations and designs to destroy me, only because your proud and carnal hearts cannot relish and fall in with, no, nor so much as bear the holy, spiritual, and self-humbling doctrine which I preach unto you.

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which you have seen with your father.

38 So great is the contrariety between me and you, that I deliver the things which I am intimately acquainted with as one present in council and communion with my heavenly Father, and which I know to be according to his mind and will: And ye, on the other hand, do those things which ye have learnt by immediate suggestion from your own father, who is opposite to mine, and which ye practise under his influence, and in imitation of him, like persons in communion and council with him.

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

39 At these words they took fire, and answered him with some smartness, What father of ours is this whom you speak of with such contempt? We tell you again, and you yourself have owned it, (*ver. 37.*) that *Abraham* is our father: What then do ye mean by reflecting upon him, as if we had learnt any evil from him? Jesus replied, If ye were indeed *Abraham's* children in temper and spirit, as well as by natural descent, ye would do such works of faith and holiness as he did.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

40 But instead of copying after, ye go into the very reverse of his believing and holy disposition and behaviour, in that ye seek my life, because I have asserted an important and necessary truth, about my being the Son of God, and the promised Messiah, (*chap. v. 18.*) a truth which, as a prophet, I received commission from God himself to declare to you: Whereas *Abraham* readily received and obeyed every divine

divine revelation, and was so eminent for humanity and piety, that he never would have gone about to kill any innocent person, much less any messenger from God to him.

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

41 It is plain therefore, notwithstanding all your boasts of being *Abraham's* children, that ye have another Father, whom ye resemble, and whose will and work ye do. The *Jews* perceiving by this, that he spoke of their pedigree, not in a literal, but spiritual sense, replied with indignation, Whatsoever you may suggest to the contrary, we are not the children of idolaters, who have broke God's covenant, and gone a-whoring from him to idols; nor do we own or serve the gods of the heathen, but are worshippers of the only living and true God; and therefore he, in a spiritual sense, is the Father of us all.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth, and came from God: neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

42 In answer to this, Jesus said, If, as ye pretend, God were indeed your spiritual Father, who has really begotten you after his own likeness, ye, instead of opposing and rejecting, would affectionately esteem and embrace me and my doctrine: For I originally proceeded from God the Father * as his only begotten Son, partaker of the same nature with him, and am come into the world immediately from him; I did not come of my own head, like a false prophet, but by commission from him, who sent me, as the Messiah, to make known the way of salvation, and to do his will upon earth.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

43 Whence is it then, that ye do not take in what I say, and have evidently proved concerning myself, and the design of my coming into the world? truly the reason is, because your hearts are so carnal and sensual, that ye cannot approve of my spiritual, self-denying, and heavenly doctrine, and are so prejudiced against it, that ye cannot endure to hear of my being the Son of God, who preach it. How then can ye pretend that God is your heavenly Father?

44 Ye are of your

44 No, on the contrary, I must tell you plainly, that your

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* Observe the difference between what Christ here says of himself, and what is ever said of any other: Believers are said to be *of God*, (ver. 47. and 1 John iv. 4.) and to be *born and begotten of God*; (1 John v. 1.) and the prophets were said to be *sent of God*, as *John the Baptist* also was. (John i. 6.) But it is peculiar to Christ, that he *proceeded forth, and came from God*, which intimates his divine original, as well as his mission, that he is of the Father as a Son of his own essence, proceeding from him, as well as that he came from the Fa-

ther, as a divine messenger: For the form of expression, *ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐξηλθόν*, here rendered *I proceeded forth from God*, is often used by the *Seventy*, to signify a proper birth, when applied to man, as in *Gen. xv. 4.* it is said, *he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels, shall be thine heir*; (*chap. xxxv. 11.*) *Kings shall come out of thy loins.* And it is said of Christ with respect to his human birth, (*Isa. xi. 1.*) *there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse.* The phraseology is the same in all these places, with that which is here rendered *proceeding forth.*

your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

your proper father, in a moral sense, is the devil himself; him ye imitate and obey, and his malicious and envious inclinations and designs ye resolutely set yourselves to fulfil: Ye are the seed of that old serpent, who murdered the whole human race, drawing their first parents into sin, at the beginning of the world; who has ever since prompted his children to all the murders that have been committed, especially upon righteous men and holy prophets, from *Abel* down to this day; and who still continues to murder the souls of men by his fallacious temptations. And as he degenerated from his own original integrity; so he afterwards denied the truth of what God had said about the forbidden fruit, that he might ruin the sons of men; and he has ever since set himself against the truth of divine revelation, to prevent their recovery, because he is a lying spirit, destitute of, and an utter enemy to all truth and goodness. Whenever therefore he suggests falsehoods, he therein acts suitable to his own temper as an apostate spirit: For he is a notorious liar, and the promoter of lies and deceits, in all his methods of procedure, and among all those that go into them after his example. Ye are therefore his children, acting his part, and fulfilling his will, in all your false suggestions and murderous designs against me.

45 And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.

45 And though I have given the clearest proofs of the truth of my character, as the Son of God and Saviour of sinners, and have told you the only true way to eternal life and blessedness; yet ye will not give any credit to me: Nay, because I tell you such truths, as are spiritual and holy, and disagreeable to your corrupt inclinations and interests, therefore ye reject both me and them.

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

46 If there is any immorality or misbehaviour in my life, or any absurdity or ill tendency in my doctrine, or inconsistency with itself, with the scripture, or with any plain principles of reason, why do not some of you prove it upon me, and thereby confute me? which of you is able to do this? And if ye cannot find any one real fault in my doctrine, any more than in my life, but all is right and true, how perverse and unreasonable is it, that ye nevertheless will persist in your unbelief?

47 He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.

47 He that is a child of God, enlightened, renewed, and sanctified by his Spirit, is desirous to know, and ready to receive and observe whatever God speaks: The reason therefore why ye pay no regard to what I declare, and have proved to be from him, is because, whatsoever ye pretend to, ye really are not the children

dren of God, partakers of his Spirit, and well affected towards him.

48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

48 Some of the *Jews* then present, being exasperated at this cutting discourse, which they could not confute, fell into a violent fury against him, crying out, How can you pretend, that none of us have convinced you of sin? (*ver.* 46.) We have said, and we stand to it as rightly said, your own discourse now confirming it, that you are as bad as a *Samaritan*, whom we look upon as the worst of enemies to our religion and nation, and worthy to be had in the utmost abhorrence; nay, we insist upon it, that you talk like a madman, and one possessed of the devil himself, while you charge the children of *Abraham* with being not the children of God, but the children of that evil one, and while you perform pretended miracles by his power, and in confederacy with him, to make people believe that what you say is true.

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

49 To this monstrously vile and blasphemous reproach, Jesus answered, with wonderful meekness and calmness of Spirit, This is such a groundless imputation, as never can be made good against me: The nature and tendency of all my doctrines and miracles, for promoting goodness and holiness among men, and for destroying the works of the devil, are a demonstration that I am not influenced by him, nor act in confederacy with him: But all, that I do and say, is to advance the glory of my heavenly Father's wisdom, power, holiness, and grace, in the salvation of his people: This Satan would never do; and yet ye revile and speak evil against me for it, as if I were actuated by him*.

50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

50 But (*de*) I neither trouble myself about your reproaches, nor court your applause, having no aim at advancing my own, in distinction from my Father's glory: Nor need I be solicitous about these things; for there is one, even my heavenly Father himself, who will secure an interest for me in the hearts of his people, and will effectually vindicate my character, and avenge all the indignities offered to it.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

51 Leaving therefore my reputation in his hands, I, who am Truth itself, go on to assure you with the greatest solemnity, as I have done before, (*chap.* v. 24. *and* vi. 40, 50, 51.) that whoever heartily embraces,

N O T E.

* He took no notice of what they had said about his being a *Samaritan*, because that did not so much affect his commission, and every thing that was invidious in that calumny would fall off itself, by his proving that he was not ac-

tuated by an evil spirit: And perhaps he made no reply to that part of the charge, because some *Samaritans* had already believed in him, (*chap.* iv. 39.) and he himself had represented a good *Samaritan* in an honourable light. (*Luke* x. 33, &c.)

braces, and holds fast my spiritual and holy doctrine, in his faith and obedience, shall not * die (*εις τον αιωνα*) for ever; he shall not be utterly destroyed by death, but shall live in all felicity, world without end.

52 Then said the Jews unto him. Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

52 Then the Jews, instead of embracing this blessed promise of a glorious immortality, wrested Christ's words to their own destruction, pretending that he meant an exemption from temporal death, and crying out with still greater rage and revilings than before, We are now thoroughly confirmed in the truth of our charge, that you are really possessed of the devil, and are stark mad: For our father *Abraham*, who was the friend of God, and all the holy prophets, from *Moses* to this day, are dead, though they were strict observers of the divine will; and yet you boldly affirm, that whoever receives and practises your doctrine shall never die.

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

53 What! said they, forgetting that the Messiah must needs be superior to all that went before him, do you pretend to be more highly in favour with God, and to have greater power than our father *Abraham* himself, and than the most excellent of the prophets, who died, like the rest of mankind? how wild and presumptuous is your talk of making others immortal, when those eminent favourites of heaven could not obtain that privilege for themselves? Pray, who are you that pretend to bestow a greater blessing on your disciples, than God saw fit to vouchsafe to any of them?

54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me, of whom ye say, that he is your God.

54 Jesus replied, if I assume undue honour to myself, or make a shew of power without good arguments to support it, such glorying would indeed be empty and vain, and would turn to my disgrace: But it is my Father (*ο δοξαζων με*) that honours and glorifies me, by bearing witness to the utmost dignity of my character, and shewing his approbation of me according to it, even that God, whom ye claim as your covenant-God, and whom ye ought to believe, in what he testifies concerning me.

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you; but

55 But, notwithstanding your pretences of peculiar relation to him, ye are really strangers to him, and utterly ignorant of him as my Father, and will not understand what he has witnessed concerning me; no wonder therefore that ye do not receive me: But I am thoroughly acquainted with him, and fully assured, that he doth and will own and stand by me,

who

N O T E.

* To see death, and to taste of death, as it is expressed in the next verse, are Hebraisms which signify dying.

I know him, and keep his saying.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

who own and honour him: And were I to say otherwise, to avoid your wrath, I should give the lie to him, to my own conscience and character, and to the truth itself, just like you: But I insist upon it, as I ought, that I have a perfect knowledge of him, and of his regard to me, and that I always do the things that please him, according to the commission which I have received from him.

56 And as to your cavil at my speaking greater things of myself than could be said of *Abraham*, he, in whom ye so much glory, as your Father and as the friend of God, made so high account of me, that he earnestly desired * to see the time of my appearing in flesh for the salvation of *Israel*; and he had such a sight of it, as filled him with exceeding great joy: How much more would he have been delighted to have seen what ye now see, and despise?

57 The *Jews*, perverting his words, as if he spoke of *Abraham's* really seeing him in the flesh, said to him, You are but a young man, who, as any one may see by your looks, have hardly reached † the middle age of life; and what, do you pretend to have seen *Abraham*, as a co-temporary with him, who died many ages ago? How absurd and preposterous is this!

58 Our blessed Lord replied, I, who am Truth itself, assuredly tell you, that, how young soever I be, with relation to my human birth; yet before *Abraham* was born, and before all worlds, I had a real existence, as the unchangeable ‡ *I AM*, who ordered

N O T E S.

* *Ἡγαλλισατο ἰνα ἴδῃ*, *He rejoiced to see my day*, seems naturally, from the form of expression in the *Greek*, to signify, he vehemently desired to see it; and this prevents the tautology, that otherwise appears in the words, *he rejoiced and was glad*. See *Blackw. Sac. Claf.* vol. I. p. 46. And though *Abraham* did not see Christ's day, in the same sense as the *Jews* saw it, by his appearing actually in the flesh; yet he saw it, by faith in types, figures, and promises, as particularly in *Melchizedek*, (*Gen.* xiv. 18.) in the appearance of *Jehovah* to him in the plains of *Mamre*, (*chap.* xviii. 1.) in his offering up of the ram in *Isaac's* stead; and in the promise, that *in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed*. (*Chap.* xxii. 1.—18.)

† Perhaps the *Jews* said this, because the gravity of our Lord's countenance, together with his afflictions and labours, gave him the aspect of a man near fifty. However, they mentioned this age, to in-

timiate, that since he could not be so much as deemed an old man, it was the more absurd in him to talk of *Abraham's* having seen him.

‡ This remarkable change of the phrase, from *I was*, to *I am*, points us to the eternal existence of Christ in his divine nature, according to the most literal and natural construction of the words, which seem to refer to what I take to have been Christ's own words to *Moses*, because the Father's voice was never heard, nor his appearance seen, under the Old Testament-dispensation. (See the note on *chap.* v. 37.) And this makes them a direct answer to the *Jews'* objection taken from Christ's human age, shews his excellence above *Abraham*, and is the proper foundation of all the great things that he had asserted concerning himself: And it is plain that the *Jews* understood him in this sense by their taking up stones to stone him, as appears from the next verse.

ordered *Moses* to speak of me to your fathers under that name. (*Exod.* iii. 14.)

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

59 Upon this, they apprehending that he had not only made himself greater than *Abraham*, but had likewise been guilty of the highest blasphemy, in speaking of himself as the eternally existent God, were furiously enraged against him, and immediately, all in a hurry, caught up stones to stone him to death: But, his time being not yet come, he prudently avoided their rage by * concealing himself from them; and, slipping out of the temple through the crowd, he made his escape.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Did *Moses* command that persons guilty of adultery should be stoned to death? How abominable then is that sin! But, alas! how unfit are enemies to Christ, and allowers of themselves in any iniquity, to shew a zeal against others, and condemn them for theirs! Were they seriously to examine themselves, their consciences must soon convince them of sin, and make them afraid of casting the first stone: And though judgment is not speedily executed against transgressors, a time is coming when it shall; and when worse miseries will come upon them than can be inflicted here: He who acts the Saviour's part now, will be their Judge then, and they that reject him in the day of his mercy here, shall be rejected by him in the day of his wrath hereafter: O how will they then seek him in vain, and find that they cannot get to heaven to enjoy him there! But blessed be God that light is come into our world by Jesus Christ, who has given us a clear revelation of the Father, and of the way of salvation by the gospel, and enlightens dark souls by his Spirit: In an estrangement from him, whatsoever knowledge we pretend to have of God, we shall certainly wander in the dark to our own eternal perdition; but they that walk in his light, and follow his guidance, shall be preserved from the dominion of sin, and every dangerous error, and shall safely arrive at eternal life: He has said it, and shall he not perform it, who is a Divine Person, inseparable from the Father, and is the eternal *I am*, whose witness concerning himself is true, and of equal authority with the Father's; and who, in his mediatorial capacity, came from him, and is faithful to him, honours him, and is honoured by him? How safely may we abide by his testimony, and appeal to it, whenever any question may be moved concerning him, who is the same that he said of himself from the beginning! But how insufficient is all external evidence to bring an unregenerate carnal heart over to Christ! And O what blasphemous contradiction and reproach did he undergo from sinners! They shamefully dishonoured him, because he honoured his Father and reproved them; and they insulted him, as if he were a madman, and possessed with the devil, while they themselves were guilty of the greatest madness, and were actuated by the power of Satan: But his innocence was his protection; and with what meekness did he vindicate himself, and confute them! What signifies having *Abraham*, or any other godly persons for our fathers, if we are strangers to their spirit, faith, and holiness? And how monstrous is the hypocrisy, wickedness, and falsehood of some, that are descendants of religious parents, and pretend to claim under them, yea, that boast of their privileges, and even profess to believe in Christ himself! They are worldly while he is heavenly, and they naturally give a carnal turn to spiritual things; they cannot understand or receive his doctrine, because it is directly contrary to the corrupt dispositions of their own hearts; they are of their father the devil, and bear his likeness, as the father of lies and of all evil; they are under the worst of slavery to sin and Satan; they harden themselves again con-

victions

N O T E.

* This he probably did, either by hiding himself in the crowd of his friends, or miraculously casting a mist before his enemies eyes, that they could not distinguish him from others, and so departed from the temple, through the midst of the company, and got away unhurt.

victions of their guilt and danger; and if they believe not in Christ, they shall die in their sins, and shall be turned out of God's family, who will disown them to be his children! But O the happiness of true believers! His word abides with powerful influence in their hearts; they know the truth as it is in Jesus; they are of God, and bear the likeness of their heavenly Father; they hear Christ's words, and obtain the most excellent freedom from him; their earnest desires are after him, and they rejoice in the views that their faith gives them of him; they love him, and shall be delivered by him from all the miseries of eternal death; and they are the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, and the children of God, who shall dwell with the only begotten Son in his Father's house for ever.

C H A P. IX.

Christ gives sight to a man who was born blind, 1,—7. Several discourses on that occasion among the neighbours themselves, and between them and this poor man, 8,—12. Between the Pharisees and him, 13,—34. Between Christ and him, 35,—38. And between Christ and some of the Pharisees, 39,—41.

TEXT.

AND as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the forementioned things, Jesus, passing along with his disciples, observed a poor beggar, (*ver. 8.*) who was quite dark, and was known to have been born blind.

2 And the disciples, supposing that this affliction had befallen him as an extraordinary judgment, put a nice sort of question to their Lord about him saying, Master for whose fault was blindness from the birth, inflicted on this man? Was it for any uncommon sin of his own †? or for some remarkable crime of his parents, before he was born?

3 Jesus, to put a check upon a curious and censorious temper, replied ‡, Though all men are sinners, and

N O T E S.

* The discourses, in the two preceding chapters, were at the feast of tabernacles, (*chap. vii. 2.*) and it seems from *chap. x. 22.* (see the note there) that what follows in this, and the next chapter, was at the feast of dedication, which was about three months after the other, that being in *September*, and this in *December*: And yet the last chapter's ending, and this beginning with the same word, carries the face of a connection of events, one of which immediately succeeded the other. There it is said, *παρὰ πηγάς, he passed by*, here *καὶ παρὰ γὰρ, and passing by*, which we render, *and as he passed by*, he saw a man, &c. However, these parts of our Evangelist's history are closely connected, though the facts were not so in time; and it appears from *ver. 2, 8, 14.* that the *passing by*,

here mentioned, was not at the temple, as the former was, but in some other place, where his disciples were with him, and where this man sat begging; and that it was on the Sabbath-day.

† Their question seems to have related to some personal sin, which God foresaw this man would be guilty of, or which he might be supposed to have committed, either in the womb, or, according to the *Pythagorean* notion, in some state of pre-existence, or in some former body.

‡ The plain design of Christ here is, not to deny original sin, or say any thing about it; but only to reply to their suggestion, as if this man or his parents, were guilty of some greater sin than others: For it could no more be said, absolutely, that his parents had not actually

man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he appointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

ally sinned, than it could, that neither he, nor they were under the guilt and power of original sin.

* It is highly probable, that he did

and all affliction is the fruit of sin; yet the blindness with which this man was born, was not for any particular fault, that either he or his parents had been guilty of, more than others: But it was ordered, by the sovereign, wise, and holy providence of God, for the manifestation of his own glory, (*chap. xi. 4.*) in my exerting the divine power to work a miraculous cure on this miserable object, and thereby proving myself to be the Messiah, who am come to open the eyes of them that were born both corporally and spiritually blind.

4 I must therefore improve the present opportunity for giving this man his sight, as an emblem of my greater work of enlightening the minds of them that sit in darkness, for which my Father sent me: For as the day of man's life is the proper time for business, and he can do nothing for God, or the good of others, in the grave, to which he is hastening; so all the work I have to do, in my own person on earth, for the glory of my Father, and the benefit of mens souls and bodies, must be done out of hand, the time of my death coming on apace.

5 Accordingly, during my short abode in this lower world, I not only cure them that are corporally blind, but am risen upon it, as the Sun of righteousness, to communicate the light of truth, grace, and comfort to the souls of its inhabitants, in healing beams for spiritual sight.

6 Then the blessed Saviour proceeded to prevent this poor man with the blessings of his goodness: And as he could work by contrary means, as well as without any, and could exert the same Almighty power which at first *formed* the body of man *out of the dust of the ground*, (*Gen. ii. 7.*) he spat on the earth, and making a kind of soft clay, by a mixture of dust and spittle, spread it on the eyes of the blind man.

7 And, having done this, he ordered him to go and wash (*εις την κολυμβηθην*) at the pool of *Siloam*, (see the note on *Luke xiii. 4.*) which was a figure of the kingdom of *Judah*, and of Christ their King, (*! a. viii. 6.*) and which in the *Hebrew* language signifies *sent*, and so pointed to the Messiah, whom God would *send*: Accordingly the blind man, in dependence upon Christ's power, and in obedience to his command, went and washed his eyes * with those wa-

ters,

N O T E.

not go into the pool, but only washed his eyes with its water, his distemper being only in them; and so the preposition *εις* here signifies *at*.

ters, and immediately came away seeing, like other men.

8 The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him, that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

8 In the mean time Jesus withdrew; and at the man's returning with his eye-sight, his neighbours, that had long been acquainted with him, and others that had before seen and observed him to be stone-blind, were amazed at the sudden alteration made upon him; and talked one to another in a different manner about him: Some, not knowing what to think, said, by way of inquiry, Is not this the blind beggar, who used to sit here?

9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

9 Others said positively, This is the very same man: Others, unwilling to believe the miracle, said, He is indeed exceedingly like him; but one person may be like another, and surely it is impossible that this can be he, since there is no such thing as a man's being brought to his sight, all on a sudden, who was born blind: But the man himself, hearing their debates about him, declared to them all, for the honour of his great Benefactor, I really am the person, who was born blind, and used to beg for my livelihood.

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

10 Upon this they began to examine him closely, saying, If you are the man we mean, how comes it to pass that you, who was always blind from your birth to this day, should now see so perfectly, all at once? By what means was this done?

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus, made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

11 He replied, a certain person, named Jesus, came up to me, as I sat begging, and, taking pity on me, made a sort of soft clay, which he applied to mine eyes, and then ordered me to go and wash it off at the pool of *Siloam*: Accordingly I obeyed his command, hoping that it might have some good effect, and immediately found, to my joyful surprise, that I could see.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

12 Then some of the company asked *, Where is the man who did this? Let us know, that we may go and take the account from him. To which he answered, I really cannot tell; for I never saw him, he being gone before I returned with my eye-sight, and I have not heard of him since.

13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

13 Some of them being enraged, instead of rejoicing at the mercy shewn to him, who had been blind, brought him before the council, in which were many *Pharisees*, that, if possible, the miracle might be disproved, which had been wrought upon him.

14 And it was the

14 And they were the rather induced to do this, because

N O T E.

* The asked this either out of curiosity, to see the wonderful person who had wrought such a matchless miracle; or out of envy and ill-will against him,

for doing it on the Sabbath-day; (*ver.* 14.) or out of earnest desire to be themselves acquainted with him.

the Sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath-day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus made the clay, and cured the beggar of his blindness, which they superstitiously thought was a servile work, and a profanation of that holy day, and which they knew would incense the *Pharisees* against him.

15 As soon as the man came before the council, the *Pharisees* also hoping, that by their superior wisdom, they might catch something from him to render the whole affair suspicious, or to put some slur upon it, asked him, How, or by what means, he came to his sight? The man honestly replied, as before, Jesus came up to me, and, taking pity on me, spread a certain clay upon mine eyes, and then ordered me to go and wash them with the water of *Siloam*, which I accordingly did; and immediately thereupon, to my great surprize and joy, I could see every thing about me, as I now do.

16 The *Pharisees* being stunned at this answer, some of them, that were most inveterate in their enmity to Jesus, said, Whether this account of the matter be true or not, it is certain that he, who is spoken of as working the cure, cannot be a holy man, approved and sent of God, because he makes no conscience of observing the Sabbath, as appears by his doing these unlawful works on that day: But others of them who were not so rash in their temper, said, If we allow that Jesus wrought this wonderful cure, though it were on the Sabbath-day, we shall never overthrow his authority among the people: For it will be said, with a great deal of reason, How is it possible that any wicked man, who is disapproved of God, should perform any miracles, so great and merciful as this? Let us therefore more thoroughly examine the fact itself, and see whether there be no fraud in it: And so they were divided in their own judgment and debates about this affair.

17 Hereupon some of the council said to the man that had been blind, What is your opinion of this person, since, as you tell us, he has given you the use of your eyes? Did he really do it? If he did, what are your thoughts about him*? The man replied, From what experience I have had, and from the best judgment I am able to form upon it, I cannot but conclude that he is, at least, a holy prophet sent from God.

18 But

N O T E.

* These words may be taken either as a single question thus, What sayest thou of him, seeing that he has opened thine eyes? and so they may be considered as the question of some that had favourable thoughts of Christ, and took

the fact for granted: Or they may be considered as two questions thus, What sayest thou of him? Dost thou say that he has opened thine eyes? and therefore I have taken both senses into the paraphrase.

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

20 His parents answered them, and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age, ask him; he shall speak for himself.

22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age, ask him.

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

18 But some of these rulers of the Jews, finding that the man spake so much like a friend of Christ, would not believe that he was born blind, or had really received any cure from him, till they sent for his father and mother, that they might try what they could learn from them about him.

19 And when his parents appeared before them, they strictly examined them, saying, Let us hear what ye can tell us about this poor man? Do ye aver that this is your son, who, it seems, ye pretend was born blind? If ye are sure that this is he, we ask you, How came he to have his sight now? or by what means did he obtain it?

20 His parents, being poor and timorous, replied with great caution, We cannot but be sure that this is our own son, and have known to our sorrow, that he was stone-blind from his birth till this time.

21 But how, or by whose operation, he now is brought to his sight is as strange to us as it can be to you; we being absent when it was done: He is best able to give an account of these things himself, and is of competent years and understanding to do it: Be pleased therefore to inquire of him; no doubt but he will give you full satisfaction.

22 His parents, instead of having the gratitude and courage to own what they knew of the cure, shifted it off in this manner, because they were sinfully afraid of incurring the displeasure of the court: For they had heard that the Jewish sanhedrim had already shewn such a malicious spirit against Jesus, as to pass a law, that whoever should own him to be the Messiah, should be forbid entrance into the synagogue, and be excluded, as an apostate, from all the liberties and privileges of the church and commonwealth of Israel. (See the note on *ver.* 34.)

23 The man's parents therefore fearing, that, if they declared their own thoughts about Christ's having healed him, it might be construed as an intimation, that they believed him to be the Messiah, turned off the answer from themselves to their son, saying, He is old enough to speak for himself; please to take the account from his own mouth.

24 Then the council, finding that they could get nothing out of his father and mother, to disprove the miracle, applied again to the man who had been blind, saying, If you really was perfectly dark from your birth, and have been brought to your sight in the manner you speak of, it is a wonderful work of God, and you ought to give him the entire glory of it, and not think that Jesus contributed any thing toward it: For we are sure that he is a wicked man, for having

done, and ordered you to do such things on the Sabbath-day, as are a downright profanation of it. (ver. 16.)

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

25 The man replied, I do not take upon me to determine about his being a wicked man, or not, on account of his having, as ye say, broke the law of the Sabbath; if he be a transgressor, I do not know it*: But this one thing I am very sure of, that whereas I was quite blind all along from my birth before, I now clearly see.

26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

26 Then the council being at a loss what to say against the miracle, and yet resolved not to own it, re-examined the man, in hopes that, through surprize and fear, he might some way or other fault in his evidence: Therefore they said to him, Let us hear you rehearse over again what Jesus did to you, and in what manner you received your sight.

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

27 The man perceiving their obstinate and unreasonable prejudices, and that they only wanted to baffle him, answered them, I have already told you the whole of the case, as punctually as I was able, and ye would not be convinced or satisfied: To what purpose should I repeat the same things over again? What, Sirs, have ye at length a mind to become his disciples? If so, I would gladly tell you the delightful story as often as ye please; but if not, Why should ye desire to hear any more of it?

28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

28 Then the council, being highly provoked at these last words, broke out into a passion, and began to fall foul upon him, saying, in a contemptuous and taunting manner, We his disciples! No, we scorn your words: You indeed, as we suspected all along from your management, are one of this man's disciples; and none but such sorry wretches, as yourself, would ever own him; but we, whom you ought to receive as your guides in religion, and to treat with more reverence and respect, than to give us such a saucy answer, are the faithful disciples of *Moses*, stedfastly adhering to the doctrines of that great man of God, and famous lawgiver of *Israel*.

29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

29 We are well assured, by undoubted testimonies, that God himself spake to *Moses* face to face, and by him delivered the law to us: But as for this obscure, worthless fellow, (as they impiously called our blessed Lord) whom you are so fond of, and by whose deceits you are so easily imposed upon, none knows †

who

N O T E S.

* Thus the words may be rendered, (εἰ ἀμαρτωλὸς εἰμι ἢ οὐκ εἶδα) If he is a sinner I do not know it; thereby intimating that he had other thoughts of him.

† The people had a little before objected against Jesus's being the Messiah, because, said they, *We know this man whence he is; but when Christ comes, no man*

who or what he is, or from whom he received his pretended authority.

30 The man answered and said unto them, Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

31 Now, we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33 If this man were not of God he could do nothing.

34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether

30 The man replied, Why, Sirs, it is a surprising thing, that persons of your learning and sagacity should know nothing of his original and authority, and yet that he should so miraculously give me sight, who was born blind: 'Tis really amazing to me, that ye should count him a contemptible ill man, or should suppose that he has no authority from God.

31 For we all, and especially ye our rulers and teachers, are well assured, that God shews no peculiar favour to wicked men, and will not hear their prayers, while they carry on base designs against him; much less will he own impostors by giving them a power of working any miracles in confirmation of their doctrine: But if any man be a faithful servant of God, doing the things which are pleasing in his sight, we justly conclude that he will hear and honour him; and God's enabling a person to perform the greatest of miracles, as the professed credentials of his commission, has always been accounted an attestation from heaven, that he is a holy man, and a prophet of the Lord.

32 Now it is a wonderful miracle which Jesus has wrought upon me; and after all the inquiries I have been able to make, I could never hear, that any physician, by human art, or that *Moses* himself, or any other of the prophets, by supernatural operation, from the beginning of the world to this day, ever gave sight to one who was born blind, and continued perfectly dark till he arrived to man's estate.

33 If therefore Jesus were not a holy man, and a prophet sent from God, and owned by him, he could never have done any miraculous work, much less one so extraordinary, matchless, and merciful as this, in confirmation of his doctrine and authority: And, as far as I see, we must deny the divine commission of all the prophets that went before him, if we disown his.

34 The proud *Pharisees*, not being able to refute the man's close and pointed reasoning, nor to bear that such an one as he should presume in this manner

N O T E.

man knows whence he is. (Chap. vii. 27. see the note there.) And here the *Pharisees* object against him, be aule, say they. *we know not from whence he is:* So that, right or wrong, his enemies resolved to run him down, and, without any scruple, would talk contradictions to serve a turn, and affirm or deny the same thing, or any thing, rather than not op-

pose him. But the truth is, they all did, or easily might know his human original: And the unsearchableness of his generation as a Divine Person, *whose goings forth were of old from everlasting*, was so far from being an argument against, that it was an argument for his being the true Messiah.

together born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

manner to argue against them, lost all patience, and answered him with bitter reproaches, and in a huff, saying, You are a silly, rude, and base fellow, who have indeed had an uncommonly blind and vicious soul from your birth; and, if what you say of yourself be true, your coming into the world corporally blind, and ever since strolling about with loose and wicked beggars, has been a plain sign and punishment of it. And what! do you go about to dispute with and instruct us who are the guides and rulers of the church, and the chief men of the day for wisdom, sanctity, and authority? And having thus insulted and reviled him, they went even beyond the severe law which they had lately made against owning Jesus to be the Christ, (*ver.* 22.) and * excommunicated this man only for pleading that he was a prophet.

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

35 Our Lord hearing that they had cast the poor man out of the synagogue for his sake, took the first opportunity of seeking after him, (thereby shewing how forward he is to own and encourage them that stand up for him) and meeting with him, said, Do you believe in the promised Messiah, who is the Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

36 The man, glad to hear of the Messiah, replied, with great earnestness, Sir, I do verily believe that he will soon appear; and if he be already come, pray tell me which is he, and where I may find him, that I may fix my faith on him, and may be one of his disciples.

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

37 Then Jesus manifested himself to him as he did not to the world, saying, He is nearer to you than you are aware of; you have already experienced his great power and goodness, in opening the eyes of your body, and of your mind too; it is he, whom you now have seen, and who is conversing with you.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

38 Hereupon the poor man cried, in a rapture of joy, Lord, I do heartily believe, that thou art indeed the Son of God, and the only Saviour of *Israel*, who art come to open the eyes of the blind, and to give light to them that sit in darkness: And immediately, in testimony of his faith, he fell down before him, and paid divine adoration to him, as his Lord and Saviour.

D d d 3

39 And

N O T E.

* *Casting out of the synagogue*, signified excommunication, which was principally of two sorts among the *Jews*. One the less, called *Niddui*, which separated the party from the congregation and society of *Israel* four cubits, for thirty days. The other, called *Cherem*, was the greater, which excluded from

any entrance into the synagogue, and from all religious and civil privileges in the church and commonwealth of *Israel*. *Vid. Seld. de Synedr.* Lib. I. cap. vii. And when it is said of this man, *ἐξέκαλον αὐτον ἐξω*, *they cast him out*, it seems as if it were by the greater excommunication.

39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not, might see; and that they which see, might be made blind.

39 And Jesus, according to his custom of improving present occurrences, said, I am come into the world to establish a rule of judgment, to alter the state of the church, to try men's spirits, and by distinguishing grace to separate the precious from the vile: I am come, in the administration of my kingdom, to open not only men's bodily eyes, but likewise the eyes of their understanding, who are really ignorant of the way of salvation, and desirous to be taught it: And I am come, on the other hand, to prove them to be spiritually blind, and to seal them up under their own stupidity and perverseness, who pretend to be wise enough already, and therefore obstinately shut their eyes against the light of my word: Meaning, that thus it would be with respect to particular persons, *Pharisees* and others, and with respect to the nations of *Gentiles* and *Jews*.

40 And some of the Pharisees, which were with him, heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

40 Then some of the *Pharisees*, that were present and heard this, taking it as designed particularly against themselves, and as a gross affront and reflection upon them, said to him, in a way of disdain, What, dare you suggest that we, who are guides to the blind, and whose lips preserve knowledge, are as stupidly ignorant as the common people that know not the law?

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

41 Our Lord replied, If ye really were as ignorant, and as sensible of it, as many of them are, ye would, comparatively speaking, have no sin, or at least none so heinous, as ye now have in despising me; and ye would be in a hopeful way of deliverance from all your sins, through faith in me: But while ye are so self-conceited, as to imagine that ye know enough already, and need no further instruction, and so reject me, notwithstanding all that I have said and done among you, your sin is attended with the highest aggravations, and ye remain under its guilt and power, without any likelihood of its ever being removed.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How cautious should we be of indulging curiosity about God's dispensations, and of uncharitably censuring others, because of the afflictions that befall them! Though they are sinners in common with all mankind, they may be under no peculiarly aggravated guilt, more than others: But God is righteous in his most awful proceedings, and will turn them one way or other to his own glory. And O how wonderful is the power and grace of Christ toward the unworthy and the distressed! He prevents them with the riches of his goodness, and can easily work salvation for them in whatsoever way he pleases; but they are to observe his own appointments for it, in obedience to his authority, and in faith and hope of his making them effectual, whether they can see the reasons of his orders, and their likelihood to answer their end, or not. What blessed experience will he give such souls of his power and mercy! He will enable them to think and speak honourably of him, till at length he will plainly discover himself to them, and they shall be brought to adore and worship him; and if they are cast out of the favour of men for his sake, he will take them into his special care, and deal the more kindly with them. Happy souls, who were once blind, but now see! How ready should they be to own their former
deplorable

deplorable circumstances, and the wonderful change which Christ has made upon them! How should they rejoice in it, and abide by their testimony to him, whatsoever opposition and contempt others may shew in disputing against it! He will own and honour their words to the confusion of his enemies; and they themselves may hope to be still further acquainted with him. But they who, like the parents of the blind man, are afraid and shy of owning what they believe concerning Christ, have no room to think that he will own them. And O how inexcusable and dreadful is their condition, whose hearts are filled with enmity against him, notwithstanding the plainest testimonies that are given to him, and who, under pretence of sacred zeal for superstitious rites, and of giving all glory to God, upbraid the blessed Saviour himself! Though they may be silenced, they are never satisfied: And the higher evidence they receive, the more they are enraged: What can be expected, but that they should be delivered up by the righteous God to judicial blindness? And the higher opinion they have of their own understandings, the greater is their guilt, and their danger of never being enlightened in the things that belong to their everlasting peace. But what encouraging ground of hope is there for those that are truly sensible of their own ignorance, and need of instruction! Jesus, according to ancient prophecies of the Messiah, is come to open their blind eyes, and to give them the knowledge of himself: And they, being enlightened by him, should, after his example, be working for God, while their capacities, opportunities, and lives are continued, doing all that in them lies for his glory, and the good of others, before the night of death comes, which will put an end to all their services, as well as sufferings, in this world; and then the places that know them now, shall know them no more.

C H A P. X.

Christ the door and the shepherd of the sheep, 1,—18. Different opinions of the people concerning him, 19,—21. His disputes with the Jews about his being the Christ, and equal with God, 22,—38. His escaping their fury, and returning back beyond Jordan, 39,—42.

TEXT.

VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Saviour having reprov'd the *Pharisees* as blind guides, while they boasted of their knowledge and skill in the law, (*chap. ix. 39,—41.*) warn'd the people, in a parabolical way, against these and all such conceited false teachers, and directed them to himself, who had been traduced as an impostor. I, said he, the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, solemnly assure you, that as a man, who does not go in at the door of a sheepfold, but climbs over the fence, is justly deemed a thief, that comes to steal away, and destroy the sheep: So all that pretend to be pastors of the flock of God, which he gathers into his church, as his fold, and do not come into that office according to his appointment, but by methods of their own devising; all these are intruders and seducers, who, instead of feeding and taking care of the sheep, come to rob God of his authority over them, and property in them, and to pervert and destroy their souls.

2 But he that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

2 But as a man, who regularly goes in at the door of the sheepfold, to manage the sheep, is to be esteemed as their real shepherd: So he, who with right principles and ends, and in the method of God's appointment, enters upon the work of feeding and guiding the church, and leading them into the only true way of salvation, is qualified, and has a right to be their pastor; and he will take care of them, who may fitly be compared to sheep, as they are a peculiar property, a dear charge and living treasure; and as they are cleanly and tractable, meek and patient, harmless and cautious, timorous and exposed, and yet social and useful creatures.

3 As the door keeper gives ready admission to the shepherd, and his sheep are acquainted with his voice, who calls them by their several names, and leads them out to the pasture: So God gives all authority to the true Shepherd, and by his Spirit, and the ministry of his servants, opens the hearts of his people to receive him*; and they are taught to understand and distinguish his voice in the gospel: And, being his peculiar charge and property, he calls them by grace, one after another, as particularly as if it were by name; and then leads them into the good pasture, which he has provided for them in his word and ordinances.

4 And as when the shepherd brings forth his sheep, he, according to the custom of these eastern nations, walks before them, and they go after him, and are governed by him, because they are acquainted with his voice: So when the great Shepherd leads his own sheep in paths of righteousness, for their spiritual food and refreshment, he shews them the way they should go, by his own instruction and example, and they willingly yield themselves up to his authority, and tread in his steps, because they understand and approve of his teachings, and can distinguish them from all others.

5 But (*δε*) as the sheep will not go out after a strange man, but, on the contrary, will run away from him, because they are unacquainted with his voice, he being a stranger to them: So the people of God, who are chosen and called to be the sheep of his pasture, will by no means be prevailed upon to hearken and adhere to the unscriptural doctrines, and bad example of uncommissioned false teachers, that would pervert them; but will be upon their guard, and keep at the utmost distance from them, because they

N O T E.

* As some refer this to God the Father, others to his Spirit, and others to his ministering servants, I have taken them all into the paraphrase.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7 Then said Jesus unto them again. Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and

they perceive that their corrupt principles and practices do not lead them into the right way of salvation.

6 The blessed Jesus delivered himself in this parabolical strain to the *Pharisees*, designing thereby to set forth his own authority, and to overthrow theirs, together with that of all other corrupt teachers: But as he had not given a particular explication of his meaning, and they were extremely opinionated of themselves, and prejudiced against him, they did not take in the drift of his discourse.

7 Then our Lord further added, I, who am faithful and true, assure you, that I am the door of salvation, and of God's sheepfold; the only way to eternal life, and the only one, by whom ministers and people can have admission into the gospel-church, that the one may have authority to exercise office-power in it, and the other may be partakers of its spiritual privileges and saving benefits.

8 All that have arisen before me, with pretences to the Messiah's character; and all that, like the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, endeavour to prejudice their own, and other people's minds against me, and to teach other methods of salvation than by me *, are no better than invaders of an office which they have no right to, and robbers of my Father and me of our honour and our due, and destroyers of men's souls: But the elect and called of God were not deceived by them, so as to be drawn into perdition by the error of those wicked ones; nor could they find any satisfaction in following them.

