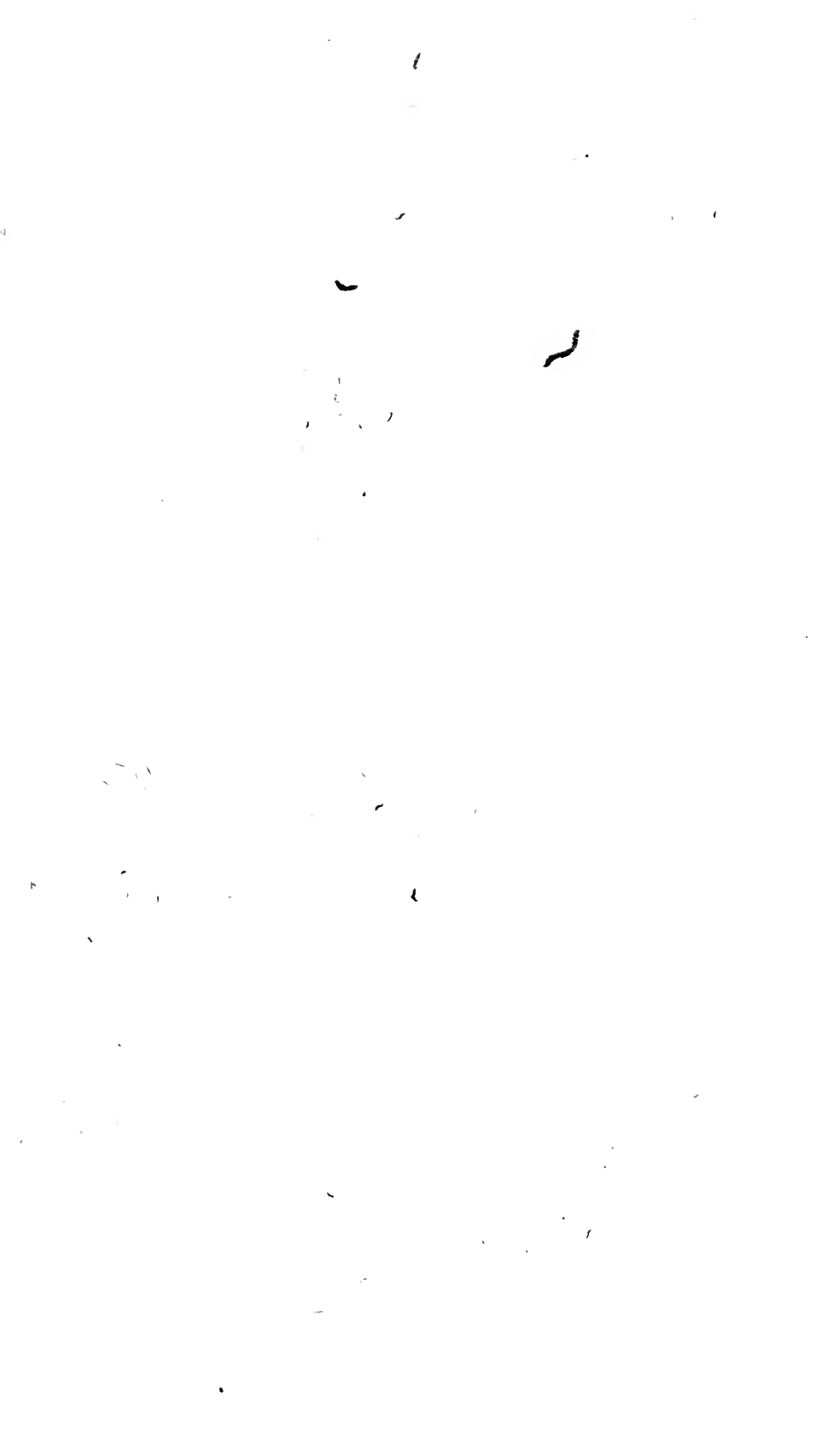


28-6

23

* THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, *
* Princeton, N. J. *
* 28-6 *
* 23 *

BT 215 .B742
Brice, A. b. ca. 1770.
Scriptural facts and
annotations on the divinity



SCRIPTURAL FACTS

AND

Annotations

ON THE

DIVINITY OF THE MESSIAH.



BY

THE REV. A. BRICE.

RECTOR OF ST. JAMES^S, SUFFOLK.

BUNGAY:

PRINTED BY C. BRIGHTLY ;

And Sold by

F. and C. RIVINGTON, St. Paul's Church Yard ;

W. MILLER, No. 5. Old Bond-street,

London ;

And BERRY & ROCHESTER,

Norwich.

1799.

PREFACE.

*T*HROUGHOUT the following work, it is the Author's intention to convey amusement as well as instruction to the reader: The amusement principally arises from a statement of circumstances truly marvellous and interesting; many of which are indisputable facts, confirmed by the clearest chain of evidence; others are imaginary, yet not inconsistent with the former. The facts are taken from the sacred writings; the imaginary deduced from observations contained in those writings. The instruction is for the most part of a moral nature, not immediately delivered as from the Author, but by different characters introduced upon many occasions: These are chosen from the variety of intelligent Beings which we have any account of in sacred history.

The acts of these persons are strongly indicative of their several characters, and suited to the particular circumstances for which they are brought forward. From the beginning to the

end, whatever is said or done, has an evident tendency to the Messiah. From his birth to his ascension; his life, doctrine, miracles, and resurrection, are endeavoured to be introduced in a clear and comprehensive point of view. To make a favourable impression upon the mind, and advance the interest of Religion ought to be the main object of every person, but more particularly when it is recollected, its fundamental principles have been in a great measure obliterated in a neighbouring kingdom.

If upon perusal the work shall be found to answer the intended end, the Author's labour will be amply compensated by the reception—if not, he must make a virtue of necessity, and content himself with the purity of his intentions, though the production be doomed, as others have been before, to oblivion. He has contracted the Preface as much as possible, consistent with the principle of the work; satisfying himself with merely stating the outlines, and wishing to avoid the unnecessary superfluity too often adopted upon similar occasions.

ERRATA.

PAGE	9. line	20,	for <i>affection</i> read <i>affections</i>
—	38. —	24,	for <i>and</i> read <i>or</i> .
—	43. —	9,	for <i>was</i> read <i>were</i> .
—	141. —	1,	after <i>crime</i> read <i>so base</i> .
—	196. —	3,	for <i>ought</i> read <i>aught</i> .
—	221. —	27,	after <i>pale</i> read <i>as</i> .
—	222. —	23,	after <i>experi-</i> add <i>enced</i> .
—	315. —	10,	after <i>shall</i> read <i>be</i> .



SCRIPTURAL FACTS,

Sc. Sc.



THE Infernal Spirit having long perceived with malice, terror, and envy, the rapid success of the Messiah after the resurrection of Lazarus, his fears increased daily, in proportion to the imminent danger which aimed at the total subversion of his authority;—at length, in the utmost confusion, and with all possible expedition, he convened the principal ministers of his kingdom upon Mount Hermon. Like a blasted cedar upon Lebanon he stood erect amidst his apostate angels; and in his guilty mind, grief, indignation, and terror alternately struggled. His expressive looks attention commanded; an awful silence held them mute; not a breath, not a whisper was heard, while the rebellious Archangel thus proceeded: ‘O, ye thrones, prin-

' cipalities, dominions, and powers, with pati-
 ' ence attend, while those events I relate, which
 ' now demand more than ever your serious
 ' deliberation—Ye cannot but recollect the
 ' threatening denounced in Paradise, “ the
 ' “ seed of the woman shall bruise thy head.”
 ' The birth of Cain, until we found by expe-
 ' rience our fears were groundless, gave us
 ' infinite uneasiness. From that period till
 ' the flood, our dread of danger was nearly
 ' obliterated. Nothing but an universal
 ' deluge could defeat our conquests, and
 ' divest us of that empire we had gained over
 ' the human race. Shortly after, our power
 ' over the descendants of Noah, were recovered,
 ' insomuch that distinct kingdoms, and prin-
 ' cipalities to each of you I assigned. As
 ' Gods over these ye were acknowledged,
 ' and according to your desires worshipped
 ' with various rites : all the dominions I al-
 ' lotted to you are unnecessary to mention ; for
 ' an inheritance I have divided among you
 ' the nations of the world ; not one of these
 ' our authority has opposed, but the detested
 ' and infamous kingdom of Judah. There,
 ' indeed, a settlement we often gained,
 ' but never for any period could hold it ;
 ' this is the only despicable spot where, as

' sovereign, our enemy is acknowledged ;
 ' even here we have many friends, who pro-
 ' fess subjection to him in disguise. By con-
 ' tinual struggles we have gained, not only
 ' the dominion of their hearts, but also the pos-
 ' session of their bodies; from their distracted
 ' imaginations, excruciating pains, and dis-
 ' ordered senses we shall derive no small gra-
 ' tification. In short, after every endeavour
 ' used by our opponent to erect his kingdom
 ' upon the ruin of ours, we have acquired an
 ' universal empire, " For all the kingdoms
 ' of the world are mine, and to whomsoever
 ' I will I give them."

' In the midst of prosperity how often have
 ' we been surprised? How tremendous was that
 ' heavenly voice, which I once distinctly heard
 ' on one of the mountains of Moriah, while in
 ' my reptile form I lay concealed? It was in
 ' these words directed to Abraham, " In thy
 ' seed shall all the families of the earth be
 ' blessed !" This appeared to be the threat-
 ' ening of old again renewed, and denoted
 ' no less than a complete annihilation of our
 ' authority. We soon perceived a nation
 ' raised in the land of Ham, and the most
 ' terrible difficulties imposed upon our sub-

'jects there; our firmest friends in the Red
 'sea perished, and even Canaan became a
 'prey to our opponents. The continual ef-
 'forts to banish the execrable race upon va-
 'rious occasions, I need not particularize; at
 'length, we gained ten of their tribes by un-
 'wearied assiduity; and I hoped to have com-
 'pleted the conquest over the other two,
 'when Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah the
 'son of Remaliah joined in the confederacy;
 'but the expedition failed; then were my fears
 'revived, for while in the form of a Raven I
 'entered Jerusalem, I saw the Prophet Isaiah
 'conversing with Ahaz, and heard him dis-
 'tinctly pronounce the following words,
 'The Lord himself shall give you a sign,
 "' behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear
 "' a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel."'
 'The son of a virgin must assuredly be the
 'seed of the woman. A long series of for-
 'tunate events had almost totally removed the
 'dreadful panic occasioned from these words,
 'particularly when I perceived their city and
 'temple destroyed, and their nation led cap-
 'tive into the very center of our dominions.
 'There I expected to have gained a complete
 'conquest, but to my great mortification,
 'they had raised more than ever a greater an-
 'tipathy to our divinities.

‘ Upon their restoration to their native
 ‘ country, which you are aware gave us so
 ‘ much uneasiness, the same threatening was
 ‘ again repeated by the last of their Prophets
 ‘ in these words, “ The Lord whom ye seek
 ‘ shall suddenly come to his temple; even
 ‘ the Angel of the Covenant whom ye delight
 ‘ in.” The same degree of vengeance has
 ‘ infused itself through every age; we have
 ‘ been tormented with fears, buoyed with
 ‘ vain hopes, and blasted with perpetual dis-
 ‘ appointments, and had not Michael the
 ‘ Arch-angel stood up in the defence of that
 ‘ nation, our most heroic and trusty supporter
 ‘ Antiochus had assuredly crowned our expect-
 ‘ tations with the greatest success. It is
 ‘ nearly 500 years since their return from Ba-
 ‘ bylon, and during that time, we have never
 ‘ had it in our power to dissipate their affec-
 ‘ tion from our grand opponent; either by
 ‘ terror or allurement. Our state is in the
 ‘ most imminent danger; yet some of you
 ‘ may perhaps be insensible of our present si-
 ‘ tuation.

‘ Attend then, ye foreign princes, far re-
 ‘ moved from the dangerous scene, ye gover-
 ‘ nors of the distant globe, and all ye powers

' who, in blind obedience to our will, lead
 ' the savage tribes, from the eastern bounda-
 ' ries of China and Japan to the western Bri-
 ' tish Isles, and from the sultry shore of An-
 ' gola to the frozen Scythian hills, hear,
 ' while I state to you things unknown, and
 ' replete with horror.

' Not many years since, the horrid din of
 ' war ceased through the earth, and in a great
 ' part of our dominions peace prevailed ; this
 ' profound calm was a miserable omen of the
 ' approaching storm which soon commenced.
 ' Suddenly a star appeared, this was known
 ' by certain Philosophers in the East, to be
 ' the sign of a mighty prince being born in
 ' Judea, they left their native country con-
 ' ducted by its gentle rays, and arrived in Je-
 ' rusalem, enquiring for the new born king :
 ' the city was alarmed, the prophets were
 ' consulted, and it appeared the Messiah
 ' would be born in Bethlehem. The words of
 ' Balaam then occurred to me, " There shall
 ' " come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall
 ' " rise out of Israel." Immediately I departed
 ' for Bethlehem. There, in the tender em-
 ' braces of an affectionate and blooming mo-
 ' ther I beheld a heavenly infant encircled ;

' never did my eyes behold a child so extreme-
 ' ly lovely, so divine; a sweet serenity, a
 ' mild benevolence, sat on each brow; in
 ' every feature a Godlike majesty was strong-
 ' ly marked. An awful respect, a profound
 ' veneration and love irresistible, suddenly
 ' seized my heart, and for a moment my
 ' whole soul possessed: but reflection soon
 ' roused me to my former state. My fears
 ' arose,—the lovely infant, and the tender
 ' mother I detested: I fled from the horrid
 ' place; Herod, my servant, in his jealousy
 ' I confirmed, and roused all the terrors of
 ' his soul: Disappointed by the philosophers,
 ' and ignorant of his supposed rival, he, with-
 ' out difficulty, assented to my designs; the
 ' ministers of his vengeance were sent forth,
 ' and all the children of Bethlehem, and the
 ' adjacent country immediately put to death.
 ' From that period I judged all danger at an
 ' end, I imagined him slain among the infant
 ' tribe.

' Oft did I search, but never till thirty years
 ' expired, find him; at last, standing by the
 ' river Jordan, where the multitude were
 ' baptized by John, there I beheld him com-
 ' ing out of the water, and heard a voice

' from Heaven, saying, " This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased:" Never did malice, rage, and envy take such possession of my soul, since the fatal day, when with the direful thunder of his Almighty Father, he drove us headlong over the battlements of Heaven, into the hissing flames of the infernal deep.—Our destruction, said I, is now at hand, the seed of the woman appears at last; the enraged fury of Heaven's eternal King, is now in the frail habit of mortality disguised. From the time of his baptism, I watched him with a careful eye. Into the lonely wilderness for prayer and contemplation he retired. There, like Moses on the cloudy top of Mount Sinai, without any food, forty days he lived. The wild beasts of the desert crept gently by him forgetting their wonted fierceness, nor did the voracious lion, when he approached with hideous roar, distend his foaming jaws. Like the kind and domestic animals, they fawned and licked his feet alternately: Sometimes they sported around him, as once we saw them in the delightful fields of Eden. Hungry and faint, at length, he wandered through rocks, and thorny briars, and branching woods, sometimes in

‘the gloomy shade; and sometimes in the
 ‘open light, in search of acorns, herbs, or
 ‘roots, but none he found. As a wandering
 ‘shepherd I then approached him; I meant to
 ‘try his temper, as once I tried the first pa-
 ‘rents of the human race, and found them
 ‘weak. O Son of God, said I, you seem to
 ‘be the person I beheld lately on the banks
 ‘of Jordan, and with that name honoured
 ‘by a voice from heaven, what do you mean
 ‘by secluding from society, and dwelling
 ‘with the wild beasts of the desert? Here
 ‘you must perish, for nature finds no support
 ‘in these lonely wilds; you appear quite ex-
 ‘hausted with hunger, and unless you con-
 ‘vert these stones into bread by a miracle,
 ‘you must assuredly die before you can arrive
 ‘at the habitations of men, or find any supply.
 ‘By this I intended that he should distrust
 ‘his Father’s providence. But my design
 ‘he soon perceived; and answered, that bread
 ‘alone does not preserve the human life, but
 ‘the power of God, who supports the human
 ‘body in the most extraordinary man-
 ‘ner without it. I then retired, and
 ‘scarce had I departed, when the truth of
 ‘what he said struck my infernal heart; im-
 ‘mediately a host of angels appeared, and

' with heavenly food refreshed him. Soon
 ' after, on the battlements of the temple I
 ' placed him; there he firmly stood, survey-
 ' ing the various hills and vallies, fertile fields,
 ' and winding streams, gardens and stately
 ' palaces—Now, Son of God, said I, plunge
 ' thyself down from hence, trust in thy Al-
 ' mighty Father, fear no harm, thus he hath
 ' promised to preserve thee, “ He will give
 ‘ his angels charge concerning thee; and in
 ‘ their hands shall they bear thee up, lest at
 ‘ any time thou dash thy foot against a stone,”
 ' here my idea he quickly discovered, and re-
 ' plied, it behoves us to confide in God in
 ' present dangers; we must not wantonly
 ' plunge into difficulty to tempt his power or
 ' goodness, to work a miracle for our preser-
 ' vation. Failing in these points one more
 ' I resolved to try. I carried him up into an
 ' exceeding high mountain, and with accu-
 ' racy pointed out in their greatest splendor,
 ' the kingdoms of the world. Behold, O Son
 ' of God, here are objects not unworthy your
 ' serious regard, they are designed for you,
 ' though mine at present; freely will I sur-
 ' render them, if you will but bend one
 ' knee, and acknowledge the generous gift.
 ' Scarce had I spoken, when with conscious

‘ indignation, he replied, “ Satan, begone,
 ‘ no more tempt me, for it is written, “ Thou
 ‘ shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him
 ‘ only shalt thou serve.” Rapid as the fork-
 ‘ ed lightning I vanished; his piercing looks
 ‘ cut my very soul; beyond the reach of
 ‘ temptation I found him, unshaken as the
 ‘ deep rooted hills before the gentle breeze of
 ‘ of the morning.

‘ From that period, as a Prophet he ap-
 ‘ peared, travelling through Gallilee and
 ‘ Judea, with unremmitting care, exhort-
 ‘ ing repentance and remission of sins, in all
 ‘ their cities and villages, in every syna-
 ‘ gogue, and in the temple; with the most
 ‘ powerful argument enforcing his doctrine,
 ‘ that the kingdom of heaven or the dispen-
 ‘ sation was at hand. His instructions are
 ‘ all confirmed by miracles of the most extra-
 ‘ ordinary kind: he commands the deaf to
 ‘ hear, the dumb to speak, the blind to see,
 ‘ the lame to walk; and in the twinkling of
 ‘ a moment it is done. A word of his mouth,
 ‘ or a touch of his hand, instantly allays the
 ‘ burning fever, or the withered limbs restore
 ‘ to their accustomed vigour. The bloated
 ‘ hydrops, shaking palsy, and moonshine

'madness, yea, all diseases dissipate at his
 'approach, and blooming health his steps
 'attend. Our power is fled, nor dare we
 'presume to torture whom he wills to save.
 'The dark and lonely regions of the dead are
 'within his power. This very morning, in
 'the presence of many, Lazarus of Bethany
 'he raised to life, who five days since expir-
 'ed, and in the gloomy mansions of the grave
 'lay confined. The attentive crouds, with
 'eager delight, beheld the triumph of his
 'power, and with pleasing admiration all his
 'doctrine echoed. In short, his design is
 'this, to establish his kingdom upon the
 'ruin of ours. What must we expect, should
 'he prevail? Nothing less than a speedy
 'exile from the earth, and a close confine-
 'ment in the dark abyss, where a doleful re-
 'gion of woe, and prison of horrible despair,
 'shall again receive us, and the blasted and
 'devoted victims of insatiable and eternal
 'vengeance. I have summoned you upon
 'the most pressing occasion. Never was the
 'safety of our persons, and the interest of
 'the empire in greater danger; now is the
 'period for our united wisdom to exert itself;
 'rack your inventions, with freedom declare
 'what seems most eligible to be adopted.

‘ either for the confusion of our enemies, or
 ‘ in our own defence ; thoughts are brooding
 ‘ in my mind, but they are not matured ; I
 ‘ will therefore postpone the disclosure until
 ‘ you have delivered your various opinions.’

Satan thus concluded his laboured harangue, his eyes dejected, tears dropt of unutterable distress, whilst the keenest anguish wrung his heart. A solemn horror on every countenance was strongly figured, a deadly groan burst from the whole assembly like thunder rolling in the sky above. At the awful sound Mount Hermon trembled, Syron's foundations felt the shock ; the lions terrified from their dens started ; the leopards fled along the hills like the frightened lambs before the prowling wolves.

In unutterable woe, and silent expectation they sometime remained. At length, Belial rose, Belial the apostate angel, who holds the effeminate sons of pleasure in the downy bonds of sensual delight ; by him seduced, their days they spend in gay amusements ; the varied dance, the harmonious sound, the sparkling bowl, and dark defiled embrace, amorous riot, and thoughtless dissipation,

with never-ceasing toil their miserable days consume. Ghastly and pale the licentious dæmon from his seat arose, with fearful aspect, and trembling joints, like his deluded sons when death unexpected stares them in the face. To speak he thrice attempted, but sorrow closed his lips; at length he said.

‘ O Prince of Heavenly Powers, Sovereign
 ‘ Ruler of this terraqueous globe, beyond dis-
 ‘ pute, perhaps beyond description our dan-
 ‘ ger is great, no tongue can paint the ter-
 ‘ rors I feel, nor can I forget the time, when
 ‘ in the burning deep, a sad retreat we sought
 ‘ from the insufferable vengeance of our Al-
 ‘ mighty foe. The fearful denunciation thro’
 ‘ every age has run, “ The seed of the wo-
 ‘ man shall bruise thy head;” these words
 ‘ will destroy with eternal fury all our host;
 ‘ our opponent will never repent, nor yet can
 ‘ we, for we delight in all we do; as soon
 ‘ shall light and darkness be reconciled as he
 ‘ and we; to resist his thundering power is
 ‘ impossible, to bear his dreadful indigna-
 ‘ tion is intolerable, all we can do is to sus-
 ‘ pend his wrath, “ and put far off the evil
 ‘ day.” This I deem worthy of all our pains,
 ‘ could we possibly gain it. Hear then, my

' proposal. Jesus of Nazareth is doubtless the
 ' Son of God, the Messiah promised to the
 ' Jewish nation ; in his outward circumstan-
 ' ces, he appears a man of the meanest rank,
 ' from the crowd distinguished, only by hea-
 ' venly power and spotless innocence, an ex-
 ' traordinary Prophet raised up like Moses,
 ' the chosen seed of Abraham to instruct,
 ' for I apprehend his commission extends no
 ' farther than to that people. Now, what if
 ' we should persuade the Jews to receive him,
 ' and yield submission to his authority? The
 ' end will justify our means, be not surprised.
 ' If we persuade the Jews to give him a kind
 ' reception, as the Son of God and the long
 ' expected Messiah, this may suspend the
 ' wrath of Heaven for a time, this a reprieve
 ' may gain till better success attend us. A
 ' truce from war is often made with prudent
 ' foresight, in order to obtain by stratagem
 ' greater advantage over the adverse party.
 ' Let us now suppose him unanimously elect-
 ' ed for their king, What can we lose?
 ' No part of our dominions, for they our
 ' authority dispute. But mark how much
 ' we gain; should they willingly receive
 ' him, this event would confound all the
 ' prophets, and prove them liars ; for they

have unequivocally foretold “ that the Mes-
 siah, would be despised and rejected of
 men, cut off from the land of the living,
 and brought unto the dust of death.” These
 predictions he knows, and has foretold that
 in the heart of the earth he shall be three
 days and three nights. It is impossible un-
 less these things be accomplished he can
 be the Messiah; and therefore could we
 persuade the Jews to receive him by any
 means, then all the prophets, as well as him-
 self, would be deceived, and their vain pre-
 science terminate in public fraud. This
 must be desirable. Not that I love the
 Jews, nor yet the Messiah, our inveterate
 and determined foe; I hate them both,
 and with infinite pleasure could behold his
 sufferings, triumph in his death, and in
 their destruction. The multitude are at-
 tached to his interest, they are disposed to
 receive him as their king; the Chief Priests,
 the Elders, and great men of the nation for
 his meanness despise him; these persons
 are our trusty servants; which ever way we
 please we can bend their inclinations. Our
 influence let us unite, and by every argu-
 ment persuade them to choose this man for
 their king. They expect a worldly prince,

‘ so let him be; for though he should reign in
 ‘ Judea, our authority over the nations may
 ‘ still remain secure. Should we succeed,
 ‘ then the Prophets will be liars, and him-
 ‘ self a deceiver. You have my advice, but
 ‘ any other I will with satisfaction attend to.’

Scarce had he ended, when Abaddon rose; a horrible frown dwelt on his countenance, strongly indicating inward trouble, and furious discontent. Oftentimes on the whirlwind, with sounding wings he rides, over hills, and plains, and o’er the raging deep, the towering cedars fall at his approach, and the oaks of Bashan groan beneath his steps. From low’ring clouds he often darts his fire, and through the dismal sky tremendous roars; while fear, and death, and desolation mark his horrid paths. With furious visage, vengeful heart, and thundering voice he thus began:

‘ Ye mighty Gods, and Rulers of this lower
 ‘ world, the most imminent danger must as-
 ‘ suredly attend our present state; when a base
 ‘ submission, and timid acquiescence with the
 ‘ designs of our detested enemies, have been
 ‘ so enthusiastically countenanced in this as-

' ssembly. Not that I have any suspicion of
 ' Belial's fidelity and fervent zeal for our in-
 ' terest. Of this I am well satisfied ; never-
 ' theless, the best intentions, the most laud-
 ' able and patriotic designs frequently fail
 ' through improper means. Excessive timi-
 ' dity is apt to confound and alarm the mind,
 ' when terror ascends the throne where for-
 ' titude should dwell, wisdom is immediately
 ' on the wing. Let us beware of serious and
 ' fatal errors. It would be matter of great
 ' joy to me to defeat the purposes of our ene-
 ' mies, to behold the words of the Messiah
 ' disappointed, and the prophecies of old
 ' totally frustrated. This might come to pass,
 ' could he be prevailed upon to accept a
 ' worldly kingdom ; but I am well assured he
 ' never will. Have ye not already been ap-
 ' prized, how on the mountains airy top he
 ' spurned the gift of all our empire ; and least
 ' it should be thought his refusal proceeded
 ' from personal revenge against our sovereign
 ' prince, or a contempt of the terms upon
 ' which it was offered : I myself observed him
 ' once in the barren desart, after he had fed
 ' a great multitude with a few loaves and
 ' small fishes, unequivocally reject the go-
 ' vernment of his native country when they

' were upon the eve of forcing him to accept
 ' it. Into a lonely place I observed him re-
 ' tire to avoid their importunity. It is true,
 ' he loves to rule over men, but then it is
 ' over their hearts, their wills and affections ;
 ' by the force of truth, and by the charms of
 ' virtue bringing them into subjection to the
 ' laws of God ; all other power he utterly dis-
 ' claims. Shall we be his servants ? Shall we
 ' support his interest, by informing the world
 ' that this is the Son of God, the long expect-
 ' ed Messiah ? No, if some have already ac-
 ' knowledged it through fear, or to blast his
 ' ministry, it is not prudent to persevere ;
 ' and you are aware we are absolutely prohi-
 ' bited under pain of his immediate displea-
 ' sure. But, admitting there was no danger,
 ' why confess his power, and to the Jewish
 ' nation publish his title ? With an intention
 ' we are told, that they may elect him for
 ' their king. Let us imagine him placed on
 ' the throne of his ancestors, by the free con-
 ' sent of high and low, how irreparable must
 ' be our loss ? We lose the affections of all
 ' that submit to him, and can we imagine his
 ' power will end there ? Will he permit us
 ' quietly to reign over the rest of the world,
 ' or can we think him indifferent about other

' nations, and contracting his love within the
 ' narrow sphere of his own countrymen? No,
 ' his views are far more extensive. Have
 ' not the prophets said, " that in him all the
 ' nations of the earth shall be blessed; that
 ' he shall be for a light unto the gentiles, and
 ' for salvation to the ends of the earth; that
 ' he shall speak peace unto the heathen, that
 ' his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and
 ' from the river to the ends of the earth."
 ' These are the decrees of the Almighty and
 ' his anointed; if these come to pass, our
 ' kingdom is inevitably lost. Our duty is to
 ' put in execution every means to prevent the
 ' apparent danger. Some bold and daring
 ' enterprize must effect it, and not the arts of
 ' mean compliance and slow deceit. His
 ' death is decreed, be it so, it is better that
 ' he should die, than live and reign for ever.
 ' But die he shall not, as the prophets have
 ' foretold, by the hands of men, in mild obe-
 ' dience to his Father's will, and with kind
 ' affection to them who shed his blood; there
 ' the merit lies. A sudden, unexpected death,
 ' and almost without pain, a death which
 ' permits no time for reflection, or room for
 ' patience, resignation to the will of heaven,
 ' or meekness towards men; such a death

‘ merits no reward, it has no virtue in it.
 ‘ If the Son of God should die in this manner
 ‘ no advantages can be reaped by himself
 ‘ or the human race, for in the eye of God
 ‘ the sufferings of men have no value, any
 ‘ further than as they are attended with vir-
 ‘ tuous dispositions in the mind of him who
 ‘ suffers. A sudden death inflicted on the
 ‘ Messiah, would not only frustrate the inten-
 ‘ tions of Heaven, but would defeat the an-
 ‘ cient prophecies, and secure our kingdom
 ‘ from the attack with which it is threatened.

‘ By various means within my power this
 ‘ may be accomplished; should I from the
 ‘ burning caverns of Mount Etna, or the
 ‘ flames of Vesuvius, raise a pitchy cloud,
 ‘ charged with venomous seeds of death, con-
 ‘ ducting, yet not dispersing it by a gentle
 ‘ wind over the sea, till hovering in Judea,
 ‘ I in the pestilential damp quickly surround
 ‘ him, and in an instant dash to atoms the
 ‘ springs of life; or high in the liquid air
 ‘ form a dense cloud of vast extent, either
 ‘ on the hills or over the plain whereon he
 ‘ stands; by a gentle gale directed to that
 ‘ side which, illuminated by the sun, a large
 ‘ concavity is formed, from thence the solar

'beams are collected in a point, where the
 'strong expansive heat repels the ambient
 'air; this suddenly recoils with strong elastic
 'force; from thence the whirling blast be-
 'gins, while men, and beasts, and trees, and
 'stately towers tossed to and fro fly mingling
 'through the sky. In this manner, I once
 'destroyed the sons of Job, and if ye con-
 'sent so shall the Messiah perish; or, if ye pre-
 'fer, I will burst in lightning from the clouds,
 'and in a moment blast our dangerous foe.
 'Thus did I once confound with instant
 'death, the numerous flocks in the land of
 'Uz and all the servile train.'

Scarce had he concluded, when, lo! his
 breath enraged was turned into flames; his
 wide extended nostrils poured out a furious
 storm, which roared along the hills, a tremend-
 ous signal of his awful power, and deadly ma-
 lice against the Son of God.

The direful God of Ammon instantly rose to
 public view. A calm deliberate malice, inspir-
 ing his votaries with cruel superstition, joined
 with the most profound hypocrisy, concealed
 with a stiff and formal gravity darkened his

soul; an enormous cloak drenched in blood, and reeking with human gore, ghastly to view, was thrown over his tremendous and disgusted shape. None of the infernal crew was ever worshipped with more barbarous rites than him. The dreadful cries of infants burning, the bitter wailings of parental sorrow, mixed with the hoarse sound of rattling drums, composed the music of his infernal sacrifice. Thus did the apostate Jews in the valley of Hinnom consume in the fire to devils their sons and daughters. Near Satan's right hand this infernal Spirit stood, and after rolling his hideous eyes around him, thus proceeded:

‘ Hear, O Immortal Spirits, friends dignified with great renown, and mighty power over this terraqueous globe, I now advise; but would studiously avoid the extremes of abject fear and blind impetuous rage. A deliberate malice that permits one diligently to seek the most proper means, and patiently to wait the regular time to put them in execution, appears best to me. That the Messiah should be put to death, Abaddon has proposed; so far I think he is right, but I differ in the means, sudden force will

not do, that is beyond our power to accomplish. By woeful experience we know the superior strength of our Almighty foe; witness the gloomy, deep, and burning lake, where in the utmost consternation we formerly fled to. Have ye forgotten his words when at the beginning he said, "Arise, thou dreadful, thou horrible abyss, be thou the prison of all my future foes." Swift as the word it sprung from unessential light. He only frowned, and then the flames rolled hissing round the dreary dungeon of the deep. We cannot do what he wills not to be done. Was our power equal to our malice, we should not have been reduced to the necessity of long consultations. By his permission we escaped from hell, and ranged the spacious earth; by his permission, not by matchless power, now on Hermon's cloudy top we stand, and weigh with prudent foresight what may come, or what our limited power or skill may do, to advance the interest of our kingdom. The roaring tempest Abaddon means to send, or poisoning vapours round the Son of God, the thunders he will cause to roll, and the piercing ætherial lightnings to blast him in a moment. This might be done if his power

' was uncontroled. Has he forgotten what
 ' happened in the land of Ham, when in the
 ' field of Zoan Moses stretched out to heaven
 ' his awful rod; lo, the ponderous cloud
 ' poured down the rattling hail, and flaming
 ' fire, while flocks, and herds, and fruitful
 ' trees, and verdant fields all perished in the
 ' mingled storm. Where was he then? Or
 ' why did he not direct the cloud over the de-
 ' tested fields of Goshen, and over our avow-
 ' ed enemies pour out his vengeance? If he
 ' commands the storm, Why did the strong
 ' east wind drive back the Egyptian sea? If
 ' the clouds collect, the thunders roar, and
 ' the lightnings dart at his command, Why
 ' did the Assyrian host, the zealous votaries
 ' of his rock, perish in a moment before
 ' Jerusalem's walls? An angel from heaven
 ' we know the storm directed, nor could
 ' Abaddon, with all his might and force col-
 ' lected, the dismal consequences prevent.

' In the land of Uz we once beheld him,
 ' clothed in fire, and riding on the whirlwind,
 ' while amidst our foes he scattered desola-
 ' tion: but his power's confined, " behold
 ' all that he hath is in thy power, only upon
 ' himself put not forth thy hand." To blast

' the Son of God would be a fruitless attempt,
 ' for the stormy winds and flaming fire fulfil
 ' his word; this, while he passed the lake of
 ' Galilee we perceived; a perfect calm had
 ' smoothed the surface of the deep, and dis-
 ' played a polished mirror to the sky; at that
 ' time in sound repose he lay, while Abaddon
 ' said, I will try my authority and power, I
 ' will plunge you prophet in the foaming
 ' deep, the wind arose, the boisterous bil-
 ' lows rolled above the deck, and ghastly hor-
 ' ror was marked in every face; the Son of
 ' God awoke; he gently said, "be hushed
 ' "ye winds, ye roaring waves be still." The
 ' winds obeyed, the rolling waters sunk in si-
 ' lent peace. In Gadara we felt his power,
 ' we shuddered at his frown, and thousands at
 ' his rebuke departed. Even a whole legion
 ' of our host could not so much as drown the
 ' swinish herd, without his permission first
 ' obtained. Almighty power his words attend,
 ' and bands of angels his paths surround. Vio-
 ' lence therefore, I judge impracticable; but
 ' supposing that might do, the consequence
 ' I greatly dread. Nothing could raise the
 ' vengeance of the Almighty to a higher
 ' pitch. What if his indignation should
 ' plunge us in the burning lake, and his

' wrath in a moment blow up the flames ten
 ' thousand times more fierce than ever? Or,
 ' what if worse than this should happen? for
 ' who can tell what boundless wrath and in-
 ' finite power may do? The Son of God must
 ' die, as all the Prophets have foretold, if by
 ' the hands of men he dies, so much the bet-
 ' ter; in that case, the consequences will be
 ' advantageous to us; the chosen seed of
 ' Abraham will be then cut off, for such a
 ' crime rejected; the first will rid us of a na-
 ' tion who have rebelled against our authority;
 ' the last will reduce them to our obedience.
 ' Here it may be objected, shall we with an
 ' event concur, so clearly decreed by heaven,
 ' and with a design perhaps to overthrow the
 ' interest of our kingdom? To this I reply,
 ' that the death of the Messiah was never de-
 ' creed by heaven. For he who sent him in-
 ' to the world has given numberless proofs of
 ' his divine commission, by his miracles and
 ' doctrine, the tendency and intention of these
 ' is to cause all men to believe, and yield to his
 ' authority; the evidence is so clear and con-
 ' vincing, that we ourselves cannot reject it.
 ' If God meant that all men should assent to
 ' the truth when fully presented to their minds;

' he could never intend they should oppose it.
 ' If he commanded the Jews to believe him,
 ' he must consequently have prohibited
 ' any degree of violence; can God de-
 ' cree the death of his son, and yet forbid
 ' men to fulfill that decree? Can he will con-
 ' tradictions? Surely not, in all our discove-
 ' ries we have never detected inconsistencies;
 ' therefore I infer that God never decreed,
 ' nor intended the death of the Messiah; he
 ' only foresaw the Jews would obstinately re-
 ' ject him, and in the end put him to death,
 ' and for reasons wisely concealed, he decreed
 ' not to oppose them. Now, if he foresaw
 ' the Jews would commit so heinous a crime,
 ' shall we endeavour to subvert it? No,
 ' rather let us by all possible means hasten
 ' the event, which will liberate us from our
 ' foe and involve that nation in guilt and de-
 ' spair. The plan I would propose for the
 ' accomplishing our ends is this; you observe,
 ' for the meanness of his birth he is despised
 ' by the Chief Priests, Elders, Scribes, and
 ' Pharisees; for the freedom of his rebukes
 ' they detest him, and in consequence of his
 ' growing fame among the people, he is an
 ' object of envy; these passions are well
 ' suited to our purpose, let us strengthen

' them daily; for where these are predomi-
 ' nant, no evidence however strong can pos-
 ' sibly succeed. These men have already
 ' formed designs against him, nothing but
 ' the terror of admiring multitudes has re-
 ' strained them within bounds. These regard
 ' him as the Messiah, but I flatter myself there
 ' will be no difficulty to transfer their love
 ' into hatred, and their admiration into con-
 ' tempt. The multitude are always fickle and
 ' indecisive, of true merit insensible, guided
 ' by passion, seldom led by reflection, like
 ' the tempestuous waves tossed to and fro
 ' with every wind. They all expect a con-
 ' quering Prince, from high to low, a Mes-
 ' siah who, from the Roman yoke shall libe-
 ' rate them, and reign in matchless splen-
 ' dor over all the world. These hopes must
 ' unquestionably be frustrated, and disappoint-
 ' ment will alter their opinion, damp their
 ' esteem, and rouse their indignation. What
 ' must he appear to their prejudiced minds?
 ' an imposter worthy of an ignominious
 ' death. This he clearly foresees, and
 ' so may we. The resurrection of Lazarus
 ' presents an occasion for admitting political
 ' alarm into the minds of the great; the
 ' voice of fame with tongues innumerable

' and rapid wings will blow the wond'rous story
 ' in every ear. Haste then, ye Princes, sum-
 ' mon up your resentment; swift as the solar
 ' beams to Mount Zion let us fly, the Priests
 ' alarm, and the Sanhedrim speedily assemble;
 ' let us rouse every furious passion in their
 ' breasts; I will endeavour to preside, and
 ' dictate what they say. My grand design is
 ' to inspire them with bravery, to drive popu-
 ' lar fears far away, that a sentence may
 ' quickly be carried into execution against
 ' the Messiah as an imposter. If he makes
 ' no resistance, as I am sensible he will not,
 ' his resignation will be deemed by the crowd
 ' as a proof of his weakness, a scandalous dis-
 ' appointment of their hopes, and a satisfac-
 ' tory excuse for abandoning his cause.'