9 I insist upon it, as a matter of the greatest importance, that I am the only true door of the church, and of eternal life: Whoever enters upon religion by faith in me, as the only Saviour, shall certainly be defended against the destroying power of all his spiritual enemies, shall be delivered from the wrath to come, and shall obtain eternal blessedness; and, while he is in this world, he, under the conduct of my word and Spirit, shall go to and from divine ordinances, and possess a holy liberty in them, and shall find spiritual support, nourishment, and refreshment to his soul by their means.

10 On the other hand, the false teacher, who vents pernicious errors, and has no commission from God, comes only to seduce my sheep, and steal away their hearts from me, that he may make a prey of them, to the murdering and ruining of their souls,

or

N O T E.

* This cannot be meant of the holy prophets, and *John the Baptist*, who preceded Christ in their ministry; for they were sent of God to their work, were faithful in it, and spoke of Christ as the only Saviour.

and that they might have it more abundantly.

or that, if he cannot carry them off from me, he may plunder and persecute them even to the death. But I am come into the world to shew them the way of obtaining a spiritual and immortal life, to purchase it for them, and to give it to them, that they may have it with more abundant evidence than it ever was revealed before, with more abundant cost to myself, and glory to my Father, and with more abundant excellence, eminence, and security to themselves, than can be said of the long life of prosperity that was promised to *Israel* in the land of *Canaan*, or even of the happy life that man enjoyed in *Paradise*; and I am come that they may have it more abundantly than they deserved, or could have expected, or were able to ask or think, (και περισσων εχουσιν) even with an overplus of the highest honour, advantage, and delight for ever, which is much more than barely living.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

11 Yea, I am not only the door of entrance, but am likewise, by way of eminence*, the good Shepherd, who am absolutely so, and the best of all others, even that great Shepherd of the sheep, who was spoken of in the prophets; (*Isa.* xl. 10, 11. and *Ezek.* xxxiv. 23.) and who lead and guide, defend and save my flock; I am not only ready to undergo hardships, and expose myself to dangers for their sake, as *Jacob*, did for the love he had to *Rachel*, (*Gen.* xxix. 20.) and as *David* did to rescue his lambs from the lion and the bear; (*1 Sam.* xvii. 34.) but I am freely willing to † lay down my own life for theirs, by dying in their room and stead, and so give my soul for theirs, by making it an offering for sin, that they may live for ever.

12 But he that is

12 But, on the contrary, whoever takes upon him

N O T E S.

* Though our Lord rebuked one for calling him *good Master*, while he took him to be no more than a man, saying, *Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God.* *Matt.* xix. 16, 17. Yet here he assumes this title of *goodness* to himself, to intimate that it is really his due, and that he is the God who alone is absolutely good: For the *good Shepherd* is as high and divine a title, as *good Master* can be supposed to be; and as *Christ* claims the first, he undoubtedly has an equal right to the last: And as *God* in the Old Testament is spoken of by way of eminence, as the shepherd of *Israel*; so *Christ* here speaks of himself under that relation to his people, with the additional epithet of *good*: And to shew that he did this in the most eminent sense of the expression, in

which it was peculiar to *God*, he says emphatically, *I am the good Shepherd*, in a way of singularity, and of preference to all others whatsoever.

† Ψυχην τεθησιν υπερ των προβατων, gives his life for the sheep, answers to what was prophesied of the Messiah, (*Isa.* liii. 10.) אִם תִּשְׂם נַפְשׁוֹ אֶת נַפְשׁוֹ אֶת נַפְשׁוֹ אֶת נַפְשׁוֹ When his soul shall make an offering for sin: And *Christ's* speaking here of laying down his own human soul, as a sacrifice for sin, intimates that he, as Lord of himself, resigned it unto sufferings, according to his Father's will, in a way of substitution, in the room and stead of his sheep, when he gave his life, or soul, a ransom for many, (Ψυχην αυτου λυτρον αυτου πολλων.) *Matth.* xx. 28.

is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even

him the pastoral office, with selfish worldly views*, and has not a real affectionate concern, like that which the owner has for his sheep; when at any time he finds an enemy approaching, with the craft, or the fury and cruelty of wolves, to break in upon the flock, by pernicious errors, or violent persecutions, he, instead of hazarding his own life, reputation, or secular interests, for their defence, will quit his post, fly from the danger, and leave them to shift for themselves; and so the enemy worries and tears, perverts and oppresses them, and makes an easy prey of them.

13 And the true reason why such a mercenary selfish pretender to this sacred office thus deserts them, in a time of the greatest need and danger, is, because he entered upon it merely for secular advantage, and does not care what becomes of the spiritual and eternal interests of those that were under his charge.

14 I say then, that I am, by way of eminence, the good Shepherd, in opposition to such an intruder, yea, and in preference to the best of under shepherds; and (*γινώσκω τα εμὰ*) I have a particular exact knowledge of all that are my peculiar property by my Father's gift, and my own purchase, and by their own free consent, who have already given themselves up to me; they are all under mine eye, and I observe them with † a tender regard and special care, that no enemy may destroy them: And, in consequence of this, I am the object of their notice and observation; they have a distinguishing knowledge of me and my doctrine, and they fiducially and affectionately embrace me, and hearken to it.

15 In this manner I know them, and am known by them ‡; even as God the Father has a perfect knowledge

N O T E S.

* The hireling cannot mean such faithful ministers as the Lord has ordained to live of the gospel, (1 Cor. ix. 14.) but it relates to such foolish and idol shepherds as are prophesied of, *Zech. xi. 15,—17.* And though what Christ here says about them is justly applicable to all worldly-minded preachers, that regard the fleece more than the flock; yet he seems particularly to point at the scribes and Pharisees: Accordingly the wolf will signify any enemy, who by fraud, or force, attacks the Christian's faith, liberty, or life.

† Knowledge is often put in scripture for an approving knowledge; as in *Psal. i. 6. The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous;* and *Psal. ci. 4. I will not*

know a wicked person; and *Matth. vii. 23. I never knew you:* At other times it is put for a fiducial knowledge, as in *Isa. liii. 11. By his knowledge, or the knowledge of him, shall my righteous servant justify many;* and *John xvii. 3. This is life eternal, that they might know thee, &c.* The first of these senses is to be taken into Christ's knowledge of his sheep; and both senses are included in their knowledge of him; and there is a mutual confidence, as well as affection, to be considered in the knowledge, that the Father and Son have of each other: Accordingly I have taken in all these meanings in this and the following verse.

‡ The construction of these words,

even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power

knowledge of me, and an entire affection to, and confidence in me, as one that will faithfully discharge the office of a good shepherd toward them, and as I myself am fully acquainted with him and his counsels, heartily love him, and delight to do his will, and am confident of his owning me in my work: And such is my love to my Father and my sheep, that I am freely willing and ready to lay down my life in their stead, that they may not die eternally.

16 And as I have already taken possession of some of them, and there are still more to be effectually called from among the *Jews*; so there are many others that the Father has given me among the *Gentiles*, who at present are *strangers from the commonwealth of Israel, and from the covenants of promise*; (Eph. ii. 12.) these also I must search and find out, and bring back to God, in faithfulness to my engagements for them, and in justice to my purchase of them; and they shall certainly, in due time, hear my voice in the ministry of the word, and be prevailed upon by my Spirit to attend to it: And, being grafted in by faith with the believing *Jews*, they shall make one church with them, as persons united together in the same faith and love, worship and obedience, in the same holy fellowship and profession, and in a participation of the same Spirit, and of the same blessings and privileges of the gospel, under my care and guidance, influence and government, as the one Shepherd spoken of in ancient prophecy. (*Ezek. xxxiv. 23.*)

17 This work is so agreeable to my Father's will, that, besides his infinite love to me as his only begotten Son, he has likewise a peculiar affection to, and delight in me, because such is my love to the sheep, whom he loves, and such my zeal for the manifestation of his glory in their salvation, that I cheerfully lay down my life for the expiation of their offences, * to this end that (*υπα*) I might rise again for their justification.

18 No man is able, by stratagem or force, to deprive me of my life, without my own consent; but I voluntarily lay it down, as mine own free act and deed: I have an original power and right in myself,

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καθως γινωσκει με ο πατηρ καθως γινωσκει τον πατερα, is, as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father; and so they refer to the foregoing verse, and are an illustration of the knowledge that is between Christ and his sheep, and an intimation that it is owing to that knowledge

which his Father has of him, and he has of the Father, with regard to his office of a shepherd to them.

* I think the connection of this verse, and the use of these phrases in other parts of scripture, sufficiently justify this sense.

power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil: can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

23 And

* Christ's receiving this commandment from his Father, is not to be considered as the *ground* of his having power to lay down his life, and to take it again; for this he had in himself, as Lord of his own life, who had an original right to dispose of it as he pleased, antecedent to the Father's command: But this commandment was the reason why he thus *used* his power in laying down his life: He did it in obedience to his Father; for he willingly accepted this commandment, *την εντολην ελαβον* as he delighted to do his Father's will herein, (*Psal.* xl. 8.) and *therefore his Father loved him*, as he hath said, (*ver.* 17.)

† This feast did not relate to the dedication of the temple by *Solomon*, nor to that which was made upon its being rebuilt by *Zerubbabel*: For there was no anniversary-festival appointed for either of these; and the first of them was in the month *Ethanim*, the seventh month, (*1 Kings* viii. 2.) which was in autumn, about our *September*; and the

self, both to deposit it as a ransom, (*εξισωσεν εχα θενου αυτην*) and to re-assume it after satisfaction is made by it: And as my Father has * ordered me, in the quality of a shepherd, to die for the redemption of the sheep, I readily yield obedience to his will therein.

19 Upon our Lord's saying these things, the Jews were mightily divided in their opinions among themselves, and went into warm debates about him, as they had once and again before, (*chap.* vii. 43. and ix. 16.) and as he foretold they would. (*Luke* xii. 51.)

20 Many of the company cried out with rage against him, saying, in a prophane and blasphemous manner, The devil is in this man, and he is certainly out of his wits: Why are ye so silly as to mind him? or how can ye have patience to hear what he says?

21 On the contrary, others that were well affected toward him, believing him at least to be a sober and holy man, said, The nature of his doctrine, and the manner of his talking, as well as the wonderful things he does, plainly shew that he is no demoniac. Who can imagine that it is the work of a devil to give sight to such as were born blind? (*Chap.* ix. 32.) No, no, A devil neither would, nor could do this: It must be owing to the almighty power of God.

22, 23 Now (*δε*) these things passed at *Jerusalem* at the time of a yearly solemnity, which was observed for eight days together by the Jews, in remembrance of *Judas Maccabeus's* † dedicating a new altar

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other was in the month *Adar*, (*Ezra* vi. 15, &c.) which was at the beginning of the spring; whereas this was in winter, and so evidently related to the dedication of the altar 2nd temple by *Judas Maccabeus*, who appointed an annual festival, in commemoration of it, to begin on the twenty-fifth day of the month *Cisleu*, which was about our *December*; an account of which we have at large, *1 Maccab.* iv. 18,—59, and *2 Maccab.* x. 1,—8. This was not an ordinance of divine institution, nor was the observation of it confined to *Jerusalem*; but it was a civil appointment, in remembrance of this dedication, as the feast of *Purim* was in remembrance of the Jews deliverance from *Haman's* conspiracy, (*Esth.* ix. 28.) And therefore Christ chose to be at *Jerusalem* then, not in honour of the days themselves, or to give a sanction to them as sacred time; for had he been so minded, he might have observed them any where else, as well as at *Jerusalem*: But he came thither

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26 But ye believe not; because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

tar to the Lord, and cleansing the temple, after they had been profaned by *Antiochus*. And this being in the winter-season, which was incommodious for walking abroad, Jesus took a turn among the people, who were got together, under covert, in a porch which was built, where one that was very sumptuous formerly stood in the first temple, and therefore was called *Solomon's porch* *.

24 Whilst our Lord was walking there, some of the *Jews* surrounding him, and designing to insult and ensnare him, rather than to be satisfied about him, said, How long will you continue to keep us in suspense, by talking ambiguously and figuratively of yourself, as the door of the sheep, and the good shepherd, and the like? If you be indeed anointed of God to the Messiah's office, as you seem to intimate, do not be afraid to speak out; but tell us in so many words freely and boldly. (*παρρησια*)

25 Jesus, knowing their crafty and malicious design, replied, I have said in plain terms what amounts to the strongest declarations of my being the Christ; (*chap. v. 20,—29.*) and yet such is your perverseness and infidelity, that ye will give no manner of credit to me: And I have not only said this, but have clearly demonstrated it by the divine and miraculous works, which I have wrought according to, and in confirmation of my commission from the Father.

26 But, after all, ye still continue to reject me by unbelief; and ye would do so, whatsoever plain declarations and demonstrations I were further to give you: For, as I know, and the event proves, ye are none of my † sheep, whom the Father has given me, and who, being drawn by the power of his effectual grace, *shall come to me*, as I told you. (*Chap. vi. 36, 37.*)

27 According

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at this time, that he might take the opportunity of preaching to the people, who were then assembled in great numbers at *Jerusalem*; as the apostles afterwards did for the like purpose, when they went to the *Jews* synagogues on their Sabbath, after the obligation of keeping a holy Sabbath to the Lord, was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week.

* Some have thought that the *Jewish* sanhedrim held their court, and were then sitting in this porch.

† As every good and holy, humble and teachable disposition is the fruit of faith: So if by sheep, as some would understand it, our Lord here meant such as

are of this excellent temper, he would rather have said of these persons, that they had not this good disposition, because they did not believe, than that they did not believe, because the temper of sheep was not found in them. And therefore I take the sheep to mean God's elect, who were from all eternity given to Christ, and, in consequence of that, are in due time drawn to him; and our blessed Lord, who was privy to his Father's counsel, knowing that these persons were none of that number, mentioned it as a *reason* to shew, that, being left to themselves, they would never believe in him, rather than as the *cause* of their not believing.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

27 According to what I then said, all that were by the Father's gift made my peculiar property, trust, and treasure, do, in the day of my bringing them back to God, (*ver.* 16.) attend to, distinguish, prize, and willingly obey the voice of my word and Spirit; and I distinctly know, observe, and love every one of them, and they readily follow my instruction and example as their great Shepherd, who go before them to lead them in paths of righteousness.

28 And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.

28 And I freely give unto them a sure right and title to an everlasting state of all possible happiness and glory, with real beginnings, earnest, and foretastes of it here, till I bring them to the complete enjoyment of it hereafter; and none of them shall ever, through their own weakness, unworthiness, or remaining corruptions, fall short of heaven, and sink into hell, there to perish for ever; (*ἢ μὴ ἀπολωνται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*) nor shall any artifice, power, or combination of men or devils, ever prevail to wrest them out of my protection, care, and keeping, who have fast hold of them.

29 My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all: and none is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

29 Nay, my heavenly Father, who loves them, and has a peculiar interest and propriety in them, and has committed them to me, as a dear charge, that I may bring them safe to glory, is (as every one must own) infinitely superior in wisdom and power to all their enemies that can possibly be against them: And ye may be sure that, whatever attempts are made upon them, (*ἰσθῆς*) none can be too hard for him, so as to defeat his designs of grace toward them, or entice or force them out of his almighty hands, who keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation.

30 I and my Father are one.

30 Now my Father's power and mine are the same, we being one in nature and perfections, as well as in will and design; and therefore he, as well as I, must be overcome, before any adversary can destroy them, whom we have agreed and determined to secure unto eternal life.

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

31 Then the *Jews* were incensed against him, as if he had talked blasphemy; and, after the manner of zealots, attempted to stone him to death, as they had before. (*Chap.* viii. 59.)

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

32 But our blessed Lord, seeing how furious they were, seriously expostulated with them, in a meek, calm, and touching manner, saying, Pray, why is all this heat and tumult? What have I done to provoke it? I have indeed wrought many great and merciful miracles among you, in confirmation of my character; I have fed multitudes of your own countrymen, when they were in danger of fainting for hunger;

hunger; have healed your sick and lame, have cleansed your lepers, have given sight to your blind, have cast out devils from poor creatures that were miserably tormented by them; yea, I have raised some of your dead to life again, and have always gone about doing good: Now for which of these compassionate acts of kindness, that exceeded the power of any other man to perform, do ye want to stone me to death? Is this the return I am to have for all my favours to you?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

33 The Jews replied, contrary to the sense of their own consciences, which could not but tell them that they really were provoked at his performing so many miracles, No, no, We do not go about to stone you for any good work, that you talk of: But, as by our law, (*Lev. xxiv. 16.*) a blasphemer of the name of the Lord is to be stoned to death; so we think you deserve it, for assuming to yourself the unalienable rights of deity, in that, being a mere man, you arrogantly and blasphemously pretend that God is your Father, in such a high and peculiar sense, as imports your being partaker of his divine nature and perfections, and being yourself God*.

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

34 Our blessed Lord, far from blaming them, as if they misconstrued his words, answered their cavil against them, in the just sense in which they had taken them, saying, How unreasonable is your being thus furious against me, for speaking of myself in these high terms, as that Son of God, who is God, one in nature with the Father? If ye look † into the scriptures, which ye profess to be guided by, do not ye find that God there says of your judges and rulers, who in their office were types of the Messiah ‡, *I have said ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High?* (*Psal. lxxxii. 6.*)

35, 36 If

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* This their construction of the meaning of Christ's words was right; otherwise, he undoubtedly would have corrected it; and had he been no more than a man, their reasoning against this sense of his expression was certainly just: But their great error lay in perversely disbelieving what he asserted concerning his own divine character, notwithstanding the demonstrations he had given of it by the plainest miracles, which he wrought in a Godlike way, and by frequent appeals to scripture-prophecies about it: And so they, in a blasphemous manner, falsely charged blasphemy on him.

† The law is here used, in a lax sense,

for all the Old Testament-scriptures, as it also is in *chap. xii. 31. and xv. 25.*

‡ The sense in which interpreters have usually considered the term *gods* in this place, as signifying magistrates in general, has, I think, misled them in their account of this and the following verses, and very much sunk and embarrassed Christ's argument in them; and is hardly reconcileable to any tolerable sense of his reasoning from thence, that *the scripture cannot be broken.* (*ver. 35.*) It seems therefore to me, that the persons here spoken of, under the title of *gods*, are not, as has been commonly thought, magistrates barely considered as such, on account of their resembling God's

35 If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

35, 36 If then he styled those magistrates gods, because by his own immediate word he had committed the legal administration of the church and nation of *Israel* to them, as types and shadows of the Messiah; and if the inspired writings, which thus speak concerning them, cannot be falsified, but must needs be fulfilled in the Messiah's really possessing the divine dignity, that answers to the high title under which they prefigured him; how perverse and daring is it in you to charge blasphemy upon me, for applying terms proper to deity to myself, as signifying my oneness in nature and perfections with the Father? Since I am the great antitype and substance of those types and shadows, and am in truth what they were only in name; and since I was set apart*, and constituted by my Father in his eternal counsels, and at length was sent into the world, to exercise all authority, as the true Messiah, which can be affirmed of none but the eternal Son of God.

37 I

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God's dominion in the exercise of their power, or acting therein by authority and commission from him. I much question whether the title of *gods* is ever given in scripture to magistrates in common; but, as I apprehend, it relates only to *Jewish* magistrates, that were typical of Christ, whose authority was shadowed out by that which they exercised in the commonwealth and church of *Israel*, and to whom it was to be transferred, when he should appear to set up his kingdom in the world; and so this denomination is not merely metaphorical, but is also typical. Thus God said to *Moses*, who was a typical mediator between himself and *Israel*, and spoke immediately from God, *Thou shalt be to Aaron instead of God*, and *I have made thee a god to Pharaoh*, *Exod. iv. 16. and vii. 1.* And afterward the *Jewish* rulers, that sat in *Moses's* seat, were called gods, (*Exod. xxii. 28.*) *Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.* So if *Psal. cxxxviii. 1.* is to be understood, not of angels, but men, *David* there seems to refer to the ecclesiastical rulers, saying, *Before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.* (*Vid. Gloss. Rhet. pars prima, cap. X. p. 216. and Cocc. in loc.*) And *Psal. lxxxii. 6.* the place quoted by our Lord, *I have said ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High*, seems to be spoken directly with a typical view to Christ; for immediately afterwards our thoughts are carried onward to him, as the great God and ruler of all, *ver. 8.*

where the *Psalmist* says, *Arise, O God, judge the earth; for thou shalt inherit all nations*, which plainly points to the Messiah, who was to have *the beathens parts of the earth for his possession*, (*Psal. ii. 8.*) and *who is governor among the nations.* (*Psal. xxii. 28.*) And perhaps it was with a prophetic aspect upon the debates between Christ and the *Jewish* rulers, that it was said (*ver. 1.* of that *lxxxiiid psalm*) *God stands in the congregation of the mighty, he judges among the gods.* However, that our Lord, in the place before us, referred to *Jewish* magistrates, appears from his saying, (*ver. 35.*) that *the word of God came to them*, which intimates, that it was by the commission and appointment of God, as made known to some of them in an immediate and extraordinary manner, that the magistratic authority was committed to them, till the great *Shiloh* should come to exercise his office-power, which was prefigured by theirs. And so Christ's way of arguing stands, I think, in a natural, clear, and beautiful light, according to the sense given of it in the paraphrase on this and the following verse. *Vid. Lamp. in loc.*

* I take the Father's sanctifying Christ, in this place, to relate particularly to his setting him up as Mediator from everlasting, (*Prov. viii. 23.*) because it is mentioned as preceding his sending him into the world.

37 If I do not the works of my Father; believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.

39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

40 And went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

37 I furthermore appeal to the miracles I have wrought to justify my divine character: If I do not perform as great and glorious works, and that in as Godlike a way as could be expected from my Father himself; if they are not so superior, and contrary to the course and laws of nature, that I could not possibly perform them by any other power than that which is in the Father himself; I do not desire you to receive me as the Son of God, and the Saviour of *Israel*, or to give any credit to what I say about my being one with the Father.

38 But if ye cannot deny that I do such works as are peculiar to God, and that in such a manner as none but God himself could do them; then, though ye have no regard to my person or doctrine, and will give no credit to my testimony for its own sake; yet submit to the plain and unexceptionable evidence of my miracles, that ye may be convinced and satisfied, that my Father and I, though distinct persons, have communion in Godhead, as being essentially one in the other, which is the same thing with what I said about my Father's and my being one.

39 Our Lord having thus plainly and unanswerably maintained his assertion, the *Jews*, instead of receiving conviction, fired at him so much the more; and therefore renewed their attempt to seize him by open violence, that they might either stone him to death tumultuously, or might prosecute him in their ecclesiastical court, as a blasphemer, who stood to his claim of deity; or in their civil court, as an enemy to the *Roman* government: But, his time not being yet come, he easily, by the management of his own wisdom and power, got clear of them.

40 And he immediately left *Jerusalem*, and, crossing over *Jordan*; retired to *Bethabara*. which was a solitary part of the country, where *John* began his ministry and baptism, and had given a public and honourable testimony to him; (*chap. i. 28, 29.*) and there he continued preaching, and doing good for some time.

41 And whilst he abode at this place, the people hearing of him, multitudes flocked to him; and recollecting what *John* had done and said among them, about three years before, they reasoned upon it in their own minds, and one with another in this manner, saying, Though *John the Baptist* was such an extraordinary great and holy prophet, that, had not he himself denied it, we should have believed him to be the *Messiah* *; yet he never wrought any one miracle

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* The miracle of *John's* conception, and of his father *Zachary's* being struck dumb,

miracle amongst us : But, said they, we now see that many, and no doubt but all the great things are to a tittle true, which we well remember he said concerning this person, who rises in his glory, and preaches such excellent doctrine, and does such wonderful works amongst us.

42 And many believed on him there.

42 And though he was so generally rejected by the great and learned, rich and noble in *Jerusalem* and *Judea*; yet among these poor country-people, great numbers of them, that spoke thus honourably of him, heartily embraced him, and became his disciples.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

With what shining evidence does Jesus appear in his divine and office-characters! All the shadows of divinity in *Jewish* typical magistrates are fulfilled in him, as the true God; his wonderful works, which he performed with sovereign majesty, and by his own power, are convincing proofs of it; and all that the scriptures predicted, or prefigured about it, center in him; for they cannot be broken. O how shocking is it for any to charge the true sense of his assertions with blasphemy, as they ascribe proper deity to him! And how indispensibly necessary is this divine Saviour to us, who is our only way to God and glory, and is that good Shepherd of the sheep, through whom they obtain holy liberty and delight, spiritual refreshments, and rich supplies of all their wants, in paths of righteousness here, and who gives them eternal life, to be fully enjoyed hereafter, with such abundance of glory and blessedness, as is matchless and unspeakable, and never could have been possessed in any other way whatsoever! He is absolutely good in himself, and relatively good to them; has taken the charge of them, and has a peculiar propriety in them; and, in the greatness of his love, has laid down his own life for them, as one who had power in himself to resign and resume it; and did both, as the Messiah, in obedience to his Father's will, that he might redeem them: And with what faithfulness, wisdom, and grace, does he search and find them out, and bring them into his fold; and what an exact and particular notice does he take of every one of them! How does he guide and govern them, defend them from all their spiritual enemies, deliver them out of every danger, and go before them, that he may lead them, through sufferings and death, safe to glory! Who can ever destroy them that are in his Almighty hands, since he is one in nature and perfections with the Father, who has given them to him, and concurs with him in securing them? And as he thoroughly knows the Father, and delights to do his will; so the Father loves and owns him, as his trusty servant, and has an entire confidence in him, that nothing shall miscarry under his hand. How short do the best of under-shepherds fall of him? And how injurious to his flock are all that teach any other way of salvation than by him! They, having no commission from him, set themselves up against his authority, seek their own secular interests, ease, and honour, and degenerate into ravening wolves, that fright and scatter, wound and endeavour to destroy his sheep, instead of standing by them! But how much soever some may oppose and revile him, and prove themselves to be none of his sheep, by finally rejecting him; he has a chosen people, that shall hear, understand, and distinguish his voice, and follow him, that shall fly from corrupt teachers, as for the life of their souls, and shall re-

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dumb, and not speaking again till after his birth, and the miraculous appearance and voice from heaven at *Jordan*, when he baptized Jesus, were, together with his holy life, sufficient to gain credit to his doctrine; for it contained nothing new, or extraordinary, more than his reminding the people of ancient prophe-

cies concerning the Messiah, and pointing them to him, whose miracles were an abundant confirmation, both of his own and of *John's* doctrine concerning him. And it was fit that this honour should be reserved for the Messiah himself, as one distinguishing mark of his superiority to his forerunner.

lish the pure doctrines of Christ: He will have a people to believe in him, and honour him, if not among the great and learned, and mighty ones of the earth, yet among people of lower rank, and among *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, who shall be to the Lord for a name, and a praise through all generations.

C H A P. XI.

The tidings which Christ received of Lazarus's sickness, 1,—16. The visit he made to his sisters, when he heard of his death, 17,—32. His raising him from the dead, 33,—44. And the effect of this on different sorts of persons, 45,—57.

TEXT.

NOW a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW, whilst our Lord continued preaching beyond *Jordan*, (*chap. x. 40.*) a man, whose name was *Lazarus*, lay dangerously sick at a little village, near *Jerusalem*, called *Bethany*; and two of his sisters dwelt there with him, one of which was named *Mary*, and the other *Martha*.

2 This *Mary*, whose brother *Lazarus* was so extremely weak, was a woman of extraordinary piety and affection to Christ, being the same person, who afterwards, (*chap. xii. 3.* see the note on *Matth. xxvi. 6.*) at a public entertainment, anointed his feet with costly ointment; and, instead of a towel, wiped them with her own hair.

3 These sisters therefore, being much acquainted with Jesus*, and having great faith in his power and goodness, sent to him, saying, Lord, we hearing where thou wert, and knowing that thou hast a great love for our dear brother *Lazarus*, could not but in duty to thee, and tender concern for him, dispatch a messenger on purpose to tell thee, that he labours under a very threatening illness, and, with humble submission, to refer his affecting case to thy wisdom and compassion, without presuming to prescribe to thee.

4 When our blessed Saviour had received this account, he said †, This distemper shall not finally issue in death; but is designed to afford a special occasion for the manifestation of God's perfections by me, that I, his eternal Son, may exert the divine power and goodness, and thereby confirm my commission in a more remarkable and convincing manner, than by immediately curing this mortal disease.

5, 6 Now

N O T E S.

* It seems that he used to be entertained at their house, when he came up to the seats at *Jerusalem*.

† He probably said this to the messen-

ger, or at least in his hearing, that he might report it to the afflicted family for their comfort, and for the trial of their faith, whilst he nevertheless delayed going to them.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again.

8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again.

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

5, 6 Now *Martha* and her sister, as well as their brother, were exceeding dear to their Lord; he therefore, waiting for the fittest opportunity to be gracious, continued two days where he then was, after he heard of *Lazarus's* sickness, without taking any further notice of it, that he might try and improve their faith and patience, and might in due time manifest his love to them in such a way as would best recommend it, and give them the sweetest relish of it.

7 Then, after the expiration of those two days, he, in pursuit of the kind designs of his heart to the afflicted family at *Bethany*, said to his disciples that were with him, Come, let us now take a turn again into *Judea*.

8 The disciples not understanding what he intended to do there, nor considering how easily he could save himself from the power of his enemies, said to him, Master; what means this surprizing motion? We remember with great concern, as if it were (127) but now, that the *Jews* in those parts were, not long since, so malicious and outrageous against thee, that they said would have stoned thee to death. (*Chap. x. 31.*) And what, shall such base unworthy wretches have the honour and the privilege of thy presence again? and wilt thou so soon expose thyself and us to the utmost danger among them?

9 Jesus replied, Alas! where is your faith, who lately saw how easily I escaped out of their hands? Is not your day divided into twelve hours, * which are allotted for labour and service? Now whilst a traveller pursues his journey and business in its proper season, having the light of the sun to direct him, there is no great danger of his stumbling, and by that means falling short of his design: So the appointed time of my life is my opportunity for finishing the work my Father gave me to do; and the knowledge I have of his will is the light that guides me in it; and as long as this time lasts, there is no danger of my being overpowered by mine enemies.

10 But if a man would travel out of season, in the night, no wonder that for want of the light of the sun, he stumbles and falls, and cannot get forward in his way: So when my work is done, and the time determined of the Father for my death is come, I shall no longer deliver myself from mine enemies, but shall fall by their hands.

F f f 2

11 Our

N O T E.

* *Judca* being about twenty degrees nearer the equator than *Great Britain* is, their days were more nearly equal than ours; and so they generally reck-

oned them to consist of twelve hours, we also do, when we speak of a day's work.

11 These things said he : and after that, he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth : but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death : but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there : (to the intent ye may believe) nevertheless, let us go unto him.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

11 Our Lord having said these things to silence their objections, and take off their fears, proceeded to open his design in going back to *Judea*, saying, I, who know all things at a distance, as well as nigh at hand, assure you that our dear friend *Lazarus* is now fallen into a deep sleep ; but I am going to rouse and awake him : By which he meant that *Lazarus* was really dead, and that he would raise him again to life, which was as easy for him to do, as to awake a man out of his sleep.

12 The disciples replied, Lord, we are glad to hear of such a favourable symptom in his case ; for if he is got to sleep, there is good reason to hope that he may recover, without thy taking the trouble, and exposing thyself to the danger of going to heal him.

13 But they mistook the true sense of Christ's words, who obviously enough spoke of his being really dead, under the notion of a sleep, as death was often called in scripture ; and yet they unthinkingly supposed him only to mean, that he was taking his natural rest in sleep, which was like to do him more good than harm.

14 Then the meek and humble Jesus, instead of upbraiding them for their stupid misconstruction of such an easy and well-known metaphor, bore with their infirmity, and told them expressly that *Lazarus* was really dead.

15 And it is very pleasing to me, said he, that I was not with him before he died, since ye may now have an higher confirmation of your faith in me, than barely curing his distemper would have been : I could then have healed him, and even now at this distance could easily raise him from the dead ; however, that the divine work may appear before you, and many other eye-witnesses, to be of my own doing, let us go to his grave.

16 Then *Thomas*, one of the twelve apostles, who was also called *Didymus**, said to the rest of his fellow-disciples then present, Since our great Master is resolved to run this risque, come, let us all go along with him, that if he should be seized and stoned, or some other way killed, we may take our lot with him for life, and death, and eternity : For what signify our lives on earth, if once we lose him ?

17 By

N O T E.

* *Thomas* in the *Hebrew*, and *Didymus*, in the *Greek*, signify a twin ; and probably this name was given him, because he was a twin-brother : And perhaps, as some think, his being three times spoken of in this Gospel with this

interpretation of his name in the *Greek*, as here and chap. xx. 24. and xxi. 2. might be to intimate that he bore twins of different qualities, like *Jacob* and *Esau*, in his heart, he being sometimes believing, and at others full of unbelief.

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

18 (Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

17 By the time that Jesus, coming with his disciples from beyond *Jordan*, (chap. x. 40.) arrived at a place near *Bethany*, (ver. 30.) *Lazarus* had been dead, (ver. 39.) and laid in his sepulchre, no less than four days, the *Jews* being wont to bury persons as soon as possible after their death. (*Acts* v. 5, 10.)

18, 19 Now *Bethany* was a little less than two miles distant from *Jerusalem*; and, it being so near that city, a great many friends were making their visit at the house of mourning, to condole with the two disconsolate sisters, *Martha* and *Mary*, and to soften their grief, as well as they could, under the very affecting loss of so dear and valuable a brother.

20 While they were thus together, tidings were privately brought to *Martha*, that Jesus was just at hand; upon which, she immediately left the company, and went out, to testify her respect to him, and bid him welcome *: But, *Mary*, who as yet knew nothing of the matter, (ver. 28.) continued with her friends in the house.

21 As soon as *Martha* came to Jesus, she, in the midst of overwhelming grief and distress, said to him, Ah, Lord, how happy would it have been for us, if thou hadst been so kind as to come hither, when we sent word of our brother's sickness! I am persuaded that his miserable case would have moved thy compassion, and that thou couldst easily have prevented his death, and all the dismal sorrows occasioned by it.

22 However, let me not indulge my passions too far: I am well satisfied thou hast such an entire interest with God, that whatsoever thou shalt still desire him to do, for making up this great loss, he will grant it †; and therefore I wholly refer myself to thy wisdom and favour.

23 Our blessed Lord observing that there were some low workings of faith in her, and pitying her on account of its weakness, and of her present distress, said, for her support and comfort, though without explaining particularly what he meant, Come, cheer up; your brother shall certainly rise again from the dead.

24 *Martha*

N O T E S.

* And some suppose that she went to tell him what a company of *Jews* were in the house, that he might use his prudence in coming among them, or not.

† *Martha's* faith was very defective, in thinking that Christ could not prevent her brother's dying, when at a distance,

and in not going so far, as to rest upon his own power for making up this loss; nor does it seem to me that she as yet had much, if any hope, of her brother's being raised from the dead, though she might believe that God was able, and that, if Christ saw fit to ask it, he would do it.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;

26 And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

24 *Martha* answered, Truth, Lord, I firmly believe that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; (*Acts* xxiv. 15.) and that my good brother shall bear a glorious part among the rising saints at the end of time. This is indeed a great comfort to us; but alas! it exceedingly troubleth us to think, that we have lost the pleasure and the benefit of his agreeable company, that he who was the strength and glory of our family, and might have kept up its name in *Israel*, is gone, and that we shall never see him in this world any more.

25 Christ replied, Whereas you only speak of God's giving me whatsoever I ask of him, Be assured that I have life in myself, and, as the efficient cause of the resurrection, and of every kind of life, quicken whom I will. (*Chap.* v. 21, 26.) And though the believer in me must die, as well as other men, yea, even supposing him to be already literally dead, as your brother now is; yet his body, as well as soul, shall live again in a better world, and, if I please, in this world too.

26 And whoever is now living upon earth, and being quickened to a spiritual life, believes in me, (*ὁ μὴ ἀποθάνει εἰς τὴν αἰῶνα*) shall not die for ever, by undergoing the second death; nor shall his body always continue in the state of the dead, but I will raise him up at the last day. (*Chap.* vi. 40.) Dost thou heartily assent and consent to this important truth concerning me, and them that believe in me?

27 *Martha* answered him, Yea, Lord, I am fully persuaded that thou art the true Messiah, even the Son of the living God, who was spoken of by way of eminence, as (*ὁ σπεγόμενος*) he that cometh, and who, according to ancient prophecies, is now generally expected to appear in the world; and I believe that all the powers belonging to this divine Saviour are in thee.

28 And immediately, upon having thus expressed her faith in him, she hastened back to her sister *Mary*; and whispering in her ear, that the rest of the company, who were enemies to Christ, might not hear her, said, I have joyful tidings to tell you, The Lord Jesus, whom we own for our great Master, is at the town's end, and asks very kindly and particularly for you.

29 *Mary* no sooner heard this, but, in the fervour of her affection to Christ, she sprung up from her seat; and, leaving her friends, ran with all speed to meet him, from whom she, like a truly gracious soul, expected and found greater comfort, than they all together could minister to her.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave, to weep there.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

30 Now Jesus, to avoid all appearance of ostentation by gathering a company about him, and to shew how ready he was to do the great and good work for which he came thither, had not entered into the village, but continued at the same place where *Martha* at first met with him.

31 As soon as *Mary* got up, and went out with such eagerness and haste, her condoling friends imagined, that, in the excess of her grief, she was gone to indulge, aggravate, and vent her passions, at the grave of the deceased; and therefore (or) they immediately followed her, designing, if possible, to restrain and pacify her: But, instead of her going thither, they found she went another way till she came to Jesus; and so they were insensibly led to him, and made eye-witnesses of the miracle that he was about to perform.

32 When *Mary* came up to Jesus, and saw him, she, in floods of tears, threw herself down at his feet, in testimony of her humble submission to him, and profound reverence of him, saying, as *Martha* had before, (*ver.* 21.) Ah, Lord, how much have we suffered for want of thy presence! If thou hadst but been here when our dear brother lay sick, I am well satisfied thou wouldst have commiserated him and us, and couldst easily have prevented his death.

33 When therefore the holy Jesus saw how bitterly she, and the attending *Jews*, lamented and wept on this occasion, he was exceedingly touched and moved in his own spirit, partly with compassionate grief and displeasure at the inordinate excess of *Mary's* sorrowing even in his presence, and at the weakness of her faith; and partly with holy indignation at the unbelief and hardness of the hearts of her friends*, and with a human pity, in prospect of the miseries that would come upon them, who he knew were cruel enemies to him, while they shewed so much humanity and tenderness toward her: And, as he had an absolute command of his passions, (*εταράξεν εαυτον*) he awakened a due commotion in his own mind on these accounts.

34 And,

N O T E.

* As the words *ἐταράξατο τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ*, here rendered, *he groaned in spirit*, properly signify to lament or groan with anger and indignation: So it seems to argue too much weakness in our Lord's passions, to suppose that he was thus exceedingly grieved and troubled, merely in a way of sympathy with *Mary* and her friends, on account of their lamentations at their loss, since he designed immediately to repair it, and to turn their mourning into joy, by raising *Lazarus*

from the dead: But as it was no unusual thing for Christ to be affected with grief and anger at the sin and folly, unbelief and hardness of persons hearts, and with sorrow in the prospect of approaching miseries, (*Mark* iii. 5. and xvi. 14. *John* xiii. 21. and *Luke* xix. 41, 42.) So the considerations that I have taken into the Paraphrase, seem to be natural, and were every way worthy of his compassionate and displeas'd resentments, and best suit the following context.

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They lay unto him, Lord, come and see.

35 Jesus wept.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him.

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

34 And, that there might not be the least appearance of collusion between him and the mourning relations, he asked them in what tomb they had placed *Lazarus's* corpse? They replied, Lord, If you please to come along with us, we will shew you where he lies.

35 Jesus accordingly went with them; and, as he was going, a consideration of all the moving circumstances, then before him, so affected his heart, that, being a man of like natural, though sinless, passions with ourselves, his eyes ran down with tears of grief.

36 Then the *Jews* observing it, some of them said to others in a sort of surprise, See how affectionately Jesus loved *Lazarus*! He seems to weep heartily for him.

37 But (½) others of them said, in a way of reflection upon him, If this man, as is reported, (*chap. ix. 6, —20.*) restored one to sight who was born blind, could he not as easily have prevented the death of his friend, for the loss of whom he now discovers so great concern? He certainly would, if he could: We may therefore conclude that story to be all sham, and that there was really nothing in it.

38 Jesus therefore knowing what perverse and unbelieving prejudices were vented among themselves, was much affected again in his own spirit, fetching a deep sigh, with compassionate grief and holy indignation, as before. (*ver. 33.*) And this was just as he arrived at the sepulchre, where *Lazarus* lay, which was a cave*; and a great stone, as usual, was laid at its mouth to inclose it.