Shouts of applause and approbation burst
 from every mouth as soon as he concluded.
 The furious noise on Bashan's hills was heard,
 and on Gilboa's barren rocks the distant mur-
 murs rung.

This ostentatious triumph had no sooner
 ended in a profound silence, when at Satan's
 left hand Mammon rose. In glittering chains
 by him the sordid sons of avarice are led the

willing slaves of his authority ; taught by his mild insinuating tongue, they anxiously conceive that riches and comfort are synonymous, that truth and justice, conscious worth, sacred honour, and all the radiant charms of virtue, are only vain and empty names compared with gold. Behind this dæmonic tyrant, an infamous train of various forms were posted, ready to execute his will. There treachery was manifest with double face and fraud disguised in garments of simple truth, and generous hearted honesty. By him stood Violence dyed with blood, and seizing a poignard in his right hand ; Oppression, with terrific claws, brandishing an iron rod of length enormous, and frowning horrible on all beneath him ; these were the attendants upon his person, accompanied by many others, the trusty ministers of his despotic will ; every eye was fixed, and every ear with accurate attention listened, while thus he delivered the secret counsels of his malignant heart.

‘ Ye Gods of this wide world, with satisfaction I have perceived, though many schemes have been proposed to this assembly, the same zeal and enthusiasm for our

• common interest is evident throughout.
 • The last advice I most applaud, with some
 • little variation to improve the plan, and
 • render our deliberations more compleat.
 • No doubt the Chief Priests and Elders are
 • disposed to forward our designs, the popu-
 • lar fury is the only restraint upon their zeal,
 • this will in all probability continue until an
 • opportunity offers of apprehending the Mes-
 • siah by a manœuvre consistent with their
 • own security. Open violence may be pro-
 • ductive of much difficulty and danger; but
 • secret fraud, and dark nocturnal wiles may
 • attain the wish'd for end. One traitor has
 • accomplished what hosts of armed foes could
 • not achieve. "The Son of Man must be
 • betrayed," I heard himself pronounce these
 • words, while secretly I lay, and Judas me
 • embraced with fond desire; oft did he view
 • my glittering form, he worshipp'd me, he
 • adored me in his heart; by degrees I se-
 • cretly stole into his imagination; ever since
 • his whole train of thoughts I have directed;
 • in hopes of endless store and worldly pomp,
 • he follows the Messiah, anxious for the
 • day when he shall sit upon the throne of
 • David, and reign supremely triumphant
 • over all the earth. What if I persuade this

‘ man, that nothing but violence would excite
 ‘ the indignation of his master; that self-de-
 ‘ fence, and nothing else will induce him to
 ‘ confound his enemies, and assume his na-
 ‘ tive right as God’s anointed, and the king
 ‘ of Israel. If I once prevail upon him to
 ‘ credit this, will he not seize the first oppor-
 ‘ tunity of delivering him into the hands of
 ‘ his opponents. He believes him to be the
 ‘ Messiah; he believes the Messiah will never
 ‘ die, and therefore may imagine no difficulty
 ‘ can arise from such an act. Let us, con-
 ‘ formable to the advice proposed, convene
 ‘ the Sanhedrim, establish their prejudices,
 ‘ strengthen their passions, and superintend
 ‘ their deliberations, until the decree for his
 ‘ apprehension is passed. This will give Ju-
 ‘ das a fair opportunity of betraying him.
 ‘ What then can he do? either resist, or quiet-
 ‘ ly submit. If he resists, then he himself
 ‘ and all the Prophets will be judged impos-
 ‘ ters; if he submits, then his friends will be
 ‘ disappointed in their expectations. They
 ‘ look for a powerful Prince, invincible in
 ‘ war, the terror of nations, the victorious
 ‘ conqueror of this present world. All this
 ‘ they expect from him, who can heal the
 ‘ sick, and overthrow dæmons with a word.

' But all their hopes shall end in confusion,
 ' grief, and cruel despair, while infamy, pain,
 ' and death shall be his fate. Then we may
 ' reign secure and prosperous, unless the
 ' Almighty, whose power is infinite, disturbs
 ' our peace.

Here his oration closed, when Satan, with
 a terrific smile of approbation the whole as-
 sembly thus invoked :

' Ye mighty Princes, with heartfelt plea-
 ' sure I have attended to your several propo-
 ' sitions ; in the general wish you seem
 ' agreed, nor is it to be supposed that all our
 ' Princes can perceive what is most eligible
 ' in every case ; but when superior wisdom
 ' points out the surest way to gain success,
 ' what should the inferior do but immediately
 ' acquiesce without a murmur. In this, our
 ' union and the strength of our empire con-
 ' sists, in having one grand view, the public
 ' good, and a chearful submission to every
 ' means by which it may be advanced. Not
 ' like the puny race of mortal men, where
 ' divided interests, partial views, and vain
 ' conceit of knowing all, plunges them into

' difficulty, and makes them easily submit to
' our superior sway.

' Moloch and Mammon have pointed out
' the surest means to atchieve our purpose;
' they have anticipated the very scheme which
' has long lay brooding in my mind. They
' have advanced the same arguments which
' occurred to me, and I congratulate you
' upon the prospect of succeeding in a case
' so desperate and replete with danger. Un-
' foreseen circumstances may give occasion to
' future deliberations. In the interim, let us
' depart, and make such observations upon the
' state of things as may be necessary to our
' designs; let us convene the Sanhedrim;
' excite their fury, and infuse darkness thro'
' their minds. Let Judas be urged to be-
' tray his Lord and Master, and all the rest
' of his disciples be tormented with terrific
' forms of death, while I endeavour, amidst
' a combination of miseries, to involve him
' in the depth of despair.'

Innumerable legions at these words bowed
round their hellish Chief, when a thundering
roar from the impending clouds gave the sig-
nal of departure. In a moment they fled

from Mount Hermon, in number like the buzzing insects which dance in the sun's mild evening rays. Through all the earth they dispersed in legions, in scattered parties, or wandering individuals, from the fruitful coasts of Sharon, to the lofty hills of Arnon, and from Lebanon to the barren rocks of Edom; every where they dropt unseen, particularly on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, where they perched on the walls like voracious vultures anxious for their prey.

Scarce had the radiant sun diffused itself over Judea, when Nahash, Tilon, and Shamma, arrived in Jerusalem from Bethany. These were distant relations of Lazarus, but foes to Jesus; men of abandoned lives, and yet firmly attached to the interest of the Chief Priests and the traditions of the Elders. Though these persons had been witnesses of the resurrection of Lazarus, and of the divine power of him who raised him from the dead; yet they were so unbelieving, that immediately upon arriving in the city, they went to the palace of the Chief Priest, where having waited for a considerable time in a magnificent hall, Caiaphas appeared, when

Nahash addressed him in the following manner:

‘ O, Caiaphas! potent Priest of the most
 ‘ supreme God, matter of no inconsiderate
 ‘ moment could have justified our disturbing
 ‘ your repose at so unseasonable an hour;
 ‘ actuated by a veneration for Aaron’s suc-
 ‘ cessors, and an ardent desire to serve our
 ‘ native country, we came to state an extraor-
 ‘ dinary fact, which, in our idea, demands a
 ‘ speedy investigation, as the consequence
 ‘ may be productive of much danger. We
 ‘ are aware of the trouble, and perplexing
 ‘ apprehensions the rulers of Israel have al-
 ‘ ready experienced, from the remarkable
 ‘ conduct of Jesus of Nazareth. None of
 ‘ his actions have been in any degree alarm-
 ‘ ing, compared with what we clearly perceiv-
 ‘ ed yesterday.—A distant relation of ours
 ‘ died in Bethany about five days since, and
 ‘ was buried; upon that occasion we assisted
 ‘ at the funeral of our departed friend, and
 ‘ deemed it humanity to visit his two
 ‘ sisters, who were inconsolable at the loss
 ‘ of a beloved brother, and endeavour to
 ‘ administer them some comfort. While
 ‘ we were present, this wandering Prophet

' arrived in town, together with his disciples.
 ' The excessive grief of the sisters revived
 ' upon his appearance, for they as well as the
 ' deceased were firmly attached to his inte-
 ' rest. The opinion they entertained of his
 ' wonderful power only increased their sor-
 ' row; for, thought they, had he been here
 ' our brother might have been save ;—this
 ' they informed him, when he desired to be
 ' conducted to the sepulchre. Accordingly,
 ' with the two sisters and many others, we
 ' went with him immediately to the place,
 ' which appeared to be a cave, and the en-
 ' trance closed by a large stone. At the
 ' sepulchre the grief of his relations and
 ' friends was excessive, and strongly indicated
 ' the keenest sensibility; Jesus himself bore
 ' a share in this melancholy scene, and dropt
 ' a manly tear for his departed friend.

' After a short time had passed in this man-
 ' ner, Jesus ordered the stone to be removed ;
 ' it was observed that the putrified corpse
 ' would be insupportable; but he insist-
 ' ing, it was accordingly done. Instant-
 ' ly, with his eyes to heaven uplifted, a
 ' short prayer he uttered. Then, turning
 ' to the sepulchre, with a majestic look

and dignified tone he cried aloud, " Lazarus come forth : " To the great amazement of the spectators, he instantly arose, and came out of the tomb, with his hands and feet tied in grave clothes, and his head bound round with a napkin. Some standing by were then commanded to loose him and let him go. Wonder, fear, and joy, was strongly marked in every countenance; in deep silence and astonishment for some time every one viewed Lazarus, and he them; often would he examine his own hands, feet, legs, and arms, survey his body, and feel if all was real. At last, falling prostrate on the ground at the feet of Jesus, he most gratefully acknowledged the favour he had received. Every one was seized with a sacred veneration for the Prophet who had raised him from the dead. We were deeply smitten with awful surprize at what we beheld : yet, after many deliberate reflections, we can scarcely credit what we saw with our eyes, and what was so evident to many. We are doubtful whether our senses have not deceived us; and yet, if we doubt this, we must doubt every thing : We cannot deny a fact so well attested, therefore we are inclined to doubt the power by

' which it was performed, and are fearful
 ' least actions of this kind should occasion a
 ' public disturbance; for the populace every
 ' where are enthusiastically inclined to receive
 ' him as the Messiah. But they are deceived,
 ' for who can believe, that ever the Roman
 ' power will tremble at the name of this fic-
 ' titious Prince, or cede their wide extended
 ' conquests to a carpenter's son. Must not
 ' he be an infamous imposter, who assumes
 ' the title of God's anointed, without the
 ' dignity and appearance attached to that
 ' sacred character? Should the unthinking
 ' multitude be so ignorant as to elect him
 ' him for their king, will it not feed the
 ' flames of war, and bring desolation on our
 ' native land? These fears have hurt our
 ' night's repose, nor can we expect ease,
 ' till these perplexing terrors, with the cir-
 ' cumstance which gave origin to them, were
 ' fully stated to thee, most holy Priest, whose
 ' enterprising zeal, and powerful influence,
 ' can alone allay the approaching danger.'

This narrative was heard by Caiaphas, with
 the most lively emotions of envy, hatred,
 surprise, and fear. 'These are no imaginary
 ' terrors,' said he, 'for we have often dread-

‘ed some terrible calamity might be the con-
 ‘sequence of this man being permitted to
 ‘continue. A prudent foresight is highly ne-
 ‘cessary to prevent what you suspect; and
 ‘the information you have given, as it merits
 ‘the consideration of the Sanhedrim, so shall
 ‘it be submitted for their serious deliberation
 ‘with every possible expedition.’

The informers instantly departed, when an order was issued summoning the Sanhedrim; which accordingly met in the temple. The consultation here began with the speech of Annas, father-in-law to the High Priest, an infirm old man, of a weak understanding, extremely subject to fear, from the apprehension of imaginary dangers, and now more so than ever, from the exaggerated account he had received from Caiaphas. With a grave and sullen aspect, he thus proceeded:

‘Ye Rulers of Israel, and descendants of
 ‘the House of Aaron, how long shall we en-
 ‘dure the terrors of approaching desolation,
 ‘without endeavouring to subvert that misery
 ‘which every prudent eye may see, and at
 ‘the thought of which every considerate mind
 ‘instantly recoils. Jesus of Nazareth has

' often been the subject of former delibera-
 ' tions ; these have hitherto ended in strange
 ' confusion, vain resolutions, and insignifi-
 ' cant threats. His increasing reputation
 ' cannot fail to alarm us. Nothing of this
 ' nature was ever heard of in any former age,
 ' that an obscure person, sprung from the
 ' loins of a base mechanic, and still in a
 ' state of the most abject poverty, should
 ' intimidate and perplex, to an unprecedented
 ' degree, the Scribes and Pharisees, the
 ' Priests and Elders of Israel. It cannot be
 ' denied he has wrought many extraordinary
 ' miracles, the lepers have been cleansed, the
 ' paralytic restored to their wonted activity,
 ' the blind to perfect sight, and the deaf to
 ' their hearing ; he has caused the dumb to
 ' speak with fluency, and the lame to walk
 ' with freedom and agility. In short, the
 ' diseased of all kinds are healed by a word
 ' of his mouth, or a touch of his hand ; whe-
 ' ther absent or present, if he commands it,
 ' the cure is immediately effected. Shall I
 ' mention his power over the Infernal Spirits ?
 ' that is universally known ; and what is more
 ' astonishing, he has restored the dead to life
 ' at several times ; you have heard of the
 ' daughter of Jairus, the widows son of Nain,

' and now upon the testimony of witnesses,
 ' by no means prejudiced in his favour, I can
 ' affirm, that no later than yesterday, he has
 ' raised to life a man of Bethany, who had
 ' been dead five days, and lay consuming in
 ' the grave. Remote ages, and distant coun-
 ' tries, may, if they are inclined, either doubt
 ' or deny the truth of these extraordinary facts;
 ' but it is impossible for us to question what
 ' we find daily supported by irresistible evi-
 ' dence. We may indeed dispute the power
 ' by which they are done, and in this case we
 ' can only judge from the effects produced;
 ' if these are good, the power is unquestion-
 ' ably from God; but if they are bad, Satan
 ' must be the principal instrument. At first
 ' appearance we are induced to believe, that
 ' to heal the sick, to cast out the devils, and
 ' raise the dead must certainly proceed from
 ' divine power. But let us consider their
 ' remote consequences, and perhaps we
 ' shall observe greater difficulties than all
 ' the good effects they have produced. We
 ' cannot ascertain what will happen, but we
 ' may form an idea of what is probable, and
 ' if possible prevent future evils. What is
 ' marvellous and surprising, particularly to
 ' the multitude, generally engrosses the whole

‘ attention; it so confounds and astonishes
 ‘ the mind, that it allows no time for serious
 ‘ investigation, but commands their assent
 ‘ before reason is permitted to interfere; thus
 ‘ we behold the nation already biassed by his
 ‘ wonderful works, and the Son of Joseph
 ‘ improperly received for the mighty heir of
 ‘ David’s throne. When the promised Mes-
 ‘ siah appears in our land, we are assured by
 ‘ the Prophets, “ that he shall be higher than
 ‘ the kings of the earth, that his dominion
 ‘ shall be from sea to sea, and from the river
 ‘ to the ends of the earth; they that dwell in
 ‘ the wilderness shall bow before him, and
 ‘ his enemies shall lick the dust; the kings
 ‘ of Tarshish and the Isles shall bring pre-
 ‘ sents, the kings of Sheba and Seba shall
 ‘ offer gifts; yea all things shall fall down
 ‘ before him, and all nations shall serve him.”
 ‘ Who can with any degree of sense believe,
 ‘ that the son of a carpenter is the mighty
 ‘ prince here described? He has neither inte-
 ‘ rest, authority, nor birth to recommend
 ‘ him, How then can he have any pretensions
 ‘ to be a king? by no other means, than low
 ‘ deceit and fierce rebellion stirred up by the
 ‘ infatuated mob. How shall we act in
 ‘ such a dilemma? Either we must oppose

' the contemptuous herd, or we must patient-
 ' ly acquiesce in their election; if we adopt
 ' the first, a civil war is the consequence,
 ' the field of battle strewed with human bo-
 ' dies must decide the day, and a multipli-
 ' city of distresses may plunge us into the
 ' grave. Suppose we submit to this pretend-
 ' ed Messiah, either from necessity or choice,
 ' with the idea of recovering our ancient pri-
 ' vileges, then what dreadful and innumer-
 ' able calamities may befall us? A foreign
 ' Power our land invades, victorious Rome
 ' will thunder at our gates; our native land
 ' will become a scene of desolation; horror
 ' and death may ride triumphant in every
 ' corner; our houses, our villages, our cities,
 ' and even this sacred temple may perish in
 ' devouring flames, while our dearest rela-
 ' tions and friends are led into captivity
 ' among the heathen. This may come, and
 ' and Rome may do what Babylon did before.
 ' Let us take warning from an ancient tradi-
 ' tion, which says, that Armolus will come
 ' in the latter days and destroy our nation.
 ' The imperial city was founded by Romulus,
 ' who called it after his own name; this I am
 ' induced to think is the same with Armolus
 ' of whom we stand in so much danger

' Thus have I pointed out the dreadful conse-
 ' quences which in all probability may arise
 ' from our suffering Jesus of Nazareth to
 ' work his miracles, deceive the multitude,
 ' and lead them wherever he pleases: Exa-
 ' mine whether these apprehensions are well
 ' founded, and by what means the danger may
 ' be averted.

Annas having thus spoken, Alexander
 rose. The fame of Jesus had raised his envy,
 and filled his heart with malice. Prejudice
 had contracted his mind, which, with an im-
 petuous temper, and an imperious spirit, ren-
 dered him bitter and censorious to the last
 degree. With an inflamed look, and discord-
 ant tone of voice he thus began.

' Men, Brethren, and Fathers, how often
 ' shall we be compelled to resume this detest-
 ' ed subject; that a man of the meanest rank,
 ' the son of a base mechanic, forever doomed
 ' to servile toil, like the false dissembling
 ' Gibeonites, condemned to hew wood, who
 ' themselves ought to have been hewn to
 ' death; that such a man should daringly
 ' assume the name of God's anointed, and
 ' every day alarm us with the apprehension of

' public danger. I never can speak, nor
 ' think of him without abhorrence. It is
 ' true, he is admired by the populace, but
 ' who are they? the ignorant, the base, the
 ' despicable refuse of the nation, men like
 ' himself. Have any of the Rulers, or the
 ' Pharisees believed? No, the meanest of the
 ' people are his followers; "they know not
 ' the law and are accursed." He draws the
 ' multitude after him by mysterious actions;
 ' this is no new thing, the marvellous always
 ' attract the mob; in this manner the subjects
 ' of Busiris were deceived by the false mi-
 ' racles of Jannes and Jambres; the soft, the
 ' insinuating smile of complacence, with
 ' gentle and persuasive words, easily engage
 ' their affections. By these solemn arts, he
 ' imposes on the crowd, and ensnares them,
 ' in the same manner as Absalom deceived
 ' the people, and shook the very foundation
 ' of his father's throne. The character of the
 ' Messiah is justly delineated in the writings
 ' of the ancient Prophets; we only have
 ' power to expound their meaning, for the
 ' ignorant are not competent, nor have they
 ' any authority to explain the Holy Scrip-
 ' tures. Who can submit to the son of Jo-
 ' seph, or choose a carpenter for their king?

' None but the base and sordid people, who
 ' are ignorant of true worth and real dignity.
 ' Shall this man, with his enormous axe, lay
 ' prostrate the majestic oak, the imperial tree,
 ' whose far expanding boughs, even now ex-
 ' tend to distant nations? Or shall he with
 ' his ponderous hammer beat kingdoms into
 ' dust? Or shall he who dwelt so long in ob-
 ' scurity, inexperienced in arms, unskilled
 ' in every manly art, shall he, I say, at length,
 ' ascend the rapid car, and ride triumphant
 ' o'er his vanquished foes? " Shall he exe-
 ' cute vengeance upon the heathen, and pu-
 ' nishment upon the people, binding their
 ' kings in chains, and their nobles with fet-
 ' ters of iron?" Let him once atchieve these
 ' deeds of heroism, then, and then only shall
 ' we bend to his imperious power. Until
 ' these ends are accomplished, all his preten-
 ' sions are vain.

' It cannot be denied that important points
 ' have been gained by him, the hearts of the
 ' people have been estranged, and we are
 ' rendered contemptible in their eyes; a dark
 ' eclipse lies on our ancient glory; we can
 ' no longer boast of that esteem, honour, and
 ' sacred veneration which formerly we enjoy-

ed; we are sunk in the splendour of his su-
 perior renown, like the brightest stars in
 sun's meridian blaze. Has substantial worth
 aggrandized his name, or has purest sanctity
 given elevation to his deeds? No, he has
 been guilty of base detraction, charged us
 unjustly with execrable crimes, and denoun-
 ced against us endless woes. These are his
 snares to entrap the weak, and lower us in
 their esteem; by these artifices the multi-
 tude are prejudiced against our authority,
 and the world become his followers. By an-
 cient right we are fixed in the seat of Moses;
 we are the Rulers of Israel, the only teach-
 ers of the chosen people, and should be
 treated with honour, respect, and profound
 submission; for so it is written, "Thou
 shalt not revile the Gods, nor speak ill of
 the rulers of thy people;" by what right
 then has he calumniated our names, and
 loaded us with reproach. What shall we
 think of him who pours contempt upon the
 traditions of the Elders, and condemns our
 religious worship as vain and insignificant?
 for these are his words, I am credibly inform-
 ed, "In vain do they worship God, teach-
 ing for doctrines the commandments of

‘ men, for ye have made the word of God of
 ‘ none effect by your traditions.” If he re-
 ‘ garded the God of our fathers, or the law of
 ‘ Moses, would he frequently and publicly
 ‘ prophane the holy Sabbath? Certainly not,
 ‘ but this he has done with confident assur-
 ‘ ance; by healing diseases, suffering men to
 ‘ carry their beds, and his own disciples to
 ‘ pluck the ears of corn upon that sacred day.
 ‘ What is yet more impious, he dares to par-
 ‘ don sin, which none but God himself can
 ‘ do. He vows vengeance against the cho-
 ‘ sen race, and expulsion from the promised
 ‘ land, though God has sworn to Abraham
 ‘ and his seed to be their God for ever. Have
 ‘ you not frequently heard him represented
 ‘ as “ a glutton, a wine-bibber, a friend of
 ‘ publicans and sinners,” these appear to be
 ‘ his favourite associates, these he prefers, as-
 ‘ serting that they shall enter the kingdom of
 ‘ heaven in preference to us, whom he de-
 ‘ scribes as the vilest hypocrites, the children
 ‘ of the devil, and the heirs of damnation.’

‘ This is the admired person we are called
 ‘ upon to receive as the long expected Mes-
 ‘ siah. The idea of such a man I abhor, and
 ‘ brand him with the epithet of a daring im-

' poster. He appeals to miracles, I am in-
 ' formed, as a proof of his divine commis-
 ' sion; but to me they are none; they
 ' are delusive arts, such as the sons of Ham
 ' could boast, when they turned rods into
 ' serpents, and waters into blood. There are
 ' false miracles as well as true, this is evi-
 ' dently inferred by Moses, when he says,
 " If there arise among you a Prophet, or a
 " dreamer of dreams, and giving thee a sign
 " or a wonder; and the sign or the wonder
 " come to pass whereof he spake unto thee,
 " saying, let us go after other Gods, which
 " thou hast not known, and let us serve
 " them. Thou shalt not hearken to the
 " words of that Prophet, or that dreamer of
 " dreams, for the Lord your God proveth
 " you, to know whether you love the Lord
 " your God with all your heart, and with all
 " your soul;" this is precisely our present
 ' case, and Moses has ordained how we are
 ' to act, in the following words, " and that
 ' Prophet, or dreamer of dreams, shall be put
 " to death, so shalt thou put away the evil
 " from the midst of thee." The wonders done
 ' by this man, are so many, and done in so
 ' public a manner, that it is impossible to

' question them. The point is, by what pow-
 ' er are they wrought? Many doubt, and for
 ' my own part I positively deny that they are
 ' wrought by the divine power: The reason I
 ' assign is this, we have often demanded of him
 ' a sign from heaven; but this he would ne-
 ' ver grant, telling us "that as Jonas was
 ' " three days and three nights in the whale's
 ' " belly, so shall the Son of Man be three
 ' " days and three nights in the heart of the
 ' " earth;" which was nothing to the purpose,
 ' for if his miracles are done by the power of
 ' God, he could with ease have given us a
 ' sign from heaven, as well as upon the earth
 ' You may recollect, that when Rezin of Sy-
 ' ria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah came
 ' with their confederate armies against this
 ' city, that the Prophet Isaiah said unto
 ' Ahaz, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy
 ' " God, ask it either in the depth, or in the
 ' " heighth above." The Prophet would have
 ' granted either, but this man positively re-
 ' fuses our request; the reason is apparent,
 ' because it is not in his power. We know that
 ' nothing is too difficult for the Lord, and
 ' therefore I conclude his miracles are wrought
 ' by Belzebub, or by the amazing charm of

* the tetragrammaton *, which by some means
 he has secretly obtained.

‘ This man beyond all doubt is an imposter;
 ‘ none surely could have a better opportunity
 ‘ of knowing him, than his own countrymen;
 ‘ these, I am told, were at one time so exas-
 ‘ perated with his conduct, that to avoid de-
 ‘ struction by being thrown over the rocks,
 ‘ he made a precipitate retreat. A Prophet
 ‘ sent from heaven will never, to aggrandize
 ‘ his fame, publish a notorious falshood; this
 ‘ without difficulty I can prove him guilty of,
 ‘ by witnesses who heard him affirm that he
 ‘ was elder than Abraham, “ Before Abraham
 ‘ “ was, I am,” said he. By this speech the
 ‘ fury of the populace was increased to so
 ‘ great a degree, that they threatned to stone
 ‘ him to death. This transport having sub-

* The word Jehovah, consisting of four Hebrew letters, a word which the Jews, from superstitious veneration, never pronounce. The Rabbis say that Moses, by virtue of the word Jehovah, engraved on his miraculous rod, performed all the prodigies spoken of in Scripture; and that Jesus Christ whilst he was in the Temple, having stolen this ineffable name, by virtue of the same, wrought all his miracles.

Vide Calmet’s Dictionary.

'sided, cowardice succeeded. I admit that
 ' an attempt against him may be attended with
 ' alarming consequences, on account of his
 ' interest having prodigiously increased; but
 ' the danger will daily augment; therefore
 ' should we through abject cowardice, and
 ' base timidity, permit him to proceed, the
 ' contagion will spread, and his faction be-
 ' come too formidable to suppress. The pow-
 ' er of his eloquence dwells upon his tongue,
 ' while the attentive crowd lose their reason
 ' in astonishment. Neither Greece nor Rome
 ' could ever produce a person so well adapted
 ' to mislead the people, and disseminate se-
 ' dition far and wide. You recollect how
 ' the officers executed our orders, when once
 ' sent to apprehend him; they went; and in
 ' a moment his soft persuasive tongue van-
 ' quished their hearts; they returned without
 ' fulfilling the object of their mission, and de-
 ' clared as an apology "that never man spake
 ' "like this man." Danger appears in view,
 ' enlivens our fear, and should awaken our
 ' resolution before it be too late. The pass-
 ' over draws nigh, who can tell but that may
 ' be the fatal day predestined for wild uproar
 ' and fierce rebellion? The nation will assem-
 ' ble at that period, and delusive arts will be

• practised upon that occasion. What if he
 • should demand the sovereign power? Will
 • not his followers support his claim? Un-
 • questionably they will. Shall we our autho-
 • rity quietly surrender, and give way to the
 • impetuous torrent of popular choice? or
 • sword in hand defend our rights? A melan-
 • choly alternative! Disgrace, nay death may
 • be the consequence. Why then should we
 • hesitate to preserve the public tranquillity?
 • Our interest, authority, lives, and every
 • thing that is dear and valuable in this world
 • imperiously demand justice of that imposter.
 • One of these two must happen; either he
 • must fall, or we must perish. Let us in-
 • stantly publish a decree, commanding eve-
 • ry man to declare where he may be found,
 • that he may be apprehended, tried, and
 • punished according to his crimes.'

During the foregoing speech, a variety of
 passions agitated the mind of Nicodemus; he
 was full of indignation at the bitter revilings
 of Alexander, vexed to hear an innocent and
 worthy man treated so contemptuously. He
 adored the conversation and character of
 Jesus; but was fearful of giving offence to
 his brethren by speaking too boldly and open-

ly; therefore with prudential care he expressed himself in the following manner :

‘ Men of Israel, and children of the stock
 ‘ of Abraham, it cannot be denied, that every
 ‘ means by which deception can be detected,
 ‘ or rebellion averted, demands our consider-
 ‘ ration, and merits the highest applause.
 ‘ Sedition comes from the lower regions, and
 ‘ should be driven back to its accursed habi-
 ‘ tation, to groan in chains and penal fire.
 ‘ The monster newly born is easily overcome,
 ‘ but when the enormous shape grows fierce
 ‘ and conscious of its own strength, then
 ‘ nations perish in its jaws, or groan beneath
 ‘ its feet. Had Theudas who fed the flames
 ‘ of rebellion, or Judas of Galilee executed
 ‘ their nefarious designs, we had this hour
 ‘ been numbered with the dead, or slaves to
 ‘ Tyrannical Ambition. They perished ac-
 ‘ cording to their crimes, and God grant
 ‘ that they may be the lot of those who at-
 ‘ tempt to overturn the approved constitution
 ‘ of their native country. The time is fast
 ‘ approaching, when the great Messiah will
 ‘ bless our land with liberty, peace, and uni-
 ‘ versal empire. Daniel’s seventy weeks have
 ‘ nearly finished their tedious round, the

' sceptre is almost fled from Judah, our
 ' branches are withered, and our roots decay
 ' under the cold damp shade of mighty Rome.
 ' The Prince of Peace must soon appear, and
 ' the good are in anxious expectation for the
 ' redemption of Israel; this may give rise to
 ' ambitious claims, a bold pretender may de-
 ' ceive the unwary, and destruction arise from
 ' the misapprehension of ancient prophecies.
 ' But while we avoid one extreme let us guard
 ' against another, that is groundless fear,
 ' jealousy and hatred. These have often
 ' kindled the horrors of war, and shed inno-
 ' cent blood. Bethlehem and all the coasts
 ' can testify, that about thirty years ago their
 ' harmless infants perished by the sword.
 ' Some imagined the Messiah was then born,
 ' and Herod seems to have been of that opi-
 ' nion, when through fear and jealousy of
 ' the infant king, he committed such wanton
 ' and unparalleled barbarity. Why should we
 ' fear any danger from Jesus and his follow-
 ' ers? I can perceive no reason for it; and
 ' am well convinced he manifests the sincerest
 ' regard for Moses and the Prophets, that he
 ' strictly enjoins honour and submission to our
 ' authority. Attend to his own words, and
 ' judge him with candour and impartiality.

“ The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’
 “ seat, whatever therefore they command
 “ you to do, observe and do it.” When the
 ‘ lepers are cleansed by him, he sends them
 ‘ directly to the Priests, and commands them
 ‘ to offer a sacrifice according to the law:
 ‘ Why should we apprehend danger from such
 ‘ a man? or suspect any treachery in him who
 ‘ commands his followers to obey us? Con-
 ‘ sidering he generously heals the diseased;
 ‘ casts out devils, and sometimes raises the
 ‘ dead, it is not surprising that he should be
 ‘ numerously attended; nor is it the igno-
 ‘ rant only that request his assistance. The
 ‘ Rulers of certain synagogues, some of our
 ‘ own nobility, and a very honourable centu-
 ‘ rion have applied to him for relief, and ob-
 ‘ tained it. There is one circumstance which
 ‘ induces me to believe, he can have no evil
 ‘ design against the government; the fact is
 ‘ well attested by many thousands who were
 ‘ eye witnesses. Having fed a multitude in
 ‘ the desert with a few loaves and small fishes,
 ‘ they were so astonished at the miracle, that
 ‘ they instantly concluded he was the Mes-
 ‘ siah, and unanimously offered to accept
 ‘ him for their king. Had he been ambitious,
 ‘ here was a fair opportunity; but he declined

‘ the dignity ; they intreated, nay, went about
 ‘ to compel him, but in vain, for he private-
 ‘ ly withdrew into a secret place, and left
 ‘ them peaceably to disperse. This may
 ‘ clearly give us full security that he has no in-
 ‘ tention to disturb the government, or usurp
 ‘ any national authority. Various are the
 ‘ conjectures concerning this wonderful man ;
 ‘ some imagine he is the Messiah, “ others
 ‘ suppose him to be Elias, or one of the an-
 ‘ cient Prophets returned to this world.”
 ‘ Some are induced to brand him as an im-
 ‘ poster, while Herod, in whose jurisdiction
 ‘ he principally resides, “ is of opinion that
 ‘ he is John the Baptist risen from the dead.”
 ‘ The Roman Governor has not noticed him ;
 ‘ which indicates, that he is under no appre-
 ‘ hension of danger. Amidst such a contra-
 ‘ riety of opinions, how can we judge with
 ‘ any certainty of his character ? doubtless he
 ‘ has friends as well as foes ; the former per-
 ‘ haps may magnify his merit and the latter
 ‘ depreciate his good name. What mode is
 ‘ most adviseable to adopt in this case ? To
 ‘ believe both is impossible ; to credit only
 ‘ one, leaves us in doubtful suspence, or un-
 ‘ der a gross mistake ; to condemn a man with-
 ‘ out hearing what he has to say in his de-

' fence, is unjust, and forbidden by the law.
 ' *Audi alteram partem* is a principle of strict
 ' justice and sound policy. It is my decided
 ' opinion that we should either take no notice
 ' of him, or suspend our judgment until an
 ' opportunity offers of enquiring into his pre-
 ' tensions by a solemn and personal investi-
 ' gation ; and if it appears he cannot produce
 ' proof of a divine mission, then let him be
 ' convicted and punished as an imposter.

Discontent was evidently apparent in each
 countenance, and rage sparkled in every eye.
 As soon as he had concluded, Joseph imme-
 diately rose ; a man who had gained a high
 reputation for his power and wealth, but more
 so for his virtue and piety. Fortitude was
 visible in his look, and solid reason dwelt
 upon his tongue. The inheritance of his an-
 cestors, situated on the fertile hill of Arima-
 thea, was the usual place of his residence.
 There the greater part of his time he passed
 in contemplation and retirement ; the sacred
 writings yielded him constant amusement.
 When in society, he was an accurate obser-
 ver of human conduct, when alone, he was
 pious and devout. The important actions and
 wonderful character of Jesus had frequently

been the subject of his theme and praise. No person of less dignity and consequence could have gained a patient hearing after what had been advanced by Nicodemus, as soon as he attempted to speak; the confused murmurings of the Chief Priests and Elders subsided, when thus he stated the undisguised sentiments of his generous heart.

‘ Ye Rulers of Israel, your attention I must
 ‘ request for a short time. It is now more
 ‘ than three years since Jesus of Nazareth ap-
 ‘ peared as a teacher of Galilee and Judca;
 ‘ his character is differently represented; but
 ‘ by this time surely his genuine one might
 ‘ have been accurately known. The whole
 ‘ nation has had an opportunity of being
 ‘ acquainted with his doctrine, for it was not
 ‘ delivered secretly, but in the most public
 ‘ manner, in every synagogue, nay, in the
 ‘ very temple itself. His miracles can give
 ‘ no serious offence to any person; has he
 ‘ not been eyes to the blind, and feet to the
 ‘ lame? Has he not opened the ears of the
 ‘ deaf, and caused the dumb to speak? Has
 ‘ he not delivered many from the power of
 ‘ malignant dæmons, and raised some from
 ‘ the habitations of the dead? These are facts

' indisputable, done daily, before a multitude
 ' of witnesses. Yet, after this, he is branded
 ' with the vile epithet of an imposter, and
 ' must account for his conduct before our
 ' tribunal. What shall we say in our own
 ' vindication? Have we not by the most cri-
 ' minal negligence suffered him to delude
 ' the people for a long time? how many op-
 ' portunitics have we had e'er now, to demand
 ' an account of his actions? He has been no
 ' stranger in Jerusalem, thousands have heard
 ' him in this most holy temple, and have ob-
 ' served with silent wonder and admiration
 ' the glory of his power. The fear of the mul-
 ' titude is an unmanly excuse "The fear
 ' of man bringeth a snare, but sanctify ye
 ' the Lord of hosts, and let him be your
 ' fear and your dread, for we judge not for
 ' men, but for the Lord, who is with us in
 ' the judgment," and therefore we ought to
 ' judge righteously. This can never be at-
 ' tained, unless we impartially receive the
 ' evidence on both sides.

' Much has been said in opposition to this
 ' just man, you have heard his accusers with
 ' patience. Equity demands your attention,
 ' while I offer in his behalf that which strikes

' me to be material for your consideration.
 ' Some, we are informed, imagine him to be
 ' an imposter; but what proof have we of
 ' this? Has he urg'd any doctrines incompati-
 ' ble with righteousness and truth, or con-
 ' trary to any of the divine attributes? If he
 ' has, let them be substantiated. Has he
 ' maintained any doctrine inconsistent with
 ' the divine law, or the perfection and felicity
 ' human nature? If he has, let it be fairly
 ' proved. On the contrary, has he not ex-
 ' pounded, recommended, and enforced the
 ' law and the prophets? "Think not that I
 ' am come to destroy the law or the pro-
 ' phets, said he, I am come not to de-
 ' stroy, but to fulfill. For, verily I say
 ' unto you till heaven and earth pass, one
 ' jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass
 ' from the law, till all be fulfilled." What
 ' more could any man say in support of the
 ' sacred writings? It is not the conduct of
 ' an imposter. If miracles are proofs of a di-
 ' vine mission, how can we deny him to be a
 ' Prophet? Neither Zoan's field, nor Edom's
 ' flood, nor the howlings of the wilderness,
 ' nor the streams of Jordan, none of these
 ' can boast of miracles so full of grace
 ' and mercy as those I have stated. In
 ' many of the former, our ancestors beheld

‘ the power, justice, and indignation of the
 ‘ Almighty. In the latter, we observe his
 ‘ tender pity and compassion, his kind affec-
 ‘ tion and good will to the miserable and dis-
 ‘ tressed.

‘ It is well known John the Baptist wrought
 ‘ no miracles, yet he was universally regarded
 ‘ as a Prophet; let us attend to his opinion
 ‘ of this man, when we sent Priests and Le-
 ‘ vites to Bethabara to enquire whether he
 ‘ was Elias or the Messiah, he answered he was
 ‘ neither; being sent only to prepare the ap-
 ‘ pearance of the Messiah, by preaching the
 ‘ doctrine of repentance, and remission of
 ‘ sins to all who waited for redemption in
 ‘ Israel. He told them that the Messiah was
 ‘ already come; but was unknown to the
 ‘ world. What is yet more extraordinary,
 ‘ upon the very day after, as he was walking
 ‘ with some of his disciples, he observed Jesus
 ‘ of Nazareth, and told them unequivocally
 ‘ he was the person. At another time, when
 ‘ baptizing at the streams of Ennon, I am
 ‘ informed by authority some of his disciples
 ‘ moved with envy, complained that Jesus
 ‘ was more successful in gaining proselytes
 ‘ than he. He replied, I am rejoiced to hear

' it, for I before informed you I was not the
 ' Messiah, he only whose glory you seem to
 ' envy, is the man; the number of his dis-
 ' ciples will increase daily; but mine shall
 ' be diminished. Since the death of their
 ' master, his disciples have followed this man.
 ' Whatever John said has been truly fulfilled.
 ' Therefore I conclude the characters of the
 ' two persons must either stand or fall to-
 ' gether. If John was a true Prophet, Jesus
 ' can be no impostor. If Jesus be a deceiv-
 ' er, John must have been involved in the
 ' same plot, which appears altogether improb-
 ' able. I am told they were strangers to each
 ' other, living at a distance. men of very dif-
 ' ferent tempers. The one extremely gentle
 ' and familiar; the other reserved, distant
 ' and austere.

' Many are prejudiced against Jesus for the
 ' meanness of his birth, and low estate in
 ' this world. But what is birth? a mere ac-
 ' cident, out of the power of every man.
 ' God gives us birth, but he gives it by whom
 ' he pleases; "he maketh rich, and he maketh
 ' poor*." How often has he hurried the

* 1 Sam. ii. 7.

' mighty from their splendid thrones, and
 ' advanced the obscure to the most important
 ' offices? Was not Moses once in the situation
 ' of an helpless orphan, exposed among the
 ' flags of the river Nile? And yet God raised
 ' him to be the leader of his people, and king
 ' of Jeshurun. David the son of Jesse was
 ' once a shepherd, musician, and armour
 ' bearer to Saul the son of Kish, until God
 ' exalted him to the throne of Israel. Amos
 ' was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son,
 ' he was merely a herdsman, and a gatherer
 ' of sycamore fruit, and yet the Lord took
 ' him as he followed the flock, and bade him
 ' Go prophecy unto my people Israel. A
 ' man's birth can neither add to, nor detract
 ' from his personal merit, "his life consisteth
 ' not in the abundance of the things which
 ' he possesseth*." I despise the son of a
 ' king if he is a bad man, I honour and es-
 ' teem the son of a carpenter if he be a good
 ' man, and a friend of his country. What
 ' though some of his neighbours should treat
 ' him with contempt? Is there any thing
 ' strange in that? Must we suppose them all
 ' to be competent judges of true merit and

* LUKE XII. 15.

' personal worth? Surely not. Fools of eve-
 ' ry kind, high or low, rich or poor, judge of
 ' men only from their outward appearance.
 ' this is a false standard, for there are many
 ' circumstances in human life which reduce
 ' the greatest to a level with the meanest.
 ' Neither wealth, nor power, nor worldly
 ' splendour can make us great in the sight of
 ' God; virtue only is estimable in his account.
 ' If we judge by this standard, who can be
 ' greater than he who instructs the ignorant,
 ' comforts the afflicted, reforms the vicious,
 ' heals the diseased, casts out devils, and
 ' raises the dead. His freedom of speech I
 ' find has caused much offence,—Is there
 ' any thing new in that? The prophets and
 ' men in every age have been odious for the
 ' same reason. We may every day observe
 ' the truth of Solomon's observation. " Re-
 ' prove not a scorner lest he hate thee, rebuke
 ' a wise man and he will love thee*." If we
 ' are conscious of these offences laid to our
 ' charge; why should we be offended? Let
 ' us reform, and his rebukes will cease. The
 ' same freedom he uses with all;—Is it not
 ' a proof of systematical integrity when he

* Prov. ix. 8.

' flatters no human being? Can he give
 ' a more positive assurance of his regard
 ' to God, and love to his country than
 ' by advancing the interest of religion, and
 ' the reformation of bad men at the expence
 ' of his own life? Was not this the work of
 ' all the prophets? who were generally de-
 ' spised, persecuted, and put to death on
 ' that very account.

' He has threatened the destruction of our
 ' city and nation; so did the ancient pro-
 ' phets, and you are aware by the Chaldean
 ' army their words were exactly accomplished.
 ' Whatever vengeance has been threatened
 ' against our land for impiety, appears to have
 ' a strong foundation in the prophecies of
 ' Daniel, " Seventy weeks are determined
 ' upon thy people, and upon thy holy city,
 ' to finish the transgression, and to make an
 ' end of sins, and to make reconciliation for
 ' iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righ-
 ' teousness, and to seal up the vision and
 ' and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy:
 ' And the people of the prince that shall
 ' come, shall destroy the city, and the sanc-
 ' tuary, and the end thereof shall be with
 ' a flood, and unto the end of the war, de-

“ solutions are determined*.” These seventy
 ‘ weeks are nearly concluded ; take heed,
 ‘ therefore, what ye do to this man, lest the
 ‘ evil you are anxious to avoid be in a tenfold
 ‘ degree insupportable.

‘ If we permit this man who assumes the
 ‘ character of the Messiah and king of the
 ‘ Jews to live, we are told the Roman ar-
 ‘ mies may invade our territories—these ap-
 ‘ prehensions are to me altogether without
 ‘ foundation. Beyond all doubt the Roman
 ‘ Governor will consult his own interest, as
 ‘ well as the public tranquility. Why should
 ‘ timidity seize us when he appears insensible
 ‘ of danger.

‘ He has been accused of publicly violat-
 ‘ ing the Sabbath ; but how does that appear ?
 ‘ He heals the diseased, and casts out devils
 ‘ upon that day ;—Is there any impiety in
 ‘ this ? Will any man be bold enough to an-
 ‘ swer what he advanced in his justification ?

* The seventy weeks in Daniel ix. 24. are meant
 of weeks of years, and make up four hundred and
 ninety years. This mode of reckoning years by
 days is not unusual in the sacred writings. Vide Gen.
 xxix. 27.—Ezek. iv. 4, 5.—Rev. xii. 6. xiii. 5.

“What man,” said he, “shall there be
 “among you, that shall have one sheep, and
 “if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will
 “he not lay hold on it and lift it out? How
 “much then is a man better than a sheep?
 “Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the
 “Sabbath days*.” “To do justice and
 “judgement is more acceptable to the Lord
 “than sacrifice‡.”

‘If the traditions of the Elders oppose the
 ‘divine law, why should we defend them, or
 ‘be dissatisfied when the contradiction is ex-
 ‘posed. The word of God seems to be the
 ‘only rule for our faith and practice. “To
 “the law and to the testimony, if they speak
 “not according to this word, it is because
 “there is no light in them‡.”

‘For presuming to pardon sin he is charged
 ‘with blasphemy. True it is, that none can
 ‘pardon sin but God: but if God has dele-
 ‘gated that authority and power to him, to
 ‘heal the afflicted, and raise the dead, may
 ‘not the same authority to pardon sin be de-
 ‘legated also. The one is as difficult as the

* Matt. xii. 12. † Prov. xxi. 3. ‡ Isa. viii. 20.

‘ other, and the one tends strongly to con-
 ‘ firm the other.

‘ The charge of gluttony, drunkenness,
 ‘ and a familiarity with publicans and sin-
 ‘ ners of which he has been accused, must
 ‘ fall when his apology is considered, “ They
 ‘ that be whole need not a physician, but
 ‘ they that are sick. For I am not come to
 ‘ call the righteous, but sinners to repent-
 ‘ ance*.” How can any person instruct and
 ‘ reform the vicious, without conversing with
 ‘ them? From the detestation of their vices,
 ‘ we may be induced to hate their persons,
 ‘ and avoid their conversation; but he
 ‘ that seeks after the degenerate, in order to
 ‘ reform and save them, must possess an un-
 ‘ common degree of goodness and condescen-
 ‘ sion, a man seldom to be found in the pre-
 ‘ sent age. Why should he be condemned
 ‘ for preferring repenting Publicans, to im-
 ‘ penitent Scribes and Pharisees, for God will
 ‘ do the same?

‘ There are false miracles as well as true, I
 ‘ admit, and Moses has clearly explained the

* Matt. ix. 12, 13.

* difference. The false Prophet says, "Let
 " us go after other Gods which thou hast
 " not known, and let us serve them; thou
 " shalt not hearken to the words of that pro-
 " phet*." Can this be applied to Jesus of
 ' Nazareth? Or where is the similitude be-
 ' tween the magicians of Egypt and him?
 ' Their miracles were wrought in confirma-
 ' tion of the grossest idolatry, and to main-
 ' tain the authority of a weak and tyrannical
 ' Prince; mischief they did, but could not
 ' remove it. By Moses and Aaron they were
 ' confounded, who in the name of the true
 ' God wrought their miracles, in confirma-
 ' tion of his divinity, and the reformation of
 ' the Egyptians from the most abominable
 ' idolatry. No miracles of an immoral or
 ' impious tendency ought to be regarded.
 ' Surely this is not the case with Jesus of Na-
 ' zareth. Has he ever proposed to withdraw
 * us from the worship of the true God? Has
 ' he promulged any doctrines contrary to rea-
 ' son, or incompatible with the perfections of
 ' the deity? Has he ever recommended any
 ' thing dishonourable to God, or injurious
 ' to men? Make that appear, and I will bold-

* Deut. xiii. 2, 3.

'ly brand him an imposter, and deserving
 ' an ignominious death. Upon all occasions,
 ' he recommends to the people, the worship
 ' of one God, even the God of Abraham,
 ' Isaac, and Jacob: None observes it with
 ' more scrupulous exactness than himself.
 ' In the name of God his miracles are wrought
 ' and to his power he ascribes them; they are
 ' performed in confirmation of the most pious
 ' and useful doctrines. Can these be deemed
 ' false miracles? if so, there never were any true.
 ' It surprises me these wonders of the divine
 ' grace should be attributed to the agency of
 ' the Devil, nothing can be more repugnant
 ' to the feelings and character of that malign-
 ' nant Spirit, or more subversive of his king-
 ' dom. Who can credit that Satan is friend-
 ' ly to us, that the apostate angels compas-
 ' sionate our misery, that division reigns in
 ' hell; and half their armies combat in our
 ' cause? Such inconsistencies no rational
 ' being can believe. Jesus of Nazareth has
 ' overcome the impious; they fly his pre-
 ' sence, and tremble at his rebuke.

' Shall we conclude he wanted power, be-
 ' cause he denied a sign from heaven? No,

' we know his power extends to the regions
 ' of the dead. Have ye not heard how in
 ' Cana of Galilee he turned water into wine?
 ' How thousands were satisfied with a small
 ' portion of food? How he rebuked the stormy
 ' winds, and tempestuous sea, and they obey-
 ' ed him? To demand of him a sign from
 ' Heaven perhaps was unreasonable, after so
 ' little attention was paid to his terrestrial ca-
 ' reer. What signs could we desire from hea-
 ' ven? Suppose the radiant sun should be
 ' turned into darkness, or the silver moon
 ' left in the nocturnal sky: If the tremendous
 ' thunder should roar along the heavens, and
 ' glaring meteors flash above our heads. If
 ' these should occur according to our desire,
 ' and in obedience to his command, our cu-
 ' riosity might be indulged, and our wonder
 ' excited: but would all objections be remov-
 ' ed? No, incredulity might persevere in its
 ' unreasonable demands, and impute these
 ' to the established laws of nature. If Satan
 ' has power to work miracles on earth, why
 ' not in the air also? We are more liable to be
 ' deceived by distant objects, than by those
 ' that are near; there can be no deceit where
 ' we have an opportunity of scrutinizing with
 ' familiarity, which is the case with the mi-

‘racles of Jesus, and the evidence is so irre-
 ‘sistible that no man can have effrontery
 ‘to deny them.

‘ As for the amazing charms of the tetra-
 ‘grammaton, to which the performance of
 ‘his mighty works by some are attributed, it
 ‘hardly needs an observation; for surely no
 ‘combination of sounds or letters can ever
 ‘work a miracle. When he refused a sign
 ‘from heaven, he gave us one sufficiently sa-
 ‘tisfactory, “For as Jonas was three days
 ‘and three nights in the whale’s belly, so
 ‘shall the Son of Man be three days and
 ‘three nights in the heart of the earth*.”
 ‘Time can only explain the meaning of these
 ‘words, as they point to some future event.
 ‘Appealing to the signs of the times, he
 ‘desired our impartial consideration. Da-
 ‘niel’s seventy weeks are nearly expired, for
 ‘this reason the coming of the Messiah can-
 ‘not be far distant. Thirty years ago, an
 ‘extraordinary sign appeared in the heavens,
 ‘a beaming star of uncommon magnitude
 ‘was observed in the aerial height; at that
 ‘time certain wise men from the east arrived

* Matt. xii. 40.

‘ in Jerusalem, conducted from their native
 ‘ land by its tardy movement through the
 ‘ sky, enquiring for him who was born to be
 ‘ King of the Jews. Strict examination was
 ‘ made into the place of his nativity; Bethle-
 ‘ hem was fixed upon as foretold by the Pro-
 ‘ phet. This is a fact well attested. I might
 ‘ also appeal to the testimony of certain men
 ‘ living near that city, who at the same time
 ‘ were surprised by a vision in the night when
 ‘ watching their flocks, “ Behold an angel
 ‘ appeared to them, saying, Fear not: for
 ‘ I bring unto you good tidings of great joy,
 ‘ which shall be unto all people; for unto
 ‘ you is born this day, in the city of David,
 ‘ a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*.” If
 ‘ any shall question the veracity of this fact,
 ‘ I will appeal to another which cannot be de-
 ‘ nied, and which all must remember with
 ‘ horror and indignation, I mean the slaugh-
 ‘ ter of all the children from two years old and
 ‘ under in that country. To account for an
 ‘ action so superlatively barbarous and inhu-
 ‘ man, in any way, than by admitting the
 ‘ truth of these extraordinary facts, the ap-
 ‘ pearance of the star, the declaration and

* Luke ii. 10, 11.

' enquiry of the wise men, the information
 ' given concerning the place of the Messiah's
 ' birth, by the Scribes and Pharisees is utter-
 ' ly impossible. These seem to have convin-
 ' ced Herod that the Messiah was then born,
 ' and dreading the loss of his power and au-
 ' thority, in order to prevent it he practised
 ' the most wanton cruelty ever heard of in
 ' any age. If the Messiah was then born,
 ' we have every reason to believe that the
 ' Divine Providence would not suffer him to
 ' perish in the common slaughter, for we are
 ' told. "that he shall abide for ever*."
 ' About twenty years ago a child appeared in
 ' this very temple, immediately after the pass-
 ' over; whose unbounded genius and under-
 ' standing astonished every one that heard
 ' his conversation with our learned Rabbis.
 ' What if this child should be the same that
 ' escaped the vengeance of Herod, the same
 ' who now teacheth the people, and worketh
 ' miracles? These were the signs of the times.
 ' John the Baptist bore witness of him, he
 ' was doubtless a prophet, and it is evident
 ' in all the country of Judea what extraordi-
 ' nary signs occurred to his father Zacharias;

* John xii. 34.

‘ now, in an instant he was struck dumb,
 ‘ and remained speechless, till the birth and
 ‘ circumcision of his son, when he immedi-
 ‘ ately foretold, saying, “ 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*.” These are
 ‘ some of the extraordinary signs performed
 ‘ by this man, though not, I am informed,
 ‘ yet forty years of age; the truth of them,
 ‘ as well as the amazing works latterly done
 ‘ by him, claim our serious deliberations.

‘ Upon a certain occasion he made use of
 ‘ these remarkable words, “ Before Abraham
 ‘ was I am †.” At first view, I grant they have
 ‘ the appearance of falshood: but is it to be
 ‘ supposed that a person of common pru-
 ‘ dence would attempt to deceive the world,
 ‘ by affirming that as true, which every one
 ‘ must know to be false? Far less is it to be
 ‘ supposed from one, who in every instance
 ‘ has discovered a direct enmity to every spe-
 ‘ cies of dissimulation. This induces me to
 ‘ think his words are misinterpreted. Cer-
 ‘ tain it is he was not born before Abraham,

* Luke i. 76.

† John viii. 58.

‘ and yet his words seem to imply that he ex-
 ‘ isted previous to Abraham: These are two
 ‘ different points; the one is manifestly false,
 ‘ the other may be true for any thing we
 ‘ know to the contrary. I do not pretend
 ‘ to understand his meaning; but I think
 ‘ there is no impossibility in what he says.
 ‘ Some imagine him to be Jeremias, or one of
 ‘ the ancient Prophets returned to this world;
 ‘ his age has never been thought incon-
 ‘ sistent with that supposition. If we sup-
 ‘ pose him to have been an angel, the same
 ‘ with Michael, whom the Prophet Daniel
 ‘ calls the first or chief of all the heavenly
 ‘ Princes, the great Prince which standeth
 ‘ for our people, or our Prince by way of
 ‘ distinction from all others; what if that
 ‘ Prince should be the angel of God’s presence,
 ‘ mentioned by Isaiah, the angel that saved
 ‘ our fathers from all their afflictions, the an-
 ‘ gel that appeared to Moses in the burning
 ‘ bush, the angel that wrestled with Jacob
 ‘ and blessed him, the angel that appeared
 ‘ to Abraham in the plains of Mamre, and
 ‘ that rained down brimstone and fire upon
 ‘ Sodom and Gomorrah from the Lord of
 ‘ Heaven. Let us imagine this person de-
 ‘ scending from the Heavens, and living in

a human body for the space of thirty years
 upon earth, might he not according to this
 supposition affirm with the greatest consist-
 ency “ Before Abraham was, I am.”

Be that as it may, the idea of offering vio-
 lence to a person whose power is so great,
 and whose conduct so exemplary, is too
 shocking to admit of the least countenance
 or encouragement. It is not the multitude
 I fear, his power far exceeds their united
 forces; he who heals the sick, can wound
 the whole; he who raised the dead can in-
 flict death. Already he has suffered many in-
 dignities, his meekness, patience, and for-
 bearing are truly unaccountable; who can
 tell how long they may continue? Recollect
 what the Prophet Elijah did to the two cap-
 tains of Ahazeah, and their companies, he
 called for fire from Heaven and consumed
 them. Beware lest the commandment of the
 Lord be in any degree violated, which or-
 daineth, “ Touch not mine anointed, and
 do my Prophets no harm*.”

At these words, murmur and confusion pre-
 vailed so much that none could bear his

* Psa. cv. 15.

voice, while every eye beheld him with scornful indignation.

Caiaphas the High Priest rose up, and immediately silence was restored. He had attended with malignant pleasure to the speeches of Annas and Alexander, because they corresponded with his own prejudiced inclinations: Nicodemus and Joseph having removed every objection, with so modest and becoming a freedom, he did not attempt to answer what they had so forcibly advanced; but having recourse to worldly policy, he spoke in the following manner.

‘ Ye Rulers of Israel, and heads of the
 ‘ house of Jacob, your attention I must request
 ‘ for a short time, while I lay before you the
 ‘ the true state of the case, as I apprehend
 ‘ much time has been taken up to little pur-
 ‘ pose. Many things have been advanced in
 ‘ opposition to this man, and not a little has
 ‘ been urged in his defence, not only the po-
 ‘ pulace but the Sanhedrim are divided in
 ‘ their opinions; and perhaps it is impossible
 ‘ that we should all exactly correspond in our
 ‘ ideas. The question is not, whether he be
 ‘ a true or a false Prophet, whether he be

' guilty or innocent, but whether the state
 ' be in danger, or not? This, I am of opi-
 ' nion, may be answered in the affirmative.
 ' You will observe, he is followed by great
 ' numbers wherever he goes. Whether he be
 ' in the villages, or in the cities, or in the
 ' wilderness, he is constantly attended by an
 ' immense retinue. Beyond all doubt this
 ' will give umbrage to the Romans, who are
 ' jealous of their power, and alarmed at the
 ' first appearance of a revolt. Their appre-
 ' hensions of danger will be followed by an
 ' army, to disperse these numerous assem-
 ' blies. What will be the consequence? Will
 ' they suddenly abandon his person, whom
 ' they imagine a great Prophet, and even
 ' the Messiah himself? Most assuredly not,
 ' the high opinion formed of him, together
 ' with the expectation of liberty, conquest
 ' and power under his protection, will ani-
 ' mate their courage, and induce them to re-
 ' sist. War will then be declared against our na-
 ' tion, when we are in no condition to defend
 ' ourselves, or recover our expiring liberty:
 ' These melancholy consequences will follow
 ' from suffering him to go free. The case is
 ' clear, either he or the whole nation must
 ' perish. It is more expedient that one man,

‘be he never so innocent, should fall for the
 ‘public security, than the whole nation
 ‘be ruined upon his account. I am of
 ‘opinion not a moment should be lost, and
 ‘for that purpose, let a decree be immedi-
 ‘ately proclaimed, commanding every man,
 ‘upon pain of our eternal displeasure, to
 ‘discover him, in order that he may be ap-
 ‘prehended.’

Nicodemus and Joseph boldly dissented
 from this decree, and many others secretly
 in their hearts: but the majority of the San-
 hedrim agreed with the Chief Priest, and con-
 firmed his sentence by the sanction of their
 authority.

No sooner was the decree published for ap-
 prehending Jesus, when fame with rapid
 wings, and a thousand tongues dispersed the
 news over the adjacent country. Various
 were the opinions upon this occasion; some
 were filled with indignation at a sentence so
 unjust and impious; some attached to the
 Scribes and Pharisees, applauded the decree,
 with the most intemperate zeal, and inde-
 cent enthusiasm; others seemed in a state
 of uncertainty, indulging a variety of con-

jectures as to the issue of such an extraordinary affair. When the news reached Bethany, which was in the evening, Jesus and his disciples retired from the dangerous scene to a city called Ephraim upon the confines of the wilderness. Being aware the time predicted for his death was not arrived, he withdrew into that secret place in order to avoid the rage of his implacable enemies. There his time was spent in familiar intercourse with his disciples, and in fervent devotion towards God. In this manner was he engaged until the Passover, when all his sufferings were to end in an ignominious death. Aware of this, he secreted himself no longer; and in conformity to his heavenly Father's will, he journeyed with his disciples to Jerusalem. As they drew near, he was warned of the sentence published by the Sanhedrim, and of the danger he exposed himself to by publicly appearing in the city upon that occasion. To which he replied, ' Let no difficulty of that sort terrify you, ' for though it behoves us to consult our own ' security consistent with the divine will, ' which hitherto I have done upon every occasion, yet we should never be so much ' overawed by timidity, as to doubt the pro-

' vidence of God, or fail in our obedience to
 ' him, let the difficulty be never so apparent.
 ' It remains for you only, to enquire what
 ' God commands to be done, in every situa-
 ' tion of life, and to discharge that with for-
 ' titude and integrity, never considering in
 ' the scale what may be the issue of the event;
 ' leaving that to Providence who directs
 ' all things for the best and most salu-
 ' tary purposes. By the law of Moses we
 ' ought cordially to commemorate the re-
 ' demption of Israel from the Land of Egypt
 ' and the house of Bondage; we may indeed
 ' be exposed to danger by doing so at this
 ' time, when the Chief Priests and Elders
 ' have resolved to apprehend and put me to
 ' death; and I am well convinced their inten-
 ' tions they will put into execution. Often
 ' have I acquainted you, and now inform
 ' you again, that every thing which the Pro-
 ' phets have written concerning me will
 ' shortly be fulfilled. At the Passover, the
 ' Jews will apprehend me; they will condemn,
 ' insult, and abuse me in the most provoking
 ' manner, deliver me into the custody of the
 ' Gentiles, who will scourge and crucify me
 ' as an imposter; yet after three days I shall
 ' rise again. I am not ignorant of my dan-

‘ger, nor am I unwilling to suffer in obedience to my father’s will.’

The disciples were much dejected and alarmed at these words, and though he expressed himself in the clearest manner, yet being incompatible with their confirmed prejudices, they could not comprehend his meaning. After a short pause spent in grief and perplexity, Peter said to him, ‘Lord, I am at a loss to understand your meaning, and hope the things you have stated will never come to pass, for they appear inconsistent with the ancient Prophets, and repugnant to our sanguine wishes. The evil inclination of your foes I do not doubt, but it becomes you to defeat their designs, or avoid their unbounded malice.’

At these words, Jesus viewed Peter, with a mixture of pity and indignation: ‘You imagine,’ said he, ‘you have given me friendly counsel; but you are much deceived, you have acted the part of an adversary, advising disobedience to the will of God, who by my death purposes to establish a kingdom of righteousness and truth. You appear not to have a proper conception of

‘ this matter; you are anxious for a worldly
 ‘ kingdom, and fondly conceive, that I shall
 ‘ have dominion over the Jews, and all other
 ‘ nations with the pomp and splendour of an
 ‘ earthly king. Neither my security nor the
 ‘ glory of God have you in view, but the gra-
 ‘ tification of your own ambitious inclinations.
 ‘ Those you must abandon, and look with
 ‘ anxiety for the literal accomplishment of
 ‘ my words.’

After this severe reprimand, they followed
 him in profound silence, with sorrow, terror,
 and disappointment contending in their breast,
 until they arrived in Bethany, at the house of
 Simon the Leper, who saluted them with the
 most joyful hospitality. During the time
 refreshment was preparing, Jesus conversed
 upon various topics, equally pleasing and in-
 structive: Lazarus together with his two sis-
 ters abode in the same house; finding a con-
 venient opportunity, he thought proper to
 notice to Jesus, that he had at divers times
 meditated upon the state of the dead, from
 which he had obtained such a miraculous de-
 liverance, and observing he could not recol-
 lect what passed during that time, he was
 induced to think that it was a state of total

insensibility, without thought, action, or enjoyment, and that the idea of re-entering that state, filled his imagination with perpetual melancholy.

Jesus answered, “ you ought not to conclude, that death is either a suspension, or extinction of thought and activity, because you have no recollection of what passed during that time, for if you ruminate upon your past life, you will have but an imperfect remembrance of the innumerable thoughts in which you have been actually engaged. To think and act is one thing, to recollect your thoughts and actions is another; the state of the dead differs from the living, and it is highly improper you should be conversant of what passed in that invisible world. The wisdom of God is manifestly apparent from what he reveals in this life, and you may conclude, that he is not less wise and good to men, in concealing many things from their present view; whatever is useful he has made abundantly clear; but whatever is useless he hath concealed from the eyes of the living; therefore cast away all useless enquiries concerning the state of departed souls,

' and rest assured, that death will not be the
 ' end of your existence, that there is another
 ' and a better world, where every one shall
 ' be happy or miserable, according to the
 ' deeds done in the body, whether good
 ' or evil.'—The conversation here ended,
 when they all partook of the supper pre-
 pared for their entertainment. Here was
 abundance without luxury, friendship with-
 out dissimulation, truth without detraction,
 temperance without austerity, and religion
 without hypocrisy; one only must be except-
 ed, for while Mary who attended and stood
 behind Jesus, listened with pleasing admira-
 tion to what he said, in a sudden transport
 of the purest love, and most grateful affec-
 tion, she poured a vial of precious essence
 upon his head and feet, and wiped them
 with her hair, which hung in graceful though
 unadorned ringlets down her shoulders.
 This act Judas eyed with a look of disappoint-
 ed avarice; and pausing a little, he said,
 ' This is certainly most unnecessary extrava-
 ' gance, for that ointment which is of great
 ' value might have been sold at a high price
 ' and given to the poor.' This was a vile
 subterfuge, for he regarded not the poor;
 but being a person of insatiable covetousness,

and purse-bearer to Jesus and his disciples, he was mortified because the ointment had not been sold, and the money placed in his hands, that he might as he had done before, convert it to his own infernal benefit. This his gracious master was not unacquainted with, and replied with great mildness and condescension, ‘ Reprove her not for what she has done, she merits applause, it is a token of her kind regard and grateful disposition, by honouring me before my death; which be assured is not far distant; for this is the last anointing I shall receive. This precious ointment she would willingly bestow upon my dead body, as a token of respect, and I cannot suppose you will condemn her for manifesting it upon that memorable occasion: As to the poor, for whom you seem so deeply concerned, you will always have them with you, and if you are so disposed can never want opportunities to relieve them; you ought not to murmur, for in a short time all expences upon my account will totally cease.’

Judas heard this rebuke with sullen silence, and the rest of the company with mournful surprise; it appeared wonderful that he could

speak in such positive terms concerning an event so dismal and unexpected, and with a mind so calm and serene. The time of rest approaching, they kneeled down, when he with fervent prayer, committed himself and his friends to the divine protection, after which they retired to repose.

The cheerful dawn having ushered in the day, they arose and performed their accustomed devotions. In a short time a multitude arrived from Jerusalem; these persons had gained information the evening preceeding that Jesus was in Bethany; excited by a strong desire of seeing him and Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead, they collected in great numbers, each enquiring of his acquaintance into the particulars of that extraordinary fact, and desirous of seeing two persons, of whom they had heard such wonderful reports. Every circumstance being attested by so many witnesses of indisputable veracity, they were fully sensible he was the long expected Messiah. But so great was the obstinacy of the Chief Priests and Pharisees, that observing so many "going to see Lazarus*," they determined to put

* John xii. 9.

him to death also, because numbers daily deserted their party, and believed on Jesus upon his account.

The multitude perceiving he was about to depart, with many others proceeded to attend the feast of unleavened bread. When in view of Bethpage, a village in Mount Olivet belonging to the Priests, and knowing that his sufferings were at hand, he determined no longer to conceal his real dignity, or avoid the malice of his enemies; therefore, resolving to enter the city, in meek and lowly majesty, as the Prophets had foretold, he commanded two of his disciples to lead the way, saying unto them, ‘Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her; loose them and bring them unto me: And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, the Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them*.’ Accordingly they departed, while the multitude impatiently waited the event. In a short time their surprise was increased, for precisely as he had foretold, they returned with the ass

* Matt. xxi. 2, 3.

and the colt, having found every circumstance to correspond according to his order. This tended so much the more to strengthen the idea they entertained of his being the Messiah. Some of them having spread their garments on the colt, he rode along in humble and peaceful majesty, as kings and righteous men had done in the days of ancient simplicity. No gaudy equipage, nor prancing steed did his train attend, no sounding clarion, nor armed body, no pomp, nor splendour of terrestrial pride, no vain procession, nor glittering parade did he assume, like empty mortals fond of being viewed, admired, and feared by gazing multitudes. Tho' divinely great, with modest dignity he shaped his course, while thousands pouring from the city met him on the way. In testimony of their homage, some spread their garments on the road as he passed, while others strewed branches of palm-trees before him, an usual circumstance on the triumphant entrance of a mighty prince at a solemn festival; the multitude both behind and before exclaiming with enthusiastic admiration, 'Hosanna: 'Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh 'in the name of the Lord*:' The joyful sound

* John xii. 13.

re-echoed from the hills, and songs melodious pierced the distant skies. Some of the Pharisees moved with envy, and offended at the homage paid to Jesus by the multitude, and dreading the loss of their authority, intreated him that he would rebuke his disciples, and not permit them to make such an indecent noise. Jesus replied, ‘ By no means, it is meet that some should be permitted to set forth the praises of God with joyful hearts, since you who ought to have been most forward, through envy and malice refuse to do it; truly if these should desist, God would even work a miracle to raise up others to glorify his name, rather than admit of silence upon so solemn an occasion.’ Approaching Mount Olivet, where they had a view of the city, he stopt for a short time; the multitude eyed him with anxious expectation, as he earnestly looked upon Jerusalem; he mourned, the tears began to flow; at length he raised his voice and exclaimed,

‘ O city of the living God! once pure, O sacred Salem! once thy Lord’s delight, but now detested for thy impieties; O that thou hadst been so wise to have reflected in the last extremity, on the tender invitations of

' Divine mercy ! Now alas ! it is too late ;
 ' thy days are nearly finished, thy sun
 ' declines, and soon will set in blood ; the
 ' time I know full well, the awful time ap-
 ' proaches fast, when lo, thy foes shall come
 ' in hostile arms, the Roman soldiers shall
 ' surround thy walls ; I see their trenches
 ' formed about thee, and hemmed on every
 ' side ; on all thy bulwarks their battering en-
 ' gines play ; death rides triumphant through
 ' thy streets, and in thy temple stands his
 ' bloody throne ; no flight without, no secu-
 ' rity found within, no house nor walls to
 ' shield thee from thy foe : Thy doom is pas-
 ' sed, the sentence issued forth, is sealed in
 ' heaven, and soon shall be fulfilled.' In this
 manner did he bewail the desolation of his
 cruel foes.

As he passed through the valley of Jeho-
 shaphat, in mournful silence the multitude
 attended him, reflecting upon his awful pre-
 diction. At length he crossed the Brook
 Cedron, and passing by the fountain of Shilo,
 he entered the city with all his retinue.
 The inhabitants were alarmed at a train so
 numerous ; but when they found it was Je-
 sus of Nazareth the Prophet of Galilee, they

received him with extreme joy. The Chief Priests and Pharisees moved with envy and rage, reasoned thus one with another; ‘Do not you perceive the approaching danger? The more he is opposed, the more his popularity increases; other measures must be adopted, and speedily executed; in a short time we shall be entirely abandoned, and left destitute of resistance.’

Immediately upon entering the city, he went directly to the Temple to instruct the people: when he had entered the Court of the Gentiles, which was appropriated for proselytes to worship in, he found it most horridly perverted from its original intention, and turned into a public market where avarice practised her various arts of deceit. There were stalls in abundance for exchanging of money, persons who sold cattle, doves, and the like; when he beheld the profanation of that sacred place, fired with pious zeal, he overturned their tables and stalls, boldly expelling their irreligious owners, and informing them how intolerable it was to see the house of God which had been consecrated to the divine worship, converted into a market for the practice of covetousness and extortion.

A horrid dread seized the breasts of those guilty men, which, connected with a sense of his authority and their own infamy, made them fly without attempting the least opposition.

The temple being cleared, crowds collected around him from every quarter of the city, taking with them the afflicted of every kind. He viewed their woes with the most tender sympathy and compassion; they implored his aid, and they obtained it. On a sudden their diseases were healed, and not one afflicted person was found in the whole assembly. Never was astonishment greater, never was gratitude more sincere, their hearts were filled with ecstasy, and their tongues uttered forth his praise, the voice of acclamation re-echoed through every court, “Hosanna to the Son of David.*” The Chief Priests highly incensed, exclaimed, ‘Our last decree is fruitless, for none dare apprehend him; let us endeavour if possible to provoke him to say something offensive to the people, or extort some declaration from his own

* Matt. xxi. 15.

‘ mouth that will enrage the Governor, and
 ‘ expose him to the punishment of the Ro-
 ‘ man laws.’ While the Chief Priests were
 plotting his downfall, not merely the multi-
 tude of the Jews, but even inquisitive stran-
 gers were anxious to hear and be acquainted
 with him, especially some Greeks who came
 from the borders of Galilee to worship in the
 outer court of the temple; these being ac-
 quainted with Philip one of the twelve, who
 lived in Bethsaida in the country of Galilee,
 earnestly entreated that they might be admit-
 ted into his presence, and have an opportu-
 nity to converse with him. Philip informing
 Andrew of it, they told their master; who
 answered, ‘ If the Greeks are desirous of see-
 ‘ ing me and hearing my instructions, they
 ‘ are welcome, for the time draws near when
 ‘ my power and glory shall be manifested not
 ‘ merely to the Jews, but to all the nations
 ‘ of the world; this is but a small token of
 ‘ the success which my doctrine shall obtain
 ‘ in the world after my death. “ Verily,
 “ verily, I say unto you, except a corn of
 “ wheat fall into the ground and die, it abid-
 “ eth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth
 “ much fruit*.” In like manner my future

* John xii. 24.