39 Then our Lord ordered some of the standers by to roll the great stone away from the mouth of the cave, that he might not work a needless miracle, and that the dead carcase might be seen and smelt by the spectators: Hereupon *Martha*, the sister of the deceased, little thinking what he intended to do, said to him, Lord, Why should your affection carry you so far, as once to desire to see the dead corpse now? It doubtless by this time begins to putrify, and will be very offensive by its noisome stench: For my brother has been dead, and buried, (*ver. 17.*) these

N O T E.

* Perhaps this custom of burying in caves might be in imitation of the burial of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and their wives, in the cave of *Machpelah*. (*Gen. xlix. 29, 30, 31.*) These caves for persons of distinction, as *Lazarus* seems to have been, were commonly in rocks, which abounded in that country: In some of

these there were natural caverns fit for this purpose, and others were cut out by art, as *Joseph of Arimathea's* was, where the body of our Lord was laid. (*Matth. xxvii. 60.*) And the entrance of these caves was shut up with a great stone, which sometimes had a monumental inscription upon it.

these four days; and it is now too late to hope for a revival, or for any pleasure in seeing him.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?

40 But Jesus, in reply, gave her a gentle reproof for her unbelief, and yet encouraged the little faith she had, saying, Did I not promise you, that, in case of your relying on my power and goodness, who am the resurrection and the life to them that believe in me, you should see a glorious display of the divine perfections in what I would do on this occasion *?

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lift up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

41 Then, *Martha* desisting from any further opposition, some of the people removed the stone from the mouth of the cave, where the dead corpse lay: And Jesus, looking up toward heaven in a solemn manner, said, in their hearing, O my Father †, I bless thy name, that, by the disposals of thy providence, thou hast granted my desire of this remarkable opportunity for exerting my power, and shewing forth thy praise.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

42 I indeed (*dei*) ever was, and still am, absolutely sure of thy answering every request that I can make, my will being always regulated by my perfect knowledge of thine: But my addressing thee, in this public manner, is merely for the sake of the people here present, that my disciples may be fully assured, and that others may be encouraged to believe that I am the true Messiah, whom thou hast sent.

43 And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud

43 And having said these words, he, standing without the sepulchre, did not thereupon peep and mutter an unintelligible jargon, like a necromancer,

or

N O T E S.

* It seems by this, that Christ had said more to *Martha* than is before recorded, when she first met him, and when he put it to her, (*ver.* 25, 26.) whether she believed what he had declared about his being the resurrection and the life, and about a believer's living, though he were dead.

† For understanding this and the two following verses, it may be of use to observe, that here is no appearance of Christ's having prayed to his Father for power to perform the miracle which he was going to work; nor was there any occasion for it, he having before said of himself, I am the resurrection and the life, (*ver.* 25.) and declared, (*chap.* v. 21, 26.) that he *had life in himself*, and *quickeneth whom he would*. His divine nature was undoubtedly sufficient for this; accordingly when he told his disciples of *Lazarus's* death, he said, (*ver.* 11.) *I go that I may awake him*; and in working the miracle itself, there is not the least shew of his applying to the

Father for assistance, or taking any notice of him: But he managed it with an air of absolute sovereignty, like the Lord of life and death, saying, with the authority and majesty of a God, *Lazarus, come forth*, as we shall see, *ver.* 43. And therefore I take it, that this thanksgiving to his Father was for the opportunity that Christ had prayed might be given him to work this miracle, in such remarkably advantageous circumstances, by his Father's ordering that *Lazarus* should die, and that so many persons of note should be brought together on that occasion, who, with his own disciples, were to be eye-witnesses of his raising *Lazarus* from the dead, for the establishment of his own character, and the advancement of his Father's glory: With regard to which he had said to his disciples, (*ver.* 4, 15.) *This sickness is—for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby: And I am glad for your sakes, that I was not there, so the intent that ye may believe.*

loud voice. Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doth many miracles.

48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans

or dealer with familiar spirits; (*Isa. viii. 19.*) but spoke out with a distinct and elevated voice, to intimate the awakening power that attended it, saying, without any mention of his Father's name, but with the majesty of God himself, *Lazarus*, I command thee to come hither.

44 And so powerful was this word of command, that the dead man, being instantly made alive, came out of the sepulchre, in his burial dress, (*Acts v. 6.*) his hands and feet being wrapped up, and rolled about with swaddling bands, and his eyes blinded with a linen cloth, which was bound about his head *: And when *Lazarus* came forth in this confined posture, Jesus ordered some of the company to set his hands and feet at liberty, no miracle being needful for this, that he might walk home.

45 This was such an incontestable and uncommon miracle, that many of those *Jews*, who had come to comfort *Mary*, together with *Martha*, (*ver. 19.*) under her loss, were thereby induced to believe in him.

46 But others of them, though they could not deny the truth of the miracle, were so obstinately and maliciously set against Christ, that, instead of believing in him, they were so much the more provoked to think, how this would raise his reputation and authority among the people; and therefore they went immediately to the *Pharisees*, his most inveterate enemies, to tell them what had passed, that they might enter into effectual measures for putting a stop to him.

47 Then the *Pharisees*, being alarmed at this information, agreed with some of the chief priests to summon a council, in which they gathered together to consult against the Lord, and his Anointed, as was prophesied, (*Psal. ii. 2.*) saying, What signifies all that we have hitherto attempted against this man? some more prudent, and yet vigorous step must be taken without delay: For from what we ourselves have seen, and our own friends now tell us, it is plain beyond denial, that he does many surprising miracles.

48 If we suffer him to go on at this rate, without some effectual opposition to him, he will soon grow so famous, that all the people will be persuaded to believe him to be the expected Messiah: And what

N O T E.

* His hands and feet being bound, and his eyes covered with the cloth, as was usual, to prevent the ghastly appearance of a dead corpse, shewed the mira-

culous power of Christ in bringing him out of the sepulchre in this form, as well as in restoring him to life.

mans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

49 And one of them *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all.

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation:

what will be the consequence of that? Why, the *Romans* will certainly take umbrage, as if we were going to set up a king of our own, and to throw off their yoke; and they will be so exasperated at this, as to deprive us of all the remains of our civil and religious rights and liberties, and even to destroy our city and temple, and put an end to our being a distinct nation any longer.

49 And, while the council were at a loss what course to take for silencing Jesus, one of them, namely *Caiaphas*, a bold *Sadducee*, (*Acts* v. 17.) who had no fear of a judgment to come, and who, by the favour of the *Roman* government, was high-priest that year, (see the note on *Luke* iii. 2.) said to them with great subtilty and malice, as well as haughtiness and warmth, All your cautious deliberations are to no manner of purpose: I find ye have no notion of what is necessary to be done in so desperate a case, which must have a desperate remedy.

50 Nor do ye consider, (*αὐτὸς διαλογίζεσθε*) in all your reasoning on this head, that the danger of the present circumstances obliges us to have recourse to the old politic maxim, of preferring a public to a private good: We have no need to trouble ourselves with nice inquiries, whether this man be an impostor, or a prophet; we do not know what he is; but it is certainly better that he should be put to death, than that we should lose our all, and the whole nation should be utterly ruined by suffering him to live.

51 And he said this, not merely from his own crafty and wicked design of exciting the council to go into resolute measures against Jesus: But as he was the high-priest, and head of the *Jewish* church for that year, in which Christ was to redeem his spiritual *Israel*, and to put an end to the Levitical priesthood and oblations, by the sacrifice of himself; and as *Caiaphas's* words, on account of his exalted character, would be looked upon as oracles: So, by an over-ruling Providence, he expressed his malicious design in terms, which, contrary to his own intention, contained a truth, that, in another view of their signification, was prophetic of what God had designed should come to pass, *viz.* That Jesus being the Messiah*, he should be cut off, not for himself, but as

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N O T E.

* By the Evangelist's construction of this prophetic sense of *Caiaphas's* words, *The children of God, that were scattered abroad*, (ver. 52.) may relate to the *Jews* dispersed among the *Gentiles*, who, on account of their ancient adoption, as God's covenant-people, might

be called the children of God: And supposing that he carried his thought still further to the *Gentiles*, it seems as if the *nation*, or church of *Israel*, were therein considered, as typical of the whole New Testament-church, consisting of *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*: Otherwise there

a propitiatory sacrifice for God's ancient people, the *Jews* :

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

52 And not merely for a remnant, according to the election of grace, (*Rom. xi. 5.*) of those *Jews* that dwelt together as a nation in the land of *Israel*, but likewise of such, to whom pertained the adoption, as were dispersed among the *Gentiles* : And not only for these ; but also for others among the *Gentiles* themselves, who were predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, (*Eph. i. 5.*) that, according to the merit of his death, they also, by the preaching of the gospel, attended with the power of his Spirit, might be effectually gathered into one church, and fellowship of believers with the *Jews*, under Christ their head ; (*Eph. i. 9, 10.*) wherever they were scattered abroad among all nations of the earth, like sheep straying from the fold of their great Shepherd. (*Chap. x. 16.*)

53 Then from that day forth, they took counsel together for to put him to death :

53 This subtle speech of *Caiaphas* so fully determined the council to act in concert for putting Jesus to death, that, from this time forward, they frequently consulted together about the properest opportunity, and the safest method for compassing it.

54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the *Jews* ; but went thence into a country near to the wilderness, into a city called *Ephraim*, and there continued with his disciples.

54 Our blessed Lord therefore well knowing their secret and resolute combination against his life, and that the time appointed of the Father for his death was not yet fully come, prudently declined walking about openly, as he was wont, to preach and work miracles among the *Jews*, at *Jerusalem*, and the parts adjacent : But he withdrew to a certain town called * *Ephraim*, which lay in a remote, and more retired part of the country, bordering upon the wilderness of *Judea* ; and there (*διεργεῖς*) he spent his time in private conversation with his disciples, till within six days of the passover. (*Chap. xii. 1.*)

55 And the *Jews'* passover was nigh at hand : and many went out of the country up to *Jerusalem*

55 At length the *Jewish* passover drew near, which was the last that Jesus eat with his disciples, or that was ever celebrated by divine authority, he having soon after legally put an end to that typical solemnity, by the sacrifice of himself : And great multitudes

N O T E S.

there was nothing in *Caiaphas's* words, about the whole nation's perishing, that could be construed as prophetic of Christ's gathering together the children of God, that were *Gentiles* : But which ever way we take the Evangelist's meaning, I do not see how it can extend to the whole nation of the *Jews*, and all individuals among the nations of the *Gentiles*, or can signify any more than the true *Israel* of God in both : For he speaks of such a trait of Christ's death, as should save them

from perishing, and should be effectual to gather together the children of God into one spiritual body under Christ, answerable to the like language that is used in *Rev. v. 9.*

* This *Ephraim* was so obscure a place, that it is uncertain where it stood, or whether it were *Ephratab*, in the tribe of *Judab*, or *Ephraim*, in the tribe of *Benjamin* : But which ever it was, it probably bordered on the wilderness of *Judea*.

Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.

multitudes from all parts of the country repaired to Jerusalem, as usual, some little time before-hand, that they who had contracted any ceremonial uncleanness, might perform the rites of purification appointed in the law, in order to their partaking of that religious feast.

56 The city therefore filling apace, and our Lord not appearing there, the people sought after him; and, at their meeting together in the temple, said one to another, What are your thoughts about Jesus's not being here? Will he, according to custom, come up to this passover, or will he stay away for fear of his enemies?

57 Now, though some might ask these questions out of good-will toward him, being desirous to see and hear him, and get good by him; and others, out of mere curiosity; yet there were others, that only wanted an opportunity to deliver him up to the chief priests and Pharisees: For they, as a council, had issued out orders, strictly requiring, upon pain of their utmost displeasure, that if any one knew where he was, he should not conceal him, but should forthwith discover him to them, that they might apprehend him, and prosecute him even unto death.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

How common is it for such as Christ loves, and as sincerely love him, to be, like Lazarus, sick unto death, and, like Mary and Martha, mourning the loss of the dearest friends and comforts of life! But what encouragements may they take from his love, to apply in all their distresses to him! Though he may sometimes delay an answer, and we may be apt to misjudge his conduct, and give way to unbelief, while we look at the discouraging circumstances that surround us, instead of looking to the promises and power of Christ; and though we may expect a reproof for it; yet how does he bear with us, and wait to be gracious, that he may glorify his own and his Father's name, improve our faith, and do us good, in a better way than we ourselves desired!—With what cheerfulness and diligence should we follow his example, in working for God whilst it is day, since death will soon put an end to all opportunities for it! How willingly should we take our lot with our Lord, for this world and the next! And why should believers be afraid of dying, to sleep in Jesus, who will awaken them again in the morning of a blessed resurrection! Behold the God in him, who spoke of himself as the object of faith, as the resurrection and the life, and, by his absolute word of command, quickened Lazarus from the dead, and called him forth out of his grave! And behold in him the man of like natural passions with ourselves, when on moving occasions he groaned in spirit, and shed tears of grief! And how admirably did Providence over-rule various circumstances, that in these ways he might act both the God and the Man, before many credible witnesses! Whatsoever we believe concerning him, our faith is vastly defective, unless it rests upon him as that Saviour, who is the Son of God, in such a peculiar and exalted sense, as to be himself God, and whose own power can perform all things for us: We may therefore think we hear him saying to us, **Believest thou this?** And we should not be satisfied till we can answer, **Yea, Lord, we believe it.**—How kind and compassionate is he to his afflicted friends; how tenderly does he sympathize with them; what rich consolations may they find in him under all their troubles; how easily can he make up their greatest losses, and restore former mercies beyond all their own hopes, whenever he pleases; and how readily should we go to meet with Jesus! And, when once he appears, how great is the joy, whatsoever our sorrows were before! The Jesus themselves, may indeed

teach

teach us sympathy with our mourning friends; but none pities like Christ, and none can relieve like him. And O what might we not hope for, had we but faith to depend upon him according to his word! And what glorious things will he work for them that believe in him! Though they must die out of this world, like other men, they shall not die for ever; but he will raise them up to a blessed immortality in a better. But, alas! how great are the prejudices that are found against him in men of carnal minds? Though they themselves were to see him open the eyes of them that were born blind, and raise them to life that had been dead long enough to stink in their graves; yet unless the same divine power be exerted to open the eyes of their own understandings, and quicken them to a spiritual life, they will not believe in him to eternal life: While some, through grace, are brought over to him; others, from worldly views, endeavour to expose, and take counsel against him: But all their devices shall be over-ruled to subserve the salvation of the children of God of all nations, wherever they are scattered abroad; and whatsoever may be the designs of men against Christ, and the various thoughts of their hearts concerning him, he will carry on, and finish his work, in his own time and way.

C H A P. XII.

Mary anoints Christ's feet at Bethany, 1,—8. The people flock to see him and Lazarus, 9. The chief priests consult to kill Christ, 10, 11. He rides in triumph to Jerusalem, 12,—19. The Greeks desire to see him, 20,—22. He foretels his death and its effects, 23,—33. His solemn warning to the Jews, 34,—36. The continued infidelity of the generality of them, though some of the rulers believed him to be the Messiah, but did not own him, 37,—43. He asserts his divine mission, 44,—50.

TEXT.

THEN Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper, and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW the time appointed of God for the death of Christ being just at hand, he, to shew his great readiness for yielding obedience to his Father's will therein, went the day before the Sabbath, six complete days before the passover, to the village called *Bethany*, where *Lazarus* dwelt, whom he had miraculously restored to life. (*Chap.* xi. 43, 44. see the note on *Matth.* xxvi. 6.)

2 Upon his arrival thither, his friends provided a handsome entertainment and invited him, and (*ver.* 4.) his disciples with him to supper, that being the principal meal among the *Jews*; and *Martha*, to testify her gratitude, veneration, and esteem, waited upon him like a servant,* though she was a person of considerable rank: But *Lazarus* himself sat at table with him, that all the company might be witnesses

N O T E.

* It appears that *Martha* was a person of some figure, from the great respect that was paid to her and her sister, in visits and condolences, at *Lazarus's* death, as well as from the costly ointment that her sister used in anointing Christ's feet, (*ver.* 3.) and from their being an house of entertainment to our Lord and his disciples, he probably lodging there, when he returned from *Jerusalem* to *Bethany* every evening of the last week of his life, which he now entered upon.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment, of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor.

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

nesses of his being alive and in health, and of his eating, drinking, and conversing again like other men.

3 Then *Mary*, the other sister of *Lazarus*, that she might likewise pay her grateful acknowledgment of Christ's favour, and her honourable regard to him, brought a pound of odoriferous ointment, made of the most genuine (*πιστικης*) and costly spikenard; and coming behind him, as he sat at table with his feet thrust out backwards, she suppled his feet with the ointment, and wiped them with her own hair, as thinking that she could not humble herself too much, in expressing her veneration of such a great Lord and friend: And that she might further testify her faith in him as Messiah, the King, and might add another token of the highest honour that was anciently put upon the greatest personages, (*Psal.* xxiii. 5.) she poured the rest of the ointment upon his head, (*Matth.* xxvi. 7. see the note there) the perfume of which diffused a grateful scent through the whole room, and was a fit emblem of the sweet odour of Christ's approaching death and sacrifice, and of the graces of his Spirit, which should be shed abroad in consequence thereof.

4, 5 Hereupon *Judas Iscariot*, who was the son of one *Simon*, and an apostle of Christ, discovered a malignant discontent at the honour done to his Lord, saying, What an extravagant waste is this, without any manner of occasion for it? Why should our Master or we suffer such profuseness? Would it not have been much better to have sold this rich ointment for the great price it would have fetched, (see the note on *Mark* xiv. 5.) and to have relieved the poor with it?

6 The reason of *Judas's* speaking in this manner was, not that he had any real concern, as he pretended, for the poor; but because he was a man of a covetous temper and dishonest principle; and what little money Christ and his disciples had for necessary supplies, was committed to his keeping, who, had the price of this ointment been put into his hands, might have purloined some of it, or run away with it all, in case the suffering days, which his Master talked of, should come.

7 Our Lord therefore, (*εγ*) knowing his wicked design, but taking no public notice of it, replied, (*απεσ*) Do not be severe upon this good woman, let her go on peaceably with these testimonies of her respect to me: She herein, by a special direction of Providence, acts more suitably than you are aware of, to my circumstances, who am just ready to be put to death, and, in effect, is only expending that upon me a little before my burial, which you cannot deay

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests consulted, that they might put Lazarus also to death.

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

12 On the next day, much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel

to have been a fit reserve for an embalment, which she will have no opportunity for, after it.

8 And as he knew that others of the disciples had likewise been influenced, by Judas's plausible pretence of charity, to find fault with what Mary had done, (*Matth.* xxvi. 8, 9.) he told them there was no occasion for their uneasiness on that account: For, said he, in the disposals of Providence, in such a world of sin and misery as this, there will be always poor people enough living among you, to furnish opportunities for liberality and compassion toward them, according to your ability, whenever ye may be inclined to it; but in a very little time I shall be no longer corporally present with you, and all opportunities will soon be over of shewing any kindness, or respect to me in person again.

9 Now as Christ was at *Bethany*, within less than two miles of *Jerusalem*, abundance of the Jews soon heard of his being there; and, as the fame of his late surprising miracle was spread among them, they immediately flocked * thither, not merely for the sake of seeing and hearing him, but that they might likewise see and converse with *Lazarus* himself, whom he had brought to life again from the dead.

10 But the chief priests, instead of being softened, or suitably affected with such a wonderful instance of Christ's power and goodness, were filled with rage and envy at it; and conspired against the life of *Lazarus*, which had been thus miraculously restored, resolving to put him, as well as Jesus, to death;

11 Because, by means of this undeniable, living proof of Christ's divine character, many of the Jews were induced to think meanly of their rulers, and desert their party, and to believe that *Jesus* was the Messiah, notwithstanding all that his enemies could say to the contrary.

12, 13 And so great an interest did he hereby obtain in the affections of the people, that the next day, the second day of the week, vast multitudes of them, that were come from all parts to *Jerusalem* against the passover, when they heard that he was repairing thither too, gathered boughs of palm-trees, and went out of the city to meet him; and strewing some of their branches in the way, (*Matth.* xxi. 8.) and carrying others in their hands, they attended him in solemn procession, and shouted aloud with all the joy that used to be expressed, together with these ceremonies,

N O T E.

* If, as we have supposed, Christ was at this entertainment on the evening, as soon as the Sabbath was over, it is high-

ly probable that this company came to *Bethany* on the next day, which was the first day of the week.

Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

14 And Jesus when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

15 Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

19 The Pharisees therefore said among

monies, at the feast of tabernacles, (*Lev. xxiii. 40.* and *Psal. cxviii. 25, 26.*) saying, *Hosanna*, May all prosperity, victory, and success, crown the long expected, and now present King of *Israel!* May he reign and triumph for ever! Blessed be his glorious name; we rejoice in him, and bid him welcome, who is come from God himself, and is clothed with his authority, as our Messiah, to save us from all our enemies, and to load us with his benefits. (See the notes on *Matth. xxi. 9.*)

14, 15 And as the people thus surrounded him with acclamations and praises, Jesus himself, having procured a young ass, rode upon it in a way of uncommon triumph, with circumstances of abasement, suitable to his state of humiliation, and with a shew of grandeur, that prefigured his approaching exaltation to the kingdom: And this was ordered in providence, though undesigned by the people, to be a literal accomplishment of an inspired prophecy concerning the Messiah, (*Zech. ix. 9.*) where it is said, *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; let your joy expel all your former fears, O every son and daughter of the new Jerusalem, and heavenly Zion; Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass* (See the notes on *Matth. xxi. 5, 7.*)

16 While these things were transacting, the disciples of our Lord were so far from using any underhand methods to promote them, that they had no notion of their reference to the Messiah's character: But when he was afterwards exalted to his heavenly throne, and shed down his Spirit upon them from on high, their understandings were enlightened, and, to the confirmation of their faith, they perfectly recollected that these very circumstances were foretold in prophecy, and had been punctually fulfilled in him.

17 The immediate occasion of which was this, those persons, who were present, when Jesus raised *Lazarus* from the dead, declared that they saw him come out of the grave, at Christ's authoritative word of command.

18 This was the principal reason, why so great a multitude, at that time, went out of the city to meet and applaud him, in that public manner, as the Messiah; for they were well satisfied by the report of these credible eye-witnesses, that he had really wrought this very extraordinary and surprising miracle.

19 The *Pharisees* hereupon were filled with the utmost rage and vexation, saying one to another, *Alas! to what little purpose are all our authority and zeal, threatenings*

among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

20 And there were certain Greeks among them, that came up to worship at the feast :

21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew : and again, Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

threatenings and persuasions, contrivances and opposition to suppress this man? Instead of the peoples being restrained by our attempts against him, they grow more fond of him than ever. Look what a * world of them run after him, and are all at once become his disciples! What will this come to at length, unless some more speedy and effectual course be taken, than we have yet gone into, to put a stop to it?

20 And at the same time, some religious persons among the *Gentiles* were stirred up to earnest inquiries after Jesus: There were, for instance, several devout *Greeks* †, who being proselytes of the gate, came up to *Jerusalem*, to worship in the court of the *Gentiles*, at the great festival which was then at hand.

21 These having heard so much of him, and having some knowledge of *Philip*, who was one of his disciples, and had been an inhabitant of *Bethsaida*, which lay in *Galilee* of the *Gentiles*, went to him, ‡ two or three days after the public entry, and begged the favour of him to introduce them into Christ's company, saying, Sir, we would fain see Jesus, and have a little conversation with him, that we ourselves may be acquainted with his doctrine, and may know what judgment to form concerning him.

22 But as Christ had discouraged converses with the *Gentiles*, (*Matth. x. 5.*) and might be still more exposed to the fury of his enemies, by appearing in company with these, *Philip* consulted *Andrew*, a senior

N O T E S.

* The *world* is here, as in many other places, evidently to be understood with restriction, and can only signify great numbers of all sorts of people, especially of the lower rank.

† ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΤΑΙ the *Greeks*, and ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΤΑΙ the *Grecians*, are very different in the stile of the New Testament. The *Grecians* or *Hellenists* are mentioned, as I think, only in *Acts* vi. 1. and ix. 29. and xi. 20. and signify such *Jews* as were scattered abroad in *Gentile* nations, and used the *Greek* language. But the *Greeks* are mentioned a dozen times in the New Testament, and properly signify *Greeks* by nation or birth: These, being a renowned people for learning among the *Gentiles*, are sometimes put for the *Gentile* nations in general, in opposition to the *Jews*, as in *Rom. i. 16.* and ii. 9, 10. compared with *ver. 14.*: and at other times for the more polite *Gentiles*, in opposition to the more rude and barbarous nations among them, as in *Rom. i. 14.* It is probable, as *Grotius* thinks, that these *Greeks* were *Syrophœnicians*, who

dwelt about *Tyre* and *Sidon*, and, by means of their commerce, were acquainted with the *Galileans*, and particularly with *Philip*, who was a man of *Bethsaida* in *Galilee* of the *Gentiles*. (*ver. 21.*) And they are most generally thought to be proselytes of the gate, who used at public solemnities to repair to *Jerusalem*, to worship; though, not being circumcised, they were not suffered to eat the passover: Accordingly it is here only said of these *Greeks*, that they came to *Jerusalem* to worship.

‡ As Christ made his entry into *Jerusalem* on the second day of that week in which he was crucified, and it is said, (*Luke* xix. 47.) that he taught daily in the temple, which intimates, that he did so some days at least in that week; so as soon as he had finished the discourse, occasioned by this request of the *Greeks*, it is said, (*ver. 36.*) that he departed and hid himself: And therefore it seems to have been two or three days after his public entry into *Jerusalem*, that they applied to *Philip* to introduce them to Jesus.

senior disciple, and one of his own townsmen, (*chap. i. 44.*) about the expediency of mentioning this request to Jesus; and they, agreeing together, went and acquainted him with it.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.

23 To which Jesus replied, The set time appointed of the Father is just at hand, when I, the Messiah, shall be highly honoured in the salvation, not of *Jesus* only, but of *Gentiles* also, that shall be brought to know and believe in me; an earnest and specimen of which appears in the importunate desire of these *Greeks*, to see and converse with me.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

24 I, who am Truth itself, assuredly tell you, that as a grain of wheat, which is sown in the earth, yields no increase, unless its present form die or perish*; but, if it dies, it becomes exceeding fruitful: So, were I to continue in my present state in this world, and never to die a sacrifice for sin, and be buried in the grave, the great design of my office would be defeated, and I should not have the honour of raising up a spiritual seed to bear mine image, and shew forth my praise: But if I am made an offering for sin, and pour out my soul unto death, *I shall see my seed, and the pleasure of the Lord will prosper in my hand,* (*Isa. liii. 10, 12.*) that I may be glorified in converting, and saving multitudes of all nations, and in their adoring songs, as the reward of my sufferings and death.

25 He that loveth his life, shall lose it: and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.

25 Then, to shew his disciples, that the benefits he spoke of, as the fruit of his death, were not of a temporal, but of a spiritual and eternal nature, he proceeded to tell them that they must be conformed to him in sufferings, as ever they would be partakers of glory with him, saying, Whoever is so fond of this present life and its enjoyments, as to deny, disown, or reject me, that he may avoid such persecutions and dangers as would expose him to death for my sake, shall certainly fall short of that eternal glory and blessedness which best deserves the name of life. And, on the contrary, whoever shall be so indifferent to the present life and all its comforts, as even to hate every unworthy means of preserving it, such as disowning or denying me, shall surely inherit

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* *Nieuventyt* observes that these words ought to have a particular emphasis, in which our Lord, agreeable to his infinite knowledge, is pleased to single out from among so many thousands of seeds, in which the contrary obtains, the only one almost which dies in the earth; and which therefore was an exceeding proper similitude, and peculiarly accom-

modated to that purpose for which he intended to use it. See *Relig. Philos. Contempl. 23. Sect. xi.* Where, for proof, he refers to *Dr. Grew's anatomy of plants:* and *Matthig. de sem. veget.* whose observations are, that the like is not found in any other grain, besides the great *bean,* and *millet-millium.*

herit eternal life, which is the highest happiness he can be capable of.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

26 So that if any one would be a true disciple and servant to me, let him follow my example, and the intimations of my word, providence, and Spirit, wherever they may lead him; and, for his encouragement, I assure him, that in the blessed world, where in a just sense I now am, and where in a little time I shall be, and abide in my human nature for ever, (see the note on *chap. vii. 34.*) there shall such a servant of mine be also with me, to behold my glory: If any man in this manner unfeignedly devotes himself to me, how much soever he may be despised and ill-used for it by men, my heavenly Father himself will put immortal honours upon him, that as he suffers for me here, he may be likewise glorified with me for ever.

27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

27 Whilst our dear Lord was thus discoursing about sufferings, the terror of his own last conflicts began to seize him; upon which, to shew that he had all the innocent passions of human nature, he said, At this very time my soul is exceedingly distressed in a near view of the bitterest tribulations that from every quarter are coming upon me: How shall I express myself in the most becoming manner, under the touching sense I have of them? Then, turning his address from the people to God, he said, O my heavenly Father, the language of oppressed nature is, Let me, if possible, be excused the extreme sufferings that are now just ready to rush upon me: But I insist not upon this, as knowing that the great design of my coming into the world is to undergo them, according to thy eternal purpose, and my covenant-engagements to thee.

28 Father glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

28 Father, I freely and entirely resign to thy holy will, and devote myself to the honour of thy name, whatsoever it may cost me; glorify thine own perfections by me, in such a way as is most pleasing in thy sight, and I am satisfied: In answer to which, an awful majestic voice was immediately directed to him from heaven, saying, I have already glorified myself, meaning by Christ's obedience, ministry, and miracles hitherto; and will be still further glorified, meaning by his sufferings and death.

29 The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said, That it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

29 This voice was heard by the whole assembly then present, though by some more plainly than others; some of them therefore said it was a clap of thunder, whilst others, who heard it more articulately, said, It is certainly the voice of an angel speaking to him from heaven.

30 Jesus answered

30 But Jesus knowing that they observed it, and yet

ed and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

33 (This he said, signifying what death

yet were ready to turn it off, as if it were not a testimony to him from God himself, said, This extraordinary voice was pronounced from heaven, not on my account, as if I needed to be satisfied that my Father would own me, and glorify himself by me; but it came, in your hearing, as an immediate witness from him, of his approving of me in my work, and of his crowning it with glorious consequences to me and mine, that ye might believe in me, or be left for ever inexcusable for rejecting me.

31 The time is now just at hand, and the thing itself is as certain as if it were already done, when the men of this lower world shall be brought to a critical trial, with regard to their thoughts about me; when a reformation shall be set on foot, and a distinction made between the precious and the vile; and when judgment shall pass upon both, by the word and providence of God, as a presage of the future judgment, to acquit or condemn them, answerable to their believing or not believing in me: Judgment shall also be speedily obtained against Satan, who has usurped a tyrannical dominion over worldly-minded men, and works in their hearts by means of the things of this world, and who reigns in the ignorance, idolatry, and wickedness of the heathen world: His power shall be vanquished, his claim defeated, his oracles silenced, his temples laid waste; and he himself shall be cast out of the hearts of sinners, by the merit and victory of my death and resurrection, and by the triumphs of my Spirit and gospel, till at length his kingdom shall be utterly destroyed.

32 And, as for me, I will erect my throne upon the ruins of his; immediately after * I shall be lifted up from the earth as a sacrifice for sin, which will be very soon, I will then effectually prevail upon persons of all nations, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, by the endearments of my love, and the operations of my Spirit, to come by faith unto me, that *my people may be willing in the day of my power.* (*Psal.* cx. 3.)

33 Our Lord spoke of his being *lifted up*, to intimate, that he should be put to the death of the cross, on

N O T E.

* It is the common observation of critics, that the particle *ταυ*, here signifies, and should be rendered, not *if*, but *when*: For our Lord was speaking of his death as a certain event, that was near at hand.—His drawing *all men* to him, in consequence of his being lifted up, cannot be meant of every individual of mankind; because many never heard of a crucified

Saviour; and many of them that have, were never prevailed upon to believe in him, or to be his disciples: But, the occasion of this discourse, which was the *Greeks* desire to see Jesus, (*ver.* 21.) naturally leads us to understand it of all sorts of people, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*. See the note on *chap.* i. 7.

death he should die.)

34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

on which, like one that died under the curse, he should hang between earth and heaven; and that, in consequence of this, he should rise from the dead, and be glorified in heaven, and his name would be exalted in the preaching of the gospel, and in its glorious effects, to the salvation of all that should look by faith to him, as *Israel* looked to the brazen serpent, and were healed.

34 The common people hearing him speak of himself in such a manner, as imported that he should die, and leave this world, replied, We have learnt by the inspired writings, (see the note on *chap. x. 34.*) that, when the Messiah is spoken of under the character of the Son of man, it is said, *His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* (*Dan. vii. 13, 14.*) If then you pretend to be this *Son of man*, how inconsistently do you talk of being lifted up from the earth, and dying out of this world? What do you mean by calling yourself the Son of man, while you thus speak? Or how must we understand you?

35 Then Jesus, knowing with what perverseness they cavilled at his words, did not think proper to answer directly to their question, by reminding them of his resurrection and ascension to heaven, where he would erect his throne, and exercise a spiritual and everlasting dominion, according to the true intent of ancient prophecies concerning him: But he said to them, I have already sufficiently told you who I am, and how all this may be reconciled, though you continue obstinately to reject me; and the light of my ministry will continue but a very little time longer among you: See to it that ye make good use of this light, while ye have it to direct you in the way to eternal happiness, lest not only I, but the gospel itself be taken from you, or ye be left under judicial blindness of mind, to your utter confusion and misery: For he that walks in the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, walks he knows not how, and goes he knows not whither; he cannot tell what course to take for safety, but is in perpetual danger of wandering into mischief and ruin.

36 While therefore, for a little time longer, ye have me among you, who am come, as a light from heaven, to shew you the way of salvation, believe in me, according to what I say concerning myself, that ye may receive the truth in the love of it, before it be too late, and may be under sure guidance here, till ye be admitted to the regions of everlasting light hereafter. Our Lord having given them these so-

lemn warnings, which enraged them, and made them worse instead of better *, he withdrew, and concealed himself from them, that they might not tumultuously rise, and immediately apprehend him.

37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him.

37 Now (δε) though he had talked so plainly and closely to them concerning himself as the true Messiah, and concerning the extreme danger of rejecting him; and though he had confirmed his doctrine with (τοσαυτα) so many great and merciful miracles, which they themselves were eye-witnesses of; yet the generality of them were suffered, through the hardness of their hearts, to persist obstinately in their unbelief:

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

38 That the prophecy of *Isaiab* might be evidently accomplished, as a proof of its being divinely inspired, and of Jesus's being the Christ, saying, (*Isa.* liii. 1.) Ah Lord! how few are there of the *Jews*, that have heartily embraced, and received by faith, the plain declarations of the gospel concerning the Messiah, as made by himself † and his servants to them? and alas! how few of them have been favoured with the victorious power of thy Spirit and grace to overcome their obstinacy, and bring them into a willing reception of him, and subjection to him, as their Lord and Saviour?

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

39, 40 They therefore remained incurably unbelieving, because they were the very persons whom the prophet *Isaiab* spoke of in another place, (*Isa.* vi. 9, 10.) saying to this purpose, Their eyes were first wilfully, and thereupon judicially, shut and blinded, and their hearts were in the same manner hardened, that they might not see the light of the glorious gospel of Christ in its truth and excellence, nor understand it in a spiritual and affecting manner, with application to their own case; and that, being left to themselves, they might not be turned, in heart and life, from sin and Satan, the world and self, to

God

N O T E S.

* It is generally thought that he retired, as usual, to *Bethany*, or to the *mount of Olives*. But, as some suppose, the preceding discourse, and that which follows at *ver.* 44. and so on to the end of the chapter, are to be connected and considered as delivered at the same time, all the intermediate verses being the Evangelist's own remarks: And so they understand Christ's departing, and hiding himself from them, to relate to his taking his final leave of them, after which he never preached publicly to them any more, but spent the little remains of his time in a more private way with the dis-

ciples, or by himself. It is in this light that I have considered it; and so this discourse may be taken as delivered at the same time with his solemn parting warning in *Matt.* xxiii. 39.

† This began to be fulfilled by the obstinate unbelief of the *Jews*, under Christ's personal ministry; and was afterward more fully accomplished by their persisting in it, under the ministry of the apostles. (*Rom.* x. 16.) And I take the *arm of the Lord* to signify his Spirit, who at other times is represented as the *finger of God*, and the *hand of the Lord*. (*Luke* xi. 20. and *Acts* xi. 21.)

God in Christ, nor be healed, by my pardoning and sanctifying grace, of their sinful and dangerous diseases, which they had contracted and taken pleasure in*.

41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

41 These awful things *Isaiab* said, under divine inspiration, concerning Christ, at the same time that he had a vision of his glory, as the great Jehovah, who appeared to him in human form, *sitting upon a high throne, and filling the temple with his train.* (*Isa. vi. 1,—9.*)

42 Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also, many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

42 Nevertheless, there were many, even of the *Jewish* rulers themselves, who were convinced in their consciences of his being the Messiah; but their sinful shame, and fear of exposing themselves to the contempt and fury of the sanhedrim, and particularly of the *Pharisees*, his most inveterate enemies, had such a powerful influence upon them, that they durst not own what they believed concerning him, lest they should be excommunicated, as apostates, and be thereby deprived at once of their reputation, and of their civil and religious rights and liberties. (See the note on *chap. ix. 34.*)

43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

43 For, their hearts not being changed, they rather chose, and were more solicitous about their own having the esteem and applause of men, and shewing respect and honour to them, than about the approbation of God himself, and shewing forth his praise.

44 Jesus cried, and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

44 This being the carnal, worldly temper of some, whilst a malignant spirit reigned in others, Jesus laid hold of that opportunity for taking his last farewell of them; (see the note on *ver. 36.*) and, lifting up his voice with great earnestness, he said, The sum of all my discourses issues in this, He who has true faith in me, as the promised Messiah, believes not in me only, nor in me ultimately as such, but together with me, and through me, believes in my heavenly Father, who sent me into the world to seek and save lost sinners.

45 And

N O T E.

* I cannot see how God's suffering men to act according to their own free, though corrupt inclinations, and overruling it by his providence into an accomplishment of what he foresaw, and foretold would be, can impeach his righteousness, who is under no obligation to turn and heal them, that obstinately refuse to be turned and healed: For whatsoever judicial act of God may be supposed herein, it is in consequence, and as a just punishment of their own wilful refusals of Christ and his gospel; and his only withholding forfeited grace, and gi-

ving them up to the corruptions of their own hearts, and to the power of Satan, which they chose to be governed by, is sufficient to account for all judicial blindness and hardness, without supposing any positive act of God upon a man's soul to produce them: And I think the course, in which they come upon the sinner, as represented in the Paraphrase, fully agrees with the account we have of this awful case in *Isa. vi. 9, 10.* which is the place here referred to, and recited in sense, though not exactly in the same words.

45 And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

46 I am come a light into the world, that who-soever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness.

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak.

45 And he that by an eye of faith beholds who and what I am, is thereby led into the knowledge of who and what my Father is, from whom I derive my mediatorial commission, and whose perfections and authority display themselves in and by me.

46 I, who had a pre-existence with him, am come into this world, to scatter the mists of ignorance and error, superstition and idolatry, which have over-spread it, and to bring life and immortality to light by the gospel, that whoever receives and trusts in me, and yields himself up by faith to my guidance, should not continue under the power of spiritual blindness, and wander in the ways of sin to an eternal state of misery and darkness, but should find the way to eternal life.

47 And if, after all, any one, who has had opportunities of hearing and knowing my gospel, wilfully refuses to embrace it, and to depend upon me according to it, I do not as yet accuse him to the Father, nor pass a definitive sentence of condemnation to an immediate execution of wrath upon him: For the direct design of my coming into the world is not to accuse, or condemn, or take vengeance upon mankind; but to make the gracious overtures of salvation to them, and effectually to save those of them, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, that shall believe in me, before I proceed to the final judgment. (See the note on *chap.* iii. 16.)

48 But he that, continuing in unbelief, (*ο οδιστων εμοις*) makes light of, despises, and rejects me, preferring other things to me, and do not cordially embrace my doctrine, shall find that there is an impartial Judge to pass sentence of condemnation, and execute wrath upon him; and that very doctrine, which I have preached, how much soever it may now be treated with contempt, shall appear in evidence against him, and shall be the rule of judgment, according to which he shall be condemned, with dreadful aggravations of his guilt, at the great and final day of account.