' glory, and the number of my disciples,
 ' shall be infinitely greater after my death
 ' than at present. As my kingdom lies be-
 ' yond the grave, and as it is necessary that
 ' I obtain the possession of it by a variety of
 ' sufferings; so must you; for rest assured,
 ' if any man, through an immoderate thirst
 ' after this world, shall preserve his life by
 ' avoiding persecution, or forsaking my reli-
 ' gion; that man shall loose everlasting life
 ' in the world to come. But he who is desir-
 ' ous to forfeit every thing that is dear in
 ' this world for the sake of virtue and religion,
 ' shall in the next receive eternal glory and
 ' honour. If therefore any person is induced
 ' to become my disciple, he must tread in my
 ' steps and be prepared to suffer the worst for
 ' my sake and a good conscience. The dread
 ' of these things will doubtless fill your breasts
 ' with horror; nor is it strange, I feel the
 ' awful prospect fills my soul with sorrow;
 ' here nature shrinks, O God, in that dread-
 ' ful hour support me!' Then raising his eyes
 to heaven, he exclaimed, 'O Father, to thy
 ' will I entirely resign myself; let all my suf-
 ' ferings magnify thy holy name.' Instantly
 an awful voice was heard from heaven, pro-
 nouncing these words, ' Hitherto have I re-

‘ received glory from all thy actions, and
‘ henceforth shall I receive glory from all thy
‘ sufferings.’ Many who heard the voice distinctly, thought an angel spoke to him; others who heard it imperfectly, imagined it was the sound of thunder in the sky. Surprise seized all the people, when Jesus said, ‘ The voice you have heard came from
‘ heaven, not upon my account, as though I
‘ stood in need of any assurance of my Fa-
‘ ther’s love and affection; No, it was merely
‘ for your sakes, that ye may have an indis-
‘ putable proof of the divinity of my mission,
‘ and that ye may be satisfied all my suffer-
‘ ings will end in the extraordinary manifes-
‘ tation of the divine glory. The time will soon
‘ arrive when the powers of darkness shall
‘ be stript of their dominion; Satan, the God
‘ of this world, who has so long deceived the
‘ nations by keeping them in ignorance, su-
‘ perstition, idolatry, and all manner of ini-
‘ quity, shall soon be divested of his power;
‘ for when I am raised from the earth, and
‘ depart this world, then all nations and peo-
‘ ple shall hear my doctrine, embrace my re-
‘ ligion, abandon their idolatry, and seek for
‘ salvation by me alone.’ At these words
some of the Jews replied, ‘ What do you

‘ mean by departing out of the world, for we
 ‘ are informed by the Prophets, that when
 ‘ the Messiah cometh, he shall abide for ever,
 ‘ and that his kingdom shall never pass
 ‘ away; if you are the Messiah, why do you
 ‘ talk of quitting the world? And if you are
 ‘ not the Messiah, why do you arrogate to
 ‘ yourself his title by calling yourself the Son
 ‘ of Man, as Daniel describes him?’ To this
 he replied, ‘ I have often acquainted you
 ‘ who I am, and have given you the most sa-
 ‘ tisfactory assurances of my divinity; but
 ‘ ye have not regarded them; take heed
 ‘ therefore, lest ye resist the truth, and de-
 ‘ spise the light which is offered to you; if
 ‘ ye do, in a short time ye will be left in
 ‘ darkness, be given up to your own corrupt
 ‘ affections, and permitted to wander in igno-
 ‘ rance, superstition, and incurable preju-
 ‘ dices. Ye affect to believe in God, when
 ‘ at the same time, ye obstinately reject
 ‘ my doctrines and miracles which evidently
 ‘ bear the stamp of Divine wisdom and Al-
 ‘ mighty power. I came from heaven to en-
 ‘ lighten the world, to remove the gross ig-
 ‘ norance, and to reform the abominable im-
 ‘ pieties that prevail in it; therefore if any
 ‘ man refuses my doctrine, or lives in opposi-

' tion to it, his present guilt and final con-
 ' demnation shall be increased to the last
 ' degree: Not that I will now pass sentence
 ' upon men, or punish them for their unpar-
 ' donable wickedness; no, that is not the in-
 ' tention of my present coming; I am sent
 ' to reclaim and save the world by every
 ' means of mildness, gentleness, and love,
 ' and to prepare them for everlasting bliss in
 ' the world to come. If these fail, then at
 ' my second appearance, which will be to
 ' judge the world in righteousness, they will
 ' be inexcusable; for the doctrine I now teach
 ' will testify against them, and greatly en-
 ' hance their final condemnation. This must
 ' be the case, observing the instructions I
 ' deliver are not of my own invention, but
 ' a revelation of the divine will, confirmed
 ' by miracles, which none but the Almighty
 ' power can produce.

Having thus spoken, he withdrew from the
 temple, and returned with his disciples to
 Bethany, as the declining sun drew near the
 western hills. Various were the effects of
 his doctrine upon the minds of the Jews,
 the unbiassed part of the people admired
 him, and were fully sensible that he was the

Messiah; some of the principal men, and chief rulers were induced to credit it: but the dread of banishment from the synagogue, prevented the candid declaration of their opinions; being unwilling to suffer the odious appellation of heretics and apostates, and wishing to enjoy the approbation of men, and a reputation in the world, in preference to that of God and a good conscience, they concluded it more plausible to conceal than to make an open disclosure of their sentiments. The Chief Priests and Pharisees were greatly incensed, and by any means determined to destroy him.

Early in the morning after a calm repose, he poured out his soul with fervency to the Almighty, and departed with his disciples for Jerusalem; as they journeyed, he perceived at some distance a fig tree, whose verdant leaves seemed to promise abundance of fruit; distressed with hunger he turned aside and found it barren; having searched to no purpose, at length he said, 'Thou barren tree, sad emblem of the Jewish nation, be thou likewise an emblem of their fate; henceforth let the power of vegetation cease, let all thy branches wither, and thy roots decay.'

Scarcely had he spoken when the leaves began to fade, and all its vigour died away.

Proceeding on his way, he went into the city and entered the temple, where crowds assembled to hear his instructions. Many Priests and Elders entered the court as he was addressing the people; awed by his presence, and the dread of the multitude, they listened some time very attentively; when one of them proceeded in the following manner.

‘ For a considerable time we have observed
 ‘ your conduct; it appears very unaccount-
 ‘ able; yesterday you entered the city with
 ‘ an immense retinue, usual for persons only
 ‘ of extraordinary dignity; you assumed the
 ‘ power of Governor of the place, by turning
 ‘ out the merchants and others employed in
 ‘ a trade both necessary and lawful; and now
 ‘ you teach openly as though you were ap-
 ‘ pointed by the Sanhedrim; pray, by whose
 ‘ authority do you thus so arrogantly act?’

To this most arrogant question, he replied,
 ‘ Suffer me to ask you a very simple one,
 ‘ which if you answer, I will instantly in-
 ‘ form you by whose authority I do these
 ‘ things: When John the Baptist publicly
 ‘ taught and baptized the people, did he act

‘ by the Divine Power, or was it only a
 ‘ scheme of his to deceive the multitude?’
 They retired to deliberate, and were greatly
 embarrassed; ‘ For,’ said they, ‘ if we admit
 ‘ the divinity of John the Baptist, then we
 ‘ condemn ourselves for not regarding the
 ‘ testimony he advanced concerning this
 ‘ man; if John was a true Prophet, Jesus
 ‘ must be one also: On the other hand, if we
 ‘ reject the divine means, and brand him as
 ‘ an imposter, we are in danger of being ston-
 ‘ ed by the multitude; it is preferable there-
 ‘ fore to pretend ignorance:’ Accordingly
 they returned for answer, ‘ that they could
 ‘ not tell by what power John preached and
 ‘ baptized the people.’ Then said Jesus,
 ‘ Neither will I tell you by what authority I
 ‘ do these things; for observing ye have re-
 ‘ jected the most positive testimony, certain-
 ‘ ly ye will not receive my individual affirma-
 ‘ tion. Those whom ye treat with the great-
 ‘ est contempt, even publicans and heathens,
 ‘ were fully satisfied John acted by divine au-
 ‘ thority; they received his instruction and
 ‘ repented of their sins: But ye who pretend
 ‘ enthusiastic zeal for religion, despised his
 ‘ doctrine, increasing your impiety, and with

‘ the most inveterate malice opposed the
 ‘ truth. Ye have trodden in the steps your
 ‘ fathers did before; God raised up wise men
 ‘ and prophets, to instruct and reform them,
 ‘ but they were persecuted in every age.
 ‘ Now he has sent his own son, ye also treat
 ‘ him contemptuously, and to compleat your
 ‘ enormities are seeking his destruction,
 ‘ bringing upon your heads the vengeance of
 ‘ heaven, and the tremendous curses denoun-
 ‘ ced in the law of Moses; for in a short time
 ‘ your nation shall be overthrown, and your
 ‘ city consumed with fire.’ At these words
 the principal Jews exclaimed, ‘ God forbid!’
 ‘ They assuredly will,’ said he, ‘ for so it is
 ‘ written, “ the stone which the builders re-
 ‘ jected, the same is become the head of the
 ‘ corner*,” that is, the Messiah, whom the
 ‘ Jews rejected, shall unite into the church
 ‘ the Gentiles, even as the principal corner
 ‘ stone unites and supports the two sides of a
 ‘ building. Then shall the chosen seed of
 ‘ Israel be cast off from their impieties, and
 ‘ the Gentile nations become servants of the
 ‘ living God.’

* Matt. xxi. 42.

The Chief Priests and the Pharisees were so inflamed at these words, but for the terror of the multitude, they would have instantly put him to death. Perceiving the danger of such an attempt, they retired and communed one with another how they might compass their end. Many of the Pharisees and Herodians entered into a plot, in order to expose him to the indignation of the multitude, or the punishment of the Roman law, and with an air of esteem they addressed him in the following manner:

‘ Sir, we are truly sensible you are a teacher
 ‘ of the divine law, you expound it accurate-
 ‘ ly, and we are induced to think, upon eve-
 ‘ ry occasion you deliver your sentiments dis-
 ‘ interestedly, without regarding persons, fear,
 ‘ or affection; will you therefore solve a dif-
 ‘ ficulty, which appears to us of importance.
 ‘ Is it lawful for the Jews who are the pecu-
 ‘ liar people of God, and under his immediate
 ‘ jurisdiction, to pay tribute to Cæsar and
 ‘ bend to the authority of the Romans, or
 ‘ not?’—Here they expected to have their end
 answered either way: for had he replied in
 the affirmative, the people who detested the
 Roman Government would have considered

him as an enemy to their religion and liberties; had he answered in the negative, then the Herodians, who were strongly attached to the interest of Cæsar, would have accused him of sedition, and exposed him to the fury of the Romans. This he knew, and therefore replied, ‘Why do ye attempt to involve me in a snare? Your gross dissimulation, and mischievous designs I am aware of; nevertheless, shew me the tribute money.’ This being done, he looked upon it and said, ‘Whose image and superscription is this?’ they answered ‘Cæsar’s.’ ‘Well then,’ said he, ‘render him what you admit to be his due, and submit to his authority consistently with the laws of God, and the practise of religion.’ The reply mortified and vexed them most exceedingly.

After their departure, a number of Sadducees, persons of wealth and power, began to dispute upon the doctrine of a future state, which they positively denied. ‘Sir, said one, you must admit that every opinion in religion which is attended with consequences manifestly false and absurd ought to be rejected; this is the case with some of your doctrines; especially concerning the

‘ resurrection or future state. Let us suppose
 ‘ a woman to have been seven times a widow,
 ‘ married to seven brothers, as the law allows
 ‘ in a certain case, when the woman dies and
 ‘ enters into a future state, pray inform us
 ‘ which of the seven brothers shall claim her
 ‘ as his wife; they have all an equal right,
 ‘ and yet cannot all have her; this must
 ‘ cause great contention in that imaginary
 ‘ state of which you talk so frequently: Why
 ‘ do you teach a doctrine so fraught with ab-
 ‘ surdity?’

To this he replied, ‘ Your argument has its
 ‘ foundation in gross ignorance, you falsely
 ‘ suppose a future state to be in every respect
 ‘ like the present, but you are deceived.
 ‘ You cannot but observe what havock is
 ‘ made in this world every day by death, and
 ‘ was it not for marriage the earth would soon
 ‘ be depopulated, and reduced to a lonely
 ‘ waste; but in the next world there are no
 ‘ diseases, pains, nor any more death, for
 ‘ they who shall be deemed worthy to obtain
 ‘ that world, shall be freed from the incon-
 ‘ veniencies of this mortal life; there shall be
 ‘ no marrying, for there will be no mortality,
 ‘ nor succession of generations: but like the

‘ Angels of God, they shall live in the posses-
 ‘ sion of consummate glory, and never fad-
 ‘ ing happiness. You must be very ignorant
 ‘ of the Divine Power, if you deny the possi-
 ‘ bility of such a state, and you must be no
 ‘ less ignorant of the Holy Scriptures if you
 ‘ reject its reality ; many passages are clear,
 ‘ and if you consider what God said to Moses
 ‘ at the burning bush, you will find a convinc-
 ‘ ing proof of my doctrine ; “ I am the God
 ‘ of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the
 ‘ God of Jacob* ;” this was several hundred
 ‘ years after their death ; the relation was not
 ‘ dissolved, he was, and is still their God,
 ‘ which could not be, had they as you affirm,
 ‘ perished both soul and body ; he is God
 ‘ only of those who have a real existence
 ‘ and enjoy life, which is the case of those who
 ‘ depart this world ; death merely destroys the
 ‘ wonderful structure of the human body,
 ‘ while the soul which is of a different sub-
 ‘ stance, enters into another state, and at
 ‘ the resurrection will be clothed with a body
 ‘ glorious and immortal. Can you imagine
 ‘ that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob received
 ‘ the just reward of their piety and virtue in

* Exod. iii. 6.

‘ this world, where they lived as strangers and
 ‘ pilgrims? Assuredly not; a better state
 ‘ awaited them in the next. The desire of
 ‘ immortality is rooted in human nature, the
 ‘ wise and good in every age have lived and
 ‘ died in hopes of a better world; it is the
 ‘ foundation of virtue and religion; the com-
 ‘ fort of those who undergo death in the cause
 ‘ of righteousness; it unfolds all the intricacies
 ‘ in the present state of things, and recon-
 ‘ ciles men to the divine government. No-
 ‘ thing but conscious guilt, and the dread of
 ‘ future punishments, can induce men to
 ‘ take shelter in the horrors of annihilation;
 ‘ it infuses darkness and confusion through-
 ‘ out all the works of God; it is the parent of
 ‘ vice, the nurse of impiety, and the source
 ‘ of endless woe.’

These sentiments were delivered with such
 mildness and majesty, that the Sadducees
 were confounded, and withdrew instantly,
 leaving the astonished multitude to triumph
 in their defeat.

The Pharisees assembled upon hearing this,
 in order to dispute, and perplex him in his
 doctrine; accordingly one of them who was

a scribe, or an interpreter of the law, demanded which was the most important of all the divine commands? to which he replied, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all
 ' thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with
 "all thy might*." This is the first and
 ' most important, and ought to be observ-
 ' ed with the greatest fidelity; the next in
 ' dignity and excellence is, "Thou shalt
 " love thy neighbour as thyself†." This an-
 swer satisfied the Scribe, who replied, ' You
 ' have asserted what is certainly true, for
 ' obedience to God, and good will to all
 ' men, ought to be preferred above all posi-
 ' tive institutions.' "If these be your true
 ' sentiments,' said Jesus, ' you are not far
 ' from being one of my disciples, and if you
 ' persevere accordingly, you will be a true
 ' member of the church of God upon earth,
 ' and at last shall be admitted into his ever-
 ' lasting kingdom. Since I have unequivocally
 ' answered all your questions, suffer me
 ' to put one to you. Can you inform me of
 ' what family you expect the Messiah will be
 ' born?' To this he answered, ' He must be
 ' the Son of David.' ' Well then,' said he,

* Deut. vi. 5.

† Lev. xix. 18.

‘ how will you reconcile that with what is
 ‘ said in the Psalms, where David by the spi-
 ‘ rit of inspiration speaketh in this manner,
 ‘ The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at
 ‘ my right hand until I make thine enemies
 ‘ my footstool’.* This you admit to be spo-
 ‘ ken of the Messiah ; now, therefore, if Da-
 ‘ vid thus called the Messiah his Lord, How
 ‘ can he be also his son? Can the same per-
 ‘ son be his superior and inferior? The pha-
 ‘ risees being ignorant of the Messiah’s real
 character could give no answer to the ques-
 tion ; and finding themselves infinitely infe-
 rior to him, in point of understanding,
 quickness of apprehension, acuteness of ex-
 pression, and force of reasoning, they retired
 mortified at their disappointment.

As the evening drew nigh, he quitted the
 city to avoid the secret machinations of his foes,
 and returned to Bethany, where he remained
 that night. On the morrow he repaired to Je-
 salem ; passing along, his disciples were asto-
 nished to observe the fig-tree withered and
 dried up by the roots. He said ‘ Do you con-
 ‘ ceive this an extraordinary thing? If you firm-
 ‘ ly believe and trust in the power of God, be

‘ assured you shall be able to perform a great-
 ‘ er miracle than this ; if it were necessary
 ‘ to remove the mountains and cast them into
 ‘ the sea, in order to confirm your doctrine,
 ‘ God would immediately do it. For what-
 ‘ ever you shall ask, in order to confirm your
 ‘ doctrine and ministry, with assured faith
 ‘ and confidence in the divine power, he will
 ‘ certainly grant; but beware lest you implore
 ‘ the divine assistance in any nefarious under-
 ‘ taking.’ Having entered the city, he went
 to the temple, where he began to instruct
 his disciples in the presence of a vast con-
 course of persons. ‘ Guard against the scribes
 ‘ and pharisees,’ said he, ‘ for they are har-
 ‘ dened and incorrigible, I have experienced
 ‘ this from many trials; they have often been
 ‘ silenced, but never convinced ; at least
 ‘ they have never had the candour to own it.
 ‘ Superciliousness and hypocrisy are their
 ‘ leading features ; and to establish a reputa-
 ‘ tion they are ill deserving of is the main
 ‘ point they have in view. Above all things
 ‘ strive to obtain the approbation of God.
 ‘ Never impose authority over the consciences
 ‘ of other men, nor submit to the imperious
 ‘ dictates of those who are disposed to tyrann-
 ‘ ize over your faith. Recollect you have no

, master upon earth excepting me, to whom
 ‘ alone ye must account for your conduct in
 ‘ matters of religion. Guard against ambi-
 ‘ tion, nor aim at worldly dignity ; for pride
 ‘ is always the forerunner of contempt, and
 ‘ humility is sure to be attended with honor.
 ‘ Woe unto the scribes and pharisees, for they
 ‘ will neither themselves nor suffer others to
 ‘ enter into the kingdom of heaven. They
 ‘ are cruel and rapacious, rigorous and tyran-
 ‘ nical, especially to the widow and fatherless
 ‘ who are incapable of resisting their imposi-
 ‘ tions ; and what tends to aggravate their
 ‘ guilt, is their injustice, covetousness and
 ‘ oppression are disguised under a pretence of
 ‘ uncommon sanctity and devotion. An ex-
 ‘ traordinary enthusiasm for their own party
 ‘ has annihilated every consideration for
 ‘ others, whom they treat most contemptu-
 ‘ ously. Their strength is exhausted in making
 ‘ proselytes to their opinions, without regard-
 ‘ ing whether the convert be virtuous or vici-
 ‘ ous. Their religion is composed of ceremo-
 ‘ nies, and their lives are stained with the
 ‘ blackest enormities. None pretend a great-
 ‘ er veneration for the ancient prophets, at
 ‘ the same time they are urged by a spirit of
 ‘ persecution, and tread in the paths of their

' incorrigible ancestors. For these offences
 ' shall the vengeance of heaven be directed
 ' against this generation. O Jerusalem how
 ' horrid is thy guilt? How often hast thou
 ' persecuted the prophets, and shed the blood
 ' of those who sought thy recovery. How
 ' often would I have collected thy children
 ' with the most tender affection, even as a
 ' hen gathereth her brood under the protec-
 ' tion of her wings; alas! ye despised me.
 ' The anxious solicitations of Divine Mercy
 ' have been repeated in every age, but in
 ' vain, for thou hast rejected them all with
 ' with the most consummate impiety. The
 ' day of mercy is near at an end, this bloody
 ' city shall become a ruin, and this magnifi-
 ' cent temple be consumed in the flames; the
 ' time approaches when ye shall be forced to
 ' acknowledge me the true Messiah, and the
 ' Son of God.'

At these words he departed, leaving the
 multitude exceedingly moved by a variety
 of passions. Some who were partial to the
 Pharisees, were roused with indignation at
 the freedom with which he rebuked their
 crimes; others applauded his resolution, and
 approved of what he said, while many were

moved with terror at his awful predictions, or overwhelmed with grief at his last farewell; for he never after appeared as a teacher; conversing only in private with his disciples, to whom he expressed himself in the most familiar manner. Withdrawing from the temple, one of them meditating upon his last words to the people, intreated that he would behold the beauty of the edifice, and observing at the same time what a pity it would be to destroy such a wonderful structure.

He replied, ‘ Do you admire these things, and view them with pity? Be assured, that when God is banished from men’s hearts, he considers not their most stately temples, and therefore I repeat, that within a few years this building shall be entirely destroyed, and not one stone left upon another, that shall not be thrown down.’ Their sorrow was increased at this reply, and they followed him in mournful silence until they came to Mount Olivet, where after much fatigue he sat down to rest. While these awful impressions were seated in their hearts, Simon Peter moved by a curiosity natural to the human mind, addressed his master in the following words, ‘ Lord, you have often fore-

‘ told the destruction of this city, and the desolation of Judea, we conclude at that time your kingdom will be established, and your enemies put under your feet.’

Jesus replied, ‘ Beware least any person deceive you with false ideas of my kingdom; imposters will arise each pretending to be the Messiah, sent with a divine commission, to extricate the Jews from the Roman power, and to establish an earthly kingdom in Judea. Many who have rejected me, will follow the rebellious standards of these impious men; confusion and civil wars will be the consequence. The Jews shall be divided even at the time when they are attacked by their common enemy the Romans: Pestilence and famine shall invade the city, fury and death shall run through every corner, fearful visions shall appear in the heavens, and horrible omens of desolation be seen on earth. Be not afraid, neither permit your integrity, to be moved in the midst of these disasters: for the Jews will revile and persecute you for my name sake; they will take you before their magistrates as criminals, and scourge you in their synagogues as vile apostates &

' They will confine you in their prisons; put
 ' some of you to death, and upon others ex-
 ' ercise the most wanton cruelty. Be not
 ' dismayed at the idea of these things, for
 ' with wisdom and fortitude I will inspire you,
 ' so that none of your opponents shall have
 ' power to cope with you. Yea, the more
 ' you are opposed, the more strongly shall
 ' your doctrines prevail, so much so that
 ' your voice shall go through all the earth,
 ' and your words to the end of the world.
 ' Persecution will attend you wherever you
 ' go, for ye shall be the hatred of all nations
 ' for my name's sake; nevertheless, rest as-
 ' sured, that not a hair of you shall perish in
 ' the destruction of Jerusalem. As to the
 ' signs which shall immediately precede; ob-
 ' serve, when ye behold the city besieged by
 ' the Roman army, which Daniel calls, "the
 ' abomination that maketh desolate*," the
 ' final destruction of the Jewish nation is at
 ' hand. Whoever is in the open country,
 ' let him instantly flee to the mountains; let
 ' no person tarry in expectation of saving his
 ' goods, but with all possible expedition
 ' escape as Lot did out of Sodom, without se

* Dan. xii. 11.

‘ much as looking behind him. For that day
‘ shall be a day of awful and sudden ven-
‘ geance, a day when all the judgments
‘ threatned by the ancient Prophets shall be
‘ executed upon this wicked and incorrigible
‘ nation. Woe unto them who are unable to
‘ escape on that day, for no kingdom under
‘ heaven ever suffered the dreadful calami-
‘ ties that await the Jewish nation; the
‘ greater part shall perish by famine and pes-
‘ tilence, by mutual slaughter and sedition
‘ among themselves, and by the sword of the
‘ victorious Romans, who shall carry the re-
‘ mainder into captivity, and scatter them
‘ throughout all lands. The city shall be
‘ razed to its foundations, and the land of
‘ promise remain in the possession of the
‘ Gentiles, until the Jews shall confess my
‘ name, submit to my authority, and joyfully
‘ receive me as the only hope of Israel.
‘ Thus I have informed you of the signs
‘ which shall precede the destruction of Jeru-
‘ salem, when their religion and government
‘ shall be totally dissolved. Then it shall
‘ appear manifest to the unprejudiced world,
‘ that I am the true Messiah, the king of
‘ Israel, and the Son of God with power:
‘ Then shall the gospel be preached through-

' out all nations, and mine elect be collected
 ' from the four corners of the earth. The
 ' time approaches, for there are some of this
 ' generation who shall live to see these things
 ' fulfilled.

' Desolation shall be an emblem of the
 ' last Judgment; the exact period when
 ' these shall come to pass is a profound se-
 ' cret, unknown to angels and men. Be
 ' therefore prepared, lest national destruc-
 ' tion, personal death, or the final judgment
 ' come upon you unexpectedly. After the
 ' revolution of certain ages, I shall return
 ' again to this world, not in the obscure po-
 ' verty of my present state, despised, and
 ' persecuted as ye now see, but in the glory
 ' of my Father, brighter than the sun, cloth-
 ' ed in the splendour of Divine majesty, in-
 ' numerable hosts of angels shall then mini-
 ' ster unto me, ten thousand times ten thou-
 ' sand shall stand before me. Then shall the
 ' awful trumpet sound, the tremendous voice
 ' of which shall awaken the dead, and rouse
 ' the inhabitants of this world; my servants
 ' shall then arise, arrayed in splendid robes
 ' of immortality, and those living in that day
 ' in a moment shall be changed, as some of
 ' you perceived me on the Mount, when Mo-

‘ses and Elias conversed with me. ‘Ten
‘thousand legions of angels shall then de-
‘scend, and collect all my saints from
‘every corner of the earth, as Elijah once
‘ascended in a chariot of fire, so shall they
‘ascend the clouds, and in radiant circles
‘stand around my throne: While the last
‘generation of wicked men, struck with
‘horror, shall seek for shelter in every dark
‘retreat; but no asylum shall they find, for
‘at my summons the impious dead of every
‘age, shall from the close confinement of the
‘grave, and from the bottom of the raging
‘deep arise; terror shall dwell on every coun-
‘tenance, and faltering tongues, and trem-
‘bling joints betray the inexpressible anguish
‘of their guilty hearts. Then shall ye dis-
‘tinguish the righteous and the impious,
‘them that feared God, and those that fear-
‘ed him not; then shall every deed be weigh-
‘ed in an equal balance, and the divine law
‘be the standard of final judgment; then
‘will I render to every one according to his
‘works, whether they be good or evil. No
‘sooner shall the dreadful sentence be passed,
‘than the dissolution of this world will speed-
‘ily approach; for at my word, the lurking
‘seeds of fire shall burst in flames from the
‘earth beneath; the boiling ocean shall

' ascend in vapour, and burning mountains
 ' melt into the plains; the lightnings flash
 ' from every cloud, and tremendous thunders
 ' roar along the heavens, the elements on fire
 ' shall melt with fervent heat, and every
 ' thing that lives and breathes expire. Then
 ' utter darkness shall involve that dreary,
 ' dismal world, where all the race of impious
 ' men and rebel angels, shall be doomed to
 ' weep and mourn their helpless fate for crimes
 ' and follies past, far, far excluded from the
 ' throne of God, banished for ever from that
 ' blissful world, where I and all my holy an-
 ' gels dwell in purest light, in perfect love,
 ' and never-ending joy, All this shall come
 ' to pass; therefore with the hope of such un-
 ' speakable felicity, support yourselves under
 ' all the mortifications of this mortal life.'

The evening approaching, he arose and
 went to Bethany, where he abode that night,
 and on the following day passed the time
 with his disciples, in acts of piety and prepa-
 ration for his approaching death. The even-
 ing drawing near, he sat down to supper,
 At this time he expressed the most endearing
 affection, and the greatest humility; during
 the time they were at supper, he rose from his

place, and throwing aside his upper garment, girt himself with a napkin, like a servant waiting at a feast; then pouring water into a bason; he began to wash their feet, and to wipe them, proceeding in order as they sat at table. Peter surprised at such an instance of humility and condescension, said unto him ‘ Lord you shall never wash my feet, this is a favour I am unworthy of. It is beneath your dignity to perform so mean an office to your own Servants; who ought upon every occasion to attend upon you.’ He replied ‘ you are ignorant of my intentions. Peter still declining, his Master answered, ‘ Unless you submit to be washed by me you cannot be my disciple, nor have any interest in the happiness of my Kingdom.’ Then said Peter, ‘ If it be so Lord wash me all over.’ Jesus replied, ‘ There is no necessity for that, for as he that comes out of a bathing place hath his whole person clean, excepting his feet, so are ye my disciples clean, but not all of you.’ Having performed this ceremony he resumed his place at the table.

‘ Ye are at a loss my friends,’ said he ‘ to comprehend the meaning of my conduct. Ye have all confessed me to be your Lord and Master, but that is not sufficient unless you

‘ obey my commandments, and follow my
 ‘ example: with that view I have proposed a
 ‘ trial of your sincerity, and a test of your
 ‘ obedience. True it is, that I am superior
 ‘ to you all; in no instance have I displayed
 ‘ any thing like hauteur in my actions; on
 ‘ the contrary, I have stooped to perform the
 ‘ meanest offices of kindness and friendship;
 ‘ how much more then, does it become you
 ‘ to behave in the same manner one to
 ‘ another; let your humility appear to all
 ‘ men, nor be ashamed to do to one ano-
 ‘ ther as I have done to you.

‘ As friends and brethren I have always
 ‘ treated you, and with reason might expect
 ‘ a return of grateful affection; yet it is pain-
 ‘ ful for me to know, that after all my kind-
 ‘ ness, one of you will betray me; as David
 ‘ once complained, so may I, “ My own fa-
 ‘ miliar friend in whom I trusted, who eat
 ‘ of my bread, has lift up his heel against
 ‘ me*.”

Consternation seized them all at these
 words, and the keenest sorrow filled their

* Psalm xli. 9.

hearts, every one observing the countenance of his neighbour, and wondering who it was that could be guilty of so base an action. John who sat next his master, and enjoyed an extraordinary degree of his esteem, at a signal from Peter, intreated with a whisper who that person was? he gently answered, 'It is the person to whom I shall give a morsel when I have dipped it;' which he did immediately to Judas, observing at the same time 'What you intend to do, do quickly.' None at the table comprehended his meaning, for they supposed he had only given orders to Judas to procure some necessary provisions for the approaching feast, or that he should give something to the poor. Accordingly he arose and departed, while Mammon possessed his imagination, and in the lonely night proceeded to Jerusalem. As he passed along he thus reasoned with himself. He assuredly must be the Messiah, his actions abundantly prove it; the secrets of the heart he knows, and is no stranger to my designs. The multitude have lately declared him to be the Messiah, and yet he declines to assume the sovereign power; if the Prophets are not mistaken, he must be our king, 'He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river

‘ to the ends of the earth.†” The words of Gabriel to his angel mother will certainly come to pass, ‘ Behold thou shalt conceive
 ‘ in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and
 ‘ shalt call his name Jesus, he shall be great,
 ‘ shall be called the Son of the Highest, and
 ‘ the Lord God shall give unto him the
 ‘ throne of his father David, and he shall
 ‘ reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and
 ‘ of his kingdom there shall be no end‡.”

When these things are fulfilled, we shall be freed from the Roman yoke, and raised to a state of exalted prosperity more glorious than any nation before enjoyed. In that case, may not his immediate disciples and friends look for the most distinguished situations under his auspicious reign. Thus much he once promised in these words, ‘ When the Son of
 ‘ man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye
 ‘ shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging
 ‘ the twelve tribes of Israel.§” This will certainly come to pass; but when, and by what means I cannot conjecture. His patience, meekness; and forbearance have hitherto been wonderful, no injuries could rouse

† John lxxii. 8. ‡ Luke i. 31, 32, 33.

§ Matt. xix. 28.

him to retaliate, or inflict punishment on the offenders; but he cannot always support such indignities; true, he has only suffered contempt, reproach, and threatenings; when danger appeared, he always avoided the fury of his foes, and ordered us to follow his example. But should they make any attempt upon his life, no doubt he will act differently, for self defence is always justifiable. I am satisfied of his innocence, and consequently he has a right to defend himself. Who can doubt his power that has seen his miracles? Certainly he who has healed all manner of diseases with a word of his mouth, or a touch of his hand, can as easily inflict them; he who has given life to the dead, can also cause death; he who appeased the storm, can pacify the tumults of the people; he who restrains the devils, can set bounds to the persecutions of the wicked. If Elijah could destroy the Captains of Ahaziah and their companies, a word from him can blast their power, and wither all their strength, and this must follow if once they provoke his indignation. The Sanhedrim have lately published a decree, commanding every one to give information, that he may be apprehended; Where can be the crime in such information? He is

acquainted with my intention, and approves of it: Now let me reflect upon the consequence. Should I deliver him into their hands how will he comport himself? His cause is good, and is eloquence surprising; often has he silenced his adversaries. Some he has already gained to his interest; possibly he may prevail by his reasoning and miracles; should they bend to his authority all difficulties are over, his kingdom will be established, and the whole nation submit to his government. But suppose the Sanhedrim should reject the strongest evidence, and remain inflexible, will they presume to offer violence to one whom the multitude adore, and admit to be the Messiah, and King of Israel? Certainly not. The same cause will produce the same effects; the dread of the people has hitherto restrained their fury, and will continue to do so. The Rulers must unquestionably submit to an authority which they cannot controul. Supposing the worst, that the people will either abandon his interest altogether, or join his enemies, which surely never can be the case, What will be the consequence? Self-preservation, the defence of his friends, and the maintenance of a good cause, will induce him to confound his inveterate enemies.

and punish their obduracy with instant destruction. The dread of his vengeance will cause the submission of others, and every one will instantly receive him for their king. This appears to correspond with the words of the prophet, ‘ Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little ; blessed are all they that put their trust in him*.’ This is the consummation of my hope, for until he is possessed of royal dignity we have not the least prospect of power, wealth, or honor. My conduct at first sight may appear base and perfidious, but the end is good, and that will either justify or extenuate the means. I merely intend giving him an opportunity of exerting his authority, and ascending the throne of his ancestors. I only do what Hushai the Archite did when he leagued in the rebellion of Absalom, that he might the more effectually advance the interest of David. If there should be any thing criminal in it, I have only to confess my fault and then I am certain of forgiveness.

Deluded by the secret power of Mammon, in this manner Judas reasoned until he ap-

* Ps. ii, 12.

proached the city, when he went immediately to the palace of the High Priest, where a number of the Chief Rulers were collected together. Here they were employed in deep deliberation about the most proper means of apprehending Jesus, without incurring the censure of the people. Judas was admitted in the midst of their difficulty, and perceiving every circumstance conformable to his wishes, he proposed openly, for a pecuniary consideration, to deliver him into their hands, at a period when no assistance could be given by the people. The offer was received with great applause, and a promise immediately made of thirty pieces of silver, as a reward for his service. This he considered as a moderate recompence; but in the expectation of gaining an immense fortune by the destruction of the Rulers, and the advancement of his Master, he accepted the proposal, and agreed to deliver him into their custody, in a place and at a time convenient for that purpose.

In this treacherous manner was Judas employed, while his Master was comforting the rest of his disciples. As soon as this perfidious man was departed, Jesus said to them, ' My friends, in a very short time the glory

‘ of God shall be manifested in my death, as
 ‘ wonderfully as it has been in my life ; for as
 ‘ I have intended the honor of God in all
 ‘ my actions, so will I in my last sufferings.
 ‘ I am convinced that he will support me un-
 ‘ der them, and raise me in a little time to in-
 ‘ conceivable glory and dignity, over all
 ‘ things in heaven and on earth. Ye will
 ‘ lament my departure ; but suffer not your
 ‘ trust in God nor in me to be the least sub-
 ‘ verted ; what I promise shall assuredly be
 ‘ accomplished. Behold the spacious earth
 ‘ and starry heavens, the wonderful creation
 ‘ extended far beyond your present view,
 ‘ yea, far beyond the power of your imagina-
 ‘ tions ; there is my father’s house built in
 ‘ the deep center of unbounded space. Ten
 ‘ thousand worlds unseen and unconceived
 ‘ are only so many different apartments in
 ‘ that magnificent habitation. There his in-
 ‘ telligent offspring, an innumerable family
 ‘ of different orders, hold their various abodes
 ‘ in regions of purest light and endless love.
 ‘ The world in which you reside is not
 ‘ one of those mansions ; it is merely a semi-
 ‘ nary for the infant race of mortal men,
 ‘ where they must be trained for a state of
 ‘ more exalted perfection in the unknown

' worlds above. From this I shall soon de-
 ' part, but mourn not ; upon your account I
 ' am going away in order to prepare a more
 ' fit habitation ; when I have accomplished
 ' that, I will return to conduct you thither,
 ' where we shall dwell in everlasting peace
 ' and joy, where sin and death shall be no
 ' more.' During my absence love one ano-
 ' ther as sincerely as I have loved you : For
 ' you I have undergone inconceivable seve-
 ' rities, and for you I shall suffer death. This
 ' is my commandment, it is the fundamental
 ' law of my kingdom, and by your conformi-
 ' ty to it you shall be distinguished from all
 ' other men, and manifest to the world the
 ' excellency of my religion. The men of this
 ' world shall in a little time see me no more ;
 ' but with you it shall not be so, for very soon
 ' I shall see you again ; your hearts shall re-
 ' joice, and your joy no man shall deprive you
 ' of. The Jews I am aware, will glory at
 ' my death, and ye shall be grieved ; but your
 ' mourning shall be of short continuance ; for
 ' within three days I will rise again, and meet
 ' you in Galilee. Mark well my words, for
 ' they shall never fail. Your present lamenta-
 ' tion I consider as a strong proof of your
 ' affection ; but ye must give more substantial

‘ proofs of its sincerity in my absence. All
 ‘ my commands you must implicitly obey ;
 ‘ he that regards me will do so : but he who
 ‘ deliberately breaks them has certainly no
 ‘ true regard for me, let his profession be ne-
 ‘ ver so great. These things I have mentioned
 ‘ lest your minds should be too much depress-
 ‘ ed at my approaching fate, that when it
 ‘ happens ye may recollect how accurately I
 ‘ have told you every circumstance. One
 ‘ thing more I have to observe for your con-
 ‘ solation ; when I am gone the Holy Spirit
 ‘ will descend in my place ; he will console
 ‘ you in all tribulations, assist you in all diffi-
 ‘ culties, teach you all things, and bring to
 ‘ your recollection whatsoever I have spoken.

In the morning the disciples collected to-
 gether in order to meet their Lord. Their
 hearts were dejected with sorrow, and a me-
 lancholy sadness appeared on every face. The
 impression of the previous conversation
 rested forcibly upon their minds. During
 his discourse they took an opportunity to en-
 quire in what house he intended to eat the
 Passover. In answer, he commanded Peter
 and John to go instantly to the city, ‘ Where,
 said he, ‘ as soon as ye have entered, ye will

‘ observe a man carrying a pitcher of water ;
 ‘ follow him into the house, and enquire for the
 ‘ guest-chamber where I may eat the Passo-
 ‘ ver with my disciples ; and without difficul-
 ‘ ty the Master of the house will shew you a
 ‘ large apartment well furnished : let the ne-
 ‘ cessary preparations be made there.’ Ac-
 cordingly they departed, and when they en-
 tered the city they found every circumstance
 agreeable to the divine foresight of their Mas-
 ter. Every thing being performed according
 to the law of Moses, Jesus and the rest of
 the disciples arrived in the evening at the ap-
 pointed house, and being seated at the table,
 feasting on the sacrifice he thus began.

‘ I have anxiously longed, my dearest
 ‘ Friends, to eat this Passover with you be-
 ‘ fore I suffer death. The intention of the
 ‘ Institution is well known to the Jewish Na-
 ‘ tion. The account of its appointment was
 ‘ so interesting, that in every age it has been
 ‘ held in sacred remembrance by the chosen
 ‘ Seed of Jacob. How terrible was that night
 ‘ when Death rode triumphant through the
 ‘ land of Egypt ; in every house the horrid
 ‘ cry was heard, and all the first-born seed
 ‘ of man and beast were slain, The Divine

2 Mercy spared our Fathers in the Land of
 6 Goshen, and passed over habitations, sprink-
 6 led with the blood of the Paschal Lamb; and
 6 thus they were delivered from bondage, and
 2 redeemed from death. In every age, with
 6 a grateful remembrance they have renewed
 6 the sacred rite. This Passover is a type of
 6 my death, which shall free the world from
 6 worse than Egyptian bondage. By my blood
 6 thousands shall be redeemed from the ser-
 6 vitude of sin, the tyranny of Satan, and
 6 everlasting destruction in the world to come.'

Then taking a cup filled with wine, as was
 customary upon that occasion, he gave
 thanks, and said to them, 'Take and drink
 6 this as the last Paschal Commemoration
 6 which we shall celebrate in this manner.
 6 From henceforth I will drink no more of
 6 the fruit of the vine, until my kingdom
 6 be established, and the shadows of the cere-
 6 monial law fully abolished. I have already
 6 told you, and now I tell you again, that
 6 one of you will betray me into the hands of
 6 my implacable enemies: the thought of
 6 such dire ingratitude from one who professes
 6 to be my friend greatly distresses me.' They
 were exceedingly dejected at these words,
 wondering who it was that could be guilty of

erime. After a pause, they began to say, one by one, 'Lord, is it I?' To which he answered, 'He that dippeth his hand with me in the same dish, the same shall betray me.' Judas, who had remained silent, put the same question, 'Lord is it I?' He said unto him, 'Thou hast said. I must suffer according to the will of God, and the writings of the Prophets; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born.' At this rebuke, Judas withdrew to the Palace of the High Priest, desiring with all possible expedition, a considerable body of men might be assembled, in order to apprehend the man, whom he had agreed to deliver into their custody.

After the departure of Judas, Jesus addressed his disciples in the following manner. 'My Friends, having with grateful hearts, according to the Divine appointment, celebrated the memorial of Israel's redemption from the land of Egypt, I shall appoint in its place the memorial of my own death, an event far more interesting than the former.' He then took bread, gave thanks to God, brake it in pieces, and gave it to them saying,

' Take, eat this as an emblem of my body,
 ' which is broken for you. I am the bread of
 ' life which came down from heaven. My
 ' doctrine and example, my sufferings and
 ' death, are the means of your salvation ;
 ' therefore when ye eat of this bread if ye se-
 ' riously meditate upon these things, your
 ' souls will be nourished unto eternal life.'

After this he took the cup, and presenting it
 to them, he said, ' Drink ye all of this, it is
 ' the memorial of my blood, shed for the re-
 ' mission of sins : by this shall the everlast-
 ' ing covenant be sealed, and the Divine
 ' Mercy be conveyed to men in every future
 ' period of the world. This I command you,
 ' and all my disciples to observe in every age,
 ' as a second memorial of my death, until I
 ' come again for the eternal redemption of
 ' my people. Knowing I must shortly depart
 ' this world it behoves you, my disciples, to
 , cast aside all immoderate attachment to the
 ' perishing enjoyments of this life. Ye have
 ' often contended for superiority, and dispu-
 ' ted who shall be the greatest in my king-
 ' dom ; I behold with compassion the same
 ' folly working in your hearts. Be wiser in
 ' future ; entertain no vain thoughts of wealth
 ' and power among men ; never think they

' are worthy of contention. In the kingdoms
 ' of this world ye will often observe men of
 ' the most profligate characters raised to the
 ' highest dignities ; pride, covetousness and
 ' ambition, supported by fraud, and strength-
 ' ened by violence, these are commonly the
 ' steps of their exaltation. Such is the course
 ' of this world : but in my kingdom it shall
 ' not be so. There every person shall rise to
 ' honor and glory in exact proportion to his
 ' merit. The meek, lowly, and generous
 ' shall be advanced above all others. Learn
 ' from my example : ye have observed in what
 ' manner I have lived. I never aspired to
 ' power and dominion. I never sought af-
 ' ter Riches, nor affected the ostentatious
 ' pride of human life ; my chief aim consisted
 ' in doing the Will of God, and promoting
 ' the happiness of men. From these I derive
 ' my highest pleasure, and in them I find my
 ' greatest glory. Observe what a reception I
 ' met with from the world, and how much I
 ' have been rejected of men ! How then can
 ' ye entertain the hopes of better treatment ?
 ' Have I endured contempt and reproach,
 ' and do ye expect to meet with honor and
 ' and esteem ? Have I lived in poverty, and
 ' do ye expect power and eminence ? Have

' I submitted to the keenest strokes of adver-
 ' sity, and can ye flatter yourselves with the
 ' vain thoughts of lasting prosperity? No ye
 ' must expect contempt, poverty, and persecu-
 ' tion : I warn you to be upon your guard
 ' and arm yourselves with fortitude and reso-
 ' lution. The time is near, the hour of dan-
 ' ger is fast approaching, the horrid scene
 ' draws nigh. The dread of death will soon
 ' arise in every heart ; then shall ye be scat-
 ' tered every man to his own, whilst I, your
 ' Lord, shall be left alone amidst surrounding
 ' foes ; yet then I shall not be alone, for my
 ' Father, in whom I trust, will support me.'

Peter replied with an inconsiderate zeal, cor-
 responding with the natural warmth of his
 temper, ' Lord fear not our resolution in the
 ' time of danger: at least for my part I am re-
 ' solutely determined, that tho' all men should
 ' forsake thee I never will.' In like manner
 all the rest declared. Jesus however being
 acquainted with their different characters, to-
 gether with the temptations which were ap-
 proaching, informed them, however sincere
 their resolutions might be, yet they were not
 sensible of their own weakness, and could
 not determine what their conduct would be
 when the time of trial came. Turning to

Peter, he said, ‘ Beware Simon lest the impetuosity of your temper, too apt to exceed the calm deliberations of reason, should hurry you into some dangerous temptation. For I now inform you, that Satan intends to try you severely. I have prayed for you, lest your faith should fail ; and my prayer shall not be in vain. Only recollect that when you are converted, strengthen your brethren, and endeavour to support their desponding spirits.’ Peter again replied, without suspecting his own weakness, or regarding his Masters admonitions, ‘ Lord, go where you will I am resolved to follow you. Neither imprisonment nor death shall ever separate me from your company.’ ‘ Alas ! Peter,’ said his Master, ‘ you are too presumptuous, your confidence will hasten your fall ; for I now tell you that before the dawning of the day, yea before the cock crow twice you will not less than three times unequivocally deny that you ever knew me. The dark and dismal hour is at hand, a sudden tempest rises from the deeps of hell, the powers of darkness and wicked men combined, will vent their utmost indignation against me, and will, to all appearance, for a time prevail. then sorrow and consternation shall seize

‘ your hearts, and ye will be tempted to view
 ‘ me and my cause as desperate and abandon-
 ‘ ed. Be not dismayed ; let your faith and
 ‘ hope support your drooping spirits, in due
 ‘ time I will break the bands of death, and
 ‘ rise triumphant from the grave.’ Raising
 his eyes to heaven, he prayed in the following
 manner.

‘ O my God and Father the hour is come,
 ‘ support me in this great distress, that my
 ‘ death may advance thy glory, and accom-
 ‘ plish the redemption of thy people. I will
 ‘ patiently endure the keenest sufferings, that
 ‘ the world may be brought to the knowledge
 ‘ of thee, the only true God, and of me thy
 ‘ well beloved son, whom thou hast sent from
 ‘ heaven. I have honored thee in all my ac-
 ‘ tions, and performed the work thou gavest
 ‘ me to do, Support me under all my sor-
 ‘ rows, raise me in triumph from the grave,
 ‘ and elevate me to the possession of that
 ‘ glory, which I enjoyed before the world was.
 ‘ Thy will to my disciples I have faithfully
 ‘ declared, and they have seriously believed
 ‘ in me. Now, O Father ! I pray in their be-
 ‘ half, not for the impenitent in this world,
 ‘ who reject the light, and avoid the paths of

' everlasting life. Preserve them when I am
 ' departed, assist them in the pursuit of righ-
 ' teousness and truth, and let them be united
 ' in faith and love, even as thou and I are
 ' one. Hitherto I have preserved them by
 ' my doctrine and example; none of them have
 ' deserted me, but that perfidious wretch who
 ' now has joined my foes. The world I know
 ' will hate, and persecute them on my account:
 ' but let thy power defend them, thy wisdom
 ' guide them, and thy good spirit assist them
 ' in publishing the gospel throughout all na-
 ' tions. In like manner, O Father, I pray
 ' in behalf of all those who shall be converted
 ' by their ministry, that as I am in thee, and
 ' thou in me, so they may be united in the
 ' indissoluble bands of pure faith and holy
 ' love; that by the integrity of their lives,
 ' and their mutual love to one another, and
 ' towards all men, the world may be sensible
 ' of the divine authority and excellence of
 ' their religion. O, righteous Father, the
 ' wicked have not known thee, nor are they
 ' disposed to obey thy will: but I have known
 ' thee, and have studiously made known thy
 ' will to my disciples, who have cheerfully
 ' received, and sincerely obeyed it. There-
 ' fore will I continue to instruct them, that

‘ they may arrive at the summit of perfection,
 ‘ that the love wherewith thou hast distinguish-
 ‘ ed me may reign among them.

These words were uttered with an air of dig-
 nity and resignation, infinitely superior to
 the most animated devotions of the sons of
 men. ‘ Let us retire,’ said he, ‘ to the wont-
 ‘ ed place where darkness, silence, and soli-
 ‘ tude, may favour our meditations; there
 ‘ lies the dismal scene, the awful prelude to
 ‘ an ignominious death; for the time ap-
 ‘ proaches when all that has been said by the
 ‘ eminent Prophets must be accomplished.
 ‘ My father wills that I should now submit,
 ‘ and what he wills I am ready to obey.’

In solemn sadness they left the house, when
 lowering clouds obscured the face of heaven,
 no twinkling stars nor silver moon appeared;
 all nature buried in the shades of night, lay
 wrapt in silence. The Son of God could find
 no rest; his weary friends, oppressed with
 sorrow, toil, and anxious fear: nay his very
 enemies were deprived of peace. Impelled
 by Satan, tortured with envy, and roused to
 madness by infernal fury, they were anxious-
 ly waiting in the Palace of Caiaphas, till Ju-

das would appear to give the promised information. The Messiah had scarcely passed the gates, and crossed the gentle stream, where towering cedars increased the shades of night, when in the following manner he addressed his melancholy friends :

‘ Beware, lest sudden danger should overcome your resolution ; this I am sensible will be the case, for so it is written, “ Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered*.” Your boasted courage will soon fail, and all of you be offended this night on account of me.’ The appearance of danger every moment increased ; a mournful silence prevailed till they arrived at Gethsemane, a vineyard near Mount Olivet, where frequently he passed the night in solitary prayer and contemplation, When he had entered the garden he said to them, ‘ Remain in this place, watch and be mindful of what may happen ; pray frequently that God may fortify you against approaching danger.’ Eight of the disciples remained, while Jesus, together with Peter, James, and John advanced ; when in mournful accents he thus revealed the

* Zech. xiii. 7.

dreadful agonies of his exalted mind. ‘ Alas !
 ‘ my dearest Friends, little are ye aware of
 ‘ what I suffer ; the dreary prospect lies open to
 ‘ my view ; surrounding terrors of ungodly
 ‘ men. the malicious fury of infernal hosts,
 ‘ and the tormenting pangs of an ignomini-
 ‘ ous death, these and more than these op-
 ‘ press my soul, and sink me to the dust.
 ‘ Await ye here and watch whilst I retire.’
 To a distant arbour he advanced, whose in-
 termingled branches and thick arched roof,
 doubled the horror of that awful night. There
 he lay prostrate on the cold damp earth,
 while dismal thoughts of approaching woe
 ran in rapid succession through his troubled
 mind. There Satan meant to plunge him in
 despair, for lo ! amidst the gloomy shade, in
 in a form more terrible than imagination yet
 conceived, he arose, and with a voice more
 hideous than ever addressed the human ear,
 he thus began :

‘ O Son of God, is this the end of all thy
 ‘ labours for the chosen race ! Three years
 ‘ and more, have I beheld thy weary wander-
 ‘ ings, thy incessant toil, thy words, and all
 ‘ thine actions full of grace and power. Yet
 ‘ thy labour is all in vain ; contempt and per-

'secution are the only returns for all thy
 'kindness: How justly do they merit thy
 'hatred and indignation; think of them no
 'more, nor lose thy affections upon such a
 'worthless race of contemptible beings; rouse
 'all thy aversion, let thy wrath be kindled
 'against the sons of men; abhor the ungrate-
 'ful, and let thy heavy curse fall upon that
 'guilty nation which gave thee birth. Be-
 'hold Judas, one of thine own disciples, in
 'concert with thy inveterate foes, are about
 'to apprehend thee; the rest of thy friends,
 'are faithless as well as he; even now, they
 'slumber in profound security, disobedient to
 'thy orders, and unconcerned about thy suf-
 'ferings. This instant I beheld thine ene-
 'mies in close array advancing from the city.
 'Like a thief detected in nocturnal fraud,
 'they will seize thee with impious hands, and
 'load thee with insolent abuse; I heard their
 'consultations, and now behold thy doom,
 'unpitied and forlorn shalt thou expire upon
 'the cross in agonizing pain. Thus shall
 'thy glory end in sad disgrace, and boasted
 'virtue sink thee to the grave. Forsaken
 'thus by God and all thy friends, what wilt
 'thou do? Cast hope away, trust neither God

'nor man, now fly, or fight, or perish in de-
'spair.'

Thus the Son of God in bold disdain re-
plied; 'Abhorred fiend, apostate from the
'world of bliss, I regard not thy hideous form,
'thy infernal malice, thy dark envenomed
'rage, pointed against my Father, me, and
'all the human race. I know what I must
'suffer, the keenest sorrows now surround
'my soul; these God permits, nor shalt thou
'gain an atom, for I will endure them all in
'meek submission to his will, and what he
'wills is ever good; I will bear them all for
'wretched men, and worse I would endure if
'worse could be. Thou temptest me to hate
'the human kind, distrust my Father, and
'perish in despair. O words infernal! detest-
'ed as thyself; how justly art thou doomed
'to endless woe. I love the human race, I
'wish them well; but thou their deadly foe,
'wouldst ruin all, and sink them down to
'hell. If they reject and persecute their
'friend, thou art the cause, the first great
'cause, who led them all astray. Had they
'but known from whence I came, and who I
'am, they never would have thought of such

‘ contempt; but thou perverse and past reco-
 ‘ very, hardened in thy sin, hast no excuse.
 ‘ Neither is it in thy power, nor in the power
 ‘ of all my foes to bring me to the grave were
 ‘ I induced to save my life. I am resolved
 ‘ to suffer death conformable to the will of
 ‘ God; and by my death I will bruise thy
 ‘ head, I will break thy power, and bring re-
 ‘ demption to the chosen race. I will trust
 ‘ in God, and by his grace conquer all my
 ‘ foes. Therefore, begone, thou base perfid-
 ‘ dious dæmon, tempt my wrath no more,
 ‘ lest sudden vengeance send thee to the
 ‘ deep, the dark abyss of everlasting pain.’

Satan terrified at these words, instantly va-
 nished; when Jesus with his hands and eyes
 uplifted, thus presented his fervent supplica-
 tions: ‘ O, Almighty Father, sovereign Lord
 ‘ of all things, my shield, my refuge, and
 ‘ only hope in sad distress; must I endure
 ‘ the sharpest sorrows, and suffer the most
 ‘ excruciating pains? Ah! must I drink the
 ‘ black envenomed cup, filled with the bitter-
 ‘ est ingredients? Hear me in the sad hour
 ‘ of darkness and distress; save me from death,
 ‘ and prevent the enormous guilt of shed-
 ‘ ding innocent blood. If this can save them

‘ from the wrath to come, O save them now,
‘ and save me from their rage ; but if nothing
‘ short of my blood can redeem a guilty world,
‘ I patiently acquiesce in thy Almighty Will.

After these words he left the harbour, and passed through the silent solitary gloom, when a multiplicity of sorrows filled his mind ; for by a divine foresight he perceived Death approaching with all its terrors ; he surveyed the persecution of his friends ; the ruin of his country ; the contempt of his grace ; and the everlasting perdition of impenitent sinners. His melancholy prospect oppressed his tender heart to such a degree, that he fell into a bloody sweat, which distilled in drops, and dyed with crimson the humid earth. No longer could his feeble joints support the weight of his afflicted body ; down he dropt, and reclining on his arm breathed groans of unutterable woe. While thus he lay in agonizing pain, and sorrow, a band of angels stood invisible around, and viewed his sufferings with pity and admiration. Gabriel who had been sent to fortify him, when he perceived his spirits so far exhausted, arrayed himself in robes of purest light, his countenance and gesture expressed a celestial dig-

nity, mixed with the greatest compassion; an air of esteem was blended with that awful veneration and respect due to the person of so great a sufferer, and thus he addressed the Messiah.

‘ O Son of God, could angels weep like
 ‘ mortal men, Angels would weep in saddest
 ‘ sorrow for thy distress. Thy sufferings we
 ‘ view with tender sympathy, and with the
 ‘ highest admiration behold thy fervent love
 ‘ to God and man; we perceive thy heroism,
 ‘ meekness, patience, and resignation with
 ‘ transporting wonder and astonishment; the
 ‘ remarkable virtues of thy life, we esteem as
 ‘ the most compleat standard for our imita-
 ‘ tion: Confirmed and encouraged by thy
 ‘ spotless example, we persevere in everlast-
 ‘ ing love to God and men, we contemplate
 ‘ thy actions with delight, we encamp around
 ‘ thy paths, and sound thy praises through
 ‘ the lofty sky. Thou great Messiah, the
 ‘ eternal Son of God, brave sorrow, shame,
 ‘ pain, and death; bruise Satan’s head, re-
 ‘ deem the chosen race, and ride triumph-
 ‘ ant to thy Father’s throne.’—The Angel
 taking him by the hand, revived his dejected

spirits, strengthened every limb, and became invisible as before.

Jesus returned to his disciples, but found them asleep, exhausted with weariness and sorrow. ‘Awake, my friends,’ said he, ‘Awake;’ and gently rebuked their security: ‘Alas, Peter, this is inconsistent with the declaration you lately professed; how can you die with me, when you will not so much as watch one hour in my deep distress?’ ‘Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation: the spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak*.’ After this he again retired, praying as he had done before; but when he returned he found them wrapt in the sweetest slumber: The third time he withdrew and poured out his soul in strains of bitter anguish, and pious resignation, saying, ‘Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will but thine be done†.’ He found them still asleep: ‘Awake, my friends,’ again he cried, ‘neither the time nor place will admit of rest; your weakness I pardon; the enemy is near at hand.

* Mark xiv. 38.

† Luke xxii. 42.

They arose immediately. By the time they reached the disciples, who had remained near the gate, the glaring beams of torches poured upon their sight, and filled their hearts with terror; a multitude in arms having surrounded the vineyard. They crossed the valley in profound silence, and to prevent alarm, their lights concealed till they had gained the spot where Jesus was; suddenly their torches appeared lest darkness should favour his escape. These precautions were unnecessary, he knew their intentions, and desired not to evade the danger.

Judas instantly approached with a countenance strongly marked with guilt; he saluted his Master, he embraced and kissed him, with all the outward demonstrations of honor and respect. In this manner he was pointed out to the multitude, and distinguished from his disciples. Immediately with drawn swords, and staves uplifted, the enraged mob surrounded him; when with a mild majestic voice he thus addressed the traitor:

“Judas is this your friendship for me?
 “Betrayest thou the son of man with a

“kiss*.”—The perfidious wretch confounded stood, and the croud remained in awful suspense. He then demanded whom they sought? They replied, ‘Jesus of Nazareth;’ to which he answered, ‘I am the very man ye seek.’ To shew how awful goodness is, and how easily he could have defeated the most daring attempts against his life, a divine power unbraced their nerves, deprived them in an instant of all their strength, and threw them prostrate on the earth. There had they perished in their impious attempts; but he had compassion, and permitted them to rise. When they had recovered, he demanded again, ‘Whom seek ye?’ They answered, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Then said he, ‘I am the man; if your designs are against me, suffer my disciples to depart unmolested.’ At these words, Malchus, a servant of the High Priest, stretched forth his hand to secure him; when Peter, impelled by the most ardent zeal, drew his sword and cut off his right ear. Speedy vengeance would have stained the garden with Simon’s blood, had not his Master, who calmed the raging deep, appeased the tumult. Turning to

* Luke xxii, 48.

Malchus he said, ‘Patience, young man, ‘pardon the precipitancy of my disciple; I ‘will heal thy wound.’ Then touching his ear, the blood ceased to flow, the pain abated, and all was sound and perfect. Looking at Peter, who stood confused, agitated by a variety of passions, and the sword yet drawn in his hand, he said, ‘Put up thy sword, nor ‘ever attempt to fight in my defence; for ‘be assured, those who have come in arms ‘against me, shall in the end perish by the ‘sword of their enemies. It is my Father’s ‘Will that I should suffer; and what he wills ‘I am ready to endure. No man can take ‘my life without my own consent; for even ‘at this time, should I pray unto my Father, ‘he would send more than twelve legions ‘of Angels to defend me; but then how ‘should the scriptures be fulfilled, for this was ‘foretold by the Prophets, and I frequently ‘warned you of it.’ Then addressing himself to the multitude, he said, ‘Why came ye here ‘in the darkness of the night, armed with ‘swords and staves, as if you were in pursuit ‘of a robber, who must be taken by surprise, ‘or overcome by violence? Have I ever concealed myself from you? Or did I ever in ‘a seditious manner appear with men in arms

‘to defend my person? No, I taught daily
 ‘in your temple; there I healed your sick;
 ‘had I been guilty of any crime why did you
 ‘not apprehend me? But this is the period
 ‘appointed for my sufferings; God permits
 ‘you to execute your nefarious designs.’ The
 soldiers immediately apprehended him, while
 distracting terror overpowered his disciples.

All hopes being destroyed they fled, and
 left their Lord amidst surrounding foes. With
 a dejected heart and weary step, he proceed-
 ed along the valley. No tender eye beheld
 him with compassion; every heart gloried at
 the event, and guarded the afflicted prisoner
 with exultation. Having entered the city
 they conducted him to the habitation of An-
 nas, where he was bound with cords as a cri-
 minal, and from thence to the palace of the
 High Priest, where the Sanhedrim, who were
 resolved to destroy him, had assembled in ex-
 pectation of his arrival.

Peter recovering a little, addressed John
 in the following manner :

‘What shall we now do? Our Lord is car-
 ‘ried off a prisoner by his enemies, and our

‘brethren are fled. O sad and unfortunate
 ‘night ! But what more could I have done ?
 ‘Willingly would I have fought in his de-
 ‘fence. Now he is in the custody of those
 ‘who seek his life, and I am impatient to
 ‘know the consequences. Unquestionably
 ‘he is competent to deliver himself; we have
 ‘observed his power over all diseases; we be-
 ‘held his power over hell and death. Who can
 ‘resist that potent arm the winds and sea obey.
 ‘The Almighty God wherever he goes, de-
 ‘fends him; and in a moment divine wrath can
 ‘blast his enemies. His words I well remem-
 ‘ber. “All ye shall be offended because of me
 ‘“this night* :’ I shall be left alone, yet I
 ‘am not alone, because my Father is with
 ‘me. If the Almighty be on his side, as
 ‘most assuredly he is, what can his enemies
 ‘do against him ? Let us observe the end.
 ‘Perhaps he means to confound the wicked
 ‘by awful and speedy vengeance ; possibly
 ‘his kingdom may commence with acts of
 ‘deadly power against those who have despis-
 ‘ed his grace. It is still my firm resolution,
 ‘that whatever be the inclination of others,
 ‘I will never forsake him.’

* Mat. xxvi, 31.

John replied in great perplexity, ‘ I know
 ‘ not what to say or do ; fear terrifies me, yet
 ‘ hope and love strongly induce me to follow
 ‘ him.’ They went, and in solemn sadness ap-
 proached the city, enquiring for the palace
 of Caiaphas. John being known to the High
 Priest, immediately entered the hall, after the
 company that conducted his Master, whilst
 Peter having no acquaintance, remained
 without the door, until John requested he
 might be admitted. Instantly he was ac-
 cused by the maid with being one of the dis-
 ciples, alarmed at the suspicion, and fearing
 the consequence, he replied, ‘ I am not.’ Ad-
 vancing forward he approached the crowd
 that stood around the fire, expecting to pass
 unnoticed, and to observe in security what
 was doing ; when the High Priest addressed
 Jesus in the following manner.

‘ Your repeated offences, your seditious
 ‘ proceedings, and your false pretensions to
 ‘ the exalted title of the Messiah, we have
 ‘ long endured with too much clemency.
 ‘ Your sins have at length detected you, and
 ‘ justice cries aloud for speedy vengeance upon
 ‘ your guilty head. Inform me the names of
 ‘ your disciples, what their station and busi-

‘ness? What do you propose by assembling
 ‘such multitudes in every corner? What are
 ‘the peculiar doctrines you teach? And who
 ‘do you pretend to be?

With undaunted majesty he replied: ‘If
 ‘you desire to find the truth, and judge with
 ‘equity, ask mine accusers, let them assert
 ‘what they have seen and heard, enquire of
 ‘the Scribes and Pharisees, and all that know
 ‘my doctrine. You demand as if I taught
 ‘secretly; whatever I delivered was in pub-
 ‘lic, and in the face of all the world. I
 ‘taught in your temple and synagogues, on
 ‘your Sabbaths, and solemn feast days; in
 ‘places of the greatest concourse; in secret
 ‘I have never asserted any thing to bring
 ‘the least disgrace upon my name.

An officer belonging to Annas, desirous of
 shewing his antipathy to Jesus, and to ingra-
 tiate himself with the High Priest, in a furi-
 ous rage struck him on the face, saying,
 ‘How dare you answer the High Priest in
 ‘this manner? Do you pretend to dictate
 ‘how he shall proceed in judgment?’

Jesus replied with the greatest meekness;
 ‘If I have spoken with unbecoming freedom,

‘ or asserted that which is criminal, accuse
 ‘ me before the council as you ought to do:
 ‘ but if I have not transgressed, why do you,
 ‘ contrary to the laws of justice and huma-
 ‘ nity, smite me uncondemned, and even in
 ‘ the presence of the court?’—No attention
 was paid to his solemn appeal; no rebuke
 given to the unjust man; equity was a stran-
 ger to their proceedings, and malice boiled
 in every heart.

Peter standing by, one of the servants re-
 collecting that he had observed him in com-
 pany with Jesus, charged him with being
 one of his disciples. In great confusion Peter
 affirmed he knew nothing of the man, and
 immediately withdrew into the porch, where
 after midnight the cock crew.

The Chief Priests having at all events de-
 termined to destroy Jesus, suborned false
 witnesses, who were interrogated; but as their
 testimony was either trifling, or materially in-
 consistent, no plausible foundation could be
 laid, for a sentence against him. At length
 two men appeared, who alledged they heard
 him declare, that he would destroy the tem-
 ple, and rebuild it in three days, affirming

that he discovered a hostile design against the whole city. To this charge he made no reply, being founded entirely on malice, and a misrepresentation of his words. This they were aware of, for when he remained silent the High Priest indignantly rose, and demanded, ‘ Have you nothing to answer ? Can you make no reply to the accusation alledged against you ? ’ Jesus being sensible they intended to extort an answer with an evil view, and to interpret it into an accusation, held his peace. Then said the High Priest, ‘ I am told many of the deluded multitude esteem you as the Messiah, and that in the most impious manner you publicly assumed that sacred character ; I therefore adjure you by the dreadful and tremendous name of God, in whose presence you now stand, that you unequivocally inform us, whether you are the Messiah, the Son of God ? ’ He replied instantly, ‘ I am the very person, and though I now stand before you as a criminal, despised and afflicted, yet I came from heaven, and thither will I return ; of this in a short time you shall have a convincing proof, when I come to take vengeance upon the Jewish nation, to establish my kingdom among the Gentiles, and to judge the

‘ world at the last day.’ The High Priest greatly incensed, exclaimed with fury, ‘ Here is the most notorious blasphemy, What need have we of witnesses? Ye have heard him with your own ears, what is your opinion? ’ They unanimously cried aloud, ‘ He is guilty of the most flagitious crime, and merits an ignominious death.’

He was then condemned as a blasphemer, and ordered to be closely confined until the morning. The servants in the interim treated him with unheard of rudeness, and gross contempt: some in derision pulled him by the hair of his head, others having blindfolded him, struck, and grossly insulted him in the most barbarous manner, saying, ‘ You who pretend to be the Messiah, inform us if you are able, who it was that struck you last? ’ And with various other indignities he passed that dismal night.

John during the whole trial was filled with surprise and contempt at the gross partiality of the chief Priests and elders. When he beheld his injured Master standing at the tribunal of his enemies, the most tender sympathy preyed upon his generous heart. When he

recollected his patience and prudence, his meekness and magnanimity, he was transported with wonder and admiration. But when he reflected upon the exalted hopes he had formerly entertained, and the grievous disappointment that was likely to ensue, he was overpowered with despair. Immediately upon hearing the unjust sentence pronounced, and perceiving the rudeness of the multitude towards his Master, overcome with grief he secretly departed from the house. Peter had likewise departed a short time before; for when the false witnesses were accusing his master, a relative of Malchus who was standing near him, instantly approached upon hearing him speak, and said, ‘ You are certainly
 ‘ one of his disciples; by your language I
 ‘ perceive you are a Galilean, and I am confident you were with him in the garden; you
 ‘ are the man that attempted to defend him.’ Peter fearing that he should be apprehended as a criminal, in the utmost confusion denied the third time in the most solemn manner that he had any knowledge of the person. Scarce had he uttered the denial when the cock crew; Jesus at that instant arraigned before the High Priest, turned round, and with an expressive look, cast his eyes upon Peter, who

in an instant was struck with remorse, for he well remembered the words of his Master, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon he wept*." Fully sensible of his guilt, he withdrew, and gave vent to his sorrow in a lonely retreat. 'Alas! said he, what have I done? Denied my Lord, my Master, and my Friend; Him whom I confessed and believed to be the Son of God. Three times I denied him, almost to his face, and with horrid oaths. O perjury, the basest perjury! I merit a curse—I cursed myself—a tremendous curse hangs over my guilty head; of this he kindly forewarned me; this aggravates my guilt. "Watch and pray," said he, "Satan hath sought to sift thee." 'How true are all his words! I am sifted now indeed, I am merely chaff before the wind. Ah! wretched man, what shall I do? What madness led me to that detested place. I went to see the end, an endless one to me. I thought to have seen his foes abashed, but vain were all my hopes. Had he stretched forth his arm, the first and heaviest stroke

* Mark xiv. 72.

I had surely fallen on my perjured head. Ju-
 das betrayed him, and I have denied him. Ah
 frail inconstant wretch ! I would have fought
 for him in the garden, yet I denied him in
 the palace. I am worse than Caiaphas, worse
 than all his public foes. Did ever affronted
 innocence look so mild ? These gentle looks
 have filled my soul with horror. O dreadful
 guilt ! The crowing of that cock I shall ever
 remember. I perceived his penetrating coun-
 tenance, then all my guilt rose horrid to my
 view. Once I heard him pronounce these
 awful words, more awful now than ever,
 “ Whosoever shall deny me before men, him
 I will I also deny before my Father
 which is in heaven*.” He certainly had me
 in view. O Jesus, forgive the wretch that
 basely has denied thee ! Will repentance
 avail me nothing ? He preached repentance,
 and so did I in his name ; will he then reject
 the penitent ? No, he cannot, here is my
 hope, I bitterly repent, he knows my weak-
 ness, he will surely pity me ; when he fore-
 saw my fall he prayed for me, and God as-
 suredly heard his prayer.

* Mat. x. 33.

No sooner had the angel Gabriel consoled the Messiah than he ascended through the liquid sky, nor staid his rapid course, 'till he reached the yielding surface of the ærial flood, and stood erect, as on a sea of glass, diffused around this gross terraqueous globe. There, in the vast circumference of the atmosphere, ten thousand clouds are formed and disappear, raised by the solar heat in every clime, from the earth below, and from the watery deep. With tremendous noise thunders roar, and fly around on wings of flaming fire. From thence the rain distils in gentle showers, or falls precipitate in rapid floods; the rattling hail or fleecy snow descends upon the earth. There, cold and heat, and moist and dry, convened in dusky vapours, swim over the hills, or fly in wild confusion, while the tempest roars; when rarified they mount on high, and melt in liquid air; but if condensed, they quickly fall, and pour their contents on the verdant plains. It is only in the lower regions, over the land and sea, those stormy vapours hold their furious reign: far above, the thin transparent air, is pure and peaceful, even to the utmost verge, where the refined æther fills the ambient space: there, angels breathe immortal life and joy.

there they stand, or walk, or fly, which way they will, independent of all material attraction. From thence, they view the various ways of men, as we behold with curious eyes, the creeping insects at the bottom of a pure transparent fountain. The immense sky, stretched far above our heads, and which appears an azure concave to our view, is observed by angels far distant on the ætherial plains, as a chrysal sphere around the earth; but when beheld much nearer, it seems a flood, calm and serene, a sea without a shore, at whose transparent bottom this globe appears, sometimes obscured by wandering spots, such are the clouds to angels in the sky. On the vast circumference of that sphere, Gabriel arrived, and viewed afar, Raphael descending from above, with a mighty host of cherubims—they dropt around him upon the azure plain, when Gabriel thus proceeded.

‘ O thou exalted Prince, thou leader of angelic hosts, may I enquire from whence, and who are these, and what their business to this lower world? Strangers they appear to me, in regions far remote they surely dwell; in all my journies from the throne of God to this inferier world, I do not recollect to

* have seen their equal. Matters of great im-
 * portance, no doubt have brought them here,
 * if it be lawful for me to enquire, or for you
 * to relate the occasion of their journey, I
 * shall attend with pleasure.'——Raphael re-
 plied in the following terms: ' A matter of
 * universal concern to the intelligent creation
 * has brought them to this world from their
 * native habitation, their business here is no
 * secret. Ten hundred times and more, has
 * yon dark earth seen the revolutions of day
 * and night since the Almighty Father from
 * his splendid throne, pronounced these words;
 * " This is my beloved Son in whom I am well
 * pleased*.' Ye saints, and all ye blessed
 * angels, within the vast circumference of my
 * dominions; assemble now in yon far distant
 * world, near where Uriel holds his radiant
 * throne; there rolls the earth, encompassed
 * by the wandering moon, whose paler beams
 * and varying face, divide the seasons, and
 * measure out the time to mortal men; on
 * yonder earth dwells my beloved Son, my
 * only Son, in whom my glory is expressed.
 * Though he appears to the inhabitants of that
 * world, a person in every respect like them,

* Mat. iii, 17.

' yet I behold his glory beaming through the
 ' flesh; on him my chief regard shall rest,
 ' when suns and stars wither and decay.
 ' Go then, and mark his sufferings, behold
 ' his glorious deeds, and learn from his life
 ' how men and angels ought to live.'

' Thus from his splendid throne the Eternal
 ' spoke; his voice was heard with extatic obe-
 ' dience, and immediately they assembled in
 ' flaming squadrons from ten thousand worlds.
 ' Since that time they frequently descended to
 ' behold his wondrous works, and again af-
 ' cended; on the pure convexity they travell-
 ' ed far to the east with the rising Sun. The
 ' earth they viewed, beheld its variety of cli-
 ' mates; the nations sunk in ignorance they
 ' deplored, and marked those lands where the
 ' fallen Angels held their impious thrones.
 ' This perhaps you know. But as for these
 ' bright legions whom now you see, they are
 ' strangers indeed, the inhabitants of far dis-
 ' tant worlds, lately sprung from Chaos and
 ' eternal night. On the utmost verge of na-
 ' ture is their dwelling place, near the dark,
 ' the deep, the infinite abyss of boundless
 ' space, where God alone resides; three years
 ' and more have they travelled on their way,

‘ swifter than the beams of yon refulgent star,
 ‘ and having passed unnumbered worlds, and
 ‘ glorious systems, suns and revolving planets,
 ‘ stretched out in empty space, far beyond
 ‘ the reach of mortal eyes, or human thought,
 ‘ they now embrace the rising day, and the
 ‘ arrival of other angelic powers, when all
 ‘ the sons of light shall with amazement be-
 ‘ hold the sufferings of the great Messiah.”