49 For, as is evident from the holy, excellent, supernatural, and gracious nature of the truths that I have taught, and from my divine manner of confirming them, I have not delivered them like a private person, as from myself, much less as the inventions of a mere man; but my Father, from whom I received my commission, gave me authority and instructions, in covenant-agreements between him and me, to publish all those things which I have insisted on among you.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

50 And, whatsoever ye may think of it, I know that the doctrine I preach by his authority, from whom I am come as the messenger of the covenant, is the only way and means of bringing lost sinners to eternal life and blessedness: Whatsoever therefore I have revealed, it is neither more nor less than the Father himself put into my commission to be made known to the world; and it is at your utmost peril to reject it.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How wide is the difference between a true believer and a hypocrite! One, like *Martha* and *Mary*, thinks he can never do too much to serve and testify his affection to Christ; while the other, like *Judas*, grudges every expence for him, under a specious pretext of applying it to some better use; but Jesus himself will take their part that honour him. And how great is the difference, even among those that have no saving acquaintance with him! Some, like the *Greeks*, and common people of the *Jews*, are pleased with the notions they have of him, and of his word and works; whilst others, like the *Pharisees* and their partizans, are filled with horrid rancour against them, and consult to suppress and destroy them.—For once, the Lord of glory, whilst on earth, gave a faint emblem of his future triumph: But with what humble state, even then, did he ride on a young ass, amidst the hosannas of admiring throngs! How desirous should we be to see Jesus, not to gratify curiosity, but to be satisfied concerning, and led into an acquaintance and communion with him! And how little reason have any to be ashamed of him! Though he was hung upon a cross, and suffered such a terrible death, as it could not but be desirable to human nature, if possible, to escape; yet how readily did he resign himself up to it, as an act of obedience to his Father's will, and as knowing that it would turn to his own exaltation, and the raising up of a numerous seed to be glorified with him! And what a remarkable honour did God the Father put upon the suffering Saviour, by over-ruling the sentence of the high-priest against him into a prophecy of the happy fruits of his death, and by publicly bearing witness to him from heaven, for our sakes, that we might believe in him, as the *Jehovah* of *Israel*, of whom *Isaiah* spake, when he saw his glory! How groundless then, and perverse, are all the prejudices and objections of his enemies against him, though pretended to have their support from scripture itself! They really shut their eyes against the most glorious light, and walk in darkness, and know not whither they are going: But how dreadful is it to be under such blindness of mind, and hardness of heart, as govern them by their own consent, till they are delivered up to their own choice, by the righteous judgment of God! And, alas! what a snare is the fear of man, together with a fondness for secular honours, to hinder a due profession of Christ, who came, as the light of this world, to enlighten them that believe in him, and who faithfully executes his Father's will, and bears long with obstinate sinners, before he removes the means of grace from them, and before he proceeds to the final judgment! Then, his word itself being the rule of his awards, they that receive him by faith, and walk in the ways of truth and holiness, shall be admitted to everlasting light and life; and they that reject him by unbelief, and go on in the ways of ignorance, self-deceit, and sin, shall be cast into everlasting darkness and misery. O what vast importance is it heartily to embrace him; and how desperate is their case, that set themselves against him! Whatsoever we may think of these things, he that is faithful has declared them, and knows them to be true.

C H A P. XIII.

Christ's last time of eating the paschal supper, 1,—3. He washes his disciples feet, to set them an example of humility and love, 4,—17. Gives notice before-hand who should betray him, 18,—30. Enjoins brotherly love upon his disciples, 31,—35. And foretels Peter's denying him, 36,—38.

TEXT.

NOW, before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world, unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Lord, having now done with preaching to the people, devoted the small remains of his time to a more private instruction of his disciples, and preparation for his own death: Accordingly, on the evening, (see the note on *Matth.* xxvi. 20.) which introduced the seven days, that altogether were called the feast*, he, who was the true paschal Lamb, knowing that the appointed time was then fully come for his being sacrificed, and for his departing from this world by death, and returning to his Father in heaven, took occasion from thence to intimate, that, as he had always loved † his own children and mem-
bers,

I i i 2

N O T E S.

* The feast was called by the Jews the *Chagigah*, i. e. the feast-offering, in which they made peace-offerings of sheep and oxen all the seven days of the feast, which are called the passover, *Deut.* xvi. 2. *Luke* xxii. 1. and *John* xviii. 28. And in *Josiah's* time, many thousands of lambs, kids, and bullocks were given for the passover-offerings, as they are called, *2 Chron.* xxxv. 7, 8, 9. (See *Ainsworth*, on *Deut.* xvi. 2.) But expositors are much divided in their thoughts about the supper, which our Evangelist here speaks of: Some understand it to mean a supper at *Bethany*, a day or two before the passover; and others take it to be the paschal supper itself. Many reasons of considerable weight are offered for each of these opinions, which do not come within the compass of my design particularly to discuss. But after mature deliberation, I am inclined to think, upon the whole, that it was the paschal supper, as I have supposed in the Paraphrase: For it was that supper, at which Christ's hour was come, and at which he said, *Now is the Son of man glorified*, (ver. 1. and 31.) which most naturally intimates the nearest approach of his death: And in the close of his discourse at this supper, he said, (*chap.* xiv. 31.) *Arise, let us go hence*; and that he then arose to go to the garden, where he was apprehended, appears from the following

parts of the history; for soon after he spake these words, he went on with his discourse, (*chap.* xv. and xvi.) which he concluded with a prayer, (*chap.* xvii.) and then went forth with his disciples over the brook *Cedron*, where was a garden, into which he entered with his disciples; and *Judas*, who betrayed him, knew the place. (*Chap.* xviii. 1, 2.) Besides, Christ's notifying the traitor to his disciples, at this supper, (ver. 21,—30.) seems to be the discovery that he made of him to them at the passover-supper, as it is recorded *Matth.* xxvi. 21, 25. and *Luke* xxii. 21,—13. And what our Evangelist says, (ver. 30.) of *Judas's* going out at night from this supper, well agrees to that night in which he betrayed his Lord, and seems to be dissent from his first going to the sanhedrim, to make the offer of betraying him, which is spoken of as having been before the passover-supper, and was probably in the day-time. (*Matth.* xxvi. 14, 15.) This account of the matter seems natural and easy, and keeps the history free from many perplexities which it is otherwise thrown into; and I do not find any transactions that passed after this supper, which might not easily be brought into the time between the paschal supper, and his being betrayed.

† Mr. *Henry* observes, that when his own are spoken of, that received him

bers, which were in this world of sin and sorrow, he rested in his love, (Zeph. iii. 17.) and would continue it, to the end of his own life, and of their days and troubles on earth, and for ever afterwards in the other world, to which he was going, yea, that he loved them to perfection*, even to the completing of their state of happiness with him there.

2 And supper being ended, (the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,)

2 And (δειπνῶν γενομένου) during the supper-time †, as soon as one part of it was over, he gave his disciples a most affecting instance of his extraordinary humility and friendship, to set them an example of the like towards one another, and to shew his engaging care and concern for them, as also to fortify them against the great trial, which was just then coming upon them: For Satan had already (ἤδη) so far prevailed upon the corrupt and covetous heart of Judas Iscariot, who was the son of Simon, and one of the twelve apostles, (see the note on *Matth.* x. 4.) as to bring him to a resolution of betraying his Lord ‡.

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

3 At this time, though Jesus knew that the Father had given all power in heaven and earth to him as Mediator, and though he was thinking of his own divine original, and approaching exaltation, as one who came from God his Father into this world, and should soon return to be glorified with him in heaven:

4 He riseth from supper; and laid aside his garments, and took a towel and girded himself.

4 Yet, even || while these grand thoughts filled his mind, so amazing were his self-abasement and grace, that on a sudden he got up from table, and, pulling off his upper-clothes, took a napkin or towel, and tied it about his waste like a servant in waiting.

5 After

N O T E S.

not, (chap. i. 11.) it is τα ἴδια, his own things, as a man's cattle are his own, which yet he may, when he pleases, alter the property of: But here it is τῶν ἰδίων, his own persons, as a man's wife and children are his own, to whom he stands in a constant relation.

* The words, ἕως τελῆς signify to perfection, as well as to the end. Accordingly I have taken both senses into the Paraphrase; because the following discourses and prayer, to the end of chap. xvii. are full of expressions of Christ's love and care after, as well as before he should go to heaven, and that not only for the comfort of his disciples; as long as they should live in this world, but likewise for the safe arrival of all his to glory.

† *Ainsworth*, on *Exod.* xii. 8. says, that the Jews used first to eat some of the bitter herbs and unleavened bread, then the table was taken away, and afterwards was brought again; and this seems to me to be the time when our

Lord rose from supper to wash his disciples feet, as is said, *ver.* 4, 5.

‡ I take this to relate to Satan's first instigation of Judas to betray his Lord, which put him upon going to the chief priests, with an offer of delivering him up to them, and was before the passover-supper; (*Mat.* xxvi. 14, 15, 16. and *Luke* xxii. 3,—6.) and so it is different from what is said, *ver.* 27, 30. of this chapter, about Satan's entering into him, after he received the sop, upon which he went out immediately to execute his villainous design, the devil having then got an entire ascendancy over him, and gained his point upon him; and perhaps the time of Judas's first going into this design was when he was vexed because he could not get the price of Mary's ointment into his hands. (*Chap.* xii. 4, 5.)

|| It is probable that he was likewise discoursing on this subject to his disciples, which made his condescension in washing their feet the more surprising to them.

5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet:

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only,

5 After which, this Lord of glory poured water into a bason, and set himself to wash the feet of his poor disciples and dependents, with his own hands, as if he had been the meanest of servants to them; (1 Sam. xxv. 41.) and, having so done, he wiped them with the cloth which he had tied about him for that purpose.

6 Then, among others, he came to *Simon*, whom he had surnamed *Peter*, to do the like to him; and *Peter*, being startled, amazed, and shocked at such a matchless instance of condescension, said, Lord, what art thou going to do? shall I, a poor sinful wretch ever suffer that thou, whom I believe, and have owned to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, (*chap. vi. 69.*) shouldst debase thyself at such a rate, as to undergo the irksome drudgery of the meanest of servants in washing my feet? I cannot endure the thought of thy doing it.

7 Our Lord answered, It is not for you to oppose my proceedings, of which you are no competent judge: You do not know the reasons of what I am now doing, and little think what is my meaning in it; but I will explain something of it by and by; (*ver. 12, —17.*) and when my Spirit shall be hereafter poured out from on high, you shall be still further acquainted with it, and shall experience the benefit I intend by it.

8 *Peter* replied, with great vehemence, It signifies nothing to talk of it; though all the rest of my brethren should admit of thy doing it to them, I know well enough, that this is too great a disparagement to thee, and too high an honour for me: I cannot bear, and never will consent, that thou shouldst degrade thyself so far as to wash such sordid feet as mine. Jesus answered again, in a way of severe rebuke for his being so hasty and positive, under a mistaken notion of extraordinary modesty and humility; Nay, if you so far set yourself against my authority, wisdom, and love, as not to submit to my washing your feet, you cannot be my disciple; and if you are not really cleansed by me * in such a spiritual manner, as is signified by washing with water, you can have no communion with me, or interest in the blessings of my kingdom.

9 *Peter*, thereupon, seeing that so much depended upon it, and dreading the thoughts of being separated from Christ, was soon convinced of his folly, and

N O T E.

* *To have no part with another*, signifies having no inheritance or communion with him, no interest in him, or benefit by him, *Deut. xiv. 27. 2 Sam. xx. 1. and 2 Cor. vi. 15.*

only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not, save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

11 For he knew who should betray him: therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master, and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

and retracting his former resolution, cried out, Lord, if this be the case, I readily submit, and beg that thou wouldst please to wash not only my feet, but my hands and head, and every part of me, that I may be cleansed throughout, and may share in all thy blessings.

10 Jesus, further to explain himself, and correct *Peter's* mistake, who ran from one extreme to another, replied, He who is once justified and sanctified, as being washed by my blood and Spirit, only needs to be further cleansed, in the daily exercise of faith and repentance, from the guilt and defilement, which, through remaining infirmity, he perpetually contracts by his conversation in the world, he being already *forgiven all trespasses*, (Col. ii. 13.) and freed from the *dominion of sin*: (Rom. vi. 14.) And most of you, my disciples, are in this sense cleansed; but though, as a symbol of purity, I wash all your feet; yet every one of you is not really clean.

11 The reason of his saying, all of them were not clean, was, because he knew that *Judas*, though a professed disciple, was still in his sins, and that he would treacherously betray him into the hands of his enemies.

12 Then our blessed Lord, having gone through the servile work of washing all his disciples feet, put on his upper-clothes again; and, sitting down at table with them, he, to convince them of their ignorance, and to raise their attention, and their desire of his instructions, said, Do ye understand the meaning of what I have done to you: And what lessons ye are to learn from it? I'll tell you:

13 Ye often salute me under the title of your Lord and Master, and profess to own me as such, and ye therein do right; for I really am the only Lord of your faith and obedience, and your only teacher, on whose authority ye may depend.

14 If therefore (*sv*) I, who am indeed your Lord and Master, and whom, as such, ye own to be infinitely your superior, have nevertheless condescended to so despicable and troublesome an office, as that of washing your feet, to testify my affection to you; how much more ought ye to be ready, on all occasions*, to stoop to the meanest and most laborious services, for testifying your mutual love, and affording reciprocal assistance to one another, who are all on a level,

N O T E.

* We never read that the apostles ever washed the feet of one another, or of any other disciples: And therefore what our Lord here says, is only to be understood of their performing offices to each

other, as mean as this; but gives no colour for observing this ceremony of feigned humility, by washing people's feet every year on the *Thursday* of Passion-week.

level, as fellow-servants and brethren, in my kingdom and family ?

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

15 For I have herein designed to set you an example, which is highly worthy of your imitation, that ye should cheerfully attend to every duty of humility, kindness, and love, to the refreshment and comfort, purity and welfare of your fellow-christians and fellow-servants, and not be ashamed, or think much of doing any offices to them, as mean and servile as this which I have now done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent, greater than he that sent him.

16 To reconcile you to these self-denying duties, I, who am Truth itself, assuredly tell you, that no servant is, or should think himself to be above his lord, nor should he, who is sent to execute any commission, think himself above his principal who sent him: And therefore, as ye are my servants and apostles, ye ought not to be ashamed, or think it beneath you to condescend as far to others as I have to you, but should learn of me, who am meek and lowly in heart. (*Matth. xi. 29.*)

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

17 Ye may hence receive useful instruction relating to your own duty; and if ye really understand what I mean by all this, it will be your great happiness and comfort, honour and advantage, to practise according to it.

18 I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen: but, that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me.

18 I do not indeed expect that this will be done by every one of you. No, I always was, and still am, fully acquainted with the temper and disposition of all your hearts: Though I have chosen you all to the apostleship; (*chap. vi. 70.*) yet, as I but now said, (*ver. 10.*) *ye are not all clean*; I know * which of you I have chosen to faith, holiness, and salvation, as well as to the apostolic office: But there is one among you †, whom I have not chosen to grace and glory, but have taken into the apostleship, and left to the free choice of his own perverse will, that what the scripture says of *David*, my type, (*Psal. xli. 9.*) may be eminently fulfilled in me, *viz.* He who, like a friend, sat at table, and familiarly eat with me, (*see the note on Mark xiv. 20.*) has turned his back upon me, and with an ingratitude, enmity,

N O T E S.

* It is manifest to me, that Christ here means a more peculiar and beneficial election than to the office of apostles; for he had chosen them all to this: But he here speaks of a discriminating choice of some of them, which did not extend to them all, and particularly to *Judas*: And to shew that his knowing whom he had chosen, related not to their temper and disposition, but to the

persons themselves, he did not say, I know, *ποιους*, what their qualities are, but *ως*, the persons whom I have chosen.

† Expositors generally consider this passage as elliptical; accordingly I have supplied what may be wanting to fill up the sentence, with what I take to be most naturally suggested by the foregoing words.

enmity, and contempt, worse than that of brutes to their masters that feed them, has spurned and kicked at me to kill me.

19 Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*.

19 Now I tell you of this beforehand, that, when the rest of you come to see the shocking event, ye may not be discouraged or stumbled at it; but, on the contrary, may be the more established in your belief, that I am the true Messiah, who foresaw the end from the beginning, and willingly yielded myself up to the worst of usage, according to the appointment of my Father, and this divine prediction, which was herein to be accomplished in me.

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

20 And further, to take off their discouragement, as if their stooping so low as he had ordered them, and as if one of their own number's so openly acting against him, would bring them under contempt, he said to them, I, who am faithful and true, assure you, that he who loves and honours any ambassador of mine, and receives his testimony concerning me, shall be looked upon and esteemed, as shewing the same regard to my own person; and he that embraces me, by faith and love, as the only true Messiah, does, in effect, receive my Father himself who sent me.

21 When Jesus had thus said he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, That one of you shall betray me.

21 When Jesus had said these things to his disciples, to prepare them for the further discoveries he was going to make of the traitor, and to caution the traitor himself, that he might still have room for repentance, and be left inexcusable for want of it; he shewed a more than ordinary trouble and concern of mind, not merely at his own sufferings, but at the horrid wickedness and ingratitude of *Judas*, who was thereby bringing the most dreadful destruction upon himself: And, speaking with great earnestness, he said, I, who am Truth itself, assure you that one of your number, who has been all along a witness of my life and miracles, and whom I have chosen to be one of my apostles, and laid under the highest obligations, will nevertheless basely deliver me into the hands of mine enemies, who will put me to death.

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.

22 Then every disciple, except the hardened *Judas*, being struck with horror and amazement at so solemn a declaration, looked round about one upon another, to observe what signs of guilt might appear among them; they being at a loss, and anxiously concerned (*απορησεν*) to know which of them he meant, none of them being conscious of any such wicked design in himself, and yet each suspecting his own, rather than his brother's heart.

23 Now there was

23 Now while they were in this solicitous suspense,

was leaning on Jesus' bosom, one of his disciples whom Jesus loved.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

25 He then lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

27 And after the sop, Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

28 Now no man at

pence, one of them *, who was a peculiar favourite of Jesus's sat next to him, leaning backward with his head upon his Lord's breast, according to the usual posture at the passover.

24 *Simon Peter* therefore, being desirous to know, and yet afraid to ask Christ publicly whom he meant, made a private sign, as persons use to do, by winking, nodding, or pointing with the hand, to put that disciple upon asking him, which of them it was that he had said would be guilty of this abominable crime?

25 Accordingly that disciple, having a fair opportunity for it by being so near to Jesus, spake to him softly, saying, in an humble manner, Lord, may I have the favour of knowing which of us is the person that will betray thee?

26 Jesus replied, in a whisper, so as not to be heard by the rest of the company, (*ver.* 28.) It is he to whom I shall give the next piece of sopped bread, as soon as I have dipped it in the sauce †: And presently after this, dipping a piece of bread, he gave it directly to *Judas Iscariot*, the son of *Simon*, as an indication to *John*, that this was the man.

27 And as soon as *Judas* had taken and eat the sop ‡, the devil got such a prevalence over his carnal heart, as to engage him in a thorough resolution to set about executing his perfidious design out of hand: And Jesus, knowing this, said to him, Whatsoever you are resolved to do, take your own course as soon as you will, I am ready, and will no longer keep you under restraint.

28 Now as the disciple to whom Christ had intimated

N O T E S.

* This was the apostle *John* himself, who wrote this Gospel, but in modesty concealed his own name, when he spoke of the disciple whom Jesus loved.

† This dipping of the sop is, I think, to be distinguished from, and seems to have been after the dipping of the hand in the dish, which is mentioned in *Mat.* xxvi. 23. and *Mark* xiv. 20. when Christ said, *He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me; and it is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish:* For that was spoken openly to them all, but this privately to *John*; that related to *Judas's* dipping in the dish with our Lord, but this to Christ's dipping the sop, and giving it to *Judas*; that was a more indeterminate signal, answering to, and probably at the same time with what he said, (*ver.* 18.) *He that eateth bread with me, bath*

lifted up his heel against me, but this was determinate, and directly pointing out *Judas* himself as the very person whom he meant.

‡ Perhaps *Judas* might have some suspicion, as if Christ's giving him the sop was designed to mark him out as the person he spoke of, and so was the more furiously enraged against him: However Satan, seeing this to be a fit opportunity to execute the villainous design, worked more powerfully in this son of perdition now, than ever before; (see the note on *ver.* 2.) and, leading him captive at his will, prevailed upon him to set about it without delay. And his going immediately upon this, (*ver.* 30.) seems to intimate, that *Judas* went out before the celebration of the Lord's supper. See the note on *Luke* xxii. 21.

at the table knew for what intent he spake this of him.

29 For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast: or, that he should give something to the poor.

30 He then having received the sop, went immediately out: and it was night.

31 Therefore when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

mated by which of them he should be betrayed, did not apprehend that it would be so soon; and as the rest at table did not know that *Judas* was the man; so none of them understood what Jesus meant by these words, and some mistook his design in them.

29 For, as their little stock was committed to *Judas's* custody, they apprehended, either that Jesus gently reprov'd him for neglecting the duty of his office, and ordered him to provide the things that were necessary for the following days of the feast: (see the note on *ver.* 1.) Or else that he * ordered him to distribute something, without delay, in a way of charity to the poor.

30 Then *Judas*, having eat the sop, forthwith left the company, and, being under the power of Satan and his own corruptions, went away to the sanhedrim to get assistance for apprehending Jesus, who he supposed would soon be moving to his usual place of retirement: And by this time night came on, so that it was dark.

31 When therefore *Judas* was gone out of the house, Jesus, knowing the business he went about, said to the rest of the disciples, Now the hour is just at hand, when I, the Messiah, shall † be glorious in the work of redemption, and in the conquest that I shall obtain over sin, Satan, and all the powers of darkness, by my death; and shall be glorious in performing my engagements to the Father; in my zeal for his glory, and love to his people; and in the exercise of every grace, and of all divine power to support me under, and carry me honourably through the awful scene that lies before me: And God the Father will be glorified in and by me, as all his perfections will be exalted with united harmony, in the humble self-abasement, obedience, sufferings, and death, which I, in the form of a servant, so freely submit to.

32 And since God the Father will be thus highly glorified in and by me, he will honour me in my sufferings with amazing signs and wonders, and with testimonies to me, which shall be extorted from mine enemies themselves, and will gloriously reward me afterwards in my resurrection, ascension, and exaltation at his right hand; he will glorify me in my own person, and (δοξασει αυτον εν εαυτω) will glorify me with himself,

N O T E S.

* It is probable that at the passover-feast our Lord had used to order a distribution of alms to the poor, as far as their scanty circumstances would admit of it.

† This evidently relates to the glory

that belonged to his dying in such a holy and victorious manner, as he did, and not to the honour his Father put upon him, which is distinguished from it, and spoken of as mostly consequent to it, in the next verse.

himself, by admitting me, even in my human nature, to full communion with him in his majesty and glory; and this he will do speedily, and in a right way, (*εὐθύς*) as is most becoming himself and me.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and, as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

33 My dear children; whose faith is weak, but whom I affectionately love, it is but a very little time that I shall continue in the body with you: When I am gone, ye will be earnestly desirous of being with me; but as I, once and again, have told the unbelieving Jews absolutely, (*chap. vii. 34. and viii. 21.*) so I tell you *for the present*, (*ver. 36.*) that ye cannot as yet come to the blessed state whither I am going.

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

34 In the mean while, I, your dying Lord and Master, authoritatively leave, and bind upon you, one great commandment, in a particular manner, which indeed is not in itself a new one *, but is sadly corrupted, and almost forgot and lost; I therefore enjoin it upon you by a new example, and with new explications, motives, and inforcements, that it may be observed with a new spirit and temper, and in a new manner, as a fundamental law of my kingdom, and may be ever fresh in your minds and hearts, and written there by the Spirit of the New Testament, as a most excellent command, which shall be eternally as much in force, as if it were always new: And this commandment is, that ye mutually love one another, not in a common way merely as men, but in an affectionate, sympathizing, self-denying, and beneficent manner, as my disciples, in imitation, and under a sense of my love to you, in the greatness of which I have freely suffered many things already, and am going even to die for you.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

35 This is the honourable badge of your holy profession of my name; and all that see and observe you, whether they be friends or enemies, shall know that ye are indeed my disciples, partakers of my Spirit, and bearing mine image, if ye thus cordially love one another, and shew it on all occasions, after my example; for my sake, and in obedience to my command.

36 Simon Peter said

36 *Simon Peter* being more impressed with what

K k k 2

Jesus

N O T E.

* This cannot be understood as a commandment absolutely *new*, since our Lord himself had said before, (*Matth. xxii. 39, 40.*) that *to love our neighbour as ourselves, is one of the two great commandments, on which hang all the law and the prophets*; and our Evangelist speaks of loving one another, as an *old commandment, which we had from the beginning*, (*1 John ii. 7. compared*

with *2 John v. 5.*) not only from the beginning of Christ's ministry, but even from the beginning of the world, ever since mankind had a being; and from the beginning of the law, ever since it was delivered to *Israel*, it being a fundamental law of nature, which runs through all dispensations, according to the various relations in which we stand one to another.

said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice.

Jesus had said, (*ver.* 33.) about his going whither the disciples could not come, than about their loving one another, said to him in an abrupt manner, Lord, I beseech thee to let us know * where it is that thou talkest of going from us to set up thy kingdom? Jesus answered, I tell you again that I am going, where you are not at present able to accompany or follow me; but you shall follow me in proper time hereafter, when I have done my work by you, and strengthened your faith for treading in my suffering steps.

37 *Peter*, not well knowing what Christ meant, replied with a sincere, but self-confident and rash zeal, Lord, what is the reason that I cannot follow thee now, as well as at any time hereafter? I am fully resolved to embark in all difficulties with thee, even to the laying down of my very life, rather than desert thee: What then should hinder my going along with thee, wherever it be?

38 To this Jesus, who knew him better than he knew himself, answered again, to humble and warn him, Will you risk, and even sacrifice your life for me? Alas! *Peter*, you are too self-confident; I, who speak the truth, assuredly tell you before-hand, that, notwithstanding this vain boast, you will this very night, before the time of cock-crowing is over, shamefully deny a first, a second, and third time, that you are any disciple of mine, or that you ever so much as knew me †. (*Luke* xxii. 34.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How affectionate and abiding is Christ's love to his own people; and how amazingly does he condescend to them, for their instruction and advantage! But we cannot justly pretend to be his disciples, unless he washes us by his blood and Spirit, and we be ready to follow his example of condescension, and to obey his commands, and particularly that great law, which he has so strongly enforced, of loving one another for his sake. How melancholy is the thought that any under a profession of Christ, and under the highest obligations, and the nearest visible relation to him, should lift up the heel against him! And what sad work does Satan make with them,

N O T E.

* It seems as if *Peter* thought that Christ, being rejected by the Jews, would go to some other parts of the earth to erect his throne, where he might reign without disturbance, and with great power, according to the carnal notions he had of Christ's kingdom.

† The substance of these passages is related in *Luke* xxii. 33, 34, 39. as well as in our Evangelist, before Christ's going out of the house to the mount of Olives: But a discourse to the same purpose is mentioned after it in *Mat.* xxvi. 30, 33, 34, 35. (see the note there) and *Mark* xiv. 26, 29,—31. It therefore

seems as if this were a conversation that passed a little before that related by *Matthew* and *Mark*, unless we suppose them to have a little neglected the order of time there, as in some other places, that they might throw things of a like nature together. But those learned men that think the supper, which our Evangelist speaks of in this chapter, was a night or two before the paschal supper, must suppose that his account of what passed between Christ and *Peter*, about that apostle's denying him, is entirely different in time from that of all the other Evangelists.

them, when, being left to their own corruptions, he leads them captive at his will! But the Lord knows who are his; and yet how many are the mistakes and defects, how great the ignorance, self-confidence, and rashness, and how dreadful the falls of some that Christ loves, and that sincerely love him! What need have the best amongst us for daily cleansing from daily sins! And how becoming is it for us to be always humble and modest, to have a godly jealousy over ourselves, and to submit to the wisdom and authority of Christ in whatsoever he says, does, or orders concerning us! And if any thing seems strange and unaccountable at present, let it be our comfort, that what we know not now, we shall know hereafter. In the mean while, we can never have too high thoughts of Christ, whose presence is our greatest joy, and whose absence our greatest grief; whose authority is uncontrollable; who is intimately acquainted with the most secret dispositions of our hearts; and not only knows what we now are, but what we shall be and do; who is glorious even in his sufferings and death, by which his Father was highly glorified; and who is now exalted to all the grandeur of his throne and kingdom! He will honour his servants that honour him, and will regard those that receive his messengers, as if they received himself and his Father; and though they, like him, may meet with treacherous usage from their nearest intimates, and with other sufferings for his sake, it will not be long before they will follow him to glory, and be ever with the Lord.

C H A P X I V.

The beginning of Christ's farewell sermon, in which he comforts his disciples under their troubles with promises of heaven, 1,—5. Speaks of himself as the way to the Father, and of his own being one with him, 6,—12. Assures his disciples that he will answer the prayers which they offer up in his name, 13, 14. Promises another Comforter, and gracious manifestations of himself, and of the Father, 15,—24. Repeats the promise of the Comforter, bequeaths a legacy of peace to them, and concludes the first part of his discourse, 25,—31.

TEXT.

LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER Judas was gone away, (*chap. xiii. 31.*) our Lord said to the eleven apostles, Take heed that your hearts be not discomposed and terrified at my approaching ignominy and death; or at what I said about the traitor, (*chap. xiii. 21.*) as if I meant any of you; nor be ye disheartened at what I told you about your soon losing my corporal presence; (*chap. xiii. 33.*) or at the disappointment ye will thereupon meet with in your secular expectations from me, and the dangers ye will be exposed to for my sake: Ye have already * faith in God, according to
the

N O T E.

* The verb πιστεύετε in both parts of the sentence is the same, and equally belongs to the indicative and imperative mood, and so admits of various constructions. But it seems most natural not to render it in one part of the sentence indicatively, and in the other imperatively, as in our translation; but either in-

dicatively or imperatively in both, as I have put it in the Paraphrase, that the reader may take his choice: Or, if he likes it better, he may follow our version, according to which our blessed Lord owns with commendation, that the disciples did believe in God, as manifested in the Old Testament, and enjoins them

the revelations that are made of him in the Old Testament ; and ye have faith it me, as his own Son and the Messiah, according to the discoveries that, in my ministry, and by my Spirit, have been made of me ; this ought to quiet your fears : Labour now, in a special manner, to live in the daily exercise of faith in God the Father, and of the same divine faith in me ; and this will be an effectual means of your support and comfort, under all the troubles, that now fill your hearts, or are coming upon you.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions ; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

2 For in heaven, where my Father dwells in the highest manifestations of himself, there are many delightful abodes, as many as there are sons to be brought to glory ; and there are some particularly for you, that ye may have eternal rest and satisfaction, after all the toils and troubles of time ; if it were otherwise, such is my faithfulness and affection to you, that I would certainly have undeceived you as I often have, when ye vainly expected temporal dignities and possessions from me : But the very business and design of my departure, by death to heaven, is to procure a right of admission to it, by the merit of my atoning blood, for you, to take possession of it as a forerunner in your names, and to dispose of things in the best manner, and get them ready against your arrival thither.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also.

3 And (*και*) when, or as surely, as I go in this manner, to provide a blessed residence there for you, (*παλιν ερχομαι*) I will quickly return by my Spirit, to take care of you, and to fit you for that heavenly habitation ; and I will receive your souls at death, and your whole persons at my second appearing, into my immediate presence, for intimate fellowship and communion with me, that where I already am in my divine nature, and very soon shall be in my human nature, there ye may likewise be in a state of perfect freedom, honour, and delight.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

4 And, by what I have now, and formerly said to you, ye have been told, and may know, both the place to which I am going, and the way, in which ye hereafter are to follow me thither.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither

5 *Thomas*, who was apt to be of a doubtful and unbelieving heart, (*chap. xx. 25, 27.*) and could not get rid of his notions about temporal dominion, replied,

N O T E.

them to believe in himself, as manifested, and to be still further manifested, in all his divine and saving characters under the New. But which ever way we take it, Christ here speaks of himself as the object of the same divine faith equally with the Father ; and therefore

though he is to be considered as a distinct person from the Father, and under a distinct notion as the Messiah, who was sent by the Father ; yet he is not distinguished from him as God, or as excluded from sharing in Godhead with him.

ther thou goest, and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me, hath

plied, Lord, notwithstanding all that thou hast said, we are still at a loss about the place, to which thou art going; how is it possible then, that we should know the way of following thee thither?

6 Jesus answered him, I, myself, am the * only true and living medium of intercourse between heaven and earth, and of your finding acceptance with God, and receiving grace to advance you to eternal blessedness; I am the *Way*, as by my own blood I am entering into the holy place, and shall thereby open a way for you to follow me; I am the *Truth*, as all the legal types and shadows are fulfilled in me, and as I, the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, teach you the sure way to heaven and glory: And I am the *Life*, as I have life in myself, and am the author of spiritual and eternal life, to all that believe in me: So that no man, in his fallen state, can make any acceptable approach in worship to the Father, or have any comfortable communion with him, by faith and love here, or have a personal entrance into his immediate and blessed presence hereafter, in any other way than by me.

7 And as for the Father, to whom I tell you I am going, had ye clearly understood what I am in my divine, as well as human nature, ye must have known who and what my Father is, he and I being in nature and essential properties one: (*chap. x. 30.*) And from this time forward ye begin, and shall go on to know more of him, and indeed, ye have already seen more of him in me, and in the manifestations that I have made of the divine power and goodness, than ye are aware of.

8 Hereupon *Philip*, another of the apostles, whose faith had a great mixture of unbelief, (*chap. vi. 7.*) said to him, Lord, if thou wilt but please to give us some visible representation of the Father, as God used sometimes to give of himself, in extraordinary visions, to the ancient prophets, this will entirely satisfy all our doubts, and silence all our fears.

9 Jesus replied, in a way of gentle rebuke, Have I been upwards of three years daily and familiarly conversing with you all? And what, *Philip*, art thou, who wast one of my first disciples, (*chap. i. 43, 44.*) still ignorant of my original nature? I tell thee, that whoever is duly acquainted with me, has seen

N O T E.

* Some suppose that Christ here useth the figure *Hendiadis*, to denote that he is the true and living way, according to what the apostle speaks of believers, *having boldness to enter into the holiest, by*

the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. (*Heb. x. 19, 20.*) I have accordingly given this sense a place in the Paraphrase.

hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

seen such divine perfections manifesting themselves in my person, ministry, and miracles, that he cannot be ignorant of the Father; but has seen such lively displays of his nature and excellencies in me, who am the express image of his person, as exceed all former visible representations, which, in their main design, were only so many types and shadows of what now appears in me: How strange is it then, that, after so long acquaintance with me, thou shouldst desire me to shew you the Father, in order to your satisfaction and comfort?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works.

10 What! Dost thou not yet believe, that I and my Father are so essentially united, as to be inseparable, though distinct persons from each other, and that we have such intimate communion in Godhead, as imports a real and mutual, though incomprehensible inbeing? Then, turning his discourse from *Philip* to all the disciples, he, to help the infirmity of their faith, said, This, as well as every other doctrine that I deliver to you, I speak not merely of myself, as if it were a private sentiment of my own, apart from the Father; but he who, I say, inseparably abides in me, exerts the same divine power with me in performing the miraculous works which I have wrought to confirm it.

11 Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works sake.

11 Believe me then, upon mine own divine authority, who am the Truth, (*ver. 6.*) that my Father and I have an essential and inseparable being one in the other, as I have said: But (*εἰ δὲ μὴ*) if ye do not believe me merely upon the credit of my own word, let the very works*, which I perform in a divine Godlike manner, satisfy you, that I exert no less power, than that of God the Father himself, in bringing them to pass.

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that

12 Then returning to his design of comforting them, (*ver. 1.*) he said, with great solemnity, I faithfully assure you, that he who truly believes in me, according to the declaration I have made of myself,

N O T E.

* It seems to me, that Christ's referring to his works here, as often elsewhere, respects not merely his miracles themselves, but his sovereign Godlike way of performing them by his own divine power, which was the same in him as in the Father: Otherwise those works themselves were no proof of his being in the Father, and the Father in him, or of the Father's dwelling in him, in any higher sense than the same might be affirmed of the apostles, who, he says in the next verse, should do the same, and greater works than these: Much less

could it be said, that he who had seen him, had also seen the Father, unless he had been partaker of the same nature with the Father, and had, in his acting like a divine person, exerted the very same power as resides in the Father himself, and that in such an absolute way as the Father himself would have done it, had he appeared personally and visibly among men: For nothing like this was ever said of the apostles, or any other mere man, because they acted not by their own, but by Christ's power.

that I do shall he do also: and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

self, shall be highly favoured in this world, as well as for ever blessed with me in the next: For he shall be enabled to do, not only the same sort of works, in healing the sick, casting out devils, restoring sight to the blind, and raising the dead, as I now perform*, during my abode on earth; but he shall be an instrument in my hand, of doing still greater works than these, with longer continuance, and wider extent, among *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, and with more remarkably happy effects, to the conversion of vast multitudes of both, through all nations of the world; because I go to be enthroned in glory, and to exercise all power at the Father's right hand.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask, upon the foot of my warrant and promise, with humble dependence on my wisdom and power, faithfulness and grace, and on my merit and advocacy, that ye may honour me; I will certainly perform it in answer to your prayers, that the Father himself may thereby manifest his glorious perfections, in my gracious and almighty operations, and through my obedience and sufferings, who am his own Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

14 Whatsoever ye, I say, making mention of my name, shall in this manner pray for, that may be for the glory of God and your good, and particularly for your assistance and acceptance, support, encouragement, and success in your work; I will not only take care that it be done, but I myself will certainly do it, as working together with my Father therein.

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

15 Since therefore these will be some of the principal fruits of my departure, If ye indeed love me, give proof of it, not by being troubled at the thoughts of losing my company, and your secular expectations from me, which self-love will prompt you to, but in having a conscientious respect to all my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter,

16 And, for your encouragement herein, I, as your High-priest and Advocate, will intercede effectually with my Father for you; and he will join with me, (*chap. xv. 26.*) in sending you † another counsellor, advocate,

N O T E S.

* Here our Lord accurately speaks of the works which he then wrought, saying, in the present tense, (*α γω ποιω*) which I do: For he was likewise the author of those greater works, that the apostles were afterwards to do, because he went to the Father to exercise all power at his right hand: And these greater works might partly respect one apostle's working miracles, merely by his shadow, and another by *handkerchiefs carried from his body*; (*Acts v. 15. and xix. 12.*) but principally their

speaking all sorts of languages, for the propagation of the gospel among all nations, and the wonderful power of the Holy Ghost, that attended their ministrations, for the conversion of three thousand at once, and afterwards of innumerable multitudes of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, for many succeeding years together, beyond all that was ever done by Christ's personal ministry.

† The Spirit is here evidently spoken of as a distinct person from Christ: He was one *Paraclete*, and the Spirit, who after

forter, that he may abide with you for ever ;

17 *Even* the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him : but ye know him ; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

13 I will not leave you comfortless ; I will come to you.

10 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more ; but ye see me : because I live, ye shall live also.

advocate, and Comforter, to supply the want of my corporal presence, in instructing, assisting, and exciting you to every duty, in pleading your cause against your adversaries, and in comforting you under all your tribulations, that he may continue with you, not, as I have done, for a little while only, but through every period, and in every turn and difficulty of life, till he shall conduct you safe, through death itself, to an eternal abode with me in glory.

17 The Divine agent I mean is the Holy Spirit, who, being of the same nature with the Father and me, is likewise Truth itself, may be depended upon for his faithfulness, and is the author and teacher of all truth : The carnal men of this world, remaining such, cannot indeed entertain or embrace him, because they have no true knowledge of him, nor are well-affected toward him : But ye, who are enlightened, and renewed by his operation upon your hearts, are already in some measure experimentally acquainted with him : For he at present dwells, and works, and manifests himself in you, as his living temples, by his gracious, as well as miraculous influence, and in a little time he will work and manifest himself in you, with increasing light, and power, and consolation.

18 Thus, though I am going from you by death, I will not leave you destitute and exposed, friendless, and forlorn, as if ye were fatherless children ; (*ορφανος*) I will soon take opportunities of visiting you again in person, and, after I am gone to the Father, will return by my Spirit, to your great relief and exceeding joy.

19 It is but a very little while before the men of this world, who rejected, despised, and abused me, shall no more see me on earth, as they have for years past : But I will appear in person again to you, my beloved disciples, that ye may see me alive after my passion : And because I am the living one in my divine nature, and shall rise to a glorious and immortal life in my

N O T E.

after his departure should come from the Father, was another, (*αλλος*) another person, though not (*αλλο*) another being, nor (*εισος*) a different sort of Comforter ; the Son and Spirit being one in essence with the Father ; and the Spirit being the same sort of divine Comforter as Christ himself had been to his disciples. The verb *παρηκαλιω* signifies to exhort, comfort, intreat, and plead ; and the word *παρηκαλιος*, derived from thence, is most commonly used to signify an advocate that pleads another's

cause : But as all that the Spirit does of this kind, is in a comfortable manner, for the assistance and relief of his servants and people, he may be properly enough stiled *the Comforter*, with regard to his work therein, as well as with regard to the divine consolations that he affords believers, under all their troubles, by shedding abroad God's love in their hearts, and witnessing with their spirits, that they are the children of God, and heirs of glory.

my human nature, and shall always live in heaven, as the head of the body; ye, my members, shall likewise live spiritually, in conformity to me, and by virtue derived from me here, and eternally with me hereafter; in a state of justification, sanctification, and consolation in this world, and of glorification in the next.