Gabriel with rapture listened, and then re-
 plied, ‘ From the earth and presence of the
 ‘ Messiah I am just returned. There, I be-
 ‘ held him sunk in the most abject sorrow,
 ‘ oppressed with agony and unmuterable woe.
 ‘ The quick apprehension of his own death,
 ‘ combined with the tender feelings of com-
 ‘ passion for the miseries of the human race,
 ‘ had exhausted his strength to such a degree,
 ‘ that he fell to the ground, and had nearly
 ‘ expired in a bloody sweat. I administered
 ‘ every consolation to him, and strengthened
 ‘ every fainting limb. Though from his foes
 ‘ he could have escaped, he would not; and
 ‘ though his power is infinitely superior to
 ‘ their united strength, yet he will by no
 ‘ means defend his person, nor blast with in-
 ‘ dignation their impious designs; Angels

' may view the horrid scene, but dare not in-
 ' terpose. Whatever God permits, he is will-
 ' ing to suffer: neither friends, nor foes, nor
 ' hell, nor earth can shake the purpose of his
 ' soul. Such spotless virtue; such filial obe-
 ' dience to God, and love to all the human
 ' race; such meekness, condescension, and
 ' magnanimity, never yet appeared in heaven
 ' above, nor on the earth beneath. I eyed
 ' him with tender pity, I beheld him with the
 ' greatest admiration, and having ministered
 ' to him in his great distress, I ascended the
 ' Heavens again, and with anxiety wait the
 ' high commands of our Almighty fovereign.'

' This charge I bear,' replied the mighty
 ' Prince: ' Here let us rest until morning
 ' light arrive, until all our armies assemble
 ' where we stand, then shall ye hear what
 ' wonders must be done by potent angels,
 ' while the great Messiah suffers.'

A bright Seraph stood on Raphael's right
 hand, who the Angelic powers commanded,
 that dwelt in the most distant worlds, border-
 ing on the utmost verge of nature; celestial
 majesty from his countenance beamed, while
 he thus the fervent wishes of his heart express'd.

‘ O thou exalted Prince, who our joyful
 ‘ legions conducted from the empyrean to
 ‘ this lower world, let us hear the virtues of
 ‘ this man divine, that Son of God, who now
 ‘ remains afflicted on the earth. Ten thou-
 ‘ sand worlds and more, fill up the boundless
 ‘ space between this dark globe, and the star-
 ‘ ry regions where we dwell. In these we
 ‘ have ever discovered unerring wisdom, al-
 ‘ mighty power, and everlasting goodness ;
 ‘ but how these qualities appear and in what
 ‘ manner they are displayed to the inhabitants
 ‘ of this world, we neither know, nor can con-
 ‘ ceive. Inform us then until the dawn-
 ‘ ing light arise, who that person is whom
 ‘ you call the Son of God, for we thought all
 ‘ Angels had been his sons. He appears more
 ‘ dear than all, why does he live obscure in
 ‘ you dark world ? Why in that world is he
 ‘ so much distressed ? And wherefore must
 ‘ he die ? ’

Raphael answered, with a countenance re-
 plete with majesty and sweet benevolence ;
 ‘ Not hours, but years, might roll away, be-
 ‘ fore the half be told, that might be told of
 ‘ of him. The Son of God is he who made

‘ this lower world where now he dwells, and
‘ every other seen by mortal or immortal eyes.
‘ God made them all ’tis true, but made them
‘ all by him. I saw the day when the foun-
‘ dations of the earth were laid, and the hea-
‘ vens stretched out. I then beheld, and
‘ thousands more besides, when clothed with
‘ majesty divine, him swiftly descending into
‘ the empty space. He commanded, and lo!
‘ the various elements of this material world
‘ sprung up in wild confusion. He said, Thou
‘ glorious light arise, and at his word the light
‘ appeared. Thou azure sky extend thy am-
‘ ple sphere around the globe, and so it was.
‘ Retire ye floods and let the verdant earth
‘ appear with hills and dales; the verdant
‘ earth with hills and dales were seen, with
‘ various seas and rolling floods, collected in
‘ the hollow deep. Shine forth thou radiant
‘ sun, thou paler moon and twinkling stars,
‘ send forth your silver beams, and rule the
‘ lonely night; the flaming sun blazed in the
‘ sky, the day shone forth, and in the night
‘ the moon and stars appeared. The hide-
‘ ous monsters in the rolling tide, and every
‘ fish that cuts the yielding stream, he then pro-
‘ duced, and every fowl that wings the lucid
‘ air; these from the watery element, sprung

' at his command. Thou fruitful earth,
 ' he said, bring forth the various tribes of
 ' brutal life, the wild, the tame, the great,
 ' the small, the swift, the slow, on rocky
 ' mountains, and on level plains; lo, at his
 ' word the teeming earth brought forth her
 ' various kind, in full perfection, all without
 ' a fault. These he made in six successive
 ' days; we saw the different parts arise in gra-
 ' dual order, not at once, for then only had
 ' we seen the stupendous effects of Almighty
 ' power; but as in order every part sprang up
 ' at his command, we could discern the wise
 ' design, and beautiful contrivance of the
 ' whole. Then it was, that ten thousand
 ' cherubims and heavenly saints stood round
 ' the rising world, where six dark globes, en-
 ' compassed by their moons of various size,
 ' at due distances move, in just proportion,
 ' round the central Sun. With transporting
 ' admiration we beheld each day new won-
 ' ders rising to our view. From darkness and
 ' wild confusion, we perceived the dawnings
 ' of order and harmony carried on by slow
 ' degrees to full perfection, and all the parts
 ' so wisely settled, as to form one grand and
 ' complicated machine, whose various mo-
 ' tions tend to produce the happiness of all

‘ that dwell therein. At the sight of the crea-
 ‘ tion, ten thousand Angels on their golden
 ‘ harps his praise resounded, and the Sons of
 ‘ God vociferated in raptures of excessive
 ‘ joy.’

‘ The last and noblest of his work was man;
 ‘ him he formed after his own image; the
 ‘ dust of the earth supplied materials for his
 ‘ body; his soul was of a divine original, cap-
 ‘ able of immortality, and invested with do-
 ‘ minion over all the inferior creatures. Two
 ‘ only were formed at the beginning, from
 ‘ whom innumerable multitudes have since
 ‘ descended. These in a state of trial were
 ‘ placed; immortal life and never fading hap-
 ‘ piness were to be the reward of their obedi-
 ‘ ence; death and final woe, the consequence
 ‘ of their rebellion, and the just punishment
 ‘ of their disobedience. Satan, the leader of
 ‘ apostate angels, in disguise entering their
 ‘ peaceful habitation, deceived and drew them
 ‘ into guilt. Then had they perished by the
 ‘ sword of justice, but mercy interposing,
 ‘ saved their lives, yet not for ever; an im-
 ‘ mortality on earth to them had been their
 ‘ greatest curse; then entered death, and all
 ‘ that springs from dust, returns to dust again.

' Mercy appointed this to be the terror of
 ' vice, and trial of virtue, to cut off the in-
 ' corrigible from society, and deliver the
 ' righteous from the evils to come. No soon-
 ' er had rebellion entered, than a promise of
 ' deliverance from sin and death was made
 ' to them, by one who should descend from
 ' their loins, one who should destroy the
 ' power of Satan, and raise them from the
 ' dead to a blessed immortality. At length,
 ' when all nations had revolted from the true
 ' God, joined in rebellion with Satan, and
 ' fallen into the grossest idolatry, he appear-
 ' ed to Abraham the Father of the Jewish na-
 ' tion, renewed the original promise, made
 ' choice of his posterity as his own peculiar peo-
 ' ple, delivered to them his laws, and ruled
 ' over them in a special manner by a series
 ' of extraordinary dispensations. The joyful
 ' time approached when God intended to re-
 ' deem his people, and destroy the kingdom
 ' of Satan by the mediation of his well belov-
 ' ed Son, whose character and ministry he
 ' had clearly foretold by the Jewish Prophets.
 ' The time being fully accomplished, the very
 ' time when the world stood most in need of
 ' him, his glory he threw aside, left the hea-
 ' vens, and descended to this lower world,

‘ not in the glorious majesty of a power divine,
 ‘ nor in angelic form, a pure ætherial sub-
 ‘ stance such as ours; but wonderful to relate,
 ‘ united to a human body, and by a divine
 ‘ power conceived, in the virgin’s womb he lay
 ‘ concealed, full nine successive moons; at
 ‘ length a feeble infant he breathed the vital
 ‘ air, and viewed the glimmering dawn of
 ‘ light through mortal eyes. In low disguise
 ‘ he thus appeared like all the sons of men,
 ‘ subject to pains and wants, to peril, toil, and
 ‘ death. No regal pomp, or splendour of
 ‘ terrestrial power in him was seen. Full thir-
 ‘ ty years he lived in mean obscurity, un-
 ‘ known to men; but seen, admired, and
 ‘ guarded by angelic hosts. The Almighty
 ‘ Father, then with awful voice proclaim-
 ‘ ed him, ‘ His well beloved Son;’* Angels,
 ‘ men, and devils heard the voice; Sa-
 ‘ tan confounded, trembled at the sound,
 ‘ and feared confinement in the burning lake.
 ‘ In vain, he tried his wiles, and all the
 ‘ snares he could invent, but nothing could
 ‘ seduce the Son of God. Inspired by
 ‘ the sacred light of heavenly wisdom, he

* Mat. iii, 17.

' preached repentance to the chosen race;
 ' and life eternal to all that trust in him. By
 ' the most wonderful acts of power and grace
 ' he gave abundant proofs of his divine au-
 ' thority. Satan urged by infernal fury con-
 ' spired against his life, that life more preci-
 ' ous than the heavens, and all their nume-
 ' rous hosts; yea God permits that sacred life
 ' to fall, as the only means to save a sinking
 ' world. This he knows will come to pass,
 ' this he will bear in pure compliance to his
 ' Father's will, and kind compassion to the
 ' human race. So pure and perfect shall
 ' his righteousness appear, that for his
 ' sake, and the encouragement of piety
 ' amongst men, a pardon will be granted to
 ' all who believe, and dutifully acquiesce in
 ' his laws. Within three days he will arise
 ' from the dead, and ascend the heavens, sit
 ' on the right hand of God, far above all
 ' principality, and power, and might, and
 ' dominion. Then shall the power of Sa-
 ' tan be destroyed in every nation; righ-
 ' teousness and truth shall spread afar, even
 ' to the uttermost parts of the earth, and
 ' the inhabitants of this world become the
 ' servants of the living God. The end of all
 ' things shall then approach, the dead shall

' be raised, men and devils shall be judged,
 ' and the inferior world shall perish in de-
 ' vouring flames; the wicked shall be punish-
 ' ed, and the righteous rewarded with ever-
 ' lasting glory.'

Raphael had scarce concluded, when lo! the clear convexity of Heaven was covered with pure ætherial spirits, compacted close, and numberless as the dew of Hermon, or the pearly drops, on the rosy fields of Sharon. Over the lucid hemisphere they stood, in perfect order, circle within circle, as in the troubled pool, wide and more wide the swelling circles move; Judea was the centre, the scene of awful deeds, nor was the light obscured by all these numerous hosts; still they remained invisible to mortal eyes; yet whenever they please they clothe themselves in robes of air condensed and dyed with various light. No sound of wild confusion or hideous uproar ever was heard; a solemn silence dwelt on every lip. At length the great ætherial trumpet blew, this trumpet once before was heard on Sinai's cloudy top, but never since, nor shall be heard again by mortal ears, until the Messiah rend the Heavens in flaming fire, and raise the dead to life. Then with an aw-

ful voice Raphael spoke, and thus proclaimed the Almighty's dread commands.

‘ Ye Saints, ye Angels, ye thrones, domi-
 ‘ nions, and powers attend; this day the Son
 ‘ of God must die, not by constraint; con-
 ‘ strained indeed by love, but not compelled
 ‘ by force. The abandoned Jews, actuated
 ‘ by the powers of darkness, have already de-
 ‘ creed his death; and God, who can bring
 ‘ good out of evil, suffers them to execute
 ‘ their dire designs; glory to himself, and
 ‘ everlasting joy to all good men, shall be the
 ‘ reward of his temporal sufferings; the sin
 ‘ of the world shall destroy the Lord of life,
 ‘ and by his death its power shall be dissolv-
 ‘ ed, the accursed serpent shall bite his heel,
 ‘ and in just disdain shall grind the snake to
 ‘ dust, Die he must by the hands of sinful
 ‘ men, as the Prophets have foretold, and
 ‘ branded with the opprobrious appellation of
 ‘ an impostor; but God intends the impar-
 ‘ tial world in every age, shall be convinced
 ‘ of his innocence, and of the divine power
 ‘ by which he acted. For this purpose, Ne-
 ‘ riah descend instantly to the earth, go to
 ‘ Jerusalem, enquire for the perfidious disci-
 ‘ ple; awaken in his soul the horrors of con-

' scious guilt, a sense of shame, and the ter-
 ' rors of future punishment, that in the bit-
 ' terest agonies of remorse he may confess his
 ' crime, and testify the purity of his afflicted
 ' Lord. Let his confession be public, in or-
 ' der to stamp indelible disgrace upon his as-
 ' sociates; then let despair hurry the guilty
 ' wretch to sudden death, a death inflicted
 ' by those very hands which received the pur-
 ' chase money for his Master's life. This shall
 ' acquit the Son of God from the malicious
 ' imputation of imposture and deceit. As the
 ' Jews intend to inflict upon the Messiah the
 ' most ignominious death, the Roman Gover-
 ' nor must be applied to, a man covetous,
 ' bloody and unjust; before his tribunal
 ' shall the Son of God appear; therefore
 ' Zedakel descend, and when he sits in
 ' judgment banish from his mind all preju-
 ' dice and partiality; impress upon the im-
 ' agination of his Consort when asleep,
 ' such an alarming vision, as may induce
 ' her husband, to lean to the righteous,
 ' and spare the effusion of innocent blood;
 ' when he shall pronounce through fear
 ' of the Jews, the unjust and cruel sen-
 ' tence, let him publicly declare, by some
 ' expressive sign, that by menaces, and con-

'trary to every principle of justice and hu-
 'manity, it was extorted, and with reluct-
 'ance granted. Whoever then shall exa-
 'mine his doctrines, his life and miracles,
 'together with the confession of Judas, and
 'the declaration of Pilate, will perceive in the
 'clearest light, that Jesus was no deceiver,
 'but the true Messiah, and the Son of
 'God. This awful day must be recorded
 'while the sun and moon exists; the hea-
 'vens above, and the foundations of the
 'earth must feel the pangs of their inno-
 'cent and dying Lord; every age must
 'behold the dreadful scene with deep dis-
 'tress, in solemn sadness, and with fear-
 'ful omens of approaching woe. All joy
 'shall cease, every pensive heart shall mourn,
 'and deadly horrors fill the wretched land.
 'The flocks shall cease to feed, the herds in
 'mournful accents low, the fowls of heaven
 'shall seek a safe retreat, and hells dark
 'mansions vomit up their dead. The infer-
 'nal hosts shall obtain a speedy triumph,
 'and heavens bright legions tremble at his
 'death. Then near the earth let us descend,
 'and resting upon the inferior clouds, with
 'wonder view the distressing scene. While
 'he remains upon the earth, and when we

' behold his sacred limbs stained with crim-
 ' son blood, Eliphaz, put thou out the golden
 ' lamp of heaven, nor let the radiant sun to
 ' the earth its lustre shew, for then the great
 ' Messiah dies. Let sudden darkness spread
 ' its sable wings, and cast an awful gloom
 ' over all the land, whilst he who is the
 ' worlds great luminary, hangs in a sad eclipse
 ' upon the cross. When his last expiring
 ' words are heard, let Gabriel to Mount Ca-
 ' valry descend, and shake the earth and rend
 ' the solid rocks; let the opening graves throw
 ' up their dead; and the shocking ravages of
 ' mortality expose to public view. By these
 ' miracles God intends to signalize the death
 ' of his well beloved Son, to rouze attention,
 ' to awaken well disposed minds, and to pre-
 ' pare them for greater evidence yet to come.

The orders being executed by the Arch-
 angel, they instantly descended, and resting
 on the lowering clouds, critically observed
 the extraordinary transactions of the day.

The rising sun having dyed with crimson
 the eastern clouds, the wild beasts of the fo-
 rest retired to their dens, and active persons
 commenced the labours of the day; when,

by the authority of the Chief Priest, Jesus was led a prisoner to the council chamber in the temple, where the Sanhedrim had assembled in order to try him, the night preceding being illegal, as to time and place: With an intention of giving the air of justice to their proceedings, they put him again to the bar. In meek and peaceful dignity he stood, when the High Priest exclaimed, ‘ On a former
 ‘ occasion you confessed yourself to be the
 ‘ Messiah, the Son of the living God, and
 ‘ the King of Israel, do you now retract, or
 ‘ still persist in the same declaration?’

He replied, ‘ I am sensible you will pay no
 ‘ credit to my assertions, though I should
 ‘ confirm them by indisputable evidence;
 ‘ neither will you permit me peaceably to de-
 ‘ part: nevertheless, I will neither conceal,
 ‘ nor deny my real character, to avoid your
 ‘ indignation; I therefore again inform you,
 ‘ that I am the Messiah, foretold and describ-
 ‘ ed by the ancient Prophets; of this you
 ‘ shall be convinced, and compelled to
 ‘ confess the truth, when I come to take
 ‘ vengeance upon the Jewish nation, and to
 ‘ judge the world in righteousness.’

Without hesitation they pronounced him a blasphemer, an imposter, and worthy of death. According to the law of Moses, the blasphemer was subject to be stoned; a punishment though severe, yet they deemed it insufficient. Therefore that he might suffer the most ignominious and painful death that the Roman Laws could inflict, they bound him as a Malefactor, and led him immediately to the Governor, a man of an hasty imperious temper, a judge whose decisions were ever in favour of those who gave the greatest douceurs; haughty, tyrannical, rapacious, and admirably adapted to accomplish their wicked ends.

Judas in the meantime disappointed by the sentence of the Council, and the meek deportment of his injured Lord; began to repent, and determined if practicable to save his master's life. He went to the temple with the purchase money of his iniquity in his guilty hand, and addressed the Chief Priests and Elders in the following terms.

‘ I now find, ye have condemned that
 ‘ righteous man, whom I perfidiously betray-

' ed; condemned him contrary to every prin-
 ' ciple of equity, and against my own expec-
 ' tations. Three years and more have I been
 ' his intimate companion and disciple; I have
 ' observed his miracles; and narrowly watch-
 ' ed his actions; during that period, I have
 ' never perceived the least offence in his con-
 ' duct either to God or man. Had he done
 ' amiss, no one could have a better opportu-
 ' nity to testify against him than myself;
 ' of his innocence ye seem satisfied; ye
 ' never had recourse to my testimony, and
 ' even those that did appear, ye were under
 ' the necessity of rejecting, as insufficient to
 ' establish any crime. Fully sensible of the
 ' purity of his heart, and too inconsiderately
 ' counting upon your integrity, I presumed
 ' he would have been acquitted. The idea
 ' of his dissolution fills my soul with horror;
 ' I am conscious I have betrayed his inno-
 ' cent blood, and under the goading agonies
 ' of remorse, I now solemnly confess my crime,
 ' and with detestation abandon the accursed
 ' bribe. Reflect seriously what ye do; never
 ' permit that unjust and cruel sentence to be
 ' executed, lest his blood should cry aloud for
 ' vengeance on the whole nation, and crush
 ' me, the miserable author of his unhappy
 ' fate.'

The arguments of Judas made no impression on the Priests, who indifferently replied, ‘What is that to us? See thou to that:’* We ‘have found him guilty, not indeed by the ‘force of witnesses, but by his own unequivocal confession, which is clearly sufficient ‘to condemn any criminal: He is a blasphemer, an imposter, and therefore must die.’ Judas having heard their determination, and despairing of forgiveness, threw down the money in the temple, and retired to a solitary place, where, the ruins of antiquity, and a melancholy gloom of a tall cypress, overhanging the wall, and extending its branches of deadly hue, struck his guilty mind with additional horror. In retirement, the aggravation of his offence forcibly occurred to him; at length, overpowered by despair, he exclaimed in the following manner :

‘Wretch that I am Whither shall I fly—
‘fly where I will, guilt attends me, vengeance pursues me. I have perfidiously betrayed the innocent blood of my best friend
‘—the greatest of Prophets—yea, the Son of

* Matt. xxvii. 4.

‘ God, and the long expected Messiah: Hor-
 ‘ rible crime! committed against the strong-
 ‘ est light—perpetrated with consummate de-
 ‘ liberation,—and in defiance of repeated ad-
 ‘ monitions. In concert with his mortal foes,
 ‘ and under the mask of friendship, I saluted
 ‘ my master, and kissed him with a treach-
 ‘ erous smile. Cursed thirst of gain, to what
 ‘ extremity hast thou reduced me? Long have
 ‘ I increased my store by the peculation of
 ‘ the poor! I am utterly undone: No riches
 ‘ can soothe my guilty breast,—kingdoms
 ‘ have lost their value in my estimation, I
 ‘ scorn them all:—Alas! he is doomed to die,
 ‘ all hopes of life are at an end. Why did I
 ‘ not credit his words, “that he would suffer
 ‘ many things of the Chief Priests and elders,
 ‘ and at length be put to death?” And must
 ‘ I be the horrid cause of all his sufferings?
 ‘ Tormenting thought how can I endure thee!
 ‘ Neither solitude nor society can give me ease.
 ‘ Monster of the human race, a companion only
 ‘ for dæmons and myself! Shall I pray to
 ‘ God? No, impossible! My sins are un-
 ‘ pardonable. The irrevocable sentence is
 ‘ already proclaimed; last night I heard it
 ‘ from his own lips—“but woe to that man
 ‘ by whom the son of man shall be betrayed!

“ Good were it for that man if he had never
 “ been born*.” His words I regarded not,
 ‘ but now I feel their awful force. Cursed be
 ‘ the hour when I was born, and the moment
 ‘ I first drew in the vital air. I sinned wan-
 ‘ tonly supposing his goodness would rea-
 ‘ dily forgive me—Will he now forgive? No,
 ‘ he cannot, he never will reverse the aw-
 ‘ ful judgment. Shall I burst through the
 ‘ guards that surround him, and supplicate
 ‘ for mercy at his feet? No, the very sight of
 ‘ the guards would increase my torment;
 ‘ How could I behold him in that miserable
 ‘ state? His penetrating eyes, and gentle
 ‘ look would add fuel to the flames already
 ‘ kindled in my bosom. Heaven and earth
 ‘ are pointed at me; God and all his angels
 ‘ are my foes—men and devils hold me in de-
 ‘ testation—the clouds above frown dreadful
 ‘ over my guilty head; these ancient ruins
 ‘ appear to tremble at my crime. Ye lighten-
 ‘ ings destroy me in a moment, ye tremend-
 ‘ ous walls crush my body to the dust, let
 ‘ some stormy tempest hurl me hence on its
 ‘ furious wings, and dash me headlong on

* Mark xiv. 21.

‘ some mountains craggy top, or plunge me
 ‘ in the foaming deep.—O earth! how canst
 ‘ thou bear the load of so much guilt! open
 ‘ thy wide extended jaws, and sink me ten
 ‘ thousand fathom below the regions of the
 ‘ dead. Thy light, O Sun, upbraids me; even
 ‘ life so valuable to all, torments me. O God,
 ‘ grant me but one favour, blot me out of
 ‘ thy creation, and let all pain, sense, thought,
 ‘ and recollection for ever cease. To thee,
 ‘ O death, I now appeal! Thou last resource
 ‘ of distracted misery, approach and end my
 ‘ woes. Since none will grant relief, I will
 ‘ free myself—These hands, these impious
 ‘ hands received the accursed bribe, these
 ‘ very hands shall grant the wished for suc-
 ‘ cour. That aged tree, that far extending
 ‘ bough, that ruined wall, and this strong
 ‘ girdle, all these combined shall end my
 ‘ wretched days, and make a sad atonement
 ‘ for my crime.—What thoughts are these!
 ‘ Fear begone!—Welcome death, despair de-
 ‘ fies all pain.’

With looks of infernal horror, he then pro-
 ceeded through an aperture in the wall, and by
 a girdle suspended to a branch extending
 over it, terminated his miserable existence;

In the most convulsive agitation he remained, until the knot loosing, he suddenly fell on the pointed ruins beneath, burst asunder, and mingled his bowels with the dust.

Jesus in the mean time was led to the Governor's palace, where a guard of soldiers and servants were placed: but being heathens, the Priests refused to enter lest they should be defiled by approaching too near such persons. The Governor being informed that a prisoner was brought, against whom an immediate order was requested for public execution, desired to know his crime. Conscious of the iniquity of their proceedings, and unwilling that an enquiry should be made, they answered in general, that if he were not a criminal, they would not have accused him. The Governor replied, 'If his crime be of a religious nature take him and judge him according to your laws, for I am an entire stranger in those matters.' 'He is unquestionably a criminal,' they answered, 'we have already adjudged him deserving of death; but as it is not lawful for us to inflict that punishment which the enormity of his crime deserves;

' we request from you an order for his im-
 ' diate crucifixion.' ' The man may be in-
 ' nocent for ought I know,' said the Gover-
 ' nor, ' Why would you have me condemn
 ' him without even knowing his crime? You
 ' must exhibit an accusation against him, or
 ' I positively refuse to interpose.

Reduced to the necessity of charging him
 with some enormous offence, and knowing
 the dependance of the Governor upon the
 Roman Emperor, they accused him with se-
 dition, asserting with the greatest confidence,
 that he had attempted to pervert the minds
 of the people from their customary obedi-
 ence to the Government, forbidding them
 to pay tribute to Cæsar, and asserting
 that he was the Messiah, the only King
 of the Jews. Pilate hearing these words
 deemed it necessary to enquire into the
 truth, and having taken his seat in the judg-
 ment hall, addressed Jesus in the follow-
 ing terms; ' You have now heard the crimes
 ' whereof you are accused. You are permit-
 ' ted to speak in your defence; be under no
 ' fear but candidly state what you have to
 ' say in your vindication.'

Jesus answered with a countenance and tone replete with innocence and dignity; ‘ You have for some time held the Government of Judea ; I have frequently taught in the temple, and in the synagogues, upon every public occasion, both in the city and country : during that time, have you ever heard any thing prejudicial to me, or that wore in the smallest degree the appearance of sedition ? Or do you merely proceed upon the clamour raised by the people ? If so, take heed that you are not imposed upon, for you will find the accusation is founded entirely upon the ambiguity of a single word ; they inform you, I pretend to be King of the Jews, and would endeavour to convince you I am an enemy to Cæsar ; that is not the case, I have no design to establish a worldly kingdom in opposition to the Roman Government ; my ideas are quite the contrary.’

Pilate replied, ‘ I am no Jew, I know not your intentions, nor in what superstitious sense you may use certain words ; the rulers of your people, who are competent judges, have brought you before me as a person en-

‘gaged in seditious practices; if the charge
 ‘be not true, convince me of your innocence,
 ‘for I am open to conviction.’

Jesus answered, ‘I indeed propose to
 ‘erect a kingdom, but it differs materially
 ‘from those of this world, and has no ten-
 ‘dency to create disturbance in the civil go-
 ‘vernment. Were I inclined to assume the
 ‘royal power, like other kings, I would have
 ‘commanded my servants to fight; but that
 ‘I absolutely forbade them, on the contrary,
 ‘I exhorted them to be subject to the higher
 ‘powers, to render to Cæsar the things that
 ‘are Cæsar’s, and to God the things that are
 ‘God’s. My kingdom is wholly of a spiritual
 ‘nature, consisting in the obedience of men’s
 ‘wills and affections to the laws of God.’

‘After this explanation, said Pilate, you
 ‘must admit in general, that you have taken
 ‘the title of a king?’—‘True,’ replied Jesus,
 ‘but it is only in the sense I have now ex-
 ‘plained the word. For that end I was born,
 ‘and for that purpose I came into the world,
 ‘that I might bear witness to the truth;
 ‘there is no compulsion in my kingdom, nei-
 ‘ther shall the sword be unsheathed in de-

• fence of my authority. I came to publish
 ‘ the laws of God to the inhabitants of this
 ‘ world, and to enforce obedience by the re-
 ‘ wards and punishments of a world to come.
 ‘ Whoever sincerely loves, and is ready to em-
 ‘ brace the truth, will hear my testimony,
 ‘ be convinced by it, and faithfully obey it.’

Pilate descended from the tribunal and ad-
 ‘ dressed the Priests and Elders in the follow-
 ‘ ing manner: ‘ I have examined the man
 ‘ whom ye brought before me as a seditious
 ‘ person, and a pretender to the kingdom of
 ‘ Judah. After the strictest enquiry there
 ‘ appears to me no foundation whatever for
 ‘ the charge. I know not what particular
 ‘ doctrines he may have taught contrary to
 ‘ your religious opinions, neither does it be-
 ‘ come me to form an opinion upon subjects
 ‘ of that tendency: As to the government,
 ‘ I cannot find that he ever attempted to raise
 ‘ a commotion, or claimed any authority in
 ‘ this province.’

The Jews were enraged, and furiously ex-
 claimed ; “ Be assured he is both dangerous
 ‘ and seditious, for not merely Judea, but all
 ‘ Galilee can testify the truth of what we

‘assert. He has travelled over the country,
 ‘and spread his doctrines far and wide, from
 ‘the very confines to this city.’

Pilate finding that Jesus came from that country, and generally resided there, conceived his case more immediately came under the cognizance of Herod. In order therefore to get rid of the importunity of the Jews, and of so odious an affair, he sent him to Herod, who was at Jerusalem, on account of the feast. Herod rejoiced at the appearance of Jesus, for he had long desired to see, and converse with such a wonderful man. He was accused of sedition by the Chief Priests, as he had been before Pilate: Conscious of his innocence, and knowing the iniquity of his accusers, he made no reply. Herod perceiving their malice, pronounced openly, that the crimes alledged against him, could not be established by sufficient evidence; ‘So far are the charges from being true,’ said he, ‘particularly in Galilee, I have for
 ‘some years heard many wonderful things
 ‘concerning this man, yet I never found any
 ‘accuse him with sedition; though multi-
 ‘tudes have attended to hear his doctrine,
 ‘I never knew of any riot, or insurrection,

‘ occasioned by his followers; on the contrary,
 ‘ to speak impartially, I have always found
 ‘ his followers the most peaceable subjects,
 ‘ under these circumstances the charges ap-
 ‘ pear to me to be void of foundation.’ In
 order to satisfy his curiosity, Herod put
 several questions to Jesus; ‘ Inform me,’
 said he, ‘ who you are, for various are the
 ‘ reports concerning you; some imagine you
 ‘ are Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the anci-
 ‘ ent Prophets returned to this world; others
 ‘ suppose you to be John the Baptist risen
 ‘ from the dead; Which of these do you pre-
 ‘ tend to be?’—Jesus made no reply. ‘ What,’
 said Herod, ‘ are you afraid to give an ac-
 ‘ count of yourself? A Prophet you certainly
 ‘ pretend to be, I have frequently heard of
 ‘ your miracles, but never saw them; now
 ‘ you have an opportunity to give a proof of
 ‘ your extraordinary power, if you possess
 ‘ any.’

Jesus knowing his licentious character and
 worthless disposition, did not think proper to
 exert it, either to save his own life, or to gra-
 tify the vanity of a wicked Prince; he there-
 fore remained silent. Herod highly offended,
 began to treat him with ridicule. ‘ This fel-

‘ low is sullen, stupid, or afraid to speak in
 ‘ the presence of his superiors,’ said he ; ‘ it
 ‘ clearly proves his meanness of birth :’ turn-
 ing to the officers, he said, ‘ your military ap-
 ‘ pearance has inspired his soul with terror ;
 ‘ he must look formidable at the head of an
 ‘ army : Who would not tremble at the pre-
 ‘ sence of such a king ? He is now disguised,
 ‘ let him therefore be clothed in apparel, be-
 ‘ coming his Majesty.’ In cruel derision he
 was dressed in a purple robe, and for a
 considerable time made the ludicrous ob-
 ject of Herod and his court. Having suf-
 fered many indignities with meekness and
 serenity, he was remanded to Pilate, who ad-
 dressed the Chief Priests thus.

‘ You have brought this man before me,
 ‘ as a seditious person, a disturber of the go-
 ‘ vernment, and a seducer of the people ; I
 ‘ told you, that after the most impartial in-
 ‘ vestigation, I could find no fault in him.
 ‘ Even Herod himself, who is of your own
 ‘ persuasion, and understands your laws and
 ‘ customs better than a Roman ; even he, I
 ‘ say, has found no truth in your allegations.
 ‘ Surely neither Herod nor myself are of his

‘ party ; we have no expectations from him,
 ‘ we hold our authority under Cæsar, and
 ‘ could we find any evidence, we would readi-
 ‘ ly comply with your request. If he imagines
 ‘ himself a king, he is clearly a very inoffen-
 ‘ sive one, there is nothing formidable in his
 ‘ appearance ; he is neither able to defend
 ‘ himself nor injure you ; he has neither
 ‘ guards to attend him, nor friends to recom-
 ‘ mend him, nor armies to fight his battles
 ‘ and crown him with victory. His preten-
 ‘ sions to royalty connected with the meanness
 ‘ of his appearance, render him an object of
 ‘ contempt. That was the punishment He-
 ‘ rod thought proper to inflict ; lest ye should
 ‘ think it too lenient, I will order him to be
 ‘ severely scourged and set at liberty.’

Lenity was so disgusting to their enraged
 tempers, that they loudly exclaimed for im-
 mediate death, and nothing less than cruci-
 fixation would satisfy them. Pilate unwilling
 to shed the blood of an innocent person, de-
 manded what evil he had done ? “ For my
 ‘ part I find no fault in him, much less any
 ‘ offence deserving of death.’ His feelings
 exasperated their fury, and made them the
 more clamorous for a speedy execution. When

the noise had in a great degree abated, some among the multitude, who regarded him as a prophet, and inwardly condemned the chief Priests, thought of an expedient to liberate him, by demanding the release of a prisoner at the time of the feast. Pilate cordially assented, and offered to their choice Jesus or Barabbas. Allowing them time for deliberation, he went into the hall, and thus reasoned with himself: ‘Certainly there is no
 ‘ comparison between the two men; Jesus has
 ‘ been admired and followed by the people,
 ‘ the Chief Priests and Elders are his only
 ‘ enemies; the multitude surely will prefer
 ‘ him to that infamous wretch Barabbas.’ While Pilate thus reasoned Alexander, the mortal enemy of Jesus, exerted all the power of his eloquence to direct the people in their choice.

‘ Men of Israel beware what ye do, upon
 ‘ your decision matters of the last importance
 ‘ evidently depends. Many there are present
 ‘ who attended the retinue of that ambitious
 ‘ and deceitful man, when he entered the ci-
 ‘ ty riding upon an ass. Be wiser now than
 ‘ ye were at that time, and suffer not such
 ‘ bold and blasphemous pretensions to impose

‘ upon your credulity. Are ye not inspired
 ‘ with resentment against such a daring impos-
 ‘ ter? Is this the desire of all nations, the
 ‘ king of Israel, the mighty prince that was
 ‘ to come, the glorious Messiah whose domi-
 ‘ nion shall extend from sea to sea, and from
 ‘ the river to the ends of the earth? What
 ‘ can ye expect? He is neither equal to de-
 ‘ fend himself nor deliver you. Where are
 ‘ his boasted miracles? Has the Almight-
 ‘ ty forsaken him? No; say rather that the
 ‘ Almighty never was with him. How egre-
 ‘ giously have ye been duped! Had he been
 ‘ the Messiah, he could without difficulty
 ‘ have confounded his enemies; but being an
 ‘ imposter, he is now confounded himself.
 ‘ smitten of God and afflicted. A foolish ad-
 ‘ miration once deceived you, let not an effe-
 ‘ minate compassion deceive you now. Ba-
 ‘ rabbas, I admit, is a criminal, condemned
 ‘ for robbery and murder, but Jesus of Naza-
 ‘ reth is worse, and has been justly condemn-
 ‘ ed as a blasphemer. Barabbas has offered
 ‘ violence to a few individuals, but Jesus has
 ‘ deceived a great part of the nation. Vio-
 ‘ lence and bloodshed excite horror and in-
 ‘ dignation, we therefore avoid them; but re-
 ‘ ligious imposture allures the unthinking,

'ensnares them in the net of intricate delu-
 'sion, and causes them ever to delight in
 'misery. Barabbas therefore ought to be
 'the object of your choice. As your friend,
 'the friend of my country, and the mouth of
 'our wise and holy Sanhedrim, I speak. Can
 'ye despise our authority, doubt our integrity,
 'or forsake your own interest to gratify a
 'mean and dangerous imposter? No, my
 'fellow citizens, I am induced to form a bet-
 'ter opinion of you. Think e'er it is too late,
 'abandon the man who has so long deceived
 'you, and suffer him to receive the reward
 'of his crimes.'

The multitude were easily biassed. Pilate
 growing impatient, returned, and demanded,
 'Whom will ye that I release unto you, Jesus
 'or Barabbas?' With an enraged voice they
 'all exclaimed, 'Barabbas!' 'What,' said
 he, 'shall I do with Jesus, whom they call
 'the Messiah?' They replied, 'Let him be
 'crucified.' 'Why,' said Pilate, 'what evil
 'hath he done? would you crucify an inno-
 'cent man? Nevertheless, to please your in-
 'dignation, I will chastise him and let him
 'go.' They still cried out with greater fury,
 'Let him be crucified.' During the confu-

sion, a servant brought a letter to Pilate from his wife to the following effect.

“ By all the Gods I entreat thee, O Pilate,
 “ have no hand in gratifying the malice of
 “ the Jews, by condemning that just man
 “ now before thee, for in my dream I beheld
 “ him barbarously murdered by the Jewish
 “ Priests. From his innocent blood which
 “ ran in streams through the public streets,
 “ there immediately arose a flame of fire, so
 “ furious and terrible that nothing could ex-
 “ tinguish it. In an instant, the city and
 “ adjacent country were involved in one
 “ dreadful conflagration. The terrors of my
 “ dream have nearly distracted my soul,—I
 “ awoke and found some relief; but the aw-
 “ ful impression still possesses my confounded
 “ imagination. Remember that dreams are
 “ from Jupiter, and often warn us of what
 “ shall come to pass.”