20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

20 Then, * when I am risen as your head and representative, and as a triumphant conqueror over sin and Satan, death and hell, and over all your and mine enemies, ye shall begin more clearly to apprehend; and, by the subsequent effusion of my Spirit, shall understand with still plainer evidence; and, at your coming to live with me in glory, shall know best of all, that I have the essential union with my Father which I have been speaking of, (*ver. 9, 10, 11.*) and that ye have a mystical and vital union with me by my Spirit, which, as I said, (*ver. 17.*) dwells in you, and shall be in you, to secure your living by and with me.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

21 Every true believer, who, by virtue of this union with me, not only hears, but heartily receives my commandments, and faithfully observes them, is one that sincerely loves, and shews his love to me: And he, who in this manner loves me, shall be accepted, approved of, and delighted in, by my Father, for my sake; and I, whose heart is the same with my Father's, will likewise approve of him, and delight in him, and will make rich discoveries of myself, and of my special love and favour to him.

22 Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

22 Hereupon Judas, not he who was called *Iscariot*, and was gone out of the company before this, (*chap. xiii. 31.*) but another apostle of that name, who was the brother of James, (*Luke vi. 16.*) cried out with amazement, saying †, Lord, how astonishing, condescending, and endearing is this, and how contrary to our deserts, that thou shouldst thus graciously make thyself known, and shew thy peculiar favour to us, and not to the generality of the world! (*τις γεγορευ*) What wonderful kindness is this to us, rather than to them!

23 Jesus answered and said unto him,

23 Jesus, in reply, said to him, If any one sincerely loves me, this, as I told you, (*ver. 21.*) will

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N O T E S.

* *That day* may relate to the day when he should appear to them after his resurrection, by which he would be declared to be the Son of God with power; or to the day when he would send his Spirit to them; or to the day when they should live with him in heaven.

† Some think that Judas, according to his notions of the temporal dominion and glory of the Messiah, spoke of Christ's

personally appearing only to the apostles, under the power of ignorance, prejudice, and concern at the disappointment they were thereby like to meet with in their expectations of secular honour and advantages from him: But as nothing like this appears in his words, or in Christ's answer, I take them to be the language of holy admiration, according to the sense given in the Paraphrase.

him If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart

engage him to receive my doctrine, and keep my commands: And such an one is a proper subject for, and shall be favoured with peculiar * manifestations, not only of mine, but likewise of my Father's love; and we will multiply tokens of our special presence with him, by our word, ordinances, and Spirit, and continue to hold free and intimate communion with him, as in the spiritual house and temple, which we take pleasure to dwell in.

24 On the other hand, he, who does not heartily love me, has no conscientious regard to my doctrines or commands, and so is unfit for, and shuts himself out from these special privileges: And as the doctrine which I preach is not merely mine, but is likewise the word and command of my Father himself, who sent me to discharge the Messiah's office, neither he nor I will dwell and commune with, or manifest ourselves to him that disrelishes and rejects it.

25 These things have I delivered for your present comfort and encouragement, according to your capacities of receiving them, and as the little time would admit, which remains for my being personally present with you.

26 But after my departure, when the Holy Spirit shall come, who is that other guide, advocate, and Comforter, whom I mentioned, (*ver. 16.* see the note there) and whom the Father will certainly send, according to my merit and intercession, in my room, and as my agent to promote my honour, and carry on my work; He shall lead you into a more clear and extensive knowledge of all truths, that are needful for yourselves to know, or for you to preach to others; and he shall revive the remembrance of all the particulars which ye have heard from me, that ye may fully apprehend and understand them, and know how to make a proper and seasonable use of them.

27 In the mean time †, I, like an affectionate and dying friend, take my farewell of you; and prosperity of the noblest kind, even peace with God, with one another, and in your own souls, is the blessing that I leave to you; my peace, which is such as I myself

N O T E S.

* *Judas's* question was not, Lord, how is it that thou wilt love us; but that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not to the world? Accordingly Christ's answer is to be understood, rather of the tokens and discoveries of his own and his Father's love, than of the love itself. But which ever way we take it, what he says here, and in the following chapter, on the like subject, is to be considered

as characteristic of the objects of his and the Father's love, and not as the cause of their loving them.

† Christ's taking this leave of his disciples may either refer to the custom of friends at parting, or of a father or friend at leaving this world; and therefore I have kept up both these views in the Paraphrase.

heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

myself enjoy, and which I am the purchaser and author of, I freely give to you: I say this, not in a way of formal compliment, like the men of this world, who, at parting, only wish their friends happiness and peace; but I heartily and effectually leave the blessing itself behind me: Nor is what I bequeath and bestow of such little value, and uncertain tenure, as the best legacies are that they can leave; but it is such a sort of peace, as passes all understanding, and as nothing in this world can either give, or take away from you. Therefore, as I said before, (*ver.* 1.) let not your hearts be discomposed with grief and terror, at the thoughts of my departure from you; nor be ye afraid of any difficulty or distress that may befall you after I am gone to the Father.

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

28 I have already said that I am just ready to leave you, but that it is with a design of returning, to receive you to my Father's house and kingdom, that ye may be with me there. (*ver.* 3.) If then your love to me were truly spiritual, regular, and considerate, ye would be so far from being disturbed and grieved at my departure, that ye would rejoice for my sake and your own; because I told you that I am going to my Father, where I, as man and Mediator, shall be possessed of the utmost blessedness, and of all power in heaven and earth, to exercise it for your advantage: For in the economy of salvation, in which I act the part of the Messiah as my Father's servant, he is * greater than I, and will reward my obedience and sufferings, by exalting my incarnate person to reign with him in glory.

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

29 And I have told you of these things beforehand, that when ye see them accomplished by my death, and ascension to heaven, and by an effusion of the Spirit, in consequence thereof, ye may be the more confirmed in your belief, that I am the true Messiah, both able and willing to perform all my promises to you.

30 The

N O T E.

* It is evident that our Lord does not here speak of his Father as greater than himself, with respect to his divine nature and person, simply considered: For in the Deity there is neither greater nor less; and he had said that his Father and he were one, and had called himself the Son of God in such a sense, as to make himself, properly God; (*chap.* x. 30,—36.) he had likewise in this discourse (*ver.* 9, 10.) asserted, that his Father and he were one in another, in such a manner, that he who saw the Son, saw the Father also; and in a following part

of his discourse he says, (*chap.* xvi. 15.) All things that the Father hath are mine: But he is to be understood, as speaking of himself here only in that sense in which he was going to the Father; and that was in his human nature and mediatorial character, or as the incarnate Messiah: And whilst he was speaking of himself in this character, it was becoming both his Father and himself, and was suitable to his then present state of humiliation, and his care to honour his Father, that he should say, My Father is greater than I.

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you : for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

30 The time wears off so fast, that I shall have little opportunity of saying much more to you before my death : For Satan, who in his former temptations pretended to offer me the kingdoms of this world, as if he had the disposal of them, (*Luke* iv. 5,—7.) and who works powerfully in the hearts of its princes and rulers, as well as in every child of disobedience, is just now making his last effort, by stirring up his evil instruments to unite stratagem and force for murdering me. And after all, he can find no corruption in me to work upon by his temptations, or to give him power over me ; nor can he answer his own ends by all that he is able to do against me, who, by dying, shall destroy his kingdom, glorify my Father, and redeem my people ; nor can he prevail against me, to bring about my death itself, without my own free consent.

31 But that the world may know that I love the Father ; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

31 But, to make it evident to the whole world, and particularly to my disciples in it, that I love my Father, and that as I, in the quality of his servant, have received a command from him to lay down my life for the sheep ; (*chap.* x. 15, 18.) so I am heartily willing to testify my love by my obedience. Come, let us rise up from table, and go away from hence to the garden, where mine enemies are coming to apprehend me. (*Chap.* xviii. 1, &c.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a safe and suitable object of faith, is Christ, who neither will, nor can deceive us ! All divine perfections shine in him, as the Son of his Father's own likeness ; and there is no knowing God, or believing in him to saving advantage, nor any coming with acceptance and comfort to him, or getting to heaven, but by this great Mediator. How equally is he possessed of deity with the Father ; and yet how amazingly did he condescend to take upon him the saving office in our nature, with regard to which his Father is greater than he ! And how freely in the discharge of this office, and in the greatness of his love, did he obey his Father's will, in yielding himself up to sufferings and death, while no powers of hell and earth could have brought him to them without his own consent ! And as Satan found nothing in him to work upon ; so how signally were his designs defeated by the death of Christ, who rose again to an immortal life, and went to be glorified with the Father ! And what a confirmation is it to our faith to see these things, which our blessed Lord foretold, so exactly accomplished according to his word ! He has now opened a new and living way to God and glory ; and there is no room for his disciples to be troubled or afraid, but the greatest reason for them to rejoice, since he, who was dead, is alive again, and is gone in their nature to heaven, to provide delightful mansions for them, and secure their interest there : And because he lives, they shall live also ; he doth not leave them comfortless while they are in this world, but gives them the noblest and sweetest peace to over-balance all their sorrows ; he and his Father will dwell in, and commune with them that love him, will send his Spirit to guide, assist, and comfort them all the days of their lives, and will answer the prayers that they present with faith in his name ; and he will come again, and receive them into his own glorious presence at death and judgment, that where he is, there they may be with him for ever : He will give them an experimental knowledge of their vital union with himself, in gradual discoveries of it by his Spirit here, till at length they shall clearly understand, and be fully satisfied about it in heaven, where they shall likewise know more of his essential union with the Father, than they can now conceive.

conceive. O what matter of admiration is it, that he should thus manifest himself to any of us, and not unto the world! But as ever we desire further discoveries and indulgences of his grace, we should affectionately love him, and shew our love, by faithfully keeping his commands, and cheerfully following him wherever he calls us, saying, *Arise, let us go hence.*

C H A P. XV.

A continuation of Christ's farewell sermon, in which he speaks of himself and his disciples under the similitude of a vine and its branches, 1,—7. Commands them to abound in fruits of holiness, and particularly in love one to another, by virtue of their union with him, 8,—17. And comforts them against the hatred and persecutions of the world, 18,—27.

TEXT.

I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord and his disciples having rose from table in the guest-chamber, where he had celebrated his last passover, and the New Testament-supper; (*Matth. xxvi. 26,—30.*) he immediately * after this, (*chap. xviii. 1.*) went on with his discourse, explaining more at large what he had hinted, (*chap. xiv. 20.*) about their vital union with himself, saying, In my peculiar relation to the church, I, as the fountain of spiritual influence, and the great medium of conveying it to its members, am, by way of eminence and excellence, like the root and stock of a generous vine, which forms and communicates sap for the production and life, nourishment and fruitfulness of its branches: And my heavenly Father, who sent me for this purpose into the world, and takes care of me and my true members, is like an husbandman, who plants, and has a peculiar propriety in, and watchful concern about his vine and its branches.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not

2 As in the noblest vine some of its branches are barren, and others fruitful, and a wise manager cuts away

N O T E.

* By comparing this with the places referred to in the Paraphrase, it appears that the discourse and prayer, which follow in this and the two next chapters, passed between the time of Christ's saying in the guest-chamber, *Let us go hence,* and the time of his coming to the brook *Cedron*. It is indeed uncertain whether this discourse were in the guest-chamber, after he got up from supper, or in the way to the garden, where he was betrayed: But, be that as it will, his having just before drank of the fruit of the vine with the disciples in the New Testament ordigance of his supper,

(*Matth. xxvi. 29.*) gave a proper occasion for his speaking of himself under the emblem of a vine. Or if he delivered this discourse somewhere in the way to the garden, it probably was in one of the vineyards which that country abounded with, or at least in sight of a vine: And so he might take a further occasion from thence to speak of himself under the metaphor of a vine, and of the true vine, in distinction from the Old Testament-church, which was often represented under that figure *Psal. lxxx. 8,—14. Isa. v. 1,—7. and Jer. ii. 21.*

not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

away all those that are superfluous, as doing more harm than good, and, by pruning off the suckers, assists the growth and improvement of the fruitful branches, in order to their bearing still more fruit: So in the visible church there are some members, which are externally united to me, only in profession and appearance, without bringing forth any good fruit; and there are others, which are internally and vitally united, by my Spirit and by faith, to me, and by virtue thereof, bear spiritual and holy fruit; and my heavenly Father, in his righteous judgment, cuts off all the hypocritical professors of my name, as unprofitable and injurious; and he in his infinite wisdom uses various methods, to purge away the superfluity of naughtiness, which still remains in true believers themselves, that they may abound yet more and more in fruits of holiness, and that their end may be everlasting life. (*Rom. vi. 22.*)

3 Now, * *Judas* being gone, all of you, my disciples, are of this sort of fruitful branches, and living members in me, ye being already partakers of my Spirit, and your hearts being purified by faith, and by means of my word, which works effectually in you.

4 Go on then to adhere by faith and love to me, (*ver. 9.*) and I will be as a root and source of perpetual supply by my Spirit to you. But as no branch, how lively soever it be, can continue to bear fruit, or bring it to perfection by any vigour in itself, unless it have an abiding union with, and communication from the vine: So neither can ye, (*εως εδς υμεις*) notwithstanding your present attainments in grace, continue to bring forth fruit to God, any otherwise than by a continuance of your union and communion with me.

5 To impress a sense of this important truth the more deeply upon you, I repeat what I said, (*ver. 1.*) that I am in a spiritual and peculiar sense the vine, of which ye, as my members, are the branches, that derive all spiritual life, recruits, and nourishment from me: According to my meaning by this metaphor, he, and he only, who cleaves by faith and love to me, and has my Spirit dwelling in him, (*chap. xiv. 17.*) produces and abounds in spiritual fruit to the glory of God, and to his own and others advantage: For (*χωρις εμης*) separate or apart from me, and without my continual influence, even ye, my disciples, can do nothing

N O T E.

* While *Judas* was with them, Christ said, *Ye are clean, but not all*; (*chap. xiii. 10.*) but now they were rid of his company, Christ told them absolutely, without exception, *Ye are clean through the word, &c.*

nothing truly good, and acceptable to God, any more than a branch can bud, and blossom, and bring forth fruit, without union with, and communication of sap from the vine.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

6 If any one, who makes an external profession, and appearance of being my disciple, do not in this manner adhere to me, he is no better than a hypocrite, who shall be cast out of all relation to me and my church, and whose gifts, profession, and specious appearances shall wither and die; and all such nominal professors shall be gathered together at the last day, as fit fuel for divine wrath, and cast into everlasting burnings, even as the withered branches of a vine are cut off from it, and men * use to gather them into a bundle, and throw them into the fire to be utterly consumed.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

7 If, on the contrary, ye steadfastly cleave to me, and I dwell in your hearts by faith, and by means of my word, as a principle that guides and governs, quickens and establishes you; whatsoever ye, as thus abiding in me, and depending on me, shall ask according to my will, for the glory of God, and your own edification and fruitfulness, ye shall receive it, even to the utmost of your desires and wants.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

8 † By your thus abiding in me, and my abiding in you, and by your petitions being thus granted, the glory of my heavenly Father's wisdom, faithfulness, and grace, is exalted, (*viz*) to the end that ye may abound in fruits of righteousness, whereby he may be still further glorified; and so shall ye appear with evidence to others, and to your own consciences, and I will esteem and own you to be my true disciples, that have vital union with me, and are an honour to me. (*εμου*)

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

9 For as I myself, considered as the root and medium of all gracious communications to you, am beloved of my Father; so I have a peculiar love for you, as branches united to me, and deriving virtue

unto

N O T E S.

* According to some expositors, *Mens gathering withered branches*, signifies hypocritical formal professors being seized by Satan and his agents in this world, that they may bring them to destruction in the next. And according to others, it signifies their being gathered out of God's kingdom, and cast into hell, by the holy angels, as ministers of justice at the last day: But, as every expression in a parable is not to be strained, hypocrites and unbelievers being cast into everlasting fire to be perpetually tormented there, may be suffi-

cient to answer the design of this part of the parable.

† *Herein* (*εν τω*) seems to refer back to what Christ had been saying concerning himself, as the vine, and believers as branches in him: And (*viz*) *that*, being a final particle, naturally leads one's thoughts to the sense given in the Paraphrase: But, as all our fruits of righteousness are, by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God, I have likewise preserved the thought of God's being glorified by them.

unto all fruitfulness from me: Let it therefore be your great concern to cleave affectionately, and steadfastly to me, and to be still further approved of, and delighted in by me.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love: even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

10 And if from a principle of love, ye cheerfully attend to, and obey my commandments, as your Lord and Saviour, ye shall continue to be approved of me, and to know, for your abundant satisfaction, that I love you; even as I, in my human nature and office-capacity, have cheerfully obeyed my Father's commandments in fulfilling all righteousness, and am continually approved of him, and know that he loves me.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

11 These things have I thus freely and plainly declared to you, that I may rejoice in you as fruitful branches in me, and ye may rejoice in your union with me, and in my abiding love to you; and that, through a supply of my Spirit, ye may have such a fulness of joy to support you under all your troubles, as shall abundantly make up your loss of my corporal presence, and as shall issue in your complete and everlasting joy with me.

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

12 Now the great command, which includes many others, and which I insist on your observing, as a proof of your sincere affection and discipleship to me, is, as I have said, (*chap. xiii. 34.*) that ye be affectionate, and ready to perform all offices of love one to another for my sake, in consideration, and in imitation of my fervent love to you, which I am going to demonstrate in the highest manner possible.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

13 No man can be capable of having a more sincere and hearty love, or of expressing it by an higher instance than this, that, where there is occasion for it, he freely put his own life in the stead of the life of his dearest friends and benefactors, and yield himself up to death for their redemption; and this I am about to do for you, as if ye were my most important and worthy friends, though I am neither indebted to you, nor can be profited by you, whom of enemies I have made friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

14 And ye will approve yourselves to be my friends, whom I esteem as such, if, from a sense of my love to you, ye make conscience of paying a ready and impartial obedience to all my commandments.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth: but I have called you friends; for all things that

15 I might indeed well speak of you, and accordingly treat you, only in the quality of servants: However, I will not keep you at such a distance; for a mere servant does not use to be let into the secrets of his lord and master: But I have conversed, and will deal with you as intimate friends; for as God *would not hide from Abraham, his friend, what he*

I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

was about to do; (Gen. xviii. 17.) so all my Father's hidden counsels, which I, as Mediator, and head of the church, have received * in commission from him, to communicate for his glory and their salvation, I have begun to impart, and will proceed by my Spirit to discover still further, with all freedom and plainness to you, that ye may know them for yourselves, and for the good of others, and that none of them may be concealed from you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

16 All this I do, not as if ye were first in your choice of me, or had laid any obligation upon me; but, from my own mere love and grace, I have freely chosen you to salvation †, as well as to the apostleship, and have constituted you to be my friends and servants for this purpose, that ye may go out in my name and strength; that by virtue derived from me, as your root, ye may bring forth fruits of righteousness in your lives and ministry; and that ye may persevere therein, till ye and the converts, made by means of your labours, shall propagate my cause for its continuance on earth, and shall arrive safe to heaven; as also that my Father may grant your petitions, in whatsoever ye shall ask to these holy purposes, with faith in my name, as your prevailing advocate and friend.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

17 Now these things I recommend, and enjoin upon you, that ye, after my example, may heartily love one another, as members of the same body, and partakers of the same blessings, and as disciples and friends, as well as servants of the same Lord.

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

18 If, according to the original enmity between the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman, (Gen. iii. 15.) ye meet with great opposition from men of a carnal spirit, that are wholly devoted to this world, and under the government of Satan, its god; do not wonder, or be discouraged at it: For ye well know that they began with me, and have been as full of spite and rage against me, your head and chief, (*πρωτον υμου*) as they possibly can be against you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his

19 Were ye of the same carnal temper and disposition with the men of this world, soothing and encouraging them in their sinful courses, they would esteem

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and

N O T E S.

* This cannot possibly mean that Christ's disciples knew, or should know, as much of God's counsels as he himself did; but it evidently relates to what belonged to his commission to declare unto them, in the discharge of which he was faithful to him that appointed him, and withheld nothing from them.

† *Judas* being now gone. Christ here speaks of his choosing the rest of the disciples, not merely to the apostleship, to which he had chosen *Judas* as well as them, but likewise of his having chosen them to saving and eternal blessings, through faith and holiness, as his friends; accordingly I have given both these considerations a place in the Paraphrase.

his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

19 Remember the word that I said unto you. The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

20 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

21 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

* Several critics have supposed that *εγω* is here used for *εξαγγελος*, which translates to observe with a malicious, calumniating intent, *Mark* iii. 2. *Luke* vi. 7. *John* i. and xx. 20. But others, not finding that the word is ever thus used, especially in this Evangelist, take it in an ironical sense, as strongly intimating that the Jews had not kept his words,

and carets you, as persons of their own party and likeness; but because ye are not conformed to their corrupt principles, manners, and customs, but I have, by a peculiar choice, distinguished you from the rest of the world, and set you apart for myself, that ye may exemplify and preach my spiritual and holy gospel; hence it is, that the men of this world have an irreconcilable antipathy to you.

20 Therefore, to compose your spirits, and silence all murmurings under the utmost malignity of your enemies against you, reflect seriously and often upon what I have told you, once and again, (*chap.* xiii. 16. and *Matth.* x. 24.) that the servant is neither worthy of, nor is to expect more regard, or better treatment, than his lord and master: If then these carnal, worldly-minded men have vented their enmity in all manner of revilings and persecutions of me; no wonder that they will shew the like rancour and severity against you: Just as they have treated my discourses, they will treat yours: If they have * carped and cavilled at my doctrine as delivered by me, because it is so contrary to their depraved sentiments, temper, and views; it is to be expected, that for the same reason, they will set themselves against it when delivered by you; whereas, had they received the truth in the love of it from me, no doubt but they would do the same from you.

21 But their utmost hatred, persecutions, and opposition will turn against you, on account of your relation to me, as ye bear my name and image, stand up for my honour, profess and publish my gospel: and the reason of their enmity to you on this account is, because they have not a true knowledge of God, nor of his having sent me into the world, to redeem *Israel* from all their iniquities.

22 If I indeed had not come and acquainted them with my true character, there would have been no sin in their rejecting me; or if I had done this only in obscure hints, there would have been, comparatively, but little guilt in their refusing to believe in me: But now, since I have appeared among them with the clearest demonstrations of my being the promised Messiah,

N O T E,

nor would they those of the apostles: And as in all the context our Lord is speaking of the opposition, that was made to him and would be made to his disciples after him, it seems as if this clause were to be understood, of rejecting his doctrine. But that the reader may have his option, I have put it both ways in the Paraphrase.

Messiah, and have long preached to them with such evident authority and affection, as prove my doctrine to be of God, their sin in disbelieving, opposing, and despising me and my words, is highly aggravated, and they have nothing to plead in excuse for it.

13 He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.

23 And whoever he be, that, notwithstanding all this, hates and opposes me, he is really, at heart, no better than an enemy to my heavenly Father, who sent me, and has given public testimony to me, as his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

24 Furthermore, had I not, together with my divine doctrines, performed such merciful and miraculous works among this people, to confirm them, as neither *Moses*, nor the prophets, nor any other man ever wrought, especially in such a sovereign, God-like manner, as I performed them, they might still have had some pretence of excusing their infidelity, or at least of lessening its guilt: But they now continuing obstinately to persist in it, after they themselves have been eye-witnesses of those my numerous and undoubted credentials, and of my Father's acting with and by me, it is plain, that their rejecting me, proceeds from a rooted aversion in their wicked hearts, to the holiness and authority both of my Father and me; so that their sin is exceedingly aggravated, and they are altogether without excuse.

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

25 But ye need not be stumbled at this: For their wilful obstinacy and prejudices have been suffered to work in this manner, that another character of the Messiah might be fulfilled in me, according to what is said in the sacred writings, (see the note on chap. x. 34.) where *David*, my type, complained with a prophetic view to the sufferings of the Messiah, (*Psal. xxxv. 19. and lxxix. 4.*) *They hated me without a cause*, or any just provocation to it.

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father,

26 But, notwithstanding all this furious, though causeless enmity to my person, truths, and interests, they shall triumph over all opposition. When that divine person *, whom I told you of, (chap. xiv.

16.)

N O T E.

* The Spirit's coming, and being sent by our Lord, from the Father, to testify of him, are *personal* characters, and plainly distinguish him from the Father and Son: And his title, as the Spirit of truth, together with his proceeding from the Father, can agree to none but a *divine* person: For this title is too high for a creature; and I cannot see any sufficient reason, why his proceeding from the Father is mentioned in the present tense, in the midst of a sentence, where Christ's sending him, and his testifying

of Christ, are spoken of as future: unless it be to intimate his necessary, unbeginning and never ending procession, as a divine person, from the Father in such a sublime manner, as lies beyond the reach of all our ideas, but is some way answerable to what is called eternal generation, with regard to Christ, in correspondence to his character as the Son: And yet that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son, as well as from the Father, may be fairly argued from his being called *the Spirit of Christ*, and *the Spirit*

Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

16.) shall come to shed abroad his gifts and graces, and whom, in consequence of my death and exaltation, I, with the concurrence and approbation of my Father, will shortly send unto you, even the Holy Spirit, who is faithfulness and truth itself, and who, in a divine and incomprehensible manner, proceeds from the Father: He, as an advocate to maintain my cause, and as a counsellor and Comforter, to direct, encourage, and support you under all your difficulties and dangers, shall bear a convincing witness to me, by the revelations he will further make of my character, and the miraculous operations he will enable you to perform; and by his assisting, owning, and succeeding you, unto the confutation of all your enemies, and bringing vast multitudes of all nations to the obedience of faith; as well as by those inward joys that he will raise in your own souls.

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

27 And ye yourselves, under the Spirit's conduct and influence, shall give a noble, plain, and courageous testimony to me and my cause, in your doctrines, miracles, lives, and deaths; and your witness will be unexceptionable, because ye have been my constant attendants, and all along familiarly acquainted with my discourses, miracles, sufferings, and behaviour, in public and private, for between three and four years, from the very beginning of my ministry, and shall continue so till I be crucified, raised again from the dead, and taken up from you to heaven.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

What blessed provision has God made in Christ for the spiritual life and growth, fruitfulness and happiness of believers, and for his own glory in and by them! And how intimate, beneficial, and endearing is their union with Christ! How effectual is his influence upon them! And how vigorous should their faith and love be toward him, who has freely chosen and set them apart for himself, counted them his friends, and loved them, even to the laying down of his life to redeem them! There is no doing any thing spiritually, and acceptably in religion, without him; but the richest abundance of precious fruits are brought forth in union with him, by a communication of grace from him, and by means of his word, ordinances, and providence, to subserve his work in true believers. Was faith more in exercise, their fruits of righteousness would increase; and whatsoever they ask for the glory of God and their own good, they would receive, and their fruit would evidently remain to eternal life. But ah, how sad is the case of hypocritical, carnal professors, who take up with external forms and appearances, instead of vital union to Christ, and who produce only dead works! They are fit for nothing but the burning, and must be cast into everlasting flames. What evidence can we have of our union with Christ,

N O T E.

Spirit of the Son, as well as of the Father. (1 *Pet.* i. 11. and *Gal.* iv. 6.) and from his being here said to be sent by Christ from the Father, as well as sent by the Father in his name. (*Chap.* xiv. 26.) And this, at the same time, shews the equal divinity of the Father and Son, in as much as they have equal power of

sending the Holy Spirit to bear the peculiar part, and to have the glory that by agreement belongs to him in the work of salvation: So that the sacred Three are here represented both in their personal characters, and in their divine and economical glories.

Christ, or what comfort in our thoughts about it, if we do not heartily cleave to him? Or what manifestation and enjoyment can we expect of his love, unless we love him, and keep his commandments without reserve? But O the delight and pleasure of knowing that he loves us! And how should his love to us, and ours to him, excite us to obey and imitate him in a sincere, affectionate, and active love to one another! All this, and every thing else necessary to salvation, has our dear Lord made known to his disciples by his word and Spirit, therein dealing with them as friends; and this Divine Spirit, who comes from the Father and Son, is able to silence all objections against every important truth of the gospel: If we have him for our advocate, guide, and Comforter, he will inspire us with a noble courage in our holy profession of Christ's name, and will be our support under all the tribulations we endure, because we are not of the world, but belong to him who hath chosen us out of the world. And why should any of the disciples and servants of the blessed Jesus wonder, or be discouraged at hatred, reproaches, and contempt from the men of this world, or at sufferings for his sake, when he, their great Lord and Master, has gone through them all, and worse, for theirs? But O how great is their guilt, who, in the midst of the clearest light of divine revelation, persist in their enmity and opposition to Christ and his gospel, his servants and followers! It is all without any just cause; and, whatsoever they pretend, they really do not know God, but are strangers, and averse to him and holiness, and therefore shut their eyes against the light, which is a high aggravation of their sin, and leaves them without excuse.

C H A P. XVI.

The conclusion of Christ's farewell sermon, in which he forewarns his disciples of persecutions, and takes notice of their present grief, 1,—6. And promises to send the Holy Ghost, 7,—15. To visit them again in person, as well as by his Spirit, after his resurrection, 16,—22. To secure a gracious answer to their prayers in his name, 23,—32. And to give them peace amidst all their tribulations in the world, 33.

TEXT.

THESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service.

PARAPHRASE.

I HAVE now told you, my disciples, before-hand, of the trials and comforts which lie before you, that ye may not be discouraged in the way of your duty; nor stumbled at my dying and leaving you, nor at the troubles that ye will meet with from mine enemies and yours for my sake.

2 Their rage will rise to such an height, that they will proceed to all manner of violence and cruelties against you; the men of ecclesiastical power, such as the chief priests and rulers, will excommunicate you, as apostates from their religion, (see the note on chap. ix. 34.) loading you with reproaches, and exposing you to all religious and civil hardships, as if ye were the most abandoned of wretches: Nay, the time is just at hand, when there will be such a general run of mad and furious zeal against you, that every one, who can but have a hand in putting you to death, will take a barbarous pleasure in it, from a superstitious blind conceit, as if he were thereby honouring God, and serving his cause and interest in the world.

3 And

3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou ?

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth ; It is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

3 And these immoral and pernicious principles and practices will they go into against you, as my disciples, because, through the wilful blindness and hardness of their hearts, they neither know, so as to believe and love, my Father, nor me.

4 But I have given you plain notices of these things before hand, that when the time of your hottest trials come, ye may recollect, to the silencing of all your objections and prejudices on their account, and to the confirmation of your faith in me and my gospel, that I, your Lord and friend, have, by a divine foreknowledge, and with all faithfulness, assured you, that thus it would be : And the reason of my not telling you, so plainly and particularly, of all these troubles and comforts, when I first called you to be my disciples was, because I myself was with you, to bear the chief brunt in my own person, and to screen you from it, as also to support and comfort you under such trials as have hitherto befallen you for my name's sake.

5 But now, as I am just going to leave you, and return to my Father, who sent me into the world, I thought proper to acquaint you with these things : And though, when I first mentioned my departure, some of you, out of curiosity, and with temporal views, asked me whither I was going ? (*chap. xiii. 36.*) yet, upon telling you, that it is to my Father's house, to prepare blessed mansions for you there, ye neither rejoice in it, nor readily understand my meaning, (*chap. xiv. 5.*) nor make any further inquiries about it.

6 But because I have spoke of leaving you, and of the troubles that will thereupon befall you, your spirits are swallowed up with over-much sorrow ; so much quicker are your apprehensions of grievous, than of joyous tidings.

7 However, the truth of the case, as I have hinted, and will now further explain to you, is this : Notwithstanding all your dejected thoughts, and formidable expectations of the consequence of my departure, with regard to your temporal concerns, it is really convenient and necessary for yourselves, as well as me, that I should go from this world to my Father : For such is the settlement of things in eternal counsels between him and me, and such is their just connection and order, that unless I depart, the Holy Spirit, that blessed guide, advocate, and Comforter, whom I mentioned, (see the note on *chap. xiv. 16.*) as more than sufficient to supply the want of my bodily presence, will not visit you with his richest gifts and graces, counsels and assistances, supports and joys :

But

But (*xxx*) when I go to be introned in my heavenly kingdom, I will send him to answer all the great and glorious purposes for which ye and my church shall need him.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment :

8 And he coming from on high, by virtue of my death, and in consequence of my resurrection and exaltation, shall carry on my cause in this lower world by demonstratively convincing both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, wherever my gospel comes, of their guilt, depravity, and obnoxiousness to the wrath of God ; of the righteousness which I bring in by my obedience and sufferings, for the justification of such as are helped to see that they have no righteousness of their own to recommend them to the divine favour and acceptance ; and of my holy and judicial power, in setting to rights the disorders of human nature, by sanctifying grace, in overthrowing Satan's dominion, and in passing judgment against the finally unbelieving and unrighteous at the great day of account.

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me ;

9 To explain my meaning a little farther, This Holy Spirit, by his miraculous gifts and operations for confirming the gospel, and by his internal illumination and gracious influence, shall convince many, among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, of all the wickedness of their hearts and lives, and especially of their great sin of unbelief ; because they wilfully rejected me, and chose rather to go on in their iniquities, than believe in me for everlasting life.

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more ;

10 He shall likewise convince them of the righteousness of my person and cause, and of the necessity, suitability, and perfection of that everlasting righteousness which I am come to work out by my obedience unto death ; because I am going to be exalted at my Father's right hand, in testimony of his having entirely approved of, and accepted me, as one that has answered all his demands ; and ye shall no more see me again in this humble state of sufferings and abasement *, as if I had not fully satisfied his justice, and finished the work he gave me to do on earth.

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

11 And this Spirit shall convince them of my power and will, to renew and sanctify sinners, to destroy the kingdom of darkness, and to execute judgment upon all the finally wicked, impenitent, and unbelieving ; because Satan, who, as the god of this world, has ruled in the hearts of the children of disobedience,

N O T E.

* This appears to be Christ's meaning, because he said this to comfort, and not discourage his disciples ; and they did see him again on earth after his resur-

rection, and he prayed, that all whom the Father had given him, might be with him in heaven to behold his glory. Chap. xvii. 24.

disobedience, is tried, and cast, and judicially defeated in all his power and claims, by my death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, from whence I will send the Spirit, as my grand agent, for demolishing the powers of darkness, and setting up my kingdom of light, and grace, and holiness, on its ruins, till I shall come to judge the world at the last day.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

12 I have still many other things to communicate to you, relating to the great alterations that shall be made in the state and worship of the church, under the guidance and operations of the Spirit, as the fruit of my going through sufferings and death to glory: But, at present, by reason of the weakness of your faith, and the strength of your prejudices and carnal expectations, ye cannot easily take them in, or be reconciled to them.

13 Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

13 But when the Divine Spirit, who is faithfulness and truth itself, shall come to do his work upon you, and by you, he shall be an unerring and efficacious guide, to give you an understanding and approbation of the whole scheme of the gospel-kingdom, which is infallibly true in every part of it: For as I have always acted in concert with my Father; so the Spirit will act in entire concert with us, by revealing these things, not like a private person, as from himself only, but in exact agreement with the counsels of peace between the Father and me, as one that is privy to them all, and searches the deep things of God: And, according to ancient predictions concerning him, (*Joel* ii. 28.) he will be a spirit of prophecy in you, and will acquaint you with all that may be needful for you to know, or make known to the church, for ages to come on earth, and for a blessed eternity afterwards in heaven.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

14 His very coming in my name, to do my work, will redound to my honour; and his great business and design will be, to manifest my glory: For he will take into his province the things that relate to my person and office, cause and kingdom, and will discover them to you, that ye may have clear, exalted, and endearing thoughts of me, and my love and grace, of what I am, and have undertaken for, and of what I have purchased by my death, and have authority to bestow in my re-assumed and glorious life.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

15 This will be a rich discovery, and include what relates to the Father together with me: For as I and my Father are one; (*chap.* x. 30.) so his nature and perfections, blessedness and glory are mine; (*Col.* ii. 9.) his Spirit is mine; and whatsoever he makes known and communicates by the Spirit, is from

from me in common with him: In a word, all things whatsoever (*παντα οσα*) the Father has, (only excepting what the very notion of his being a Father imports) are already mine by original right and claim; and, in my office-capacity, the administration of all that he does, is in a peculiar manner committed to me, as one every way equal to the important trust: Therefore I said, with great propriety, That, in the whole of the gospel-dispensation, the Spirit will take into his province what relates to me and my glory, and will make it known to you.

16 A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me; because I go to the Father.

16 It is now * but a very little while, that ye shall see me in my present mortal state, before I be taken from you for a few days by death; and soon after that, ye shall see me again but for a little time longer, as risen to an immortal life, because I am going to be exalted in my human nature, at the Father's right hand, and to transact the affairs of my church with him there.

17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, 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?

17 The disciples, through ignorance, grief, and carnal notions of a temporal kingdom, being at a loss about the unexplained meaning of these last words, some of them were exceedingly amazed and troubled at them, saying privately one to another, What can our Lord intend, by telling us, that in, or for a little while, we shall not see him; and that in, or for a little while afterwards, we shall see him again? And what doth he mean by the reason he gives for it, *viz.* because he is going to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

18 They therefore being in a great perplexity and concern about it, the question went round among them, saying, in a whisper to such brethren as were nearest, What means this *little while* that our Lord talks of? we cannot imagine what he hints at.

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto

19 Now as the heart-searching Jesus saw the confusion they were in upon this account, and that they had a great mind, though they were afraid and ashamed, to ask him to explain himself, † he said to

N n n 2

them,

N O T E S.

* I have referred the *little while*, in the first clause, to the time before which Christ would be taken from his disciples by death, and appear to them again after his resurrection; and in the second, to the time during which he would be absent from them, and appear again to them; because from the grammatical construction, it seems uncertain which of these are referred to, and neither of these senses is absolutely disagreeable to the context. Some indeed suppose, that the *little while* in the first clause, relates to the time between Christ's speaking

these words, and his ascension to heaven; and that in the last clause, it relates to the time between his ascension, and their own death, or his second appearing to judgment: But one or other of the senses given in the Paraphrase, appears to be most natural.

† That this relates to his knowing the secret thoughts and desires of their hearts, as well as their private whisperings one to another, appears from the conclusion they drew from hence. (*ver.* 30.) that *he knew all things, and needed not that any man should ask him.*

unto them, Do ye enquire among yo^r selves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, A little while, and ye shall see me?

19 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

20 A woman when she is in travail, hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish: for joy that a man is born into the world.

21 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

22 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily,

them; Are ye at a loss, and troubled in your own thoughts, and solicitously inquisitive one of another, and desirous to ask me about my meaning, when I spoke of a little while, with relation to your not seeing me, and again of a little while, with respect to your seeing me afterwards?

20 I, the faithful and true Witness, solemnly assure you, that ye shall quickly be full of tears and bitter lamentation, for a short season, on account of my sufferings and death; (*Mark* xvi. 10. and *Luke* xxiii. 27, 28.) and at the same time the men of this world, rulers and people, will triumph and rejoice, as thinking that they have gained their point against me and my cause: Yea, for a while, ye will be exceedingly dejected in my absence, as if all your faith and hope in me were a delusion; (*Luke* xxiv. 17, 21.) but very soon, when I shall visit you again in person after my resurrection, and shall shed down my Spirit upon you after my ascension to heaven, all your distressing sorrows shall be turned into the greatest joy. (*Chap.* xx. 20. *Luke* xxiv. 52, 53. and *Acts* ii. 46.)

21 Your case will be like that of a woman in labour, as she for a short time has sharp pains, and great anxiety of mind about the event, because, according to God's ordination on account of the first sin, (*Gen.* iii. 16.) the unavoidable and expected hour of distress is come upon her: But as soon as she is safely delivered of a man-child, the joy of her having brought forth the desired offspring is so great, that she no longer groans or complains, or reflects with any uneasiness on the pangs she endured.

22 So ye now for a little while, under your present dismal apprehensions of my leaving you, and by means of the sore trials that are just coming upon you, are, and will be, full of distress and anguish of soul: But I will soon return to you in person, and afterwards by my Spirit, with clear manifestations of my triumphs and my love, as an earnest of your being with me for ever; and then ye shall forget all your sorrows, and shall have unspeakable joy and gladness of heart, in consideration of the great and glorious things, which by my sufferings and death I shall have obtained for you; and whatsoever men or devils may design or attempt against you, (*εδεις*) none of them shall ever be able to shake the foundation, or rob you of your spiritual and eternal joy.

23 And in this time of great consolation, under the light and influence of my Spirit, ye shall neither need my corporal presence with you, nor have opportunities

verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

tunities of asking me * questions, for relieving your doubts and difficulties, and informing you about the things of my kingdom, as ye have been wont, and are now desirous to do. (*ver.* 19.) As I told you (*ver.* 16.) that I am going to the Father; so I, who am Truth itself, solemnly assure you, that whatsoever ye, by the assistance of the Spirit, shall afterwards ask my Father and your Father, with faith in my name, as your only Mediator, High-Priest, and Advocate, he will readily grant it to you on my account.

24 Hitherto, whilst I have been with you, ye, under your great darkness and difficulties, doubts and fears, have on all occasions had recourse to me; and, in your addresses to God the Father, ye have not applied to him with any express mention of my name; nor have ye well understood the grounds of worshipping him in that manner, so as to plead and depend upon my merit and righteousness, and my interest with him for you: But henceforth, in all your wants, present your petitions and pleas with faith in my atonement and advocacy, which shall be hereafter fully revealed; and he will certainly return an answer of peace, that your holy joy may be daily increasing, till at length it shall be as abundant and complete, as ye yourselves can wish for, or be capable of.

25 These important things have I delivered to you in short, pithy sentences, which, by reason of your present ignorance sorrows, and prejudices, are as obscure to you, as parables are to those that do not understand them: But the time is now coming on apace, when my Spirit shall so clearly enlighten the eyes of your understanding, and lead you into the whole scheme of the gospel, that what I have said, and shall further communicate to you by him, will no longer appear dark and mysterious like a parable; but I will then make a free, open, and full discovery of my

N O T E.

* Here is a plain reference to their wanting to ask him what he meant by a *little while*, &c. (*ver.* 19.) There it is said, *ἠέλον αὐτὸν ἐρωτᾶν, they were desirous to ask him*: And here Christ says, *ἐμε μὴ ἐρωτᾶτε ὅτι εἶπν, ye shall ask me nothing*: But he is far from designing by this, to forbid their praying to him: For not only *Stephen* and the apostles did this after he was gone to heaven; but it is made the distinguishing character of Christians, that they *call upon him*, or, *upon his name*, (*Acts ix. 14. Rom. x. 12, 13, 14. and 1 Cor. i. 2.*) The reason of our Lord's not mentioning this here,

seems to be, because he was then going particularly to recommend the Father's love to them, (*ver.* 26, 27.) and to give them a hint of the gospel-scheme of worship, with regard to his mediation, through whom we have access by one Spirit to the Father. (*Eph. ii. 18.*) And as the disciples did ask him questions after his resurrection, (*chap. xxi. 21. and Acts i. 6.*) I think *the day* mentioned here, and in *ver.* 26. refers rather to the time of his pouring out the Spirit, than of his personal appearing to them after his resurrection.

my Father; of his gracious counsels and will concerning you and the whole church; of the nature and design of my sufferings and death; of the reasons of my going to him; of the business which I go to transact with him; of the confidence which on these accounts ye may have towards him; and of the way, in which ye are to address him, through me, for obtaining all the blessings ye need.

26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

26 At that time, when I shall be with my Father, and the Spirit shall come down upon you, ye, by his assistance, shall offer up all your petitions, with an explicit mention of my name, and with an entire trust and confidence in me, as having made atonement on earth, and as interceding in heaven: And I need not tell you, nor do I insist upon it now, as I have before, (*chap. xiv. 16.*) that while ye thus address a throne of grace in my name, I will be your great Advocate to recommend your persons and prayers to the Father's acceptance.

27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

27 For the heart of my Father himself is toward you, as a God of peace through my blood; and he, in the greatness of his love to you, will readily hear your prayers, that shall be in this manner presented to him, because ye are indeed my disciples, that have a sincere affection for me, springing from that faith whereby ye believe in me as his only begotten Son, who came from him to be the Saviour of *Israel*: He has the greatest delight in those, who thus by faith and love embrace me, in whom he is well pleased.

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

28 To sum up all that I have been saying, in a few words, it is plainly this; I, who was with the Father from everlasting, voluntarily came forth from him into this world, in a way of peculiar manifestation and operation; and having gone through my great work, in a state of humble obedience and sufferings on earth, I now am taking leave of this lower world, and returning home again to my Father, that I may be glorified with him, may manage and secure the concerns of the redeemed in heaven, and by my Spirit may apply my purchase to them on earth for their salvation. Why then, upon the whole, should your hearts be troubled, or afraid? (*Chap. xiv. 1, 27.*)

29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

29 Our blessed Lord having spoke in this plain and comfortable manner to his disciples; they at length understood him to mean, that he was going to be glorified with his Father in heaven, and cried out with ecstacy and assurance, Now we clearly take in the true sense of thy discourse, and it is no longer a dark saying to us.

30 Now are we sure

30 We are now likewise fully satisfied, that thou hast

sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.
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hast a perfect knowledge of all things, even to the very secrets of our hearts: And though we were afraid to tell thee the perplexity of our minds, and how desirous we were, (*ver.* 19.) to ask thee about the very thing which thou hast now explained to us; we now find that thou didst not need to be informed of our thoughts, but hast, of thine own accord, as exactly and directly answered the question, that was in our hearts, as if we had expressed it in words: By this evident proof, which thou hast given of thy divine omniscience, we are thoroughly confirmed in our faith, that thou art indeed the Son of God, who camest from him, and art returning again to him.

31 Jesus however knowing that their faith was not so strong and steadfast, as they imagined, and that, notwithstanding their present confidence, it would soon be shaken again, replied, Are ye now at last, as ye ought to have been before, so clearly apprehensive, and so well assured of what I have said? And is your faith so fully confirmed in me, that ye think yourselves established in it to such a degree, as never to be staggered more? Alas! ye are much mistaken.

32 Observe what I say to you, for your humbling, watchfulness, and caution, and for further proof of my divine omniscience with regard to what *will be*, as well as *is* in your hearts: The time is just at hand, yea, is so very near, that in a manner it may be said to be already come, when ye will all be dispersed, and skulk about in a fright among your friends to provide for your own safety, according to former prophecy; (*Zech.* xiii. 7.) and not one of you will dare to accompany, own, or bear witness to me: And yet, destitute as I shall be left by you, I never am, nor then shall be alone, because my Father and I, being intimately and inseparably united, are ever present one with the other; and though he, as a *Justice*, will withhold the comforts of his presence from me, who am come to bear the sins of many; yet he will continue to be with me, * as a *Father*, to assist and own me, and carry me through all the conflicts which I have consented to undergo, as his servant, that he may be glorified. (*Isa.* l. 7.)

33 Now all these things have I delivered unto you in my farewell sermon, that by virtue of your union with me, and by faith in me, ye may and the noblest peace with God, and possess your own souls
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* This interpretation easily reconciles what our Lord here says about his not being alone, and the *Father's being with him*, in his last sufferings and

d. at. with his saying on the cross. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* (*Matth.* xxvii. 46.)

In the world ye shall have tribulation but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

in quietness and patience: Ye may see, by what I have said, that while ye are in this world, great troubles and persecutions for my sake, will attend you; but do not be disheartened at them, (*θαρόσυροι*) confide in me, and be courageous in hope of an happy event: For as I have weathered all opposition from men and devils, and come off with victory hitherto; so, by my death and resurrection, ascension to heaven, exaltation to my throne, and effusion of my Spirit, I am just now going to obtain an entire conquest over the world, and every thing else, which stands in the way of your salvation, that I and you may dwell together in my Father's house, where, as I told you at the beginning of this discourse, I am going to prepare a place for you. (*Chap. xiv. 2.*)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How often are we sorrowful at those things at which we ought to rejoice! How much better is it for us, that Christ is now exalted on his throne, than that he should have always continued to be personally present on earth! And O how divinely great and glorious is he, who came from the Father, and whose human nature is now removed from our world, and gone to heaven. He is possessed of all the same perfections, and is Lord proprietor, and disposer of all the same things with the Father himself; and he sends his Spirit to carry on his work in the world, and knows all things, even the secrets of our hearts. With what safety then may we believe in him!—How equally divine is the Spirit of truth, who is perfectly acquainted with the Father and Son, and with their whole design, and who freely comes from them, to acquaint us with all needful truth, and to glorify Christ by acting in his name, and taking of his things, which are also the Father's, and shewing them to us! And how efficaciously doth he convince apostate men of sin, righteousness, and judgment! O blessed work! May it savingly prevail in our hearts, and spread far and wide through our world! But how ignorant and dull of understanding are we, and how indolent in our enquiries after the most important things, which, how plainly soever they be delivered to us, appear as obscure as parables, till Christ opens the eyes of our minds! And what an excellent teacher is our Lord, who suits his instructions to our circumstances, capacities, and occasions, and to what he knows to be the distresses and desires of our hearts! How soon can he scatter all our darkness, and turn our sorrow into joy, into such joy as no man can take from us, and as shall grow up to full perfection! But alas! when we think our faith is strongest, the greatest temptations are often nearest; and therefore we should not be self-confident, but give ourselves unto prayer: And what rich encouragement have we for this, since the Father himself loves them that believe in his Son, and is well pleased with their love to him! But as it is only on his account, that God is our Father and friend, how carefully should we always address the throne of grace, with a direct eye to Jesus, and with explicit pleadings of his name, as our great Mediator, according to the settlement of gospel-worship; and with what humble confidence may we depend upon an answer of such believing pleas through him!—This world is a scene of sorrow; and what if we meet with great tribulations in it for Christ's sake? It is only from men that know not God, and it is no more than our Lord himself foretold would be: We should therefore be so far from being disheartened and stumbled at this, that our faith should be the more confirmed in the truth of the gospel by it: And what can be a greater comfort under it, than the peace that he has promised to give, and the victory that he has obtained over sin, Satan, and the world for us, that we may also overcome them by faith in him! And if we are deserted, even by our friends, in the days of our greatest tribulation we may encourage ourselves in this, that we shall not be alone, but Christ and his Father will be with us by the Spirit, to support and own us, and carry us safe to glory.

C H A P. XVII.

Our Lord's prayer before his death, for himself, 1,—5. For all that were already called, 6,—10. Most immediately for the apostles, that they might be preserved and sanctified, 11,—19. For the whole church, as well as the apostles, that they might be united and glorified, 20,—24. And particularly again for the apostles, 25, 26.

TEXT.

THESE words spake Jesus, and lift up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee :

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Lord having given his disciples a farewell sermon, closed it with a parting prayer, in which he, like an affectionate dying parent, committed his family, and, like a merciful and faithful high-priest, recommended the apostles, and the whole church, to his Father, and therein gave a specimen of the continual intercession which he was going to make for them in heaven. He therefore lifted up his eyes, with great solemnity, to the habitation of God's glory, and poured out the desires of his heart in the following manner, saying, "O my Father, the set time agreed upon in eternal counsels, for finishing my course of obedience and sufferings on earth, is now come; own me, I beseech thee, as thy Son; support me under my last agonies; and give me such a triumphant victory over death and the grave, and all the powers of darkness, as shall issue in thy receiving me up to glory; that I, thine own eternal Son, may honour all thy perfections by my death, and then, being exalted at thy right hand, may spread thy glory, by my word and Spirit, through the world;

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal

2 "According to the design, for which thou, in consideration of my fulfilling my engagements to thee, hast given me an universal, absolute dominion over all the persons and concerns of the * fallen race of mankind,

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* *All flesh* is commonly used in scripture to describe the human race, as frail, mortal, and degenerate by the fall; and though the phrase, *As many as thou hast given me*, may have a particular respect to the apostles as included in that number: yet it is not to be confined to them, much less is it to be referred merely to their office: For power over all flesh was given to Christ, that he might give eternal life to these many; but surely eternal life is given by him to more than the apostles; and he had not this office-power over all things to give eternal life merely to them, whose number was so small, as hardly to admit of propriety in

meaning them only, by the many that were given to him: Our Lord therefore expressly tells us, that he *prayed not for the apostles alone, but for them also that should believe on him through their word, that they all might be one, and might be with him, where he is, to behold his glory:* (ver. 20, 21, 24.) So that Christ regarded all God's chosen people in this prayer, that were committed to his charge, as the great Shepherd of the sheep; in some parts of which he had a respect to all that were then already called, whether apostles or other believers; in others, particularly to the apostles and their office; and in others, to the whole

ternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

6 I have manifested

kind, that I might authoritatively, freely, and effectually bestow the great blessing of eternal life, with all the means tending to it, upon every one, whom, in the greatness of thy love, thou hast committed, as a peculiar property, trust, and treasure to me.

3 " And the way to this eternal life, the beginnings and earnest of it, the evidences of right and title to it, and the complete enjoyment of it lie, not only in their approving and fiducial knowledge of thee, under the character of the only true and faithful God, in * opposition to all other gods; but also in the like knowledge of me, the anointed Saviour, whom thou hast sent into the world, under the character of the only true Mediator, in opposition to all other mediators, or other ways of approaching thee, and finding acceptance with thee.

4 " I have all along invariably intended and displayed thy glory, in the whole of my doctrine, miracles, and life, and am ready to honour all thy perfections on earth, by my death, which I am so fully resolved upon, and which will be so certainly, and so soon accomplished, that I may speak of it, as if it were already over; and (*τελειωσεν*) I have thereby perfected the great work of redemption, answerable to the utmost demands of thy justice, and to the trust, which thou didst repose in me, as the head and surety of the church.

5 " And now, O my heavenly Father, I plead that, according to thy engagements to me, thou wouldst advance my incarnate person to the highest glory at thy right hand, where I may appear in human nature, and in the mediatorial office, like myself, and may shine in all that divine majesty, which has been obscured in my state of humiliation on earth, and which I was possessed of, together with thyself, from all eternity.

6 " As to all my sincere † disciples, whom thou hast

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number of the elect, including those that were to be called, as well as those that were already called, that they might be eternally saved.

* That our blessed Lord here speaks of the only true God, in distinction from idols, and not to the exclusion of himself, appears from his speaking of himself, as the object of the same fiducial knowledge with the Father, and from his distinguishing himself from the Father, not by any essential title, but merely by his office-character, *viz.* *Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* And the same apostle, who recorded this prayer, express-

ly says of Christ, *This is the true God, and eternal life,* in opposition to idols. 1 John v. 20, 21.

† Though this part of Christ's prayer, to the end of *ver.* 10. may have a principal reference to the apostles; yet I take it to extend likewise to the seventy, and to all that had been already effectually called under his ministry: For there seems to be nothing peculiar to the apostles, till we come to *ver.* 11. where our Lord begins to speak more immediately of them, as appears to me by his there altering the pronoun, from (*αυτοι*) *they,* to (*ουτοι*) *these,* and then going on to mention

feſted thy name unto the men which thou gavelt me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavelt them me; and they have kept thy word.

7 Now they have known that all things, whatſoever thou haſt given me, are of thee:

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavelt me; and they have received them, and have known ſurely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou diſt ſend me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou haſt given me; for they are thine.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am

haſt made my peculiar charge, by way of diſtinction from mankind in general, I have already begun to give them a ſpiritual underſtanding of thine excellencies, of my relation to thee, and commiſſion from thee, and of thy mind and will about their ſalvation: They were originally thine by peculiar and eternal choice, as well as by creation-right; and thou gavelt them to me, that I might take effectual care of them; and they, under my powerful influence upon their hearts, have embraced, and adhered to the teſtimony which thou haſt given to me, and to the doctrine which I have delivered from thee.

7 " They now have been brought to underſtand, and believe that all things, which I, as Mediator, have undertaken, taught, and performed, are by thine appointment and commiſſion, and are the fruits of thy infinite wiſdom, and ſovereign grace.

8 " For I have effectually revealed to them thoſe myſteries of the kingdom, relating to my perſon, office and benefits, which thou haſt authorized me to make known for their inſtruction and edification; and they, by the internal light and energy, that attended my words, have cordially entertained them with faith and love, and accordingly have been well aſſured in their own minds and conſciences, that I, as a divine perſon, came into this world from thee; (*chap. xvi. 30.*) and they have ſavingly believed in me, as the true Meſſiah, whom thou haſt ſent.

9 " I therefore affectionately recommend them to thy fatherly care for perfecting every thing that concerns them, my prayer being deſigned, not univerſally for all mankind, but only for thoſe whom thou, in thy peculiar love to me and them, haſt committed to my charge; for they are by eternal choice and designation thine.

10 " And our joint intereſt in them, anſwerable to the original communion that we have one with the other * in all things, is ſo entirely and inſeparably

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mention things more peculiar to the apoſtles: And his ſpeaking of what he had done, in the ſaving illumination of all theſe converts, may very well be conſidered as a ſpecimen of his faithfulneſs, in what he would likewiſe do, in proper ſeaſon, for all the reſt, that the Father had given him, eſpecially ſince he cloſes this part of his prayer with ſaying. (*ver. 10.*) *All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.* See the note on *ver. 20.*

* The words (*τα μου παρ' εσ σε εστι, και εσ σε εμα.*) being in the neuter gender,

may be moſt properly rendered, *all things that are mine are thine, and that are thine are mine*: And theſe are very high and ſtrong expreſſions, too grand for any mere creature to uſe, as intimating that all things whatſoever, inclusive of the divine nature, perfections, and operations, and of all creatures, are the common property of the Father and Son; and that this is the original ground of that peculiar property, which they both have in the perſons who were given to Chriſt as Mediator, according to what is ſaid in the cloſe of the verſe, about his being glorified

am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

12 While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the

bly the same; that all whom thou hast given me are still as much as ever thine, and all that thou hast chosen for thyself are equally mine; our property in them is not divided, nor transferred from one of us to the other, but is common to us both: It is therefore for them, who are both thine and mine, that I pray; and I, together with thee, am, and for ever shall be, glorified in their redemption, and effectual calling, in their faith, love, worship, and obedience, and in their eternal glorification with thee and me.

11 "And now the time is come, when I must die a sacrifice for their sins, and shall afterwards be but a little longer with any of them corporally in this world, to instruct, defend, and comfort them; but (*ουτοι*) these * my apostles, here present with me, as well as the rest of my disciples, are still to be left, for a while, in a world of sin and sorrow, attended with many infirmities, temptations, and dangers: And as I am coming to appear in thy presence for them, therefore, O my Father, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, I beseech thee, that, after my departure, thou wouldst by thy mighty power, and for thine own name's sake, preserve them stedfast in their faith and holy profession, whom thou hast appointed, and given to me for special service, as my witnesses and chief ministers in my kingdom, that they may be entirely united in heart and affection, testimony, interests, and designs, as we are in ours.

12 "Whilst I have been personally conversant with them in the world, I have, according to thy commission, kept them from apostacy, by my doctrine and example, and by my powerful influence upon their minds and hearts: I have so faithfully watched over, established and preserved them, whom thou gavest me for the apostleship, that not one of them has miscarried † except the perfidious *Judas*, who has forsaken

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glorified (*εἰς αἰῶνα*, in the masculine gender) *in them*: For none but a divine person was equal to the honour, or difficulty of so important a trust, as was therein committed to him.

* Here, as I apprehend, our blessed Saviour enters on his prayer most immediately for the apostles, and so on to *ver.* 19. See the notes on *ver.* 6. and 20.

† If, as some suppose, our Lord in these verses, as well as in the former part of his prayer, intended the elect and called whom the Father gave him, that he might give eternal life to them; when he says that *none of them is lost, but the*

son of perdition, the particle (*οὗτος*) *but*, is to be understood here, not in the exceptive, but adverbative sense, as it is often used, particularly in *Gal.* i. 7. and ii. 16. and *Rev.* ix. 4. and xxi. 27. For of all, whom the Father in this respect had given him, he says, It was his Father's will, that he should lose nothing, and that he would raise every one of them at the last day. (*Chap.* vi. 39, 40.) And so the sense of this passage will be, None of them whom thou hast given me, that I might give them eternal life, is lost; but the son of perdition is lost, he being none of that number. But, taking this part

the scripture might be fulfilled.

13 And now come I to thee: and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

forfaken me, and is gone to betray me to death; and who has deserved, and brought destruction upon himself, under divine permission, in accomplishment of ancient predictions of his treachery and ruin. (*Pfal.* xli. 9. and cix. 8, &c.)

13 “ But (*δε*) now I am coming to be glorified with thee in heaven; and as my apostles will no longer enjoy the benefit of my company, to guide, protect, and comfort them, I make this address to thee in their favour, and in their hearing, whilst I am with them in this lower world, that they may rejoice in hope, according to my promise, of thy preserving, teaching, and comforting them by thy Spirit in my absence, and that their joy may be more abundant, than they ever found in my personal presence with them.

14 “ I have given them an understanding of, and a commission to preach thy gospel; and the men of this world, whose hearts are carnal and unbelieving, are full of enmity, rage, and violence against them, because their principles, tempers, and views are utterly disagreeable to the sentiments, lusts, and interests of natural and worldly-minded men, even as I myself, and the doctrines I have preached, are contrary to their corrupt judgment and taste.

15 “ However, my desire is not that thou wouldst immediately rid my disciples of all their troubles, by taking them from earth to heaven, or that thou wouldst deprive this lower world of so great a blessing, as their holy lives and ministrations; but that thou wouldst support them under, sanctify to them, and carry them through the cruel persecutions they may meet with, till they have finished their testimony; as also from the iniquity and error in which the world lies, and from that evil one, the devil, (*εκ του πονηρου*) that none of his temptations may ever prevail against them.

16 “ They are already of such a religious spirit and disposition, and engaged in such an excellent work and cause, as is directly contrary to the liking of the generality of this world, even as I myself, to whom they are herein conformed, have been before them.

17 “ Let

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part of Christ's prayer, from the 11th to the 19th verse, to have an immediate reference to the apostles as such, (see the notes on *ver.* 6. and 20.) the particle *but* is to be considered in the exceptive sense, according to the Paraphrase, *Judas* having been one of their number, who were chosen to the apostleship, though our Lord knew from the begin-

ning, that he would betray him; (*chap.* vi. 64.) and what Christ here says, about none of the other apostles being lost, is mentioned with a direct reference to them in the next chapter, (*ver.* 8, 9.) when he desired his enemies to *let them go their way, that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake. Of them which thou gavest me I have lost none.*

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word:

21 That they all may

17 " Let this holy temper be maintained, cultivated, and increased in them, by means of thy word; and (*αγιασον*) * consecrate them by the anointing of thy Spirit to their office, and for thy service, (*εν τη αληθεια σου*) in propagating the truth of the gospel, which they are, and shall be further instructed in: For thy word, in the faith, profession, and preaching of which I desire they may be preserved, is infallible and important truth.

18 " Accordingly, as thou hast sent me into the world, with a commission to preach the everlasting gospel to mankind: So I have sent them with authority, as my ambassadors, to go on with the same work, wherever Providence may cast their lot upon earth, after my departure from it.

19 " And one great reason for which I have devoted myself to the mediatorial office, and am going to be further consecrated to it, by offering up myself (*υπερ αυτων*) in their stead, is, that they by the merit of my death, and in consequence of it, may have a supply of the Spirit to sanctify them throughout, by means of the gospel of truth, and to consecrate and qualify them for, and assist and succeed them in preaching it.

20 " Not that I pray only (*περι τουτων*) for these † my apostles; but likewise for all those, who I know shall henceforth, in this and succeeding generations, be brought to saving faith in me, by means of their publication of the gospel.

21 " My great petition is †, that the whole number

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* As (*αγιαζειν*) to sanctify, frequently signifies to consecrate, or set apart to office; and the priests were set apart for the service of God, by sacrifices offered for sin, and by an holy anointing: (*Exod. xxix. 1, 14, 21. and xxx. 30.*) and as our Lord, speaking of his own consecration to office, by the sacrifice of himself, (*ver. 19.*) says, *for their sakes I sanctify myself*; it is natural to take in, at least, the notion of consecration to office, by the anointing of the Spirit, when he speaks of sanctifying the apostles in both these verses: I have likewise given it the turn that relates to real holiness, that the reader may take it in the sense which pleases him best.

† Here our Lord passes from that part of his prayer, which more immediately and directly related to the apostles, by using the same distinctive pronoun (*τουτων* the genitive case of *ουτοι*) these, as he began with, (*ver. 11.* see the note on *ver. 6.*) which to me is a plain key for

understanding all the intermediate verses, as having a peculiar reference to them, who are evidently spoken of in this verse as the persons through whose word others should believe in him.

‡ As this part of the prayer, till we come to *ver. 25.* relates to all that should believe, as well as to the apostles, and those who had already believed; I apprehend that what is said (*ver. 22.*) is not to be referred to the glory which was given to the apostles in their working miracles, nor to any thing that was peculiar to them; but is to be extended to the benefits which all believers are partakers of in common with them. But the union, the glory, and the love, spoken of in this and the two following verses, are to be considered in a way of similitude, and not of sameness, or equality with the union of the Father and Son, and with the glory that is given to Christ, and the love that the Father has to him: For these things cannot be said of them

may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou givest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one:

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

24 Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst

ber of believers now, and in after-ages, may be joined together as one body, in faith and love, worship and obedience, by one spirit, in as near a resemblance as possible of that inseparable union, which thou, O Father, and I have together by our mutual in-being; that they also, in their measure and proportion, may be united to us; to the end that others, of all nations, seeing its powerful effects on them, may be induced to believe in me, as the true Messiah.

22 "And, in pursuit of this great design, I have given them an interest, and sort of partnership in the glory which thou hast given me, as their head, representative and trustee, that it may reflect a lustre upon them, and make them heirs of thee, and joint-heirs with myself, as thy children, and as members of my mystical body, who are made partakers of my Spirit, and shall at length be glorified with me; (*Rom. viii. 17.*) that so they may be united, in the most beneficial and honourable manner, to me and one another, in resemblance of that infinitely higher union, which is between thee and me.

23 "In order to their being thus united to me, and to thee through me, and so to one another, I will dwell in them by my Spirit, *according to the measure of my gift to them*, (*Eph. iv. 7.*) as thou dwellest in me by the same Spirit, which *thou hast given, not by measure, to me*, (*John iii. 34.*) that they, being *joined to me, may be one Spirit*, (*1 Cor. vi. 17.*) and may attain to the most perfect union they are capable of, in one body, under me as their Head; and that, by means hereof, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, may be fully satisfied, that I am the Christ, whom thou hast sent into the world for the redemption of my body the church, and that thou hast a peculiar, affectionate, and complacential love to them for my sake, and in resemblance of the supreme love, which thou bearest to me, as their head and mediator, and as thine eternal Son, partaker of the same nature and perfections, with thyself.

24 "The upshot, O my Father, of my will and pleasure, which I insist on as matter of right, according to my purchase and thy agreement, is, that all whom thou hast given me, that I might give eternal life to them, (*ver. 2.*) may not only stand in the nearest relation to thee, and be the objects of thy peculiar love and care in this world; but that, in due time, they may be also admitted into my immediate

N O T E.

in the same sense as they are of Christ, unless they were to be deified, and bear the office of mediators.

lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.

diate presence in heaven, where I already am in my divine nature, and for ever shall be in my intire person; and that there they may have an appropriating, beatific, and transforming vision of the glory which thou hast conferred, on me, as their head and representative, because (*οτι*) from all eternity thou hadst a infinite delight in me, not only as thy Son, but as their surety, who engaged to glorify thee in their salvation.

25 "To thee therefore I apply for all these things, as a righteous Father, who not only lovest me, and them in me; but wilt likewise be just and faithful to me, and to them on my account, who have purchased what I ask for them, and have promised to receive them to myself. (*Chap. xiv. 2, 3.*) As for the unregenerate world, which lies in wickedness, they are ignorant of, and have rejected thee and thy counsels; but I am thoroughly acquainted with thy nature, perfections and will, and (*ουτοι*) these, * my apostles, have known and received me, as the true Messiah, whom thou hast sent to bring salvation to *Israel*.

26 "And as I have fulfilled my commission, in delivering those parts of thy mind and will to them which I was to reveal on earth, and in savingly enlightening them in the knowledge of thyself; I will, after my resurrection, still more clearly and fully make known thy glorious name to them, by personal conversation before I go to heaven, and afterwards by the effusion of my Spirit from thence, that the infinite love, which thou hast eternally bore to me, may extend itself to them, and manifest itself in them, to their exceeding joy; and that I may dwell in their hearts by faith, till they, as well as all that thou hast given me, arrive at an endless enjoyment of that perfection of blessedness, which, in thy distinguishing love, thou designest for them."

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

With what solemnity is God addressed, when eyes and hearts are lifted up toward heaven! But how different is the mediatorial intercession of our Lord from the humble supplications and prayers that he offered merely as man upon earth! He not only vouched his office-character, and his faithfulness in discharging it, but applied to his own Father, with such freedom and confidence in his claims and appeals, as would have been the highest presumption in any but a divine person. In what exalted strains did he speak of the Father's glorifying him, and of his glorifying the Father; of the power he has over all flesh to give eternal life; and of the knowledge of himself, together with the Father, as necessary to the enjoyment of it! And with what majesty does he remind his Father of his own eternal existence

N O T E.

* Here, as appears by the particle (*ουτοι*) *these*, and the subject matter, our Lord returns again to speak particularly of the apostles. See the notes on *ver. 6.* and 20.

ence and glory, and of his communion in property with him, in every thing that belongs to him! How did he insist on his having come from him into our nature and world, and on his returning in that nature to heaven, to be glorified with him! And with what assurance does he plead the Father's infinite love to him, and to his people in him, and the merit of his obedience and sacrifice, whereby he glorified him on earth, and finished the work which he gave him to do! And what a claim of right did he thereupon make, not only that he himself might be glorified, but that all, whom his righteous Father had given him, might likewise be with him, and made completely happy in the vision and enjoyment of him in all his glory! And O what an affectionate love and care have he and his Father to the elect and called! How nearly are these united in one body, by his Spirit, and by faith and love to one another, to himself as their Head, and to the Father through him! And what dignity and glory has he put upon them, as heirs of God, and joint-heirs with himself! None of them shall ever miscarry, apostatize and be lost; they shall be kept from the power of sin and Satan, and of this present evil world; they shall be enlightened, sanctified, and saved, while the rest of mankind, and even those who were appointed to, and employed in his service, but were no otherwise given to Christ, are justly left to perish for, and in their own iniquity, as sons of perdition.—Faith comes by hearing, and the gospel, through which many shall believe and be sanctified, is infallible and important truth; it is the revelation which the great Mediator has made of the mind and will of God, and committed to the apostles, whom he sent with full authority and instructions to publish it, by preaching and writing, for the good of the church in all ages. How securely then may we depend upon this word of truth! And what blessed effects may we hope for from it, through the intercession of Christ, and his gracious influence! And when the designs of God's love, and of the Saviour's death, shall be fully accomplished, according to his word, what a transporting, and transforming view will believers have of their Head in all his glory, as God-man-Mediator; and how glorious will they be in his presence for ever!

C H A P. XVIII.

Christ is betrayed by Judas, and apprehended in the garden, 1,—12. Is examined, and abused in the court of the high-priest, and denied by Peter, 13,—27. And is prosecuted before Pilate, who examined him, 28,—40.

TEXT.

WHEN Jesus had spoken these words he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Jesus had finished his discourse and prayer, he went with the eleven apostles, over the brook *Cedron**, to a garden in *Gethsemane*; (Matth. xxvi. 36.) into which he entered with them, that he might manifest his own willingness to suffer and die at the time, and for the glorious purposes which he knew were appointed of the Father: By this means, as the first *Adam's* sin was committed, and the first promise of a Redeemer was given, so the principal part of the second *Adam's* atoning sufferings began in a garden.

2 And

NOTE.

* *Cedron* ran on the east side of *Jerusalem*, between that city, and the mount of *Olives*, and was the brook, which *David*, a type of Christ, went over with the people weeping, in his flight from *Abshalom*, 2 *Sam.* xv. 23, 30; and there seems

to be a reference to our Lord's passing over it, in a prophecy of the Messiah's sufferings, (*Psal.* cx. 7.) where it is said, that he should drink of the brook in the way.

2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples.

3 Judas then, having received a band of men, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons.

4 Jesus therefore knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also which betrayed him, stood with them.

6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

2 And this was a place, which Judas, who was gone to betray him, (*chap. xiii. 30.*) was well acquainted with, and thought to be the most likely for finding him: For it had been customary with our Lord, during the time of the feast at *Jerusalem*, to retire thither with his disciples at night for private devotion.

3 Judas therefore (*ovv*) taking with him a body of Roman soldiers, together with officers and servants belonging to the sanhedrim, conducted them to the garden; some of them carrying lanthorns and torches, to search for Jesus, and others of them being armed with swords and staves, to apprehend and secure him; some of the chief priests, captains of the temple, and elders likewise went with them; (see the notes on *Luke xxii. 52.*) and so Jews and Gentiles united against him, who came to reconcile both to God in one body by his cross. (*Eph. ii. 16.*)

4 Then (*ovv*) Jesus knowing in himself the design of their marching thither, and that the set time for his last sufferings was fully come, took no care to abscond, or get away from them, as he did from the people at one time, when they would have made him a king, (*chap. vi. 15.*) and at another, when they would have laid violent hands upon him before his work was done: (*chap. viii. 59.*) But he, of his own accord, advanced toward them, and with an entire calmness of spirit said to some of them, What is the meaning of all this company's appearing here, in such a manner, at this time of night? Whom are ye come to look for?

5 They boldly answered, We are come to search for Jesus of *Nazareth*. Our Lord replied, Ye need not go far to seek him; for I am he: But what occasion is there to come out in this hostile manner against me, as if I were a thief, or some desperate villain, who would oppose force to force; since I have often appeared publicly and peaceably in the temple, and ye might easily have found me there, if ye were minded to apprehend me: (*Luke xxii. 52, 53.*) And Judas, who betrayed him into their hands, was at the same time standing among them.

6 No sooner had Jesus uttered these words, *I am he*, but such divine power and majesty attended them, that they, who came to apprehend him, were struck with the utmost consternation and terror; and immediately, retiring backwards, fell down to the ground, like men that had no spirit left in them: He thereby shewing, that he could as easily have struck them dead, as struck them down to the ground; and that, had he not been free to suffer, they could have done nothing against him.

7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way.

9 That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none :

10 Then Simon Peter having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

12 Then the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews, took Jesus, and bound him,

7 Then Jesus, instead of taking that opportunity to make his escape, said to them a second time, they being in some measure recovered from their fright, Who is it, that ye say ye are come to seek after? Thereby putting it to them, whether, after such an awful repulse, they durst still persist in their design against him. But (δὲ) so hardened were they in their wickedness, that, instead of being afraid of meddling any farther, they with a daring resolution answered, as before, It is Jesus of Nazareth, that we are come for.

8 Jesus replied, with the same mildness and composure as at first, I have already told you that I am he: If therefore ye are coming to take me, I am ready to resign myself into your hands; only I insist upon it, that ye offer no violence to these my friends and followers, that are with me, but let them go free.

9 And he put in this kind word, backing it with power, for their preservation, that his own declaration might be made good to the last, wherein, with a peculiar reference to them, he had just before said, *Those that thou gavest me, for the apostleship, I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition.* (See the note on chap. xvii. 12.)

10 Upon this the soldiers took him into custody; (*Mat.* xxvi. 50.) and *Simon*, who was surnamed *Peter*, seeing him in their hands, and having one of the swords, which the disciples carried into the garden, (see the note on *Luke* xxii. 38.) rashly drew it; and in the heat of his inconsiderate, though honest zeal for rescuing his Lord and Master, he, instead of waiting for orders, immediately struck at the head of one *Malchus*, a domestic servant (δουλον) of the high-priest, and cut off his right ear.

11 Then Jesus being displeased at *Peter's* intemperate and unseasonable zeal, because that was no time for fighting, nor was his cause and kingdom to be maintained, or propagated by force of arms, said to him, in a way of rebuke, Sheath your sword again: What I am going to suffer is not for want of power to rescue myself, but in obedience to my Father's will: And shall I not freely submit to all the tribulation and wrath that he has appointed me to undergo for his glory, and the redemption of lost sinners? This bitter cup must be drunk; I am ready for it, and will admit of no opposition to it.

12 He therefore so willingly resigning, the soldiers with their captain, and the officers of the *Jerusalem* sanhedrim, joined in seizing him, (συνελθειν) and having so done, they cruelly bound him, as if he had been the worst of malefactors and slaves; he submit-

ting to all this for his people, that he might loose their bonds of iniquity, and lay them under the highest obligations to himself, who was willingly bound to set them free.

13 And led him away to *Annas* first; (for he was father-in-law to *Caiaphas*, which was the high priest that same year.)

13 And then the rude company hurried him away, first of all to *Annas*, that he might see how they had secured him, and, being an experienced old man, might give his advice how to manage their process against him: For this *Annas* was father-in-law of *Caiaphas* the high-priest of that year. (See the note on *Luke* iii. 2.)

14 Now *Caiaphas* was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

14 After this, they carried him, still bound, to *Caiaphas* himself, (*ver.* 24.) at whose house, though it was so very late, the great council were met, waiting for him to be brought before them, that they might sit in judgment upon him; (*Matth.* xxvi. 57.) and (ð:) this *Caiaphas* was the man, who, in a former debate, shewed such an inveteracy against Christ, as to advise the putting him to death at all adventures, that their nation might not be exposed to the jealousy and rage of the *Romans*. (*Chap.* xi. 49, 50.)

15 And *Simon Peter* followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. That disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

15 Now (ð:) while Jesus was thus harassed, and led about from place to place, like a malefactor in bonds; *Simon Peter* recovering a little from his first fright, in which he ran away with the rest of the apostles, followed him at a distance with an heart full of fear and concern about the event; and so did * another of his disciples, who being acquainted with the high-priest, and not known to be a disciple, ventured to accompany Jesus into the hall, where the council were assembled.

16 But *Peter* stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in *Peter*.

16 But *Peter* being a noted follower of Jesus, and having no interest at court, was more cautious, and so stood some time without the door, waiting for an opportunity to get in, which being known to that other disciple, who had an acquaintance with the high-priest, he went, and, speaking to the young woman that kept the door, procured entrance for *Peter*.

17 Then saith the *daniel* that kept the door unto

17 Soon after her admitting *Peter*, she-suspecting by his looks, behaviour, or speech, or by some other means, that he belonged to Jesus, challenged him with it, saying, Are not you one of the followers and

N O T E.

* Who this other disciple was, is uncertain. It does not seem to have been *John*; for he was a *Galilean*, as well as *Peter*, and was an unlikely person to be acquainted with the high-priest, considering that he had been only a fisherman, and had carried on his trade in *Galilee*: But this disciple was probably a person

of figure, who lived in *Jerusalem*, and was one of them that believed in Jesus, but had not made an open profession of him; and some have conjectured that it was either *Nicodemus*, or *Joseph of Arimathea*, or the person at whose house Christ had lately eat the passover with his disciples.

to Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, (for it was cold;) and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whether the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing.

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which

and disciples of this man, who is now under examination about the high crimes that are laid to his charge? to which he, all in a flutter, replied, No, not I; he is a perfect stranger to me. (*Luke xxii. 57.*)

18 And as there were several domestic servants, and officers of the court (*οι δουλοι και οι υπαγορευται*) gathered together about a fire, which they had made to warm themselves, the weather being cold; *Peter*, instead of appearing as a witness for his Lord, mingled among these servants and officers, in a distant part of the hall, to warm himself with them, that he might seem to be of the same kidney with themselves, rather than one of Christ's disciples. (See the note on *Luke xxii. 55.*)

19 In the mean while, the high-priest at the head of the council, being desirous to fix a charge of *sedition* upon our Lord, strictly examined him about his disciples, and followers, who, and what they were, how great their number, to what purpose he constantly had so many attending him, and had lately gathered such multitudes about him at his public entry into *Jerusalem*, and what were become of all that pretended to own him, since none appeared in court to speak for him? And then, to fix *blasphemy* upon him, the high-priest examined him about the doctrine he preached, what was its nature and tendency, and whether it were not contrary to the law of *Moses*? and the like.

20 Jesus, knowing the malicious and unfair design of these captious questions, took no notice of what was said about his disciples; since it appeared from the very circumstances of things, that there was no likelihood of his carrying on seditious views by them: But, as to his doctrine, he replied, Whatsoever I have taught, it has been (*παρηγορια*) with all openness, freedom, and plainness to all sorts of people; it having been my constant custom to preach it in the synagogues on Sabbath-days, and in the temple at the solemn festivals, when there has been the greatest concourse of *Jews* to hear me: And as I have never sought to conceal my sentiments*; so I have never taught any doctrine in private, that is different from what I have preached openly, or that I am afraid or ashamed should be known to all the world.

21 Why then should you thus interrogate me about my doctrine, as if I were bound to accuse myself,

N O T E.

* Though our blessed Lord taught his disciples privately, when they were alone; yet it was not any different doctrine, but an explanation of what he had preached to others. (*Mark iv. 10. &c.*) And he expressly ordered them to publish to the world what he told them in secret. *Matth. x. 27.*

which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

22 And, 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?

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

24 (Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.)

25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself: they said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not.