Pilate, having perused the letter, resolved if possible to save his life. He perceived the danger that might result from an enraged multitude, he thought of Mark Anthony, who by exposing to public view, the murdered body of Cæsar, first excited the compassion

of the people, and then roused their indignation against his murderers. With the same view he ordered Jesus to be led to the common hall by the soldiers, who stripped him, bound him to a pillar, and scourged him with unrelenting severity, until his tender flesh was torn asunder, and the pavement dyed with precious blood. They clothed him in a purple garment, plaited a crown of thorns, and set it upon his head, put a reed in his hand, imitating a sceptre, and kneeling down they exclaimed in derision, ‘Long live the king of the Jews;’ then taking the reed from his hand, they struck him on the head until the thorns sunk into his flesh; they spit in his face, smote him on the cheek, and treated him most contemptuously. With unshaken fortitude, astonishing meekness, and invincible patience, he bore every indignity. In that deplorable condition, Pilate led him forth, decorated with the ornaments of mock majesty, his head, face, and body streaming with blood, the multitude fixing their eyes upon him, the governor addressed them in the following manner.

‘Behold the man so much admired of late,
 ‘the man who taught in your temple, and

' healed your diseased friends, mark how in-
 ' nocent and mild he appears, not a frown
 ' ever was observed on his countenance, nor
 ' an angry word ever dropt from his lips ;
 ' behold the sad reverse of fortune,—not long
 ' since in crouds ye followed him, amazed at
 ' all he said or did; now ye persecute him
 ' with rage and unexampled fury. See the
 ' ludicrous garb in which he is clothed, the
 ' crown of thorns how it sinks into his flesh.
 ' Behold that placid countenance stained
 ' with blood! Is it not alone sufficient to gra-
 ' tify resentment and to excite compassion in
 ' your hearts? Have ye no mercy, no pity for
 ' an harmless, inoffensive man? Is it possible
 ' ye can be so lost to the cries of justice and
 ' humanity, as to reject an innocent person,
 ' and prefer a wretch condemned for sedition
 ' and murder. I find no fault in him, Herod
 ' found none, why then will ye be so implac-
 ' able? His life depends upon your word,
 ' speak that word and he shall live.'—They
 still cried out, ' Away with him, cru-
 ' cify him, crucify him.' Pilate observing,
 instead of requesting a favour, they appeared
 disposed to frighten him into a compliance,
 by mutiny; in an angry tone exclaimed,
 ' Since nothing short of crucifixion will satis-

‘ fy your unfeeling hearts, go, execute your
 ‘ cruel sentence, and let the consequence fall
 ‘ upon your unworthy heads ; it shall never
 ‘ be inflicted by my consent, or by my autho-
 ‘ rity.’—One of the Priests cried out, ‘ We
 ‘ are amazed at your declaration, though he
 ‘ appears innocent to you, he is unquestion-
 ‘ ably guilty, for according to our law, a
 ‘ man who arrogates the character of a Pro-
 ‘ phet is worthy of death. This he has open-
 ‘ ly done, yea more, he pretends to be the
 ‘ Son of God, which is the highest degree of
 ‘ blasphemy.’

Pilate was astonished, and pausing, said within himself, What man is this? I have heard many surprising reports concerning him ; the Jews have acted in a strange inconsistent manner, and now alledge an accusation entirely new :—After thus reasoning, he returned to the Judgment-seat. Jesus being placed at the bar, Pilate enquired who he was, from whence he came, of what family he was descended, and who were his immediate parents? Jesus made no reply. Pilate hurt at his silence, said, ‘ Why do you not answer? ‘ You are aware that I have power either to ‘ release or crucify you.’ He then said, ‘ I

‘ could with ease secure myself, so that nei-
 ‘ ther you nor the Jews could injure me ; but
 ‘ it is the will of my heavenly Father, from
 ‘ whom your power is derived, that for the
 ‘ most important ends I should be delivered
 ‘ into your hands ; as it is manifest they im-
 ‘ portune you to put me to death, I confess,
 ‘ your compliance is infinitely less criminal,
 ‘ than their unprovoked cruelty in demand-
 ‘ ing my life.

Pilate admiring his modesty, meekness,
 and innocent deportment, again addressed
 the multitude:—‘ The more I investigate
 ‘ the conduct of this man, the more I am sa-
 ‘ tisfied of his innocence. His deportment
 ‘ is truly praise-worthy ; he discovers no re-
 ‘ sentiment against you for all the indignities
 ‘ he has suffered, such meekness, fortitude,
 ‘ and magnanimity under persecution, I have
 ‘ never before witnessed ; ye have alledged
 ‘ a strange accusation against him ; but that
 ‘ has no connection with the crimes hitherto
 ‘ laid to his charge. He calls himself the
 ‘ Son of God, you say, and for aught I know
 ‘ it may be true : I have heard so many
 ‘ things of an extraordinary nature, from per-
 ‘ sons of undoubted veracity, that I am in-
 ‘ duced to believe there is something in his

‘character that approaches divinity, and
 ‘far surpasses the rest of men. I have en-
 ‘quired into his origin, his parents and fa-
 ‘mily, to all which questions he remained
 ‘silent, yet his silence did not appear to pro-
 ‘ceed from sullenness, conscious guilt, or
 ‘confusion, but from an inward sensibility,
 ‘greatness of mind, and a submission to the
 ‘will of heaven, to which he refers all his
 ‘sufferings. We have had men of our own
 ‘nation descended from the Gods, who were
 ‘distinguished by some extraordinary actions.
 ‘If this man be the Son of God, what daring
 ‘impiety will ye be guilty of, if in the vio-
 ‘lence of your indignation ye put him to an
 ‘infamous death: Beware then what ye do;
 ‘some of the gravest men of antiquity, the
 ‘wisest lawgivers, and the best friends of their
 ‘country have fallen victims to the ignorance,
 ‘envy, and malice of an enraged faction.
 ‘This, I fear, is now the case. Set bounds
 ‘to your indignation, be guided by the laws
 ‘of justice and humanity; let Barabbas meet
 ‘the reward of his crimes, and suffer an in-
 ‘nocent man to be restored to liberty.’

The sentiments of Pilate were delivered
 with energy and enthusiasm, and sufficiently
 indicated the high opinion he entertained of

his innocence, but in vain, for the Chief Priests had so inflamed the minds of the multitude, that neither the authority of the Governor, nor the force of reason, nor the voice of equity, nor the feelings of humanity were any longer regarded; at length they proceeded to indirect threatenings against the Governor, when Alexander with an air of boldness thus began.

‘It is evident you are disposed to reject our suit in defiance of our strenuous entreaties to the contrary. Here is a person who assumes the character of King of the Jews, a man who will seize the first opportunity upon the government of this province. We have brought him before your tribunal, we have supplicated justice, and though you derive your authority from Cæsar, yet you hesitate to put in execution the necessary punishment. Recollect, that any man who arrogates sovereignty without the approbation of Tiberius, is his avowed foe, and in this instance you are not Cæsar’s friend; reflect upon your own danger, and preserve your authority, by immediately complying with the request of the people.’

Pilate aware of the jealous disposition of Tiberius, and how easy it would be to misrepresent his conduct, and conceiving his fall might be the consequence, returned to the public tribunal in a dejected manner, and once more addressed the multitude:

‘ Behold, O ye hard-hearted and implacable Jews, the poor man, whom ye have accused of assuming the title of your king. He is one of your own nation, a teacher of your own religion, a man of wonderful meekness and affability; what benefit can ye propose by his death? Is it possible ye can be unanimous, and that no man will venture to plead in his behalf?’—They cried out, with increased fury, “ Let him be crucified*!” Many of them were strongly disposed to mercy, but the dread of an enraged faction vanquished their honourable feelings.

Pilate perceiving their obstinacy, replied in a scornful manner, ‘ What, shall I crucify your king?’—They retorted, ‘ We have no king but Cæsar, whose interest you are

* Matt. xxv i. 23

‘disposed to defeat.’ Finding **no** arguments could penetrate their adamantine breasts, that nothing but indignant clamour prevailed among the multitude, he acquiesced, and commanded the Centurion and Soldiers, who had previously inflicted the punishment, to conduct him to mount Calvary, and there prepare for his immediate crucifixion. In order to testify how reluctantly he passed the unjust sentence, he called for water and washed his hands before the multitude, exclaiming, ‘I call the Gods to witness my innocence, ye well know I have exerted the summit of my power to prevent the shedding innocent blood. I found no fault in him, but your riotous importunity has compelled me to condemn him. If ever the righteous Gods, who are the avengers of injured innocence, or the roman Senate, shall investigate this affair, the cruelty must rest with you for “I am innocent of the blood of that just man.” Then answered all the people, and said, ‘His blood be on us, and our children.*’

When the condemnation of Jesus had been declared, the soldiers unrobed him, clothed

* Mat. xxvii. 25.

him in his own garments, and placed upon his painful shoulders, already mangled with the scourge, the ponderous beam on which he was doomed to die; they led him to Mount Calvary, the place of public execution, amidst an innumerable multitude of Spectators, who thronged the streets. Exhausted by the bitterest sorrow and excruciating pain, he fainted under the deadly weight of his cross; but meeting accidentally on the road one Symon of Cyrene, him they compelled to bear it.

Among the vast crowd that followed to the execution, there were many women, the relations and friends of Jesus and his disciples, who could not behold the melancholy sight of suffering innocence, without the bitterest lamentation. Jesus observing it, he raised his countenance bloody and disguised, and said, “ Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for
 “ me: I knew this would happen, and I bear
 “ it with patient resignation to the divine
 “ will; rather weep for yourselves and chil-
 “ dren, 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 that never gave suck. Then shall
 “ they begin to say to the mountains, fall on

“ us; and to the hills, cover us*.” If God
 “ permits the innocent for wise and good
 “ ends, to suffer so much infamy and torment
 “ as I now bear, how dreadful do you think
 “ will be the vengeance of an offended God,
 “ when he comes in righteous judgment to
 “ punish this incorrigible nation?”—He pro-
 nounced these words with an air of sorrow
 and compassion, not like a vindictive man
 who rejoiced in the overthrow of his enemies.
 Two criminals convicted of robbery, were led
 to execution with him. This was intended
 by the Chief Priests, to impose upon the mul-
 titude who might imagine that Jesus was
 equally criminal.

Arriving at Golgotha, the fatal place where
 the guilty make an atonement by the just
 forfeiture of their lives, some of his friends
 presented him wine mingled with myrrh,
 with a view to fortify his nearly exhausted
 spirits, and render him insensible to the terrors
 of approaching death; but that he declined,
 fully resolved to suffer the worst that malice
 could inflict. He was immediately stript of his
 garments, raised from the ground, and nailed

* Matt. xxiii. 28, 29, 30.

to the cross, while streams of blood issued from his hands and feet. In the same manner the two thieves were crucified, the one on the right hand, the other on the left, and that he might be distinguished from those abandoned criminals, an inscription was written by Pilate, on the contrary side of the cross, in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, containing these words, “Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews”†. Many of the Jews were highly incensed, deeming it a public insult to the nation, therefore they entreated the Governor that he would write, but that he said, ‘I am King of the Jews.’ Pilate highly provoked at their insolence, and wishing so far to do justice to an injured person, answered, ‘What I have written, I have written‡.’

Jesus was no sooner nailed to the cross, than the four executioners began to divide his dress, which was all he had on earth. His inner garment being without a seam, they were unwilling to divide it, therefore cast lots whose it should be. During the period of his crucifixion, a strange compound of mournful lamentation, and triumphant

† John xix. 19.

‡ John xix. 22.

scorn was heard among the spectators. His afflicted friends bewailed his death most bitterly: but his cruel enemies insulted him with scoffs and reproaches; and “railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, ah, thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross. Likewise also the Chief Priests mocking, said among themselves, with the Scribes, He saved others, himself he cannot save. Let Christ the king of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him*.” To their insolent remarks he made no reply; but looking to the heavens with a countenance full of the deepest sorrow, and expressive of the most agonizing pain, he exclaimed, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.†” At the same time one of the thieves which were crucified with him, a man of the most abandoned and depraved mind, said in a discontented and sullen manner; ‘If you be the Messiah, why do you not descend from the cross and save yourself and us?’ But the other who was of a different

* Mark xv. 29, 30, 31, 32.

† Luke xxiii. 34.

disposition, patient under his sufferings, because he deemed them just, attentive to the deportment of Jesus, convinced of his innocence, and fully sensible that he was the Messiah, shocked at the wickedness of his companion, rebuked him, saying, ‘How can you be so utterly insensible of your own condition, as to insult a dying person, and one who is innocent:—then addressing himself to Jesus, he said, ‘Lord, I believe you to be the Messiah, and that after all your sufferings, God will exalt you to a state of inconceivable glory; I entreat you, therefore, when you obtain the possession of your kingdom, to have mercy upon me.’ ‘Fear not,’ replied Jesus, “To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*.”

In the mean time, the mother of Jesus, and her sister Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene, with John his beloved friend, all in the deepest sorrow stood near the cross. In their agonies of distress, they gazed on every feature stained with blood, and felt by sympathy the pangs of their dying Lord. No language can describe his

† Luke xxiii. 43.

mother's grief. In mournful silence she remained, nor could her eyes endure the sight of her Son, groaning in torment, streaming with blood, dying like a slave, or as the vilest malefactor murdered by the hands of cruel men, bearing all with meekness, praying for his enemies, submitting patiently to the will of God, and expiring in the most exalted hope of another and a better world. Often she raised her eyes to the cross; but confounded at the mournful sight, she burst into a flood of tears, while her heaving breast could scarce contain her throbbing heart, almost broken by the keenest woe. Jesus beheld his mother with the strongest emotions of sympathy and filial love. At length he addressed her: 'O woman! thou tenderest of parents, whom I still revere with my dying breath; be not too much dejected. Behold the man who possessed my affection, regard him henceforth as your only son; and you, my dearest friend, John, regard her as your mother; and when I am departed treat her with kindness and esteem.'

The glorious lamp of day having gained its meridian height, on a sudden the radiant beams began to fade, the face grew pale,

if astonished at the depravity of men, and filled with horror at the sufferings of the Son of God, it lay concealed for three long hours behind the sable and melancholy veil of ancient night. A gloomy horror dwelt on every brow, and terror seized the human breast: The affrighted birds fled to their solitary mansions; the lowing herds quitted their pasture, and looked with unusual sadness, the flocks staring round, stood amazed at the unexpected night, while each domestic animal retired in haste to its accustomed shelter. Nature in the saddest sorrow, threw aside her splendid robes of various colours, and covered all her works in deepest mourning: The songs of Angels ceased around the throne of God: the heavenly legions reclining on the darkened clouds, beheld his sufferings with a mixture of sorrow, terror, and admiration; while the infernal powers, metamorphised into buzzing insects, danced with malignant joy, and hellish triumph over the neighbouring hills. In the summit of their exultation, they experience the goading agonies of disappointed rage, - when they perceived that nothing could disconcert his mind, or inflame his temper with the least tincture of revenge, sullen discontent, or gloomy despair. He remain-

ed languishing in sorrow, and declining in strength until three in the afternoon, when raising his eyes to heaven, and pouring out his heart to God, he cried aloud, ‘ My God, ‘ my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Re- ‘ proached and insulted, tortured and cruci- ‘ fied by the hands of ungrateful men, they ‘ now think I am abandoned and cast off by ‘ thee; all that see me laugh at my sorrows ‘ and with insolent scorn ridicule my dying, ‘ pains: But Thou, the everlasting Friend of ‘ injured innocence, oppressed, and afflicted ‘ virtue, thou art he who sent me into the ‘ world, and hitherto hast supported me. ‘ Now, in this my last, my greatest agony ‘ and distress, thou canst not, wilt not for- ‘ sake thy well beloved Son, in whom thou ‘ art well pleased. Behold, O Father, my ‘ blood drops down like water, my sinews ‘ stretched, my bones disjoined, my heart ‘ melted with a burning heat, my strength ‘ exhausted, my spirits fail, my tongue parch- ‘ ed with intolerable thirst, the pangs of death ‘ have seized my afflicted soul, and the pains ‘ of hell encompass me, for there is none to ‘ help me besides thee.’—Whilst he prayed ‘ some, from the similitude of his words, not ‘ comprehending what he meant, ridiculed

‘ his prayer, and exclaimed, ‘ He called for ‘ Elias, let us observe whether he will come and take him down.’ When he complained of intolerable thirst, one of the soldiers dipt a sponge in vinegar, mingled with wormwood and gall, and fixing it on a reed, offered it to him on the cross. As soon as he had tasted the abominable mixture, he turned away his head, and cried with a loud voice, not like the feeble accents of a dying man, but with the strong and masculine voice of one in perfect health: “ Father, into thy hands I commend “ my spirit*.”—Having uttered these words, he gently bowed his head and expired without a groan.

No sooner had he breathed his last, than the foundations of the earth began to shake, Mount Calvary trembled, the solid rocks were rent asunder, and the sepulchres of the dead exposed to view. The astonished spectators looked around them, with a deadly paleness, and ghastly terror dwelt on every face. Many condemned their rashness, bewailed their guilt, and seemed fully sensible of his innocence whom they had so perfidiously destroy-

* Luke xxiii. 46.

ed; they shook their heads, smote their breasts, and wrung their guilty hands, while they returned with fearful perplexity to the city. The Roman Centurion who commanded the soldiers after he had recovered from his surprise, thus proceeded:

‘Certainly so dismal a day was never
 ‘known before; darkness began at noon,
 ‘and is not yet ended; the moon in her full
 ‘orb, and yet the sun totally eclipsed. When
 ‘he expired how dreadful was the earth-
 ‘quake, observe the amazing fracture made
 ‘in the solid rock; behold how the graves
 ‘stand open! The very dead are disturbed in
 ‘their gloomy mansions! See the skulls, the
 ‘various bones how they are scattered to and
 ‘fro upon the hill! What can it mean? The
 ‘Gods are exasperated against the unjust
 ‘proceedings: Nature appeared to totter
 ‘when he died;—doubtless he was the Son
 ‘of God. Herod found no fault in him,
 ‘neither did the Governor, convinced of his
 ‘innocence, every method he tried to save
 ‘his life, but in vain, no shadow of proof
 ‘could be alledged against him; yet the Jews
 ‘were implacable. Such mildness of temper,

' joined with such a majestic look, such a
 ' peaceful countenance, so much tranquility,
 ' fortitude and patience, under such base treat-
 ' ment, was never before seen or heard of.
 ' Such a love for his country, such meekness
 ' and benevolence towards his enemies and
 ' persecutors, such tender affection to his re-
 ' lations, such confidence in the Deity, hope
 ' and assurance of a future reward for all his
 ' sufferings; proves him to the plainest de-
 ' monstration to have been a most wonderful
 ' man. We admire Socrates; Socrates was
 ' far inferior to him; one died like a philoso-
 ' pher, the other died like a God. How
 ' strong and forcible were his last words, not
 ' like those of a man worn out with protracted
 ' woe, but one in perfect health; death seem-
 ' ed to await his signal; he died not from ne-
 ' cessity but choice; not from a deficiency of
 ' strength, but from a desire to depart from
 ' abandoned and wicked men. His deport-
 ' ment astonished me, and of this I am certain,
 ' he was a righteous man.'

No sooner had Jesus expired than his soul
 immediately entered the world of departed
 spirits; a vast and boundless region beyond
 the gates of death; a world divided into two

parts by a bottomless gulph through which it is impossible to pass. That to the right, called Paradise, admits none but the just, who having passed through a state of trial upon earth, enter therein, and live in purity until a certain period, when they re-enter their bodies made then incorruptible and immortal. On the left enter the souls of the wicked, there they are confined as in a doleful prison, until the end of the world, when they are again embodied and undergo the adequate punishment of their crimes. In that state, excluded from the material world, the lively representation of their past exploits are continually in their view. There sensible of the past, and timid of the future, they experience the most agonizing remorse. A strong imagination commands their variety of thought, and presents innumerable scenes of inexpressible anguish. A perpetual train of dreadful visions, far more terrible than the dreams of a guilty wretch stained with innocent blood, passes in continual succession through their minds, from which they can never be delivered, until the sound of the last trumpet awakes them from the dead to more lasting pains. In Paradise, the righteous, though excluded from the world of sense and flesh, recollect

the past; with joy they reflect upon every virtuous action, and triumph in the assured hope of a more perfect state of everlasting felicity. Their fancy, steered by the purest reason, presents scenes of exquisite delight. No painful reflection, no goading passion, can in the least disturb the calm serenity of their minds; social love, and mutual joy, and peaceful contemplation fill their souls with unspeakable satisfaction.

On the right, the soul of Jesus entered after he expired. All his pains in an instant dissipated; he felt immortal joy and inconceivable delight. As soon as he entered, thousands of spirits hailed him with joyful congratulations: 'Hail, mighty Saint,' they cried, 'far greater thou appearest than all that ever passed the gates of death, most welcome to the blessed world.' 'All hail,' he said again, to thronging multitudes which stood around, 'on earth no doubt many of you have heard of me, and anxiously awaited my appearance—Adam, thou first of men, great parent of the human race, I know thee well. It was I who informed you in the garden of Eden "that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent;"

‘ Abraham, my venerable friend, it was I who
 ‘ promised “ that in thy seed all the nations
 ‘ of the earth should be blessed.’ With thee
 ‘ I conversed in the plains of Mamre, imme-
 ‘ diately before the destruction of Sodom and
 ‘ Gomorrha. And all ye holy prophets, who
 ‘ at divers times, foretold the coming of the
 ‘ Messiah, it was I who endowed you with the
 ‘ spirit of inspiration ; I am the very man of
 ‘ whom ye wrote. When the fulness of time
 ‘ arrived, I threw aside my glory, took upon
 ‘ me the form of a servant, and was made in
 ‘ the likeness of man. I am the seed of the
 ‘ woman, and was born of a virgin——The
 ‘ seed of Abraham according to the flesh, ‘ a
 ‘ rod of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out
 ‘ of his roots.’ In me all your predictions
 ‘ are accomplished. I have been despised
 ‘ and rejected, a man of sorrows, and well
 ‘ acquainted with grief ; wounded for your
 ‘ offences, and bruised for your iniquities ; cut
 ‘ off from the land of the living, and for the
 ‘ transgression of my people have I been smit-
 ‘ ten. I came to mine own, but mine own
 ‘ received me not ; blinded by their pre-
 ‘ judices, and led astray by vicious pas-
 ‘ sions, they condemned me to die as an
 ‘ imposter ; my body even now hangs upon

‘ the cross, yet here I am without spot or blemish. Ye have all passed the gates of death, and your bodies lie compounded with the dust; here the exalted powers of your rational nature act uncontrouled in the state of pure intelligence; but whilst ye remain entirely separated from the material world, your felicity must be imperfect, for in that world which extends through boundless regions, the infinite perfections of my Father are displayed in an infinity of objects, and amazing dispensations of providence. Those perfections ye cannot perceive until again united with bodies refined, ætherial and immortal. Your past experience supplies the material for your present reflection and enjoyment: but the time approaches when your minds shall be expanded with new ideas flowing in an eternal succession of inconceivable joys. I came to apprise you of that glorious and most perfect state which shall commence at the general resurrection; as a proof, in the space of three days I will return to the earth, resume my former body, and within forty days after, will ascend to the imperial throne of my Father. No sooner shall I arise from the dead, than some of you shall follow me to life, appear amongst

‘ men, and ascend with me into the heavens.
 ‘ This shall be to all a type of your resurrec-
 ‘ tion in due time, and your final ascension
 ‘ to the regions of never-fading glory.’

When the evening drew nigh some of the Elders approached the Governor, and thus addressed him; ‘ Sir, as three malefactors
 ‘ have been crucified, we request that you will
 ‘ put a period to their sufferings, and order
 ‘ their bodies to be taken down from the cross:
 ‘ according to our law, the bodies of the dead
 ‘ cannot be exposed to public view beyond the
 ‘ day of execution; for upon the evening we
 ‘ are commanded to bury them: To-morrow
 ‘ is not only our Sabbath, but also one of our
 ‘ chief festivals, and it would be highly im-
 ‘ proper that the joy of our people should be
 ‘ interrupted by the appearance of such ob-
 ‘ jects. We trust you will comply with our
 ‘ request, particularly as it is usually done
 ‘ upon the festivals of the Emperor.’—The
 ‘ Governor consented, and they departed. In
 ‘ order to prevent deceit, they deemed it ex-
 ‘ pedient to see the Governor’s mandate car-
 ‘ ried into execution themselves. When they
 ‘ arrived at Mount Calvary, they perceived the
 ‘ two thieves groaning in the most excruciating
 ‘ pain; immediately their legs were broken,

‘ and an end put to their torture.—No symptoms of life appearing in Jesus, they thought it unnecessary to brake his legs; but supposing he might be in a fainting fit, and that he could not be so soon dead, to remove every impediment, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, when instantly gushed forth from the wound water and blood.

His disconsolate friends still remained in view of the cross, waiting with impatience to observe how his body would be disposed of. As soon as it was removed, Joseph of Arimathea took it under his protection. Immediately after the darkness and earthquake which followed the crucifixion, he, together with the multitude returned into the city, and went directly to the Governor and thus addressed him:

‘ Sir, you cannot but have observed with
 ‘ how much cruelty that righteous man has
 ‘ been destroyed. Constrained by the fury
 ‘ of an inveterate faction which nothing could
 ‘ resist, you were compelled to deliver him up
 ‘ to their malice. You are not unacquainted
 ‘ with his astonishing greatness when living,
 ‘ and must have observed what wonders at-
 ‘ tended his death; the unnatural darkness,

‘ and dreadful earthquake abundantly con-
 ‘ firms your solemn declaration of his inno-
 ‘ cence; the darkness ceased, and the earth
 ‘ trembled as soon as he expired. Many ap-
 ‘ pear now to relent, the dreadful prodigies of
 ‘ this day have convinced them of their crime,
 ‘ they are truly sorry, but, alas! it is too late.
 ‘ From the prosecution of that extraordinary
 ‘ man I ever dissented; but as you well know
 ‘ it was dangerous to speak openly; his ene-
 ‘ mies to their everlasting disgrace, have ob-
 ‘ tained their desire. Possibly they may in-
 ‘ sist that his body should be cast into
 ‘ the public places of the dead. He has al-
 ‘ ready undergone too much obliquy; suf-
 ‘ fer him in testimony of your esteem at least
 ‘ an honourable interment, This I propose
 ‘ to bestow upon him, and earnestly intreat
 ‘ that his body, by your authority, may be
 ‘ delivered to me.’

The Governor surprized that he was dead,
 but being satisfied of the truth, complied
 without hesitation. Joseph immediately went
 to provide linen, and every thing necessary
 for embalming the body; he then returned to
 Mount Calvary, and having delivered the
 orders of the Governor, bound the body in

the linen, with spices, after the manner of embalming persons of distinction. In mournful silence he then carried it to an adjacent garden where he had provided a new sepulchre for himself, hewn with great labour and expence out of a solid rock. There the body of Jesus was deposited, after which the door was closed with a stone of an immense weight.

Mary Magdalene, and the other women who were present at his death, remained at some distance when his body was taken down and embalmed, nor would they venture near the sepulchre, but stood afar off and beheld the place of his interment. As soon as they returned to the city, not knowing the honour that was done to their Lord, they went to purchase the necessary ingredients for embalming his body, intending to apply them when the Sabbath was over. The transactions of the day afforded abundant materials for litigation. The Chief Priests, the Elders and Pharisees who had carried on the prosecution with such obstinate malice; ascribed the darkness and earthquake to the divine displeasure against him for blasphemy: Whilst many of the multitude terrified at the

signs they had seen, began boldly to affirm that God was enraged against their nation for the death of Jesus. His disciples and friends were inconsolable, timid and silent. The public confession and death of Judas was universally known, and very much insisted upon by those who were induced to favour his master.

The sable night had no sooner covered the face of nature with her dark and melancholy veil, when Satan with his dæmonic peers assembled on Mount Tabor, and in sullen dignity thus disclosed the counsels of his heart.

‘ We have observed with satisfaction the
 ‘ good effects of our past deliberations; the
 ‘ Son of God is dead; and lies secreted within
 ‘ the bosom of yonder rock. Yet, our vic-
 ‘ tory is nevertheless incompleat, his mortal
 ‘ part, a frail system of organized matter, it
 ‘ is true we have subdued: This I fear will
 ‘ avail nothing; his virtue remains invin-
 ‘ cible even in death itself. His obedience
 ‘ to God, and love to men, have been ren-
 ‘ dered more conspicuous, by a variety of
 ‘ the keenest sufferings; instead of being
 ‘ glorious, I fear we are the vanquished

' party. His death would be of inconceivable
 ' advantage to us, could we by any
 ' stratagem detain him in the grave; but
 ' that is beyond the limits of our power:
 ' Frequently he foretold his resurrection,
 ' and should that be verified, as doubtless
 ' it will, the consequences must be dread-
 ' ful; for if all the nations of the earth are
 ' to be blessed in him, then it is evident that
 ' all nations must confess him to be the Son
 ' of God, and should that come to pass, we
 ' can expect nothing short of total annihila-
 ' tion, and a miserable confinement in the
 ' infernal lake from which we have escaped.
 ' Let us suppose him risen from the dead, to
 ' whom will he appear? It must be to the
 ' whole nation, as he formerly did, or to his
 ' disciples only. Let us reflect what may oc-
 ' cur from both these suppositions. If he
 ' should appear to the whole nation, and con-
 ' verse familiarly with every description of
 ' men, they will either believe in him, or
 ' they will not; if they should believe in him,
 ' then our power over the Jewish nation is
 ' totally lost; and worse we may dread, for
 ' the purity of his doctrine, the power of his
 ' miracles, and the sanctity of his life, com-
 ' bined with the united testimony of Jews

‘ and Gentiles, who saw him publicly con-
 ‘ demned and put to death; these connected
 ‘ may occasion every nation to revolt from
 ‘ our authority. We have but one alterna-
 ‘ tive upon this supposition, to persuade our
 ‘ subjects in remote parts, that the account of
 ‘ his death is fictitious, calculated merely to
 ‘ impose upon the world. If his resurrection
 ‘ be expedient to convince the Jews that he
 ‘ is the Son of God, the same degree of evi-
 ‘ dence will be necessary to satisfy every
 ‘ other nation; and therefore he must be put
 ‘ to death, and rise again in every other coun-
 ‘ try as well as in Judea. That can never be,
 ‘ as the proof must depend simply upon the
 ‘ credit of a nation universally abhorred, and
 ‘ already judged too credulous; we have some
 ‘ reason to hope by a proper management of
 ‘ their prejudices, our faithful subjects will
 ‘ give no credit to such an improbable rela-
 ‘ tion. But admitting he appears as public
 ‘ as usual, may we not with good reason ex-
 ‘ pect, that the Chief Priests, the Elders, many
 ‘ of the Scribes and Pharisees, but particular-
 ‘ ly the whole sect of the Sadducees will still
 ‘ deny him to be the Messiah. They have
 ‘ already resisted the most powerful evidence
 ‘ of his divinity, when he healed their discas-

' ed and raised their dead. His own resur-
 ' rection will be only another miracle, and
 ' the same motives that actuated their re-
 ' jection before, will cause them to re-
 ' ject him again. We are aware that the
 ' strongest arguments fail when inconsistent
 ' with men's temporal interests and inclina-
 ' tions. If he should appear to the whole
 ' nation, we must endeavour to convince
 ' them that he was taken from the cross be-
 ' fore he expired, having fainted through ex-
 ' quisite pain, and that by the kind interposi-
 ' tion of his friends he recovered. It will ap-
 ' pear the more credible, when they consider
 ' how improbable it is he should have expired
 ' so soon, and that when the legs of the two
 ' thieves were broken, not the smallest vio-
 ' lence was done to him. If the Jews are
 ' once prevailed upon to credit this, then we
 ' may expect to behold him again treated
 ' as an imposter, and every attempt made to
 ' destroy him. But supposing the evidence
 ' of his resurrection to be as strong as possible,
 ' as in the case of Lazarus, yet by a prudent
 ' management of their passions and prejudices,
 ' they may persevere in their opposition, and
 ' support our interest notwithstanding all he
 ' can do to the contrary, they will certainly
 ' pay no credit to his prophecy respecting the

‘ destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion
 ‘ of the Jewish nation. Let us now consider
 ‘ what may be the consequence of his appear-
 ‘ ing only to his disciples, which I am induc-
 ‘ ed to think will be the case, from his own
 ‘ words, ‘ Yet a little while, and the world
 ‘ seeth me no more; but ye see me: because
 ‘ I live; ye shall live also.’ If so, the truth
 ‘ of his resurrection must depend simply upon
 ‘ their testimony, which I trust will not be
 ‘ regarded by the Jewish nation; for who will
 ‘ credit a fact so improbable upon the decla-
 ‘ ration of a few contemptible fishermen? But
 ‘ foreseeing what might happen, he said,
 ‘ If they have rejected me, they will also re-
 ‘ ject you.’ We have the confidence to hope
 ‘ not only to see their testimony despised, but
 ‘ themselves persecuted and put to death.
 ‘ Persecution it is clear they cannot bear;
 ‘ and if we may judge of their future con-
 ‘ duct by their past, we have no reason to fear
 ‘ any danger. One betrayed him, another
 ‘ denied him, and the rest forsook him in dis-
 ‘ tress. There is therefore no room to believe
 ‘ that even they will discover true fortitude
 ‘ in support of his cause.

* John xiv. 19.

‘ To weaken their testimony, in favour of
 ‘ his resurrection, we must persuade the Jews
 ‘ that his disciples stole him away in the
 ‘ night, and invented the story of his resur-
 ‘ rection, merely to strengthen their credit,
 ‘ and impose upon the world. This unques-
 ‘ tionably will be admitted as an incontest-
 ‘ ible fact by all who continue inveterate
 ‘ against him. A few despicable persons,
 ‘ without learning, or wealth, power or inte-
 ‘ rest, must stand in opposition to the whole
 ‘ world; they must prevail upon the Jewish
 ‘ nation to receive for their Messiah a con-
 ‘ demned malefactor. Such is repugnant to
 ‘ their expectations; for however the multi-
 ‘ tude may have been inclined to favour him
 ‘ when living, there is no room to imagine
 ‘ they will carry their partiality beyond the
 ‘ grave. The contempt that attached to him
 ‘ will fall upon his disciples and friends. If
 ‘ they remain in their native country, their
 ‘ testimony will cease with their existence;
 ‘ if they seek an asylum in other nations,
 ‘ what can they do? they cannot propagate
 ‘ their doctrine on account of their inability;
 ‘ but supposing them competent, who will
 ‘ give credit to what they assert? Will the

' nations of the world abandon the religion
 ' in which they have been educated, a reli-
 ' gion confirmed by the imperial authority,
 ' and esteemed by the most learned philoso-
 ' phers? Will the world give up their religion
 ' to compliment a few straggling Jews, per-
 ' secuted and banished their native land?
 ' Or will they accept a religion quite new,
 ' and published among an obscure people, by
 ' a man condemned and crucified as a male-
 ' factor? Will they receive such a religion?
 ' a religion incompatible with their former
 ' sentiments, contrary to their fixed customs,
 ' opposite to their passions, worldly views, and
 ' inclinations, is it at all probable they will
 ' do it? It would surpass every miracle,
 ' and yet it must be done, if ever the king-
 ' dom of the Messiah is established upon earth.
 ' It strongly wears the appearance of impos-
 ' sibility; therefore we may hope the con-
 ' sequences of his resurrection will not be so
 ' fatal as at first we apprehended. It is ex-
 ' pedient that our interest be exerted to
 ' strengthen the prejudices of men and to
 ' darken their understandings against the
 ' most positive evidence; let us add new
 ' force to every passion, heighten every appe-
 ' tite, and confirm our trusty subjects in their

‘obedience. Let us depart, and attentively observe what passes in Jerusalem, mark the various reflections of the Priests and people, concerning the Messiah and his disciples. We may enter the city, and easily penetrate every corner, since he whose frown formerly terrified us, lies still and inoffensive in his grave.’

Immediately upon the wing they mounted, in number like the locusts, dropt in Jerusalem, passed through every street and place of secrecy, carefully observing what was said or done, by friends or foes. The disciples in the interim were dispersed through the city: With sorrow and disappointment they passed the lonely night in broken slumbers, and dreams of sad distress. With the first dawn they arose, and piously observed that holy rest which had been appointed the sacred memorial of the world’s creation, and Israel’s redemption from the Land of Egypt.