26 One of the servants of the high priest, being his

self, or as if you would pay any regard to my own testimony, who am brought before you, and treated like a criminal? Ask whom you please of my hearers; ask your own friends, and party; ask the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, the chief priests and rulers themselves; ask the worst of all mine enemies that ever heard me preach: Behold, there are witnesses enow; and even some of these, (*ουτοι*) here present, know what I have preached: Let them be examined; and, if they can, let them witness against me.

22 Upon his saying this, with all the justness, decency, and calmness imaginable, one of the insolent public officers, (*εις των υπηρετων*) to shew his zeal for the honour of the high-priest, and his malignity against Christ, rudely gave him a slap on the face, saying, How dare you answer the high-priest in so free and disrespectful a manner?

23 Jesus, instead of striking him dead, or inflicting any other judgment upon him, or even threatening him, or shewing any emotion of spirit, replied, with wonderful meekness and patience, If I have said any thing unbecoming, or amiss, accuse me to the court, that I may be punished for it: But, if what I said was unblameable and just*, why should you strike me in the presence of the council, at whose bar I stand in circumstances that call for pity, and not insults.

24 Now Jesus having been before *Annas*, (*ver.* 13.) he had sent him, bound like a criminal, to his son-in-law *Caiaphas* the high-priest.

25 And *Peter*, as has been observed, (*ver.* 16, 18.) having followed him, and got into the high-priest's house, stood warming himself among the servants and officers: And as the maid-servant, who let him in, had questioned him about his being one of Christ's disciples; (*ver.* 17.) so some others of the company a little afterwards attacked him again, saying, Can you really stand in it, that you are not one of this man's disciples? (See the note on *Luke* xxii. 58.) *Peter*, full of confusion and dread, peremptorily, and still more rashly than before, denied that he was; saying, and swearing to it, I do not so much as know him. (*Matth.* xxvi. 72.)

26 About an hour after this, there was, among others, (*Luke* xxii. 59. and *Mark* xiv. 70.) one of the high-priest's domestic servants, (*εσ των δουλων*) a relation

N O T E.

* This is no way contradictory to what Christ says, about turning the other cheek to him that smites us: (*Matth.* v. 39.) For that relates to restraining passionate and malicious resentments, litigious persecutions, and private revenge; but do not forbid a legal defence of our own innocence against those that abuse us.

his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, faith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

27 Peter then denied again; and immediately the cock crew.

28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early, and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring you against this man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

tion of *Malchus*, whose ear *Peter* had cut off, and he, seeing him, said to him, You certainly are a disciple of Jesus of *Nazareth*: How can you say to the contrary? Did not I myself see you in the garden with him?

27 *Peter* was so nettled at this close and home charge, that he lost all patience and government of himself, and thinking to bear this man down, by language, more like a profane servant of the high-priest's, than an holy disciple of Jesus; he, under the power of violent temptation, denied with horrid imprecations that he knew any thing about him; (*Matth.* xxvi. 74.) immediately upon which, he heard a cock crow about three o'clock in the morning, which was usually called, by way of distinction, the cock-crowing. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvi. 34.)

28 After this, the council having spent a great part of the night in examining Jesus, and suffering various indignities and abuses to be offered him, and having at length got a confession from his own mouth, of his being the Messiah, and Son of God, (*Mark* xiv. 61,—64.) which they thought might be a sufficient ground for an accusation of blasphemy and sedition before the *Roman* governor, they very early in the morning carried him away, bound as he was, from *Caiaphas's* house to the judgment-hall of *Pilate*, who was then governor of *Judea*. (*Mat.* xxvii. 1, 2. see the note there.) And, though they were going to shed innocent blood, they were so hypocritically scrupulous about external rites, that they would not enter into the hall themselves, which was full of *Roman* soldiers, whom they accounted unclean, lest, by touching *Gentiles* in the crowd, they should contract a ceremonial defilement; (*Numb.* xix. 22.) but they stood without doors, to avoid pollution, that they might be fit to eat the paschal feast upon the sacrifices, which were to be offered that day*, and were called the passover.

29 *Pilate* therefore (*οὐδὲν*) was so complaisant and condescending, as to come out to them, and ask them what was the reason of their bringing Jesus to him, or what crime they had to lay to his charge?

30 The *Jews*, answering haughtily, said to him, You may be sure that he is a notorious evil-doer, (*κακοποιός*) otherwise we should not have given ourselves or you the trouble of bringing him before you, especially so early in the morning, and on such a solemn day as this.

31 Then

N O T E.

* See the note about the passover-feast on *chap.* xiii. 1.; and see *Whitby* on this place; and his appendix to *Mark* xiv.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the king of the Jews?

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew?

31 Then *Pilate*, being displeased at their insolent and unreasonable procedure, upon the foot of general defamation, without any formal proof against him, said to them, E'en take him back again to your own court, and do what ye will with him, according to the directions of your own law: For my part I do not care to meddle with him, the *Roman* law allowing of no such preposterous methods of prosecution. They then, being a little more humble, replied, We cannot legally put any one to death*, which is the punishment this man deserves, as a traitor to *Cæsar*, he having set up himself for a king.

32 And this was over-ruled by Providence, to accomplish what Jesus had foretold, about the manner of his death, that he should be *lifted up from the earth*, (chap. iii. 14. and xii. 32.) and should be *delivered to the Gentiles to be crucified*. (Matth. xx. 19.)

33 *Pilate* having found that Christ's accusers alleged against him treasonable designs, in setting up himself for a king, returned back into the judgment-hall, and, summoning Jesus to answer for himself, said, Is it true that you pretend to be the king of the *Jews*, in opposition to *Cæsar*? Have you ever presumed to offer at this, or said any thing to raise the peoples expectations of it?

34 Jesus, to put *Pilate* upon serious consideration, answered him, Do you ask me this question from any suspicion in your own mind, about my setting up for a temporal prince, according to the notion that the *Jews* have of their Messiah? or is this what mine enemies have suggested against me, and you are pleased to mention only from them?

35 *Pilate* replied, Am I a *Jew*, that I should be able to judge of their expectations from their Messiah?

N O T E.

* It is hard to say how far the power of life and death was at this time taken from the *Jews*, considering the proceedings of the high-priest and council in stoning *Stephen* to death, (*Acts* vi. 11,—15. and vii. 1. &c.) and what power *Saul* received from them, for persecuting the Christians unto death, (*Acts* xxii. 4, 5.) and how they would have judged *Paul*, according to their law, had not *Lysias* prevented them. (*Acts* xxiv. 6.) But as the sceptre was departed from *Judah*, and the law-giver from *Israel*, by their being made a *Roman* province, and subjected to *Cæsar* as their king, it is evident that this power was under some limitations and restraints from the *Roman* government. (See *Lightfoot* on the

place.) And whether the *Jews* meant absolutely, or only under some restrictions, that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death; or whether they said this only because it was the time of the passover, or that the odium of condemning and executing Christ, and the people's rage on that account, might be turned off from themselves to the *Romans*; it was over-ruled by Providence, that the judgment should fall into the *Romans*' hands, for accomplishing ancient prophecies, as well as Christ's own predictions, about the manner of his death: For crucifixion was not appointed by the *Jewish* law for any crime whatsoever.

Jew? Thine own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee unto me. What hast thou done?

35 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, 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.

38 Pilate saith unto him. What is truth? And, when he had said this, he

saith? I do not trouble myself about these matters: But your own countrymen, and the chief priests and rulers among them, have brought and accused you to me, as a pretender to the crown. What have you done to occasion this charge upon you? or what provocation have you given them, that they are so furious against you?

36 Jesus answered again, To tell you the truth of the case, I am indeed the Messiah, the King of *Israel*; but my kingdom is altogether spiritual and heavenly, consisting in a dominion over mens souls and consciences, and not over their secular affairs; nor doth it in the least interfere with, or tend to the disturbance of civil government: If it did, my followers, like the servants of other earthly princes, would have shewn it, by fighting for me; and would never have so tamely suffered my cause to sink, and me to be delivered into the hands of the *Jews*: But nothing of this kind was ever attempted, or intended, which is a plain evidence, that my kingdom does not take its rise from man, nor is built upon human laws, force, or policy, nor is designed for secular honour or advantage to my subjects, or myself.

37 Upon this, *Pilate* said to him, What then! Destitute, mean and wretched, as you now appear at my bar in bonds, do you profess that, in the sense you speak of, you really are a king? Jesus replied, Yes, I stand to what your question supposes me to have affirmed; (see the note on *Luke* xxii. 70.) I freely own myself to be, in that respect, a king: And still further to satisfy you, that my kingdom is not of a worldly constitution and design, the end for which I was born of a woman, and the purpose for which I came, as sent of God into this world, is, that by my preaching and miracles I might reveal, and confirm the truth, and nothing but the truth, concerning God and myself, and concerning the way in which sinners may be restored to his image and favour, and made for ever happy through me. This is the means and instrument of all my conquests and government, and every one, that is acquainted with and begotten by the word of truth, heartily believes and embraces my testimony, and becomes a willing subject to me, while they that love falsehood reject me.

38 *Pilate* replied, What is the truth, that you speak of? or wherein does it consist? many philosophers among us, and many of your rabbins make high pretences to truth, but give us very different accounts of it; pray, let me hear your notion of

he went out again unto the Jews, and faith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

39 But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the king of the Jews?

40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

it *, or what you mean by it : And having said this, he, not staying for an answer, immediately went out of the judgment-hall again to the multitude of the Jews, that stood before it, (*ver.* 28.) and said to them, I have examined this man upon the great article of your charge against him, as setting up himself for a king; and, upon the whole, I cannot find but that he is an innocent, honest, and undefining creature, and has been guilty of no capital crime, for which, by the *Roman* law, he ought to die.

39 However, ye having brought him bound as a malefactor to me, and it being customary, in honour of your passover-feast, that I should pass an act of grace for discharging some one prisoner at your request; will ye agree that your king should be the object of this mercy, since nothing appears to be proved against him?

40 *Pilate* said this in hopes of putting an end to their malicious prosecution, and of procuring his liberty: But, instead of falling in with his proposal, they all, both the rulers, and the people through their instigation, cried out in a rage, as with one voice, No, no; we will not have this man released, but beg that favour for *Barabbas*. Now this *Barabbas*, whom they so shamefully preferred to the holy Jesus, and that in defiance of *Pilate's* honourable testimony to his innocence, was an infamous criminal, who lay in prison for sedition, robbery, and murder. (*Luke* xxiii. 19.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Our garden-retirements may lead our thoughts to the ruining apostacy of the first *Adam*, and from thence to God's gracious promise, and the redeeming passion of the second. Was ever any creature so willing to suffer and die, at the divine appointment, as our dearest Lord, who went, as usual, to the place where he knew his enemies would come to apprehend him, and went forth of his own accord to meet them, who otherwise, with all their lanthorns and torches, might never have found him! And as he readily resigned himself into their hands, whom he could easily have struck dead, notwithstanding all their numbers, and their weapons; so he would allow of no opposition to the greatest distresses he was called to endure in obedience to his Father's will. But was ever any one treated so unworthily, as he, who, though he was the King of *Israel*, and had just given a demonstration of his divine power and mercy, was seized with force of arms, as if he had been a desperate ruffian, was led about like a malefactor in bonds, and rudely boxed by a petty officer in the presence of the whole council, as if he had been the meanest servant or slave? And how did *Jews* and *Gentiles*, priests and people,

N O T E.

* This is a very important question, which many put, but, like *Pilate*, give up again before they get any satisfaction about it; and it is uncertain whether his asking it were merely from curiosity, or from some good opinion that he had of Christ's ability to give him an account of truth; or whether it were only for in-

formation in a judicial way, that he might the better know how to proceed in the case before him; or whether it were in a way of contempt and scorn, as one that made a jest of truth, and derided Christ for his solemn profession of coming to bear witness to it.

people, all ranks and degrees of men, and among them a treacherous disciple, join in affronting, and persecuting him even to the death! But while, contrary to all justice and truth, decency and humanity, he was charged with the highest crimes, and arraigned for his life, he undauntedly owned his character as Messiah, the king, whose kingdom is not worldly and carnal, but spiritual and heavenly, and is to be propagated and maintained, not by the power of the sword, but by the word of truth; and *Pilate* himself, whilst he was sitting in judgment upon our Lord, was forced to honour him with such a testimony of his being faultless, as shews that his sufferings were indeed, not for his own sins, but for the sins of the people: And how was all over-ruled by Providence, to accomplish divine prophecies concerning the manner of his death, and his coming, as the Messiah, just upon the sceptre's departing from *Judah*!—His doctrine, as well as his person and cause, will bear the test of the strictest examination; it is the truth, which he came into the world to reveal and confirm, and he will stand by it, how much soever others may be offended at it, or deride it. And O, how much better is it to seek Jesus as a Saviour, than to seek occasions against him! And how much better to hear him saying, *I am he*, to our support and consolation, than to our terror and confusion! He can as easily speak a word for the preservation of his disciples, as for the defeat of his enemies. But how dangerous is it to go into the way of temptation! And how dreadfully may they fall, that venture into bad company without a warrant from God!—Let *Peter's* denying his Lord, the *Jews* thirsting after his blood, and preferring *Barabbas* to him, while they were hypocritically scrupulous about external rites and ceremonies; and let *Pilate's* cowardice, carnal policy and complaisance in complying with them, fill us with sacred horror and caution: And O, may the wisdom, meekness, and patience of the holy Jesus, under all indignities and hardships, be reflected upon as our example, that we may tread in his steps!

C H A P. XIX.

The remainder of Christ's trial before Pilate, 1,—15. His condemnation and execution, 16,—18. His title placed on the cross over his head, 19,—22. Several circumstances that attended his hanging on the cross, 23,—29. His death, and the piercing of his side, 30,—37. And his burial by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, 38,—42.

TEXT.

THEN Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

PARAPHRASE.

PILATE being unwilling to put Jesus to death, whom he believed to be innocent, and finding that his attempt for releasing him by a mere act of grace failed, and that the people were the more enraged by his barely proposing it, (*chap. xviii. 39, 40.*) he thought of another expedient to appease their clamour, and move their compassion toward the royal prisoner: And therefore he took and delivered him to the proper officer, to be stripped naked, and whipped publicly in an opprobrious and severe manner, hoping that, after this punishment, they might consent to his being released. (*Luke xxiii. 16.* See the note on *Matth. xxvii. 26.*)

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they

2 And *Pilate* turned him over to his soldiers, that they, as *Herod's* men of war had before, (*Luke xxiii. 11.*) might insult him, and make themselves merry with him, under the character of a king; according-

they put on him a purple robe,

3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and said unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe, And Pilate said unto them, Behold the man!

6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate said unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our

ly they, in a way of barbarous derision, wreathing a crown of thorns, clapt it on his head, and threw a purple garment upon his wounded body, in mimicry of royal robes, (see the note on *Mark* xv. 17.) and put a reed or cane into his right hand for a sceptre. (*Matth.* xxvii. 29.)

3 And having thus dressed him up, they scoffingly imitating the custom of kneeling before princes, and of saluting them with honour and joy, bent the knee before him, and cried out, in a ludicrous manner, Prosperity to the king of the Jews! They likewise buffeted him with their hands, and offered many other abuses and indignities to him. (*Matth.* xxvii. 30.)

4 Then (*οὖν*) Pilate ordering Jesus to be brought forth to the Jews, who stood without, went himself before him, to dispose them to compassion, saying, See now I am presenting to you this poor man again, in circumstances of as much misery and contempt, as ye could wish him to be in, that ye may apprehend no danger from him, and may be satisfied that I find nothing worthy of death, nor indeed any cause for an accusation, (*ουδενίαν αἰτίαν*) in him, who is to be pitied and despised, rather than feared or envied.

5 Upon his speaking in this manner, the meek, humble, and holy Jesus, appeared before them with his mangled body, crown of thorns, and purple robe, and with his face all over smeared with spittle and blood: And Pilate, pointing to him, said to the Jews, Behold the poor wretched man, look at him, see what a figure he makes! Let what has been done to him suffice; and now let me discharge him.

6 But when the chief priests and Jewish officers saw him under all this misery and contempt, instead of being moved with pity, they hardened their hearts against him; and, instead of attempting to prove him guilty of any fault, were enraged at Pilate's repeated motion for his release: They therefore cried out in a tumultuous manner, and with great vehemence and outrage, No, no, this shall not satisfy us; we insist upon it, that he be crucified. Hereupon, Pilate seeing that there was no appeasing them, and being very loth to comply with their demands, said in a passion, and with a sort of sneer, If he must be crucified, even take him, and do it yourselves: I cannot in justice condemn him to death; for I can see no manner of cause for it. (See the note on *Luke* xxiii. 22.)

7 The Jews finding that Pilate was still against crucifying him, and talked ironically of their own doing it, fled to another charge, saying, We have an express

our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

9 And went again into the judgment-hall, and said unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

11 Jesus answered, 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.

expresses law for putting blasphemers to death, (*Lev.* xxiv. 16.) and by this law he ought to die; for, said they, he has been guilty of the highest blasphemy, by calling himself the Son of God, in such a peculiar and exalted sense, as to claim equality with, and make himself God. (*Chap.* v. 18. and x. 33.)

8 *Pilate* hearing that Christ assumed the grand and awful character of an incarnate Deity, was struck with great surprise, as not knowing what to think of it, and was more than ever afraid of proceeding any further against him, lest he should bring divine vengeance on his own head.

9 And therefore returning into the judgment-hall, to which he remanded Jesus, he said to him, What is your original? Are you only a man, or are you an incarnate God? Tell me your parentage, and from whence you came. But our blessed Lord, knowing that *Pilate* was no competent judge of this matter, and had forfeited his right to information about it, by so cruelly using him, whilst he believed him to be innocent, thought proper to make no reply to this unseasonable question.

10 Then *Pilate*, full of wonder and resentment at this seeming contempt of his authority, said to him, with an haughty air, What is the reason that you stand mute, and make no answer? Do you neither know, nor consider that you are here, as a criminal at my bar, and that your life is in my hand, who have power either to condemn you to be crucified, or to discharge you, just as I please?

11 Jesus, to correct his mistake and arrogance, replied, Notwithstanding all this imperious boast, you have no legal authority but from God; nor could you exercise any power to my hurt, had not my heavenly Father appointed and permitted it, for glorious ends and purposes, which you are ignorant of, and far from designing to accomplish: Though * therefore your sin is great in hearkening to the clamours of the people, and in abusing your trust, as a magistrate, by using me so ill, and that in defiance of your own convictions of my being faultless; yet the sin of *Judas* and *Caiaphas*, and of all the people of the *Jews*, who have brought me before you as a criminal, is still more abundantly aggravated, as being committed against known instances of my extraordinary power

N O T E.

* *Therefore* (*δὴ τοῦτο*) may probably refer to *Pilate's* having judicial power from above, which the *Jews* at that time had not; and therefore, though he

was prevailed on by their importunity to abuse his power, his sin was less than theirs, whose malice and envy pressed him to it.

power and goodness, and with the greatest ingratitude and malice.

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar.

12 From this time forward, *Pilate*, being still further persuaded of Christ's innocence, and of the Jews malice, was more than ever desirous in himself, and industrious in dealing with them, to get him discharged: But the Jews finding that their last accusation rather obstructed, than promoted their blood-thirsty design, returned to their former charge; and enforced it with an argument, which touched *Pilate* in the tenderest part, crying out with still greater noise and vehemence, If you will not crucify him to oblige us; yet how will you answer it to the emperor? It will be proved against you that you betray your trust, and have not a due regard to his authority and government, in case you let his competitor go free; since whosoever sets himself up for a king, in one of *Cæsar's* provinces, is guilty of high treason against him, and says, in effect, that he is not its rightful sovereign.

13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

13 When therefore *Pilate* heard them talk, as if they would accuse him of unfaithfulness to *Cæsar*, his fears of *Tiberius's* wrath, who was a jealous prince, bore down his concern for Jesus; and being of a timorous temper, and chusing rather to sin than suffer, he ordered Jesus, with his thorny crown and purple robe upon him, to be conducted out of the hall; (*ηγουγεν εξω*) and he himself went, and sat down on a throne of judgment, to pass sentence upon him, in another place, which was called the stone-pavement *, (*λιθοστρωτον*) but in the Jews language, *Gabbatha*, which signifies a raised or elevated place.

14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your king!

14 And, as to the time when things were brought to this crisis, it was the day before, and so the preparation † day for the passover-Sabbath, and about six o'clock in the morning, a solemn day and time, when the Jews, and especially the priests, ought to have been employed in sacred work: And *Pilate*, having placed himself on the judgment-seat, called to the Jews, saying, Look at your king; see what a miserable and despicable appearance he makes: Is this the man, from whom any danger to the government is to be expected? Is it worth while to condemn such an one to death for pretending to the crown?

15 But they cried out, Away with him,

15 But they, instead of being in the least mollified or ashamed, cried aloud, and eagerly repeated it, Away

N O T E S.

* Dr. *Lightfoot* seemed to think that this was the room *Gazith*, where the sanhedrim used to sit; and so, when the Jews would not go into *Pilate's* judgment-hall, he went into theirs. See his *Hebrew and Talmudical exercitations* on the place.

† This was on what is called *Good-Friday*; and for the time of day, see the notes on *chap. i. 19.* and *Mark xv. 25.*

him, away with *him*, crucify *him*. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar.

way with him out of our sight, we hate to see him; hang him up on a cross, as one that deserves to die under a curse. *Pilate*, seeing their implacable enmity and fury against him, replied, What then, have ye no compassion for him nor concern for your own honour? Must I pass so ignominious a sentence, as that of crucifixion, upon your king? The chief priests, though at other times they were great sticklers for *Jewish* freedom, and boasted that they were never in bondage to any man; (*chap. viii. 33.*) yet now to please *Pilate*, and serve their malicious turn, virtually renounced God's dominion over them, and publicly owned that the sceptre was departed from them, in an express declaration, that *Cæsar* was their only king.

16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away.

16 Then *Pilate*, having no longer courage to strive against the stream, passed sentence upon our Lord, delivering him up, according to their demand. (See the notes on *Matth. xxvii. 26.*) And no sooner was this done, than they hurried him away by the assistance of the soldiers, who then took off his purple robe, and put on his own cloaths again; (*Matth. xxvii. 31.*) and they led him to the place of execution, like a lamb to the slaughter, without delay, lest the governor should change his mind, or the friends of Jesus should rise to rescue him.

17 And he bearing his cross, went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew *Golgotha*;

17 And he, carrying his cross upon his shoulders, (see the note on *Matth. xxvii. 32.*) went out of the city to a place called *Golgotha*, in the dialect then used by the *Jews*, which signifies the place of a skull, and which was ceremonially unclean, it being the common place where criminals were executed, and many of their skulls and bones were left; (see the note on *Matth. xxvii. 33.*) and so was a fit emblem of Christ's being made sin for us.

18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

18 There they crucified him in company with two thieves, (*Matth. xxvii. 38.*) one of which hung on his right hand, and the other on his left, as if he had been the greatest sinner of them all, whilst in that manner *he was numbered with transgressors.* (*Isa. liii. 12.*)

19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

19 And as it was usual for the cause of condemnation to be signified in writing, and placed over the heads of those that were crucified; so *Pilate* wrote this inscription, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS, and ordered it to be fixed on the top of Christ's cross, above his head; which, whatever *Pilate* designed, was over-ruled by Providence, to be, in effect, a condemnation of his own unrighteous judgment, and an honour to the holy Jesus, as having been put to that shameful death, only for asserting

a title, which he had a just claim to, and could not be divested of.

20 This title then read many of the Jews. for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not. The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written.

23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, (and made four parts, to every soldier a part,) and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not read it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

20 This title was read by great numbers of Jews, that were come from all countries to celebrate the pass-over at *Jerusalem*: For the place of crucifixion was near the city; and the inscription was made in large letters of the *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latin* tongues, the most known languages of that day; and so, as the benefit of the Messiah's death was to extend to persons of all nations, many of them had an opportunity of reading the cause for which he suffered it.

21 This was indeed such an honourable and public testimonial to the dying Saviour, as might easily be construed to his advantage; and therefore the chief priests among the Jews were highly displeased at it, and went to *Pilate* with a request, that, instead of these words, THE KING OF THE JEWS, it might be wrote, HE SAID, I AM THE KING OF THE JEWS; and so the infamy of a pretender might be fixed on his memory, and the disgrace of their king's being crucified might not lie upon them.

22 But *Pilate* was so much out of temper, for their having, in a manner, forced him to condemn Jesus, and was so offended at their boldness, in pretending, after all, to correct the form of his inscription, and God so influenced his mind to abide by this constructive testimony to Christ's real character, that he resolutely replied, What I have written shall stand without any alteration.

23 Now the soldiers having stripped Jesus of his cloaths again, when they came to fasten him to the cross, took them as their own perquisite, and, while they were watching him, diverted themselves with dividing the spoil; the bulk of his cloaths they laid in four parcels, of which every soldier had one, there being only four of them that were immediately employed in crucifying him: But as his upper-garment was without any seam, being woven or knit all in one piece from the top to the bottom;

24 They therefore said one to another, -Do not let us divide this coat into four parts, which would utterly spoil it; but let us cast lots, to determine which of us shall have the whole. This they accordingly did, God so ordering it in his providence, that, contrary to their design or knowledge, a remarkable prophecy of the Messiah might be fulfilled in this very circumstance, where it is said, (*Psal.* xxii. 18.) *They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture*: Hence it was that the soldiers were secretly influenced to do these things, relating to Christ's cloaths.

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, *Mary the wife of Cleophas*, and *Mary Magdalene*.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might

25 And, ($\delta\epsilon$) while Jesus hung upon the cross, several pious women stood near it, particularly his own mother, after the flesh; and her sister *Mary*, who was the wife of *Cleophas**; and *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom he had cast seven devils. These having a touching and affectionate concern for him, ventured to get as near as they could, to behold with weeping eyes, and lament with aching hearts, the dismal tragedy, which was like a sword piercing through his mother's soul. (Luke ii. 35.)

26 Jesus therefore casting his eye upon his dear mother, *Mary*, as she was standing by the cross, together with that disciple whom he had all along distinguished by the most familiar tokens of his love, tenderly recommended her to his special regards: And this he did in such a prudent manner, as might soften her grief, and not expose her to the observation and fury of his enemies, as one so nearly a-kin to himself; and as might intimate, that her relation to him, according to the flesh, was then expiring, and that he died under a higher character, than that of her son, saying to her, and at the same time turning his head, and looking toward that disciple, Woman, observe the man, who will take care of you, and pay the duty, honour, and affection of a son to you.

27 Then he spoke to that disciple, saying to him, and turning his head again toward her, Behold your mother, whom I commit to your filial reverence, care, and kindness, as if she had bore you in her own body †: And that disciple was so affected with these words, that, in love and obedience to his Lord, he, from that time forward, took her into his own house and family, and treated her with all the respect due to a parent.

28 After this, Jesus knowing that, according to eternal agreements between the Father and him, and according to ancient prophecies concerning him, every thing ($\kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$) was just upon the point of being perfectly accomplished, to the full satisfaction of di-

vine

N O T E S.

* *John*, the writer of this Gospel, was also standing with them, as appears from the next verse; but out of modesty did not say it was himself: And *Mary*, who was of *Cleophas*, ($\text{Μαρια η του Κλωπας}$) is thought by some to have been, not the wife, but the daughter of *Cleophas*.

† Her husband *Joseph* was probably by this time dead: And Jesus, who had taken care of her hitherto, having none

of this world's goods to leave her, gave an example of filial love and duty, in putting her under the care of the apostle *John* to provide for her: who, though he, like the rest of the apostles, had quitted all his business and affairs in life to follow Christ, might nevertheless retain his property in what he had before he left off trade, or in what his father *Zebedee* had afterwards given him. But it is uncertain where he dwelt, and how long *Mary* lived with him.

might be fulfilled, faith, I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

31 The Jews therefore because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath-day, (for that Sabbath-day was an

vine justice; he said, as well he might, considering what a fever he was in, through fatigue, pain, and anguish, * I am grievously a-thirst.

29 Now there was, near at hand †, a vessel full of vinegar; and the soldiers, filling a sponge with that liquor, stuck it upon the top of a reed, or long stalk of hyssop, and lifted it up to his mouth, that he might suck it.

30 When therefore Jesus had tasted the vinegar, in accomplishment of a prophecy relating to his last moments, (*Psal. lxxix. 21.*) he said, to the honour of his Father, the confusion of devils, the joy of saints, and his own triumph, Now all is over, and done to perfection: (*τελεισται*) The great council of God my Father, my engagements to him, the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, relating to the work of redemption, and the full measure of my sufferings according to all these, are now accomplished to the utmost; the ceremonial law is fulfilled and abolished; the moral law is satisfied and magnified; an end is made of sin; an everlasting righteousness is brought in; the covenant of grace is fully confirmed; the foundation of the church is completed; God is glorified; all the powers of darkness are vanquished; and the whole work, which my Father gave me to do upon earth, is finished: And having spoke in this manner, he, to shew his willingness to die, immediately bowed down his head, and breathed out his holy soul, saying, with faith and fervour, and with a loud voice, *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.* (*Luke xxiii. 46.* see the note on *Matth. xxvii. 50.*)

31 Then (*οου*) the Jews went, and intreated Pilate to give orders for the legs of the three crucified men to be broken, that they might be the more effectually dispatched, and that thereupon their bodies might be taken down from the crosses before the Sabbath; because the day on which they were crucified was the day of preparation for an extraordinary Sabbath of peculiar solemnity, it being in the passover week:

N O T E S.

* The reason of our Lord's saying this, was not from any murmuring complaint of his sufferings; but to evidence that the most minute circumstances, which the scripture had foretold of the Messiah, were fulfilled in him, as particularly in *Psal. xxii. 15.* and *lxxix. 21.* *My tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*

† Vinegar, mixed with water, is said to have been the drink of the Roman soldiers; and so this vessel of vinegar

might be set for their use, as they should have occasion for it, while they were attending the crucifixion: This four liquid they gave to Christ, instead of a cordial, or a cooling draught: And their hyssop, like their mustard-tree, being of much larger growth than ours, might afford a stalk long enough to reach up to his mouth, as he hung upon the cross; or a sponge full of vinegar might be stuck on the top of some other reed, in the midst of a bunch of hyssop. (*υρωπω περιβητες*)

an high day,) be-
fought Pilate that
their legs might be
broken, and *that*
they might be ta-
ken away.

32 Then came
the soldiers, and
brake the legs of
the first, and of the
other which was
crucified with him.

33 But when
they came to Je-
sus, and saw that
he was dead al-
ready, they brake
not his legs.

34 But one of
the soldiers with a
spear pierced his
side, and forth-
with came there-
out blood and wa-
ter.

35 And he that
saw *it* bare record,
and his record is
true: and he know-
eth that he saith
true, that ye might
believe.

week: And these hypocrites pretended to have so high a veneration for this Sabbath, as not to be able to bear the thoughts of its being defiled and disgraced, by the crucified bodies continuing to hang upon the cross, and being exposed to public view on that day; though, instead of making due preparation for it, they had been in the vilest manner imbruing their hands in the most innocent and noble blood that ever was shed.

32 Accordingly, *Pilate* still gratifying them so far as to comply with this request, some of the soldiers came, and broke the legs of both the malefactors that were crucified with our Lord, there being symptoms of remaining life in them.

33 But when they came up to Jesus, with a design of doing the like to him, as (*25*) they plainly saw that he was certainly dead already, they forbore breaking his legs, there being no occasion for it.

34 But, to put the matter past all dispute with others, as well as themselves, and to shew their spite at him, as well as to make sure of his death in the most effectual manner, one of the soldiers thrust a spear into his side; and immediately there ran out of the wound * both blood and water, so distinctly, as to be easily discerned by their different colours.

35 And the writer of this Gospel, who was an eye-witness, took very particular notice of it, as a remarkable circumstance, which not only proved that Jesus was really dead, but likewise (as he afterwards knew) carried an intimation of the justifying and sanctifying virtue of his death; and this historian's record is faithful and true: Yea, he being not only an eye-witness of it, but being likewise under the conduct of the Spirit of truth, is fully assured that his senses did not deceive him; but that what he here commits to writing is infallibly true, which he declares, (*122*) to the end that ye, to whom this testimony shall come, in every age, may believe in Jesus as the true Messiah, who died and rose again for cleansing from the

R r r z

N O T E.

* How far the spear entered Christ's body, and whither it struck into the cavity of the breast, or into the pericardium, and let out the liquid, in which the heart swims there; or whether it pierced the heart itself, has been variously conjectured: And possibly it may be difficult to account for this distinct flow of blood and water, upon the principles of anatomy. But it was an evident proof that Jesus was really dead; and there was something extraordinary and mysterious, if not miraculous, in

this circumstance of his death, since the Evangelist here takes such particular notice of it, and lays such weight upon the truth of his record about it, (*ver. 35.*) and refers to it, (*1 John v. 6. 8.*) as a matter of great importance, saying, *This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood. And there are three that bear witness on earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one.*

guilt and defilement of sin, by his blood and spirit, through faith in him.

36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

38 And after this, Joseph of Arimathea, (being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews) besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore and took the body of Jesus.

39 And there came also Nicodemus, (which at the first came to Jesus by night,) and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the

36 For how trivial soever the circumstances of not breaking his legs, and of piercing him with a spear, may seem to be; they were ordered by Providence, that two different predictions of the Messiah might be literally fulfilled in him: One is, what God commanded about the paschal lamb, which was an eminent type of Christ, (1 Cor. v. 7.) saying, * *Not a bone of it shall be broken.* (Exod. xii. 46.)

37 And the other is, what the scripture says, with a plain reference to him, (Zech. xii. 10.) *They shall look on him whom they have pierced.*

38 And after it appeared that Jesus was really dead, Joseph of Arimathea, that honourable counsellor, (see the note on Luke xxiii. 50, 51.) who was in heart well affected toward him, and a believer in him, though hitherto he had not ventured to make an open profession of it, for fear of suffering reproaches and injuries from the Jews: This Joseph, I say, being a man of figure and interest, now took courage, and going to Pilate, begged a warrant for empowering him to take down the body of Jesus, and to have the disposal of it; and Pilate granted his request, who accordingly went, and took the body down from the cross, that he might give it an honourable burial.

There came likewise Nicodemus, who was also a ruler of the Jews, and a member of their great council, and who had formerly gone to Jesus in private by night, for satisfaction about his doctrine and character; (chap. iii. 1, 2. and vii. 50.) and he being a rich man, and having got more courage now than before, brought a great quantity, about an hundred pound weight, of a fine embalming mixture, composed chiefly of myrrh and aloes, for his funeral.

40 These two persons therefore, (see) who were so remarkable for their high rank and station, and for their former cowardice and weakness of faith, joined together in testifying their affection and respect to Christ, by taking down his body from the cross,

N O T E.

* Though God is sovereign in his institutions, and his bare command is a sufficient obligation to observe them; yet as he appointed Israel to eat the passover, with *their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand*; and they were, in that manner, to eat it in haste, because it was the Lord's passover. (Exod. xii. 21.) So his command that a bone of the

paschal lamb should not be broken, as well as their eating unleavened bread, might likewise be designed to keep up a memorial of the haste with which God delivered them, and, as some have thought, might possibly prefigure the strength, signified by unbroken bones, with which Christ our passover wrought salvation, by his being crucified for us. *Vid. Lamp. in Loc.*

the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews' preparation-day, for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

cross, and wrapping it up with linen cloaths, and with preservative, as well as fragrant spices, according to the *Jewish* custom in burying persons of reputation and eminence; whose bodies did not use to be embowelled, but perfumed and embalmed.

41 Now there was a garden near that spot of ground where Jesus was crucified; and as, among the *Jews*, great men often built sepulchres in their gardens, which might remind them of their own mortality, amidst the delights of life, and might assist their meditations and hopes of their dead bodies rising again, like the springing of plants and flowers out of the earth: So in this garden *Joseph* had a new tomb hewn out of a rock, (*Ma. xxvii. 60.*) in which no one had ever been buried before. (See the note on *chap. xi. 38.*)

42 In this sepulchre therefore, because it was so very near, they interred the body of Jesus for the quicker dispatch, it being a solemn day of preparation for the passover-Sabbath among the *Jews*: And Providence so over-ruled these circumstances, that though he died so poor, as to have no burying place of his own; yet he *made his grave with the rich in his death**, in accomplishment of a prophecy concerning him. (*Isa. liii. 9.*)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What struggles are there in carnal hearts, between convictions of conscience and secular interests, the fear of God and the fear of man; and how dreadfully prevalent is the corruption of nature, which bears down all religion, truth, and justice, as it did in *Pilate*! But how shocking must their sin be, which is committed with still higher aggravations, as the case was with the *Jews*! With what outrage, indignity, and barbarity, was the great king of *Israel* used, when they cried out, *Crucify him, crucify him*, and their unrighteous demand was fulfilled in every circumstance of contempt and horror, even to the ignominious and painful death of the cross! Behold the man, who endured the cross and despised the shame; look and love; wonder and mourn. There was no fault in him: For whose sake then did he freely undergo all this, but for his people's, in the greatness of his love to them? He was falsely accused, that they might be honourably acquitted; he was wounded and scourged, that they might be healed by his stripes; he was clothed with a robe of derision, that they might be adorned with a robe of righteousness; he was crowned with thorns, that they might wear a diadem of glory: his kingly office was insulted and ridiculed, that they might obtain royal dignity, as kings to God; he was condemned, that they might be justified; he carried his own cross, and was crucified upon it, that he might bear their sins and sorrows, and the curse due to them, and that they might take up their cross and follow him; he was numbered with transgressors, that they might be numbered with the righteous; he had vinegar to drink, that they might pledge him in a cup of salvation, joy, and praise; he bowed the head, and gave up the ghost, that they might be exalted, and live for ever; he was buried in the grave, that he might sanctify it for them; he

N O T E.

* As sin and death commenced in a garden, the conqueror of both rose and triumphed over them in a like place; and *Christ's* rising from a new tomb might be an emblem of his sanctifying the grave, as the first fruits of them that sleep in Jesus.

he finished the whole work of their redemption, that no demands of satisfaction to justice might be made upon them; and the benefit of all this extends to sinners of the Gentiles, *Romans* and *Greeks*, as well as *Jews*. His enemies could have had no power against him, without his Father's appointment, and his own free consent; but many prophecies were hereby fulfilled in him, and the title, which *Pilate* ordered, as if it were a disgrace, owned him to be *Messiah*, the King. With what holy confidence and joy may believers now behold their King! And how worthy is he of their imitation, in his meekness, patience, and holy fortitude under all his sufferings, in his filial care of his mother after the flesh, and in his resignation and faith, whereby he committed his departing soul into his heavenly Father's hand! And how can he embolden the most timorous of his disciples to own him in the worst of times! His crucifixion is recorded by a faithful eye-witness, that we might believe, and be partakers of the virtue of his death, as signified by the water and blood, which proceeded from his wounds, for the remission of our sins, and cleansing us from all unrighteousness.

C H A P. XX.

The resurrection of Christ is proved by his body's not being found in the sepulchre, and the grave-clothes lying in good order there, 1,—10. By two angels appearing to Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, 11,—13. By Christ's own appearing to her, 14,—18. By his appearing that evening to all the apostles, except Thomas, 19,—25. And by his appearing to them again that day seven-night, Thomas being then with them, 26,—31.

TEXT.

THE first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

PARAPHRASE.

ON the first day of the week, after the Sabbath was over, (see the note on *Matth.* xxviii. 1.) *Mary Magdalene*, with some other women, in the fervour of their zeal, and that they might the better pass along undiscovered, set out early in the morning, before it was quite day, and got to Christ's sepulchre by sun-rising, (*Mark* xvi. 2.) in order to a further embalment of his body; and, at their arrival, they found the great stone was removed, which, while they were looking on, *Joseph of Arimathea* had laid at the mouth of the tomb the day before the Sabbath. (*Matth.* xxvii. 60, 61.)

2 Hereupon she, with the rest of the women, looking into the sepulchre, missed the body of Jesus, but saw two angels, who told them that he was not there, but was risen: (*Luke* xxiv. 3,—6. see the note there.) Then they, full of wonder, fear, and joy, hastened away to the apostles; and *Mary*, speaking particularly to *Peter*, and *John* the beloved disciple, said to them, We have been at the sepulchre, and, instead of finding the body of the Lord Jesus, were surpris'd with something like an appearance of angels, who told us he was risen: (*Luke* xxiv. 4, 9.) But, alas! we suspect the vision, and are ready to believe that, either some of his enemies in spite to him,

him, or some of his friends, with a kind design of taking his body into their custody, have removed it to some other place, we know not where*.

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

3 *Peter* and *John*, being startled at this unexpected and amazing account, immediately ran to the sepulchre, that they might see how things stood there, and that, in an affair of such vast importance, they might judge for themselves.

4 So they ran both

4 So they both set out in all haste together, like men

N O T E.

* Οὐκ οἶδαμεν πού, we know not where, in the plural number, intimates that the other women were with *Mary* at the sepulchre at least, and saw that the body of *Jesus* was removed, before she went to the apostles; it was likewise upon their telling what they had seen, and what the angels had said, that *Peter* got up and ran to the sepulchre: (*Luke* xxiv. 9,—12, 23, 24.) And we need not much wonder that, notwithstanding all this, the women, under their strong prejudices, fears, and unbelief, suspected the body of *Jesus* to have been removed by the hands of men; since we are assured that *Mary*, after she had seen the angels, expressed herself in the same manner to them, *ver.* 12, 13. of this chapter. It is indeed very difficult to settle the account of this part of the history, in its proper connection with what is said by the other Evangelists. But, upon carefully comparing them together, it seems to me, that there were two appearances of the angels to the women; and that *Mark* and *Luke* speak only of the first, whilst *Matthew* and *John*, after mentioning the womens coming to the sepulchre, and finding it open, with some other circumstances, pass on to the second: For *Mark* xvi. 5. and *Luke* xxiv. 3. speak of the womens entering into the sepulchre; but *Matth.* xxviii. 6. and our Evangelist, *ver.* 11. represent *Mary* as standing without: *Matthew* says nothing about the angels message particularly to *Peter*; whereas *Mark* xvi. 7. expressly mentions it; and *Luke* xxiv. 9, 12. says, that, upon delivering their message, *Peter* ran to the sepulchre; and our Evangelist speaks of this as having been before *Mary* saw the angels here mentioned, *ver.* 2, 12. Again, *Mark* xvi. 8. says the women fled from the sepulchre, trembling and amazed, like persons terrified at the sight, as one might reasonably expect them to be at the angel's first appearing and speaking to them; but *Mat.* xxviii. 3.

tells us, they departed with fear and great joy, which mixture of passions very well suits the temper they might be supposed to be in at the angels appearing again, and repeating their former declaration. But that which seems to determine the point is, that *Mat.* xxviii. 9. says, As the women went to deliver the angel's message to the disciples, *Jesus* met them; and yet it appears from all the other Evangelists, that none of them had seen him, when they went with this first message to the apostles: But it is evident from our Evangelist, in this chapter, *ver.* 12,—18. that *Mary* saw him immediately after the vision of angels there mentioned, and then went to the apostles again to make her report of it; and, as appears from *Matth.* xxviii. 5,—11. the other women, immediately after the vision there recorded, saw *Jesus*, which was either in company with *Mary*, or soon afterwards by themselves; and then they went forward with the like tidings to the apostles. This appears to me to be the most natural account of these things, and takes off the difficulty of reconciling all the Evangelists together, beyond any thing I have met with, either in the harmonists, or other expositors, that have come within my notice. But as I had not fallen upon this thought, till after the Paraphrase on *Matthew* was printed, I hope what little disagreement with this scheme may be found there, will be excused by the reader.—Some suppose that the narrative from the beginning of this chapter to *ver.* 18. is of facts entirely new; but others take them to be mostly different circumstances of the same facts, and that *Mary Magdalene* only is mentioned, because she was the most remarkable, zealous, and active woman, and the principal speaker in the whole of this affair; and I have chosen to represent it in a consistency with the last of these views, at least till we come to *ver.* 11.

both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie;

7 And the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

men eager to run a race; and *John* being the younger of the two, and not so depressed with fear and guilt, as *Peter* was, on account of his having denied his Lord, ran faster than he, and reached the tomb before him.

5 And he, stopping at the mouth of the sepulchre, stooped down to look into it, and plainly saw that the body of Jesus was really gone, and that the linen cloaths, in which it was wrapped, were left behind it; but being timorous, and full of consternation, he did not venture in, to make a more exact scrutiny.

6, 7 Then *Peter* hastening after him, as fast as he could, soon came up to the place, and, being naturally a man of a more adventurous temper, went directly into the sepulchre itself, that he might get the fullest satisfaction possible, about the true state of things there: And when he came to survey it in the strictest manner, he not only found that the body of Jesus was removed, but saw both the linen cloaths that had been wrapped about it, and the napkin which had been bound about his head; and observed that that they were not thrown in a heap together, but were folded up, and laid apart in different places from each other, which was a certain indication that no person, whether friend or foe, had taken away the body in a hurry.

8 Thereupon the other disciple, who first arrived at the sepulchre, took courage, from *Peter's* example, to enter into it likewise; and he seeing all these circumstances, and comparing them with what the women had said about the vision and admonition of the angels, (*Luke* xxiv. 9.) was in some measure persuaded*, merely upon these considerations, that Jesus was really come to life again, and had no occasion for burial-cloaths; as he indeed had not, being to die no more.

9 For hitherto, though Christ had so often referred to Old Testament-predictions, and declared that they must be accomplished in himself; yet such was the stupidity and backwardness of all the disciples, to entertain any notions of a dying Messiah, that neither *Peter* nor *John* understood the meaning of those scripture-prophecies, which spoke of his resurrection from the dead, or had any hope about it on that account †.

10 Then

N O T E S.

* *Peter* wondered at these things; (*Luke* xxiv. 12.) but it does not appear that he, as yet, believed that Christ was risen from the dead: And as angels can appear or disappear at pleasure, neither

of these disciples saw them at the sepulchre, to help their faith, which was in a little time to be satisfied, and confirmed by Christ's own appearing to them.

† So wonderful was the wisdom of God,

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping; and, as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,

12 And seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

10 Then these two disciples, having learnt as much as they could for the present, and being afraid lest, were they to stay long at the sepulchre, some suspicion might be raised about their tampering with the body of Jesus, returned home (*προς εαυτους*) to their own companions, to tell them what they had seen, and confer with them about it, and to wait for further discoveries of this important event.

11 But, soon after these things, *Mary Magdalene* being returned to the tomb, with an heart full of perplexity, doubts, and fears, and desirous of hearing some good tidings of her beloved Jesus, stood lamenting her loss without-side of the entrance into the sepulchre; and as she was venting her grief in tears, she stooped down, and looked wishfully into the tomb, like one that could not tell how to depart till she found him.

12 And there she again saw two angels in bright and glorious apparel, and in human form, (see the note on *Matth.* xxviii. 6.) one placing himself where the head, and the other where the feet, of the body of Jesus had lain; and so they resembled the appearance of the cherubims at both ends of the mercy-seat, and paid a visible honour to their Lord, as if he had rose up between them, who had been so lately crucified between two thieves.

13 And one of them spoke to her, saying, in a kind and tender manner, Woman, why should you thus grieve and cry, who have more reason to rejoice? She replied, Alas! I have cause enough for my sorrow and tears: For I have lost my dearest Lord; some unknown persons have removed his body from this sepulchre, where it was laid, and I cannot learn, by any means, where they have put it, or what is become of it.

14 And, having spoke these words, she flung herself round *, like one in an agony, and one desirous to look every way, to see if she could get any tidings of her Lord, nothing short of which could satisfy her; and instantly she saw Jesus himself standing near her: But little expecting him there, and her eyes being dim with tears, and in modesty turned off from steadfastly looking at him, she knew not that it was he.

15 Then

N O T E S.

God, in giving unquestionable evidence of Christ's resurrection, that his enemies, who were afraid of it, and did all they could to prevent it, were jealous about it; and his own disciples, who could not but heartily wish for it, thought nothing

of it; though afterward, being fully convinced, they bore a brave and noble testimony to it.

* Perhaps she heard the noise of Christ's feet behind her, and looking to see who it was, might not observe his

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have botne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father,

15 Then Jesus said to her, Woman! what is the reason of your weeping at this rate? Who is it that you want, and are inquiring after? She supposing him to be the man * who had the care of the garden in which the sepulchre was, replied, Sir, no wonder I am in so much trouble; the body of a dear friend of mine was lately buried here; If you, or any by your order, have taken it from hence, I earnestly beg the favour of you to tell me where it is lodged, and I'll take care to give it a safe and honourable interment.

16 Hereupon Jesus, designing now to discover himself to her, spoke with his usual voice, and in the same affectionate manner as formerly; and calling her by her name, said, What! is it you, *Mary*, that are lamenting after your beloved? at which, she turned her face and eyes toward him, and immediately knowing him, said, with faith, affection, and reverence, in the *Jewish* language, † *Rabboni*, which was the highest title of honour that was ever given to any of their teachers, and signifies *my Master*.

17 Then she, in a perfect rapture of love and joy, running to embrace him, and to catch hold of his feet and adore him, as all the women did likewise, when they saw him; (*Matth.* xxviii. 9.) Jesus, to restrain her, said, Do not stay now to express your affection in this manner to me, whom you will have opportunities hereafter of seeing again: For as I have not yet ‡ ascended, so I am not just now going up to my heavenly

N O T E S.

face at the first glance; or if she did, he could easily so affect her organs of sight, as to prevent her knowing him, till the time was come for manifesting himself to her, as he dealt with the disciples in the way to *Emmaus*. (*Luke* xxiv. 16.) See the Paraphrase and note there.

* It was natural for her to think that it might be the gardener, his business lying there, and that he might be ready to give her what information he could, since he belonged to *Joseph*, who had shewn such friendship to Jesus: However, the distress of her spirit inspired her with courage to beg this favour of him.

† Several critics have observed that, as *Rabbi* is more emphatical than *Rabb*, so *Rabban*, or *Rabbon* is more emphatical than *Rabbi*, and signifies such a matter as is of chief eminence and authority; and so *Mary* calling Christ *Rabboni*, with an appropriating pronoun, saluted the risen Saviour as her great Master, whom she affectionately loved, and revered, and claimed an interest in.

‡ The verb *αυτεβηκα* and *αυτανω*, used here and in the latter part of the verse is active, as it likewise is in *chap.* iii. 13. and vi. 62. and *Eph.* iv. 8, 9, 10. to signify that our Lord's ascension was by his own power, as his own act, or that he was not passive in it, as believers will be, who, I think, are never said in a literal sense to *ascend* to heaven, but will be *caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air*, (*1 Thess.* iv. 17.) And though his disciples had so lately forsaken him in the time of his reproach and sufferings, and he was now risen to, and going to take possession of his glory; yet he was not ashamed to call them brethren; and this being the first time of his ever directly calling them so, may intimate that he had then secured, and established this happy relation between himself and them, and that his exaltation would be no abatement of his condescension and grace to them. Dr. *Goodwyn's* sense of the former part of this verse is, (*μη ανω*) Do not at present in so familiar a manner

Father, and to my God, and your God.

heavenly Father: But hasten thou away, with all speed, to my poor, disconsolate, and distressed disciples, whom I still love as much as ever, and whom I esteem and own as my brethren, having taken them into my Father's family, and made them heirs with myself of the glory to which I am going: And tell them, as from me, that I am risen to immortal life, and not to set up a temporal throne among them on earth; and that, according to what I lately said to them, (*chap. xiv. 2, 3.*) I am about to ascend to my own Father, who is so by nature, and to their Father, who is so by adoption and grace; and to my God, who is in covenant with me, as their head, and to their God, who is in covenant with them, through me, and under me, and in whom they may have the greatest confidence on my account.

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples, that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

18 Accordingly *Mary Magdalene*, preferring present duty to present enjoyments, went immediately in obedience to his command, and, with an air of pleasure and satisfaction in her countenance, told the disciples that the Lord Jesus had appeared to her, and had sent her with the wonderful, condescending, and gracious tidings, which she rehearsed as from himself, to assure them of his great love, care, and concern for them.

19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you.

19 After this, in the evening of the very same day on which he arose, and appeared to *Mary Magdalene*, viz. the first day of the week; when the disciples were gathered together in a private room, and were comparing notes about his resurrection, (*Luke xxiv. 34, —36.*) after the doors were fastened (*εϋρων κλεισμενων*) for fear of being discovered and broke in upon by the Jews, Jesus himself, whose divine power could easily make his way, (see the note on *Luke xxiv. 37.*) came in his usual form, before they were aware, to confirm his love to them, and their faith in him; and, standing in the midst of them, he, instead of upbraiding them for, or taking any notice of their having so shamefully deserted him in his late distress, saluted them in a friendly, affectionate, and authoritative manner, saying, All safety, comfort, and quietness, and the best of prosperity, be to you, as consisting of peace with God, with one another, and in your own souls; *I have blessed you, and ye shall be blessed.*

20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his

20 And as, at this sudden appearance and salutation, they were in a great fright, imagining that they saw a ghost, (*Luke xxiv. 37.*) he, to rectify their

S f f 2

mistake,

N O T E.

ner hang about me, for I am not yet ascended, as I shall be ere long: And when you and I shall be

with all my saints and children, you shall have familiarity enough with me. Vol. IV. Part II. pag. 112, 113.

his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

mistake, immediately presented to their view his hands and feet, (*Luke xxiv. 39.*) and his side, that they might see the scars of the wounds, which had been made on all those parts at his crucifixion; and so might be the better satisfied that it was really himself who then appeared among them. And they being thereby convinced that it was the same body which had been crucified, were filled with exceeding great joy, he therein making good his promise of *seeing them again, that their hearts might rejoice* after their sorrow. (*Chap. xvi. 22.*)

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

21 Then, they being recovered from their surprise, Jesus repeated his blessing upon them, with further enlargement, saying, The excellent peace, which I promised you, (*chap. xiv. 27.*) I am now come to confer in the most effectual manner upon you: And as my heavenly Father sent me into the world, to discharge the office of the Messiah; even so I, by my plenary authority, and in proof of my mediatorial commission, send you to discharge the office of apostles and ministers, in preaching the gospel to every creature, and to confirm it with miraculous signs wherever ye may go. (*Mark xvi. 15, 17, 18.*)

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

22 And, having spoke these words, he breathed upon them, in an emblematical way, to intimate that the Spirit proceeded from his divine person, as truly as the breath did from his human body; and that as, in the creation of this world, God *breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul;* (*Gen. ii. 7.*) so in the new creation, he could as easily convey his quickening spirit to them, as breathe upon them; and at the same time he said to the disciples, with all the authority of a God, Receive ye now the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, to enlighten your minds, and strengthen your faith in me the risen Saviour, as an earnest of what ye shall receive more abundantly a little while hence, for your spiritual illumination, sanctification, and consolation, and for your assistance and success in the ministerial work, which I commit to you.

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

23 And this shall be attended with such divine authority, that whoever sincerely believes in me, according to the gospel which I send you to preach, and ye thereupon declare him to be forgiven all trespasses; he is certainly forgiven, by the riches of divine grace, on my account, and may take the comfort of it: And whoever persists in unbelief, finally rejecting me, and my gospel of salvation, which I send you to publish, and ye thereupon declare him to be in a state of condemnation; his sins are not blotted out, or forgiven, but lie in judgment against him, as he will find

to his sorrow; so that the sentence of absolution or condemnation shall be valid, which ye shall regularly pronounce in my name and authority, according to my word; (*Mark* xvi 16.) * God himself will confirm it, and proceed according to it in the great day.

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

24 But when the blessed Jesus made this gracious visit to the rest of the apostles, *Thomas*, who was likewise called *Didymus*, (see the note on *chap.* xi. 16.) and was chosen and set apart to be one of them that were originally twelve in number, was not present with them; and as this neglect was his own great loss, so providence over-ruled it to make way for such further evidence of Christ's resurrection from the dead, as might put it past all reasonable dispute, in that, and succeeding generations.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, 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.

25 The rest of the disciples therefore, meeting with him a little afterwards, said to him with a transport of joy, We ourselves have seen the Lord Jesus alive again, who spoke in the most endearing manner to us. But *Thomas*, though he had often seen Christ's mighty works, and heard him speak of his resurrection, and was present at the report that the women made of it, as actually come to pass; (*Luke* xxiv. 9.) and though he knew his brethren to be sober and faithful men, whom Jesus had chosen to be his witnesses; yet so desperate was his unbelief, that he replied Alas! ye have been some way or other imposed upon, as we all know the women were, when they told us just such another unlikely story: (*Luke* xxiv. 11.) For my part, I do not believe a word of what you say, the thing itself is impossible; and unless I were to see him and his scars with mine own eyes, and feel him with mine own hands, so as to put my finger into the dents made in his hands by the nails that fastened him to the cross, and my hand into the hole that the soldier's spear made in his side, I will never believe that he is really risen from the dead.

26 And, after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas

26 And in this unbelieving condition he continued, distressed and comfortless, as a stranger to his brethren's joys, till the next return of the first day of the week *, when the disciples assembled privately again; and

N O T E S.

* What is here said is applicable, according to the Paraphrase, to every faithful minister of Christ, as well as the apostles, to encourage them in the discharge of their office: But if our Lord meant any thing further, which was peculiar to the apostles, it might refer to the power he gave them of discerning spirits, and thereupon of healing the corporal diseases of such as they perceived had faith to

be healed, as in the case of the cripple at *Lystra*, (*Acts* xiv. 8, 9, 10.) and of inflicting corporal punishments on others, whom they knew to be hypocrites and enemies to the gospel: Instances of which we have in *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, and *Elymas* the sorcerer. (*Acts* v. 3. *Ec.* and xiii. 10, 11.) see the note on *Matth.* xvi. 19.

* After eight days in the Jewish idiom

mas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

and *Thomas* having suffered so much by his late absence, took care to be with them, they still admitting him to their society as a sincere disciple, though at present under the power of unbelief, from which they hoped that Christ would some way or other soon recover him: Then Jesus came into the room, after the doors had been fastened, in the same manner, and for the same reason as before, (*ver.* 19.) and standing visibly among them, repeated his former friendly salutation, saying, I command that all the blessings of spiritual peace and prosperity may rest upon you.

27 Hereupon Jesus, knowing the incredulity of *Thomas's* heart, and yet his real concern not to be deceived in a point of the last importance, so far condescended to his weakness, as to speak particularly to him by name; and instead of upbraiding him for his obstinacy and perverseness, in refusing the reasonable and sufficient evidence, that had been given before, he, with amazing endearments of grace, said to him, Come *Thomas*, take the very proof that you yourself insist on, of my being risen indeed; reach hither your finger, and examine the wounds that were made in my hands, by your own feeling, as well as eye-sight; and then put your hand to the hole that was made in my side; satisfy yourself by all means possible, that this is a real body, the very same which was crucified; and be no longer incredulous; (*απιστος*) but believe that I am risen from the dead, depending on me for all its glorious consequences*: And this word of command was attended with such power, as worked effectual faith in his heart.

28 Then

N O T E S.

om signifies a week, or that day seven-night, which, including the day reckoned from, and the day reckoned to, is eight days; (see the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 63.) probably Christ, in his former meeting of the disciples on the first day of the week, gave them an intimation of his appointing it for the New Testament-Sabbath, if not of his visiting them personally again at its next return; and some think that he appeared to them every first day of the week, between his resurrection and ascension to heaven: However, he so sanctified and blessed it, by these vouchsafements of his presence now and before, and by the wonderful effusion of his Spirit at the following pentecost, that from thenceforward it was constantly observed by the apostles, and the primitive church, and was commonly called, by way of eminence and distinction, the *Lord's day*. (*Rev.* i. 10.)

* It is uncertain whether *Thomas* made the experiment, that was offered him; it rather seems as if he did not, by Christ's only saying in the next verse, because thou hast *seen* me thou hast believed: But, be this as it will, his bare seeing and handling the risen body of our Lord would have been no more effectual of themselves to cure his unbelief, than the other evidences were, that had been given him before; for a carnal heart might have raised some perverse and unreasonable objections against these proofs, as well as them: And therefore, though these were extraordinary means of this divine and appropriating faith, and strong inducements or motives to it; yet it was the word of Christ set home upon his heart with power, which begat it in him; for it was immediately upon Christ's saying, *Be not faithless, but believing*, that *Thomas* cried out, *My Lord, and my God*.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord, and my God.

28 Then *Thomas*, full of admiration at the condescension and grace of Christ, and at his own stupidity and backwardness to believe, and full of holy shame and joyful ecstasy, cried out, I now declare, before all the company, that I am fully satisfied, and do believe thee to be the risen Redeemer, and the God of all salvation; as such I adore thee; and I take thee for my Lord, and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

29 Jesus replied, in a way of gentle rebuke, *Thomas*, you have indeed now believed, being induced thereunto by the testimony of your senses; it is well for you, that any means have been at length made effectual to overcome your unbelief: But their faith is still more noble, spiritual, and ingenuous, and brings more honour to God, who believe in me, barely upon a divine testimony sufficiently notified, as the Old Testament-saints did, whose faith rested on a mere word of promise; and as they will do, who shall hereafter believe through the word of my inspired witnesses, though it be not confirmed to them by sensible evidence, as it hath been to you.

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

30 And as Jesus gave these undeniable attestations to his resurrection, by doing and saying wonderful things, to satisfy the doubts of his disciples about it; so he added many other *infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days after his passion*, (Acts i. 3.) which are not recorded in this sacred history.

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.

31 But these particulars are recited, under divine suggestion and conduct, as sufficient specimens of the rest, that ye, to whom these presents shall come, may be induced to believe, that Jesus is indeed the Saviour of sinners, whom the Father has anointed to, and has owned and accepted in his office, and that he is the eternal Son of God, possessed of the divine nature and perfections, and *demonstrated* to be so, *by his resurrection from the dead*; (Rom. i. 4.) and that, through faith in him as such, ye may be partakers of spiritual and eternal life, by the merit of his blood, and the power of his resurrection, *who is alive for evermore, and has the keys of hell and of death.* (Rev. i. 18.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Blessed be God for the strong and numerous evidences he has given of Christ's resurrection from the dead. How clearly does this appear from the open sepulchre, from the orderly position of his burial-cloaths there, from the testimony of angels, and from his own frequently shewing himself after his crucifixion to many faithful witnesses, who saw and conversed with him! And how were the jealousies, and distrusts of his disciples about it, over-ruled by Providence into occasions of transmitting to us the more abundant and unquestionable confirmation of this fundamental article of our faith, which we are assured was likewise attended with many other infallible proofs, that are not recorded in this book! And O the astonishing condescension and love of the risen Saviour to them, that had so lately forsook him in his

his last extremities; to *Peter*, who had so shamefully denied him; and to *Thomas*, whose unbelief was so obstinate and perverse! He appeared and pronounced peace unto them, and owned them, as he does all that believe in him, for brethren, and is gone to heaven to manage and secure their interests with his Father, and their Father, his covenant-God, and their God. Happy souls! that are brought to believe in the risen and exalted Jesus, and to claim and adore him, as their Lord and their God. Though we have not the sensible evidence which he vouchsafed to those witnesses of his resurrection; yet we have faithful and unexceptionable records from one, whom he inspired with the Holy Ghost, to be the ground of faith in him, as the Son of God, and our Saviour: And though darkness and fears may sometimes overspread our minds in an hour of temptation, Christ can easily speak us into faith and joy by his word and Spirit; and blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed; they shall obtain eternal life through his name. But with what care should we take all opportunities of attending religious assemblies, and observing the Lord's day, in hopes of meeting with Jesus, and of hearing him speak peace to our souls!

C H A P. XXI.

Christ discovers himself again to several disciples at the sea of Tiberias, and eats with them, 1,—14. Orders Peter to feed his sheep and lambs, 15,—17. Foretels the manner of Peter's death, 18, 19. And checks his curiosity about John, 20,—23. The conclusion of this gospel, 24, 25.

TEXT.

AFTER these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself.

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a-fishing. They say unto him,

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the appearances of Jesus, that have been already recorded, the disciples, as he had ordered them, (*Matth. xxviii. 10.*) retired from *Jerusalem* to *Galilee*; and as he had promised to meet them there, so before his interview with them all together on a mountain, according to his appointment, (*Matth. xxviii. 16.*) he took an opportunity to discover himself again to several of them, at the sea of *Tiberias*, which is also called the sea of *Galilee*; and it was in the following manner:

2 *Simon Peter* and *Thomas*, who was likewise called *Didymus*, and had now got over his unbelief, and *Nathanael*, an inhabitant of *Cana* in *Galilee*, as also *James* and *John*, the two sons of *Zebedee*, and two other disciples * of the Lord, were got together waiting for the appointed meeting, according to his promise, and in obedience to his command.

3 In the mean while, that they might not be idle, but employ themselves in some useful way for a livelihood, *Peter* said to the rest of his brethren, I'll go a-fishing; and they, being desirous to keep together, told

N O T E.

* It is uncertain who these were; but *Andrew* and *Philip* being *Galileans*, (*chap. i. 44.*) some have thought that they were these other two: And yet it

is plain, from *ver. 7.* and *20.* that *John* was one of this company, though he is not here mentioned.

him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

4 But, when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved, saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now, when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

told him they would go along with him: Accordingly they all went, and forthwith took a boat for their purpose, and spent that night in fruitless labour, catching nothing; God so ordering it in his providence, to make the following miracle, and the instruction designed by it, the more remarkable.

4 And (δε) the next morning Jesus came, and stood on the shore within sight and call: Nevertheless, (μυστοι) the disciples, not expecting to meet with him there, were so far from knowing him, that they took him for a perfect stranger.

5 Then our blessed Lord, as if he had wanted either to gratify his curiosity, or to buy provisions, called to them, saying, in a familiar manner, Have ye caught any fish, (παιδια) my lads? They replied, No, none at all.

6 Whereupon Jesus designing to discover himself to them by further miraculous signs, and to give them a hint of the great success they should have in their ministerial work, according to his appointment and command, and by his assistance, though without him they could do nothing to good purpose; he spoke to them again, saying, Throw your net on the right side of the boat, and ye will certainly find a great shoal there. Then the disciples being willing to try what might be done, rather than return without catching any thing, cast their net according to his direction; and it inclosed such a surprising number of fishes, that they could not draw it up into the boat.

7 This was such a demonstration of Christ's dominion over the fishes of the sea, (*Psal.* viii. 6, 8. compared with *Heb.* ii. 6, 8.) and was so like the miracle he had wrought in the same lake before, (*Luke* v. 5,—10.) that his favourite disciple *John*, reflecting upon it, and being under divine illumination, said to *Peter*, Undoubtedly this is no other than the Lord Jesus, who now again appears to us: Upon which *Peter*, being convinced that it really was so, immediately girded about him his fisher's coat*, and in the warmth of his love and zeal, jumped, at all adventures, into the water, to get to Christ with the utmost speed.

8 And

N O T E.

* The critics variously dispute about this coat, (επειδουλην) some taking it to be an inner, and others an outward garment; but which ever it was, there is no occasion to suppose that *Peter* was quite naked before: For persons are said to be naked, when they have only their shirt on, or even when they have only

stripped off some of their upper-cloaths; (*1 Sam.* xix. 24. *2 Sam.* vi. 20. and *Matth.* xxv. 36.) and sometimes when their garments only hang so loose about them, that their flesh may be seen; (*Isa.* xx. 2, 3.) and perhaps *Peter* only girt the garment about him which was loose before.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Jesus then cometh and taketh bread, and giveth them,

8 And the rest of the disciples made the best of their way to him, as fast as they could, in the boat, dragging the net, that was so full of fish, along with them in the water; for they were but about an hundred yards off from the land.

9 Now, as soon as they came a-shore, they saw a good fire ready made, to warm and dry them, and dress their food; and saw fish already broiling on the coals, and bread at hand to be eaten with it*.

10 And that they might take the more particular notice of the preceding miracle, in the great draught they had made, as also that they might eat the fruit of their labour, he ordered them to bring some of the fish, which they had caught, and to dress it on the coals to make up their meal.

11 Then Peter went, and, with the assistance of his brethren, drew the net, till they landed it; and it was found, upon a careful reckoning, to be full of large fishes, to the number of one hundred fifty and three: And though they were (ταροῦτοι) so great, strong, and many; yet, by another miraculous operation of Christ's power, the net was preserved † from being rent and torn.

12 Jesus seeing with what awe the disciples were struck at his presence, and at his performing these miracles, said to them, in a kind and affable manner, Come, sit down, and eat with me; (see the note on Luke xxiv. 43.) which he did as a further proof of the reality of his resurrection, and as an emblem of that spiritual, free, and friendly communion he would have with them, while they should remain upon earth, though he was risen to be glorified, and of the still more intimate communion he would admit them to in heaven. And they were so fully satisfied of its being the Lord himself, that none of them thought there was any room to ask him, whether he were or not; nor durst they venture to put such a question to him, because it would have carried an appearance of remaining unbelief.

13 Then, they sitting down, he went and placed himself among them, having, as the master of the feast, asked a blessing on the food, which he continued

N O T E S.

* 'Tis highly probable that Christ, as the Lord of the earth, as well as of the sea, had miraculously provided all this for their speedy refreshment, and for a further manifestation of his power and mercy on their behalf.

† In a former miracle of this kind, (Luke v. 6, 7.) the net broke, and yet

the fish were secured; but in this the net was kept whole, notwithstanding the flouncing of the great fishes. Perhaps, as some have thought, that net was their own, and this was borrowed, the disciples having left off their fishing trade; and so Christ preserved it from damage, to teach us to take care of borrowed goods.

them, and fish like-wife.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

nued to do after, as well as before his death, to set us an example; (*Luke xxiv. 30.*) and he distributed both the bread and fish among them.

14 Now this was the third time, (*chap. xx. 19, 26.*) that Jesus discovered himself, as really alive, to any considerable number of his disciples together, after his resurrection, though he more privately appeared, on various occasions, to several particular persons*.

15 After they had done eating, and Christ had thereby given them tokens of his friendship, he thought it a proper season tacitly to reprove *Peter* for his late shameful denials of him, and to intimate the greatness of his own love in forgiving him, as also to admonish him of his duty for time to come, and to satisfy him, and the rest of the disciples, that he had restored him to his commission, as well as taken him into favour, notwithstanding all that had passed: And therefore he spoke to him particularly, by his original name, and not by that which he himself had given him with a view to his strong faith, (*Matth. xvi. 17, 18.*) saying, *Simon, son of Jonas, you not long ago said, Though all men be offended because of thee, yet will not I: (Matth. xxvi. 33.)* Have you indeed a greater affection to me than † any of these my disciples have? *Peter* answered, Lord, though, were I to be judged of by my late behaviour, there is too much reason to suspect me, and though I dare not pretend to exceed my brethren in their love, having too much already experienced the vanity of such presumptuous thoughts; yet I dare humbly appeal to thee, that thou knowest I sincerely love thee. Jesus replied, Shew then your love to me, in

T t t 2

exercising

N O T E S.

* This may likewise be understood of the third day of his shewing himself to any of his disciples: For his appearance to *Mary Magdalene*, and other women, to *Peter*, and the two disciples at *Emmaus*, and to all the apostles together, except *Thomas*, was on the day of his resurrection; (*Mat. xxviii. 9.* and *Luke xxiv. 13, 31,—36.*) and his shewing himself to them all, when *Thomas* was with them, was on that day seven-night; (*chap. xx. 26.*) and after this we have no account of his appearing again to any of them till now.

† *More than these*, (*πλεον τουτων*) may, by the construction, refer to the objects of *Peter's* love, which would make the meaning of the question to be, Do you love me more than you do these, your earthly friends and companions, or

more than these nets and boats, and the pleasure and profit of fishing? But *Peter's* dropping this part of the question in his answer, seems to intimate, that he understood it to relate to his loving Christ more than his fellow-disciples loved him: For no doubt but he could have said, that he loved him more than those other earthly things, or else he could not have appealed to him for his sincerity therein; since if he did not love his Lord in preference to all things here, he could not be truly said to love him at all; (*Matth. x. 37.*) but a remembrance of his former self-confidence, and its dreadful effects, might well make him afraid of speaking of his love, as excelling that of the rest of his brethren; accordingly Jesus condescended to renew the question without the comparison.

exercising a tender care toward the weakest of my flock, by administering such doctrines, as may be refreshing and strengthening to them whom I now commit to your charge.

16 He saith to him again the second time, *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* He saith unto him, *Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.* He saith unto him, *Feed my sheep.*

17 He saith unto him the third time, *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* Peter was grieved, because he said unto him the third time, *Lovest thou me?* And he said unto him, *Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.* Jesus saith unto him, *Feed my sheep.*

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch

16 Again he said to him a second time, *Simon, son of Jonas, have you then a hearty and affectionate love for me?* *Peter* answered as before, *Yea, Lord, I trust I can abide by this appeal, that thou knowest I have a sincere desire toward thee, esteem of thee, and delight in thee.* Jesus replied again, *Let it then appear by your discharging the office of a faithful shepherd toward all my sheep that may come under your care.*

17 After this Christ put it close to him a third time, saying, *Simon, son of Jonas, will you then stand to it, that you thus unfeignedly love me?* Then *Peter* being so plainly reminded of his having three times over denied his Lord a few days ago, notwithstanding his high professions to the contrary, was exceedingly troubled in spirit at this further repetition of the same question, and said, with still more earnestness than before, *Lord, I know there is no deceiving thee, who art fully acquainted with all things, even to the most secret dispositions of the heart; but my great comfort is, that, how justly soever I may suspect myself, and deserve to be suspected by thee and others, thy omniscient eye sees the principle of love which is in my soul toward thee, and the uprightness of my appeal to thee about it.* Jesus answered, as before, *Prove then the sincerity of your love**, by feeding my people with knowledge and understanding, like a pastor after mine own heart, whatsoever dangers and sufferings you may be exposed to for it.

18 And I, who am Truth itself, assuredly tell you, that though, in the days of your youth and vigour, you used to gird your cloaths about your loins, and go wherever you pleased, as but now you girded your fisher's coat about you, and came to me; (*ver. 7.*) yet, in the declining age of life, to which you shall be preserved to feed my flock, you will be forced to stretch † out your hands in such a disagreeable manner,

N O T E S.

* I do not see that any great dependence is to be had on the observations of the critics, about the different senses of the verbs *αγαπᾶν* and *φιλεῖν*, *to love*, and *φιλῆναι* and *σπουδάζειν*, *to feed*, in this and the two preceding verses: The two former of these seem to be, here at least, used promiscuously one for the other, as terms of the same import, as also do the two latter.

† *Stretching forth the hands*, has a plain reference to the posture of a crucifixion, as the following verse explains it: And as it is here mentioned before *Peter's* being girded, and carried whither he would not, it may relate to the custom of laying the cross on the shoulders of him that was to be crucified, who it seems carried it with his arms extended, and bound on the transverse piece of
wood

stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

20 Then Peter turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

21 Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren,

ner, and others will bind and carry you to such torments and death for my sake, as human nature cannot but wish, if possible, to avoid.

19 Our blessed Lord spoke these last words to intimate that particular sort of martyrdom, even the death of the cross*, by which *Peter* should at length seal his testimony to him and the gospel, should give evident proof of the power of divine grace, in its enabling him to submit to that cruel and shameful death, with a becoming exercise of faith and love, and of cheerful resignation and patience, and should thereby encourage and establish the faith of others, for the glory of God. And Christ having said this, he further confirmed *Peter's* commission, and ordered him to yield himself up to his service, saying, Keep close to my instructions and commands, in all your preaching and labours, under the guidance and influence of my Spirit; and follow my example, in the exercise of every grace, through sufferings and death to glory; and for the present come along with me.

20 Then *Peter* getting up, and going after his Lord, looked behind him, and saw that disciple also following, for whom Jesus had a peculiar kindness, as appeared on various occasions, and who particularly at the last paschal supper, leaning like a bosom-friend on his breast, said to him, at *Peter's* giving the beck, Lord, Who is it of all this company that will betray thee? (*Chap. xiii. 23,—25.*)

21 *Peter*, I say, observing this disciple, and being partly concerned as a friend for him, and partly curious to know what would become of him, said to Jesus, Lord, What is the lot that will befall this thy peculiar favourite?

22 Jesus, not thinking proper to gratify his curiosity, replied, with some obscurity, If it be my pleasure that he should continue in life, till I come to appear in great glory; What have you to do with that? your duty is to mind your own business and concerns, and not trouble yourself about his: Whatsoever becomes of him yield you yourself up to me, and follow my steps, as I have already ordered you. (*ver. 19.*)

23 The determinate sense of this answer not being easily understood, a report was immediately spread abroad among the disciples, who were all brethren in Christ,

N O T E S.

wood to which his hands were afterwards to be nailed. (*Vid. Lamp. in Loc.*) And possibly the occasion of our Lord's expressing *Peter's* crucifixion in this manner, was taken from his having just before stretched out his hands with eager-

ness and pleasure in swimming from the boat, *ver. 7.*

* All antiquity agrees that *Peter* was crucified at *Rome*, though there is a great diversity in its account of the circumstances of it.

thren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true.

25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world

Christ, and children of the same heavenly Father with himself, that this beloved apostle should never die, like other men, but should remain alive on earth, till their Lord should appear at the final judgment: But this notion, as is usual in oral traditions, was grounded on misconstructions of Christ's words, and additions of men to them; he having said no such thing to *Peter*, but only, If I am minded that he should prolong his days upon earth till I come *, meaning till I come to destroy *Jerusalem*, and after that to take him to heaven, not by a violent death, but in the ordinary course of nature, at a good old age, what signifies that to you? It is no business of yours to inquire after it; nor is it for you to be made acquainted beforehand with it.

24 This disciple, concerning whom these things were said to *Peter*, is he who here records them, and wrote the present history of Christ; and as he is an inspired writer of what he has seen and heard, his testimony is undoubtedly true: So that it is to be assuredly believed †, according to the best rules that men can have to judge of such things; what he hath said is already received with the fullest satisfaction by the churches as divine truth; and I, who have committed it to writing, am infallibly certain of its being so.

25 And now, to conclude the whole, so indefatigable was the Lord Jesus in his labours, who went about doing good, (*Acts* x. 38.) that a vast abundance of other things, well worthy of remembrance, were done by him, besides those which are recorded; and were a particular account to be written at large of all his excellent prayers, discourses, and performances

N O T E S.

* Both the senses given in the Phrase were fulfilled in *John*, who was the only apostle that survived the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and that died a natural death.

† The words, *we know*, have been drawn by some into an argument for this last chapter's being written by other hands than the apostle *John's*. But the beginning of this verse is a plain confutation of that opinion, where, referring to what Christ had mentioned concerning *John*, it is said, *This is the disciple which testifies of these things, and wrote these things*; and in this chapter he apparently uses the same stile as he had in the foregoing parts of the history, continuing to conceal his own name, and speak of himself as the disciple whom

Jesus loved. Therefore, according to the various senses given in the Phrase, which are submitted to the reader's choice, *we know*, may relate either to the common sense of mankind, as to what we all know in like cases, or to what, in fact, is the sense of true believers with regard to the things contained in this particular history; or to the apostle's own assurance, upon infallible evidence, of the truth of what he wrote; and so it agrees with what he had said before in a case, of which he was an eye-witness, *chap.* xix. 35.: For though he here speaks in the plural, he in the next verse resumes the singular number, saying *I suppose*; and this very apostle used the plural number, just in the same manner, when speaking of himself. *1 John* i. 1,—5.

world itself could not contain the books that should be written. A-
men.

mances of a religious, moral, and miraculous nature, I am persuaded (*οιμαι*) they would fill such an incredible number of volumes, as would over-load the mind and memory; and, after all, the unbelieving world, through their carnality and prejudices against Christ and the gospel, could not (*χωρησαι*) receive* the things contained therein; and so they would be of no more advantage, than this compendium may be to them. In ratification of all the foregoing record, I hereunto set my *Amen*; and may every one that reads it say, by way of assent and consent, So it is, and so let it be!

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How repeated, miraculous, and plain are the proofs of Christ's resurrection, who has given us such abundant satisfaction concerning it, as should make us afraid of entertaining a suspicion to the contrary! He is often near his people while they know it not, is better to them than their own expectation, and visits them in the greatness of his mercy, even before they look for him: And O, with what wonders of divine power, condescension and kindness, does he manifest himself to them, since his resurrection from the dead! But when they have misbehaved, he puts them to the trial, and to the proof of the sincerity of their love to him: And how happy is it, upon close and serious reflection, to be able to appeal to him, as the omniscient, heart-searching God, that he knows we love him! We may then be assured that he first loved us; and whatsoever trials he may further call us to, he will enable us to follow him, even unto death, that God may be glorified thereby: But let us take heed of indulging curiosity, by prying into his secrets, or meddling with things that do not concern us.—Whilst his ministering servants fish for souls, unless it be under his direction and blessing, how much soever they toil, they will catch nothing: But when, at his command, they cast the gospel-net, and he, by a secret, efficacious influence, brings a shoal under its power; how surprising is the success! And when, by their ministry, he has gathered a church for himself, with what tenderness does he take care of the weakest, as well as the strongest among them! With what solemn injunction has he laid it upon his servants to feed them with good doctrine! and how can they shew their love to Christ, without attending to the charge he has given them of his lambs and sheep!—Blessed be God for the sufficiency of the scripture, free from all the uncertainties of oral tradition, and without any need of supplements of that kind, which are no way to be depended upon, unless they agree with the word of God: But we are well assured, that whatever is left upon record there is infallibly true; as such may we believe it, approve of it, and rejoice in it, saying, as with one heart and voice, Amen!

N O T E.

* The word (*χωρησαι*) rendered to *viii. 37. and Matth. xix. 11, 12.* And so there is no necessity for an *Hyperbole* contain, is sometimes taken in a metaphorical sense, and signifies *to receive, to account for this phrase. or to have place* in the mind, as in *chap.*