When the evening drew near, and the declining sun approached the western hills, the Priests assembled in the temple: Still they laboured under strange fears and painful conjectures; when the High Priest arose, and thus addressed his brethren:

' Ye sacred ministers of the Most High, I
 ' am compelled to acquaint you with the re-
 ' sult of my reflections, and to request your
 ' advice in a matter which demands our most
 ' serious consideration. You cannot be ig-
 ' norant of the omens which attended the
 ' death of that blasphemous Imposter; you
 ' perceived the dreadful eclipse; the rocks
 ' rent, the earth trembled, the graves open-
 ' ed, and an invisible hand rent asunder our
 ' sacred veil: Such awful symptoms may ope-
 ' rate variously upon the timorous imagina-
 ' tions of the multitude. What may be the
 ' result, and what destructive tendency they
 ' may have upon their senses, we can have no
 ' conception of: one thing we are apprized of,
 ' and ought therefore to be vigilant. When
 ' living, he boldly affirmed that on the third
 ' day he would rise again from the dead.
 ' Should that be verified, we are lost; the
 ' multitude will regard him as the Messiah,
 ' and treat us as the worst imposters. Our
 ' interest must then cease to exist, and our
 ' lives be in continual danger. Though we
 ' have no reason to suppose he will rise again,
 ' yet it is very probable some act of deception
 ' will be practised by his disciples. We must
 ' guard against every artifice. Conformable

'to the direction of Pilate, his body, I am in-
 'formed, was delivered to one of his friends,
 ' who has buried it in a garden, contiguous to
 ' the place of his crucifixion. Perhaps it was
 ' carried away with a view to conceal it until
 ' the third day, and then by shewing the
 ' empty sepulchre to insinuate he is risen from
 ' the dead. Such artful conduct after what
 ' has occurred, may obtain credit among the
 ' giddy and unthinking, and produce un-
 ' pleasant consequences. In order to defeat
 ' such a plan, it will be proper to examine
 ' the sepulchre this evening; if the body be
 ' already gone, his prediction must fall, and
 ' his disciples be convicted of carrying on an
 ' imposture: but if it remains, perhaps his
 ' disciples may take it before the morning,
 ' and circulate that he rose again agreeable
 ' to his declaration. In order to prevent
 ' fraud, it is necessary that a strong guard be
 ' posted during the night; and according to
 ' their report, proper measures will be adopt-
 ' ed in future. Let us apply therefore to the
 ' Governor, for a guard until the expiration
 ' of the third day.—This was unanimously
 ' agreed to. and application made to the Go-
 ' vernor in the following manner:

‘Sir, we have had an opportunity to reflect
 ‘upon an observation which the deceiver made
 ‘previous to his death, ‘After three days, said
 ‘he, I will rise again.’ Though we are not in-
 ‘clined to credit his words, yet his disciples who
 ‘are engaged in the same cause, may in the
 ‘night remove the body, and then publish his
 ‘resurrection. Should it be credited by the peo-
 ‘ple, the spirit of tumult may increase to such a
 ‘degree, that no authority will be able to keep
 ‘them in subjection. To guard against any evil
 ‘that may happen, we think it expedient that
 ‘you should appoint a guard to watch the se-
 ‘pulchre until the third day.’ To this the Go-
 vernor answered, ‘Your conduct very much
 ‘astonishes me, why trouble yourselves or me
 ‘so unnecessarily about a man, whose life and
 ‘death have been so extraordinary? He was
 ‘the object of your averfion when living, and
 ‘now he is dead, his disciples are become the
 ‘objects of your suspicion; your proceedings
 ‘are unaccountable: His disciples must ei-
 ‘ther be very few, or of a peaceful disposi-
 ‘tion; for I observed yesterday when the
 ‘populace preferred a murderer, he had
 ‘not so much as one friend to speak in his
 ‘favour. You say, you are fearful lest his
 ‘disciples in the night should steal his body;

' but for what purpose? Do you conceive
 ' they can restore it to life? Surely not; if
 ' they remove it, it can only be to bury it
 elsewhere, and that I am confident they will
 ' never do. You imagine they will deceive
 ' the people, and cause them to believe
 ' he is risen from the dead; Can you really
 ' imagine they are so insane, or the people
 ' so destitute of reason and common sense as
 ' to credit such outrageous folly? Their de-
 ' ception would then appear to all the world.
 ' What advantage can they derive from it?
 ' Nothing but universal contempt; and in all
 ' probability their Master's fate. Your fears
 ' are without foundation, but in order to gra-
 ' tify your unaccountable humour in this as
 ' well as in every other particular, I have no
 ' objection to comply with your request. The
 ' guard appointed to protect the city, you may
 ' charge in my name to watch the sepulchre
 ' under pain of death, as long as you think
 ' necessary.'

Having gained their point, immediately they
 assembled the guard, and marched to the se-
 pulchre, rolled away the stone, and found
 the body wrapt in linen, cold and lifeless as
 Joseph had left it the preceding day. They

closed up the entrance, and to prevent fraud between the soldiers and the disciples, a seal was fixed upon it, so secure, that none could break it without a discovery. The guard being posted at the sepulchre, and every precaution taken, the Priests returned home, while glimmering twilight hovered on the mountains. The disciples in the mean time assembled where they had eaten the passover, and were pitifully bewailing the fate of their deceased Lord. Peter calling to his recollection these words, “When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren*” conceived himself particularly called upon to comfort them as much as possible: He accordingly addressed them in the following manner.

‘ My brethren and companions in sorrow,
 ‘ our present situation is dangerous beyond
 ‘ description. Our beloved master is, alas,
 ‘ no more; condemned and put to death as
 ‘ an impostor; he has suffered as a criminal,
 ‘ and slave, the most infamous tortures of
 ‘ the cross. He was once the admiration of
 ‘ the multitude, but like modern friends,
 ‘ they at length abandoned him to cruel de-

* Luke xxii. 32.

'spair. But why ought I to condemn this
 'multitude? Are we better? Did not Ju-
 'das betray him? Did not we all forsake
 'him in the time of danger? and with a bit-
 'ter heart, I here confess my crime, I perfidi-
 'ously denied him, and confidently affirmed
 'I never knew him. This he foretold, as
 'clearly as words could do: I candidly ac-
 'knowledge my guilt, and sincerely repent
 'my crime. For more than three years I
 'have been intimately acquainted with him,
 'shared in his familiar conversation, heard
 'his public instructions; observed his mi-
 'racles, and watched his every action. His
 'life was spotless, his doctrines pure and con-
 'sistent with his character, his miracles won-
 'derful, and his deportment truly worthy of
 'approbation. Could I have perceived any
 'thing that had a tendency to imposture, I
 'should never have lamented his death, but
 'have gloried in my deliverance from such
 'an artful man. I well know the inte-
 'grity of his character, and in numberless
 'instances have observed the rectitude of his
 'heart. I am perfectly convinced he was
 'the Son of God, the true Messiah, and the
 'king of Israel, though he has met with an
 'ignominious death. It is not possible that

' he could have been an imposter : for if God
 ' ever sent a prophet into the world, he cer-
 ' tainly was one ; the purity of his doctrine,
 ' and the sanctity of his deportment, do evi-
 ' dently prove his sincere affection to God
 ' and men ; his miracles and foreknowledge
 ' of future events, do sufficiently declare the
 ' divinity of his mission. How often has he
 ' informed us that he would suffer many
 ' things of the Chief Priests, the Scribes and
 ' Pharisees, and at length be crucified? I well
 ' recollect, when he was transfigured upon the
 ' Mount, Moses and Elias appeared in their
 ' glory, and communed with him respecting
 ' his decease which should happen at Jeru-
 ' salem. The whole chain of circumstances
 ' are now verified, and are to me a satisfactory
 ' proof he was no imposter. God himself
 ' can never deceive us, for I heard his voice
 ' proclaiming, ' This is my beloved Son :
 ' hear him.*' It is impossible that any hu-
 ' man being could deceive the world, and in
 ' the mean time plainly foretell his destruc-
 ' tion in the undertaking. It is incompa-
 ' tible with the principles of human nature ;
 ' such imposition never was, nor ever can be

* Mark ix. 7.

' practised. We are disappointed in our
 ' hopes, we imagined he would have redeem-
 ' ed Israel from the Roman yoke, confirmed
 ' us in the possession of our ancient liberties,
 ' overcome all nations as the prophets fore-
 ' told, and reigned for ever a great and pow-
 ' erful king. But, alas! he has now beaten
 ' that dismal path, from whence no traveller
 ' returns. When living, he raised Lazarus
 ' from the dead, but we have no one endow-
 ' ed with power to raise him. I am in the
 ' greatest perplexity; for a prophet he evi-
 ' dently was, an imposter he could not be;
 ' we believed him to be the Messiah, and yet
 ' all our hopes from him are at an end. He
 ' told us he would quit the world and go to the
 ' father: I have been informed of persons
 ' appearing after death, have we any reason to
 ' expect this? I remember a short time since
 ' his observations, ' 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*.' But if he should appear as a de-
 ' parted spirit, what benefit can we derive?
 ' Will he redeem Israel from slavery, vanquish
 ' the world, and reign over it? That can never

* John xvi. 16.

' be, the Messiah when he comes, shall abide
 ' for ever. The more I reflect, the more am
 ' I perplexed. We must expect to be treated
 ' with scorn since our master is dead, and in
 ' all probability after the feast may be appre-
 ' hended and put to death. Thus much he
 ' intended when he said, ' Behold I send you
 ' forth as lambs among wolves.*' Let us
 ' therefore consult our own security, return
 ' to Galilee, follow our former occupations,
 ' and pass the remainder of our days in sor-
 ' rowful obscurity, esteeming him as a great
 ' Prophet, imitating his example, and lament-
 ' ing his untimely end.

As soon as Peter had concluded, John, the
 beloved disciple, expressed himself to the
 following purport.

' What you have observed unequivocally
 ' proves that he was no imposter. ' Behold
 ' I send you forth as lambs among wolves,'
 ' Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's
 ' sake †.' ' Yea, the time cometh, that who-
 ' soever killeth you will think that he doeth

* Luke x. 3.

† Luke xxi. 17.

‘“God service*.” These are clearly not the
 ‘ words of a deceiver. Had he buoyed us up
 ‘ with the expectation of wealth, and worldly
 ‘ grandeur, we might indeed complain that
 ‘ he imposed upon us, and applaud the con-
 ‘ duct of the Chief Priests. It is not pos-
 ‘ sible to justify them; we indeed expected
 ‘ important services, but all our hopes are
 ‘ frustrated; yet, nevertheless every thing
 ‘ has been verified as he predicted. How
 ‘ could he have foretold these things if he
 ‘ had not been immediately from God? He
 ‘ never was solicitous about wealth, or domi-
 ‘ nion over men, he never promised to ad-
 ‘ vance us in that way; “The Son of Man
 ‘ came not to be ministered unto, but to mi-
 ‘ nister, and to give his life a ransom for
 ‘ many.†” He said, ‘ If they have persecut-
 ‘ ed me, they will also persecute you.‡’ The
 ‘ grand design he ever appeared to have in
 ‘ view, was the reconciling men to God,
 ‘ and uniting one another in the bonds of
 ‘ peace. No imposter would undertake a
 ‘ work so honourable. With what facility
 ‘ could he have avoided his enemies, previous
 ‘ to his apprehension in the garden? yet he

* John xvi. 2. † Matt. xx. 28. ‡ John xv. 20.

' would not retreat, neither would he defend
 ' himself by a miracle. Did you not perceive
 ' how powerful his words were, when they fell
 ' prostrate upon the earth, yet he would per-
 ' mit none to fight in his defence. The rea-
 ' son he assigned for his conduct you may ea-
 ' sily recollect, 'The cup which my father
 ' hath given me, shall I not drink it?'
 ' Therefore doth my Father love me, because
 ' I lay down my life that I might take it
 ' again, no man taketh it from me, but I lay
 ' it down of myself.*' When Malchus
 ' was wounded, the facility with which he
 ' healed it was astonishing. I beheld with
 ' the keenest anguish his meekness and hu-
 ' mility in the palace of the High Priest; I
 ' heard him pray for his enemies in the ago-
 ' nies of death, and in his last moments com-
 ' mend his spirit into the hands of his Father.
 ' Such sentiments are foreign from those of
 ' an imposter: He must be the person he de-
 ' clared himself, the Son of God, the long
 ' expected Messiah. Can any thing but his
 ' own promise relieve us? 'And ye now there-
 ' fore have sorrow; but I will see you again,

* John x. 17, 18.

‘ and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy
 ‘ no man taketh from you.*’ He promised
 ‘ to rise again, but will he rise from the grave
 ‘ as Lazarus did? Certainly he will not; for
 ‘ if he should, he may be exposed to the same
 ‘ treatment he has already experienced: His
 ‘ foes are implacable and beyond the reach
 ‘ of conviction; they even resolved to destroy
 ‘ Lazarus, after they had the most undeniable
 ‘ proofs of his resurrection. I well remember
 ‘ by what argument he enforced the doctrine
 ‘ of a future state against the Sadducees;
 ‘ I am the God of Abraham, and the God
 ‘ of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is
 ‘ not the God of the dead, but of the liv-
 ‘ ing †.” It appears from such mode of rea-
 ‘ soning, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
 ‘ are alive to God, and consequently risen
 ‘ from the dead. In the same sense our mas-
 ‘ ter is risen from the dead, and gone to Pa-
 ‘ radise, conformable to his declaration upon
 ‘ the cross. We may therefore entertain san-
 ‘ guine expectations of his appearing to us
 ‘ again, perhaps in a similar manner as Moses
 ‘ and Elias appeared to him on the Mount.
 ‘ I think that may be fairly inferred from

* John xvi. 22.

† Matt. xx. 32.

‘ these words, “ 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*.” Let us therefore still
 ‘ believe, notwithstanding all that has occur-
 ‘ ed, and hope for his appearance, when he
 ‘ will accomplish our expectations, and crown
 ‘ us with triumphant joy.

John having ended his exhortation, the disciples departed, and retired to rest. The exalted principalities of heaven assembled above the clouds, waiting for the approaching day, when the archangel Raphael made the following remarks, while thousands of angels attended.

‘ We have at length beheld, said he, the
 ‘ most wonderful scene that ever happened in
 ‘ the dominions of God. We have beheld
 ‘ him, who once in heaven scattered terror
 ‘ and desolation among the apostate angels,
 ‘ led a prisoner upon earth, and grossly in-
 ‘ sulted by the sons of men. We have be-
 ‘ held him, whose face did once shine above

* John xvi. 22.

' the brightness of the firmament, treated
 ' with the most contemptuous indignity. We
 ' have beheld him who was once crowned with
 ' glory, disgraced with a wreath of thorns;
 ' him who was the express image of the invi-
 ' sible God, turned into a spectacle of horror
 ' to the children of men. We have beheld
 ' him, who was the admiration of angels and
 ' the terror of devils, contemned and perse-
 ' cuted by the sons of earth. The Lord of
 ' glory covered with shame, and the Prince
 ' of life expiring on a cross; yet in all these
 ' sufferings, neither the terrors nor allure-
 ' ments of this world, could corrupt his heart,
 ' neither dæmons nor wicked men could stain
 ' the purity of his mind. Henceforth his
 ' spotless character shall be the unerring
 ' standard of perfection, and the pattern of
 ' imitation. Of all the crimes ever commit-
 ' ted on earth, we have now beheld the great-
 ' est; the Son of God, and heir of all things,
 ' rejected and wantonly murdered by the peo-
 ' ple whom he sought to save. There is no
 ' madness like that of sin; it brought confu-
 ' sion i. to heaven above, and misery upon
 ' earth. The monster would devour the whole
 ' creation, and, if possible, dethrone, and
 ' destroy the Almighty sovereign. What a

' complication of wickedness have we per-
 ' ceived in the conduct of the Jews! What
 ' astonishing humility! What manly and un-
 ' shaken fortitude! What unruffled meekness!
 ' and inextinguishable love have we beheld
 ' in the sufferings of the Messiah. Here we
 ' may contemplate with admiration the divine
 ' wisdom in permitting such sufferings, for
 ' the more glorious manifestation of exalted
 ' virtues. We have beheld the riches of di-
 ' vine love in the death of his own Son, for
 ' the redemption of a rebellious world: If any
 ' thing can possibly produce the love of God
 ' in the souls of men, this will assuredly do it.
 ' We have now beheld the seed of the woman
 ' bruise the head of the infernal serpent. The
 ' first Adam was easily seduced, but the se-
 ' cond is invincible, and hath achieved the
 ' most glorious victory over the powers of
 ' darkness. The human race may now per-
 ' ceive how abominable in the sight of God,
 ' all and every kind of wickedness must be,
 ' when he sent his Son into the world, and
 ' exposed him to a variety of the greatest
 ' sorrows, and the most ignominious death,
 ' with a view of putting an end to its domi-
 ' nion, overturning the empire of Satan, and
 ' establishing a kingdom of everlasting right-

'tcousness. They may now perceive, that
 ' nothing is so truly acceptable as virtue and
 ' goodness of heart, when for the sake of the
 ' most perfect obedience, and spotless virtue
 ' of his own Son, he is willing to forgive all
 ' penitent sinners who turn from their evil
 ' ways; for the sake of his obedience, every
 ' means of obtaining everlasting happiness,
 ' shall be granted to a corrupt and perfidious
 ' world. We have beheld the only meri-
 ' torious and all-sufficient sacrifice offered up
 ' for the sins of men. Every other was me-
 ' rely a type, and therefore will in a short
 ' time cease. With great reason may we
 ' therefore sing, as we formerly did on the
 ' day of his nativity, ' Glory to God in the
 ' highest, and on earth peace, good will
 ' towards men*."

' The time approaches when he must
 ' rise again conformable to his declaration.
 ' His resurrection is an event of the greatest
 ' importance, and must be confirmed by the
 ' strongest evidence, To the Jews he will
 ' clearly not appear, that is a favour they are
 ' totally unworthy of. His disciples only will

* Luke ii. 4.

‘ be the witnesses of his resurrection, and
‘ their testimony will be sufficient to establish
‘ the fact to every impartial advocate of truth.
‘ As for those who are hardened in their
‘ wickedness, no evidence will be adequate
‘ to reclaim them. Certain women who fol-
‘ lowed him from Galilee have agreed to em-
‘ balm his body at an early hour in the morn-
‘ ing, and will meet at the sepulchre. That
‘ they may have free communication, and
‘ an opportunity of examining every circum-
‘ stance, let us with the dawning light, con-
‘ formable to the will of the Almighty Father,
‘ descend into the garden. The soul of the
‘ Messiah will return about that time from
‘ Paradise, break the bands of death, and
‘ shake the foundations of Mount Calvary.
‘ Then with a gentle touch I will remove the
‘ stone from the door of the sepulchre, and
‘ remain clothed in celestial splendour, while
‘ he rises from the dead, and leaves the dark
‘ confinement of the tomb. His person I will
‘ attend, and await his commands, when with
‘ exalted joy we will publish his victory over
‘ hell and death. The guard will lose their
‘ senses immediately upon my appearance;
‘ and become as dead men. When we are
‘ departed, they will awake, fly into the city,

‘ and relate the wonders they have seen.
 ‘ The strange report will through every street
 ‘ resound, and crowds assemble at the tomb,
 ‘ where the presumptive evidence of his re-
 ‘ surrection will appear, and induce every im-
 ‘ partial observer to receive the testimony of
 ‘ his disciples.

When the morning light began to dawn through the eastern sky, and usher in the day,—a day pregnant with an event more illustrious and important, than any to be met with in the annals of the world since the creation. Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, went with anxious desire to visit the sepulchre of their departed Lord; when, lo! the angelic host descended into the garden. The earth began to shake immediately; the guard astonish’d turned round, but perceived nothing, until they observed the stone rolling spontaneous from the sepulchre. They retreated a few paces, when in an instant their eyes were confounded with an amazing splendour; Raphael sat upon the stone, his garments appeared of the purest white, and tremendous lightening blazed around his face: The soldiers perceived him, and fell like dead men to the ground. In

their state of insensibility, Jesus burst asunder the bands of death, while a number of angels beheld with joyful admiration, his body animated with renewed life; instantly he awoke as from the most profound sleep, when the angel Gabriel having stript him of the linen clothes, and napkin that was around his head, arrayed him in celestial robes, which, like his body, could either transmit or reflect the rays of light, as he chose to become visible or invisible. He stept with a majestic air from the tomb, when ten thousand cherubims surrounded his person, and bending lowly to the earth, they exclaimed, ‘Welcome, O Son of God, to life eternal, to everlasting bliss, and highest honour, the just reward of all thy glorious deeds.’ A heavenly smile was visible in his countenance, strongly expressive of conscious worth, divine majesty, and universal love; he viewed all with a pleasing approbation, and every one beheld him with rapturous delight, Away he went attended by the angelic train, and directed his course to the habitations of many favourite saints: When he arrived, he said, with a voice of dignity and mildness, ‘Awake, my friends, and return to life:’ His voice they heard, and started from the dust, with

manly vigour, while blooming health was marked in every face. They beheld him with grateful ecstasy, they fell prostrate and kissed his feet, who had given them life.

The soldiers who guarded the sepulchre, in the mean time awaking from their trance, fled directly to the city; when Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, advanced towards the sepulchre, with an intention of embalming their Lord; one of them observed, ‘ Who shall remove the stone from the door of the sepulchre, for at his burial the united force of twenty men could scarcely place it there? If we have not strength sufficient, when the rest of the women are assembled, we must request the assistance of his disciples.’ As they drew near, to their great astonishment they perceived the stone already removed. ‘ What can this mean,’ Mary Magdalene remarked, ‘ a number of persons must have been here before us, the door is open, and the body gone; but by whom taken and for what end, I cannot conjecture. I will instantly return and inform his disciples; in the interim, go ye to the sepulchre and wait lest the rest of the women should arrive before

‘ my return.’ Accordingly she went with all imaginable expedition to Peter and John, when the other two advanced, and immediately upon entering the sepulchre, they saw an angel sitting on the right clothed in a white garment. The sight of him surprised and terrified them prodigiously. ‘ Be not afraid,’ said he, ‘ I know whom ye seek, it is Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified; he is not here, he is risen from the dead, behold the place where his body lay: But depart and inform his disciples, particularly Peter; behold he goeth before you into Galilee, there will you see him, as he informed you before his death.’ They fled from the sepulchre terrified and amazed at what they had heard and seen. Shortly after, Peter and John whom they had observed running at a distance, went, but terror prevented their uttering a word. The two disciples being apprised by Mary Magdalene of what she had seen and suspected, hastened to the sepulchre, but John being the younger, arrived the first. At the door he stooped down, and perceived the clothes, but did not enter: Peter having approached went in and perceived the napkin that was about his head, not with the linen clothes, but in a place by it.

self. John then entered, and from the circumstances, together with the report of Mary Magdalene, he strongly credited that his master was risen from the dead. Having examined every circumstance, they returned home, when on the way, John delivered the undisguised sentiments of his noble heart.

‘ When I reflect upon the variety of incidents that have occurred, there cannot
 ‘ be a doubt of the truth of his resurrection; though you and Mary Magdalene
 ‘ conclude him to have been stolen in the
 ‘ night, yet it appears to me altogether improbable; for who would steal him? Not
 ‘ his friends, for what could they do with
 ‘ him? Has he not been honourably interred?
 ‘ What could induce them to strip him of his
 ‘ dead clothes? They would assuredly have
 ‘ taken them also, and is it to be supposed
 ‘ they would have bestowed so much time
 ‘ and pains, to remove the linen and the
 ‘ napkin, and lay them in separate places?
 ‘ Clearly not; had they intended to remove
 ‘ his body, they would have done it in the
 ‘ most expeditious manner, just as they
 ‘ found it; had it been done by friends,
 ‘ would they not have told us, and requested

‘ assistance? For reasons equally strong, I
 ‘ cannot believe any of his enemies would
 ‘ have stolen him away, and left the clothes
 ‘ behind: Consider the weight of the stone
 ‘ which closed the entrance; it required many
 ‘ men to move it, nor can I conceive what
 ‘ benefit they could derive by such an at-
 ‘ tempt. He is certainly risen from the dead,
 ‘ his words imply it, ‘ After three days I will
 ‘ rise again.’—Peter listened attentively; but
 many difficulties arising in his mind, he con-
 tinued in great suspence, fully resolved to
 withhold his assent until the strongest evi-
 dence obliged him to submit.

After they had departed, Mary Magdalene
 again arrived, and in the deepest sorrow,
 with tears in her eyes, stooped down, and
 looking in, she perceived two angels clothed
 in white, sitting at the head and feet, where
 the body of Jesus had lain. Instantly one of
 them said, “ Woman, why do you look so
 ‘ desponding?’ Overcome with grief she an-
 swered, ‘ Some persons unknown have taken
 ‘ away the body of my Lord, and I know
 ‘ not where it is.’ Turning about, she per-
 ceived Jesus himself clothed in a manner
 she had never before seen, and who ap-

peared an entire stranger to her, he demanded, ‘Woman, why do you weep, and
 ‘whom seek you in this place?’ Supposing
 him to be the gardener, she replied, ‘The
 body of Jesus was lately deposited in this se-
 ‘pulchre, it is gone, but by whom taken I
 ‘know not.’ Jesus in a familiar tone, called
 her by her name: She looked in his face, and
 recollecting his features, in extatic surprise
 fell prostrate before him, embraced his feet,
 and exclaimed with a trembling voice, ‘My
 ‘dearest Lord, are you then alive?’ ‘I am,’
 said he, ‘but now I cannot stay; detain me
 ‘not, nor take your last farewell, for I have
 ‘not ascended to my father, nor shall I leave
 ‘the world for some time; you shall see me
 ‘again. Go, tell my disciples I am risen
 ‘from the dead, and live for evermore; in a
 ‘short time I shall ascend to my Father and
 ‘your Father, to my God and your God, to
 ‘receive full power over every thing in hea-
 ‘ven and on earth, and to prepare a place
 ‘for you, that where I am, you may be there
 ‘also.’ He then disappeared, leaving her
 overpowered with joy. In a second he pas-
 sed through the air invisible, and meeting
 Mary and Salome, who in terror had fled from
 the sepulchre, and were near the city, he

saluted them; his voice and countenance they well knew; overjoyed, they embraced and worshipped him: When he exclaimed, ‘Be not dismayed, inform my brethren that I am risen from the dead; in a little time I shall see them in Galilee,’ and immediately vanished.

The women and the two Apostles having left the sepulchre, Joanna arrived, together with some other women, in order to embalm the body. A sudden dread overwhelmed them, when they found the stone removed; but they were more surprised when they observed the body gone, and the clothes left behind. Two angels appeared in shining garments; at the sight, they were more confounded than ever; one of them demanded, ‘Why search ye the sepulchre of the dead, for a person that is alive? Jesus whom ye seek is not here, dead as you suppose, but risen again. You may recollect he informed his disciples when living, that he should be delivered into the hands of wicked men, be put to death, and should rise again the third day: these circumstances are now verified.’ They instantly remembered that frequently the disciples had de-

bated in consequence of the declaration. Returning in a transport of joy and fear, scarce knowing what to believe, they went to communicate to the disciples and others, what they had heard and seen, but their narrative met with little or no credit, for the resurrection was in itself so remarkable; and the minds of the disciples so dejected and oppressed with grief, that though he had clearly informed them he would rise again, yet they entertained no hopes of it; neither could they be persuaded to consider the reports of the women, but merely as idle tales. Peter reflecting in the mean time upon every circumstance, immediately went to the sepulchre, with others in order to see if the angels mentioned by the women, were still in that place; but when they arrived none appeared. Peter approaching the entrance, perceived nothing but the linen clothes. Having received no confirmation, he departed wonderfully perplexed.

The Chief Priests assembled in the council chamber, in consequence of some of the soldiers who had guarded the sepulchre, having reported what had happened; but being hardened to the last degree, and having advan-

ced in wickedness too far to retreat, they convened the Sanhedrim, with a view of consulting what measures might be necessary to preserve their authority, and to prevent the people giving credit to the evidence of the resurrection. Alexander rose and delivered his sentiments in the following strain.

‘ We are now reduced to the last extremity,
 ‘ every possible method has been adopted to
 ‘ suppress the grand imposter, but every at-
 ‘ tempt has failed. The soldiers terrified have
 ‘ fled from the sepulchre, the stone has been re-
 ‘ moved by an invisible hand, and the body is
 ‘ gone. It is impossible to deny indisputable
 ‘ facts, the news will fly through the city, and
 ‘ create the utmost confusion; his disciples
 ‘ will declare he is risen from the dead;
 ‘ the multitude astonished at the report, and
 ‘ reflecting upon what has occurred, may pos-
 ‘ sibly believe it; if they should, they will
 ‘ brand us as murderers, cast off all respect
 ‘ to our authority, and revenge his death.
 ‘ It had been better to have placed no guard
 ‘ there, even though his disciples should have
 ‘ stolen him away; in that case it would have
 ‘ been very easy to have proved the deceit,
 ‘ but far different now, the report of the sol-

' diers will give it an air of plausibility. Very
 ' few of the guard have reported this matter
 ' to us, the rest no doubt will relate every
 ' circumstance as an apology for their flight.
 ' The fact cannot be contradicted; the ques-
 ' tion simply is, how shall we account for these
 ' things, so as to give no encouragement to
 ' the report and prevent any tumult among
 ' the people.

Caiaphas instantly replied, ' It is well
 ' known the guard was appointed with a view
 ' to prevent the disciples stealing the body;
 ' that will suggest a means of accounting
 ' for every thing that has happened; let us
 ' persuade the people that while the soldiers
 ' were asleep, the disciples stole it. We
 ' must bribe the guard to propagate the re-
 ' port, for their testimony is necessary to
 ' give it an air of credit among the mul-
 ' titude. A liberal reward, together with
 ' an indemnification from punishment will
 ' easily bring them over to our interest. But
 ' suppose Jesus should appear among us, it
 ' may be accounted for, by affirming he was
 ' taken from the cross before he was dead; and
 ' if he should never publicly appear, who will
 ' credit his disciples? They may endeavour

‘ to render the account contradictory and inconsistent, but I trust their influence will have no weight, when opposed to our authority. Let us call in the guard and direct them how to proceed.’—Accordingly the soldiers were introduced, a large sum of money was distributed among them, as well as the following charge delivered by the High Priest:

‘ You cannot but be sensible that we have liberally rewarded you, therefore we expect gratitude will prompt you, to advance nothing that can in any degree be detrimental to our interest; for if this extraordinary affair be circulated, it may lay the foundation of rebellion in Judea. To prevent so dreadful an evil, it is expedient you inform every person, that exhausted with continual watching, sleep overcame you, during which interval, the disciples stole the body; should the report reach the Governor, we undertake to indemnify you from any punishment.’

The soldiers in consequence of such an assurance, received the money, obeyed their instructions, and reported that which they knew to be false, contradictory, and dishonourable.

The fact being told by the rest as it really happened, in order to palliate the criminality of their flight, and having received none of the secret money which was given to their companions, they persisted strongly in the truth of their declarations. The different reports flew with the rapidity of lightning through the whole city, and curiosity so prevalent with many, was raised to so high a pitch, that multitudes flocked to the sepulchre, comparing the different statements of the soldiers, with the circumstances of the time and place. Amazed at the contradictory reports, among others, Joseph of Arimathea went with all possible speed; immediately upon his appearance, John a zealous Sadducee spoke to the following effect.

‘The stone is removed, the body is gone,
 ‘are facts that require no illustration; some
 ‘are at a loss to account for them, but I see
 ‘no difficulty, when I reflect upon the tes-
 ‘timony of the soldiers; none can be so well
 ‘acquainted with what passed as those that
 ‘were present. They inform us, oppressd
 ‘with fatigue, they fell asleep, during which
 ‘time the disciples removed the stone, and
 ‘carried away the body; the account is simple

† and natural, and as for the contradictory evi-
 † dence of the soldiers, there appears to me
 †, nothing strange in that; some affirm they
 † were terrified by an horrible apparition; I
 † need scarcely tell you how often dreams have
 † excited the most dreadful apprehensions;
 † the impressions are frequently as strong and
 † lively as when awake. That circumstance
 † proves plainly they were all asleep, and as
 † to the design of removing the body, it may
 † be accounted for without much difficulty.
 † He was taken from the cross long before
 † malefactors usually expire; and though the
 † legs of the two thieves were broken, to put
 † a period to their torments, yet no violence
 † was done to him; his apparent death seems
 † merely to have been a fainting fit, from
 † which he might recover, and in expectation
 † of it they stole his body. We have heard
 † of the recovery of persons after their burial,
 † this accounts for the conduct of his disciples;
 † should he appear again there will be nothing
 † extraordinary or miraculous in it. Nothing
 † can render a pretended resurrection more
 † plausible to the ignorant who are prejudic-
 † ed in his favour, than a plot so well con-
 † certed, and so happily executed,

Joseph who listened with the most contemptuous indignation, in order to undeceive the people, who appeared to place implicit credit in every circumstance as stated by John, replied ;

‘ It would gratify me exceedingly to see
 ‘ imposture fairly detected and exposed to
 ‘ universal contempt; but I never can assent
 ‘ to that which is improbable, contradictory,
 ‘ and absurd, such are the leading features
 ‘ of hypocrisy, and too much appears in the
 ‘ statement so confidently delivered. We
 ‘ have been told that Jesus was taken from
 ‘ the cross before he expired, having faint-
 ‘ ed with excessive pain. Demand of the
 ‘ centurion and soldiers who guarded the
 ‘ cross, as to the truth of the assertion; they
 ‘ must know whether he was dead or not;
 ‘ though his legs were not broken, yet his
 ‘ heart was pierced with a spear, and the ef-
 ‘ fusion of water and blood clearly proves
 ‘ the impossibility he could ever survive.
 ‘ Was not the sepulchre examined by the
 ‘ Priests, who had all the proofs of his death
 ‘ that could be desired? Had his disciples
 ‘ expected a recovery from a fainting fit,

' would they have buried him? Would they
 ' not rather have used all possible means, as
 ' soon as he was taken from the cross for his
 ' recovery? Had they entertained any hopes,
 ' would they have wrapped him in dead
 ' clothes, embalmed his body, and then have
 ' left him alone in the gloomy cold sepulchre?
 ' These questions require a serious answer.
 ' I appeal to every man if such circumstan-
 ' ces do not abundantly prove, that his dis-
 ' ciples could never steal him in expectation
 ' of a recovery; and if they could have no
 ' hopes of restoring their master to life, what
 ' end could they propose by stealing his body?
 ' It is asserted, with a view to impose upon
 ' the world, and to induce us to believe that
 ' he rose again; a supposition weak and
 ' groundless to the last degree. Is it possible
 ' that they could have formed a resolution,
 ' so bold and desperate, as to force a guard,
 ' well armed and accustomed to war? It is
 ' well known how they behaved when their
 ' master was apprehended; they were seized
 ' with such a panic, that they forsook him
 ' and fled; If they were void of courage to
 ' defend him when living, how can we ima-
 ' gine them capable of fighting for him when
 ' dead? Possibly it will be said, the disciples

' knew nothing of the guard until they arriv-
 ' ed at the sepulchre, where by accident
 ' they found them all asleep: Admitting that
 ' to be true, though it is very improbable,
 ' can we suppose they would venture to roll
 ' away the stone, and carry off the body? Such
 ' an attempt would have been rash to the last
 ' degree, and inconsistent with their known
 ' characters. There are yet greater difficulties
 ' remaining. Who can believe that a body of
 ' Roman soldiers, under the strictest discipline,
 ' would all fall into a profound sleep at one
 ' and the same moment of time, and thereby
 ' expose themselves to the severest punish-
 ' ments of the military law? But even admit-
 ' ting that to be the case, would not the dis-
 ' ciples have been under great apprehensions
 ' lest the guard should awake while they were
 ' rolling away the stone, and carrying off the
 ' body? You may easily imagine what the
 ' danger would have been. Would they in
 ' such precipitation have spent their time in
 ' stripping their master of the winding sheet,
 ' and the napkin that was about his head,
 ' and placing them carefully in the sepulchre?
 ' Whoever rolled up the dead clothes must
 ' have been under no apprehension of dan-
 ' ger. If the guard were all asleep during

' that time, how could they know that the
 ' body was stolen? or, How could they tell
 ' that his disciples stole it? During the time
 ' of sleep our senses are so entirely lulled, and
 ' locked up, that we are totally ignorant of
 ' every thing that happens around us. If they
 ' saw and heard every thing so distinctly, they
 ' must certainly have been awake; and if they
 ' were asleep as they confess they were, then
 ' it is impossible they can give any account
 ' by whom or in what manner the body was
 ' removed. The soldiers likewise differ in
 ' their narrative; some positively affirm and
 ' swear that none of them were asleep; that
 ' when the morning began to appear they felt
 ' an earthquake; that immediately the stone
 ' rolled spontaneously from the door, and that
 ' some divinity sat upon it, from whose coun-
 ' tenance the lightning flashed dreadfully in
 ' their faces, so much so, that for a length of
 ' time they were considerably alarmed, that
 ' when they recovered, they perceived no man
 ' but fled precipitately to the city: In this
 ' account they at first agreed, but why they
 ' differ now is very remarkable. Suffer the op-
 ' posite statements to be impartially consider-
 ' ed, and then every one may see on which
 ' side the strongest evidence rests. On the

‘ one side, every circumstance is improbable
 ‘ and self contradictory; on the other, every
 ‘ thing is probable and consistent, though mi-
 ‘ raculous; and what renders it more credible,
 ‘ the life of Jesus was attended with the most
 ‘ extraordinary miracles: We are aware of
 ‘ the wonders which happened at his death,
 ‘ we may therefore the more readily credit
 ‘ that the stone has been rolled away, and the
 ‘ body removed by some extraordinary cause.
 ‘ With what reason can any man suppose his
 ‘ disciples, have either invented or executed
 ‘ such an incomprehensible plot, to deceive
 ‘ the world into a belief of his resurrection.
 ‘ you may judge as you think proper, never-
 ‘ theless I am open to conviction, and will
 ‘ with pleasure give attention to any explana-
 ‘ tion of this mysterious business.’

Some time after, when all had left the
 sepulchre, Peter revolving in his mind the
 strange accounts he had heard, went alone to
 Mount Calvary, wandering melancholy and
 pensive, agitated by a variety of passions, sud-
 denly his Master appeared. At the sight he
 fell to the earth; but Jesus taking him by the
 hand, said unto him, ‘ Peter, arise, I know
 ‘ the sincerity of your repentance, I freely

' pardon you, and will strengthen your faith.
 ' You can now no longer doubt the truth of
 ' what I so often told you, that after three
 ' days I would rise again. You may remem-
 ' ber what passed on the Holy Mount, when
 ' Moses and Elias conversed with me concern-
 ' ing my sufferings at Jerusalem, and the glo-
 ' ry that should follow after: All these things
 ' are come to pass, and you are now fully con-
 ' vinced by the testimony of your senses.
 ' How could you doubt the truth of my words,
 ' or the reality of my resurrection, after the
 ' proofs I had given you of my power? Did
 ' you not perceive me walking amidst the bil-
 ' lows of the stormy lake? Did not you hear
 ' me rebuke the winds and the seas? Did not
 ' you see how I raised to life the widow's son
 ' of Naim, the daughter of Jairus, and Laza-
 ' rus of Bethany? Did I not tell you in the
 ' garden I had power to lay down my life, and
 ' power to take it again? Was you not in-
 ' formed by the women that I was risen from
 ' the dead? Yet after these declarations you
 ' remained dubious and perplexed: I have
 ' appeared to you first of all my Apostles, to
 ' remove your doubts, and alleviate your
 ' desponding hopes, and at the same time to
 ' convince you, that none is more acceptable

‘to me, than a repenting sinner; depart
 ‘therefore, and inform my brethren that I
 ‘shall see them in Galilee, and give them
 ‘all necessary instructions concerning the
 ‘kingdom of God, and their future con-
 ‘duct.’ He then disappeared, leaving Peter
 entirely overcome with joy and admira-
 tion.

No sooner had Jesus departed from Mount
 Calvary, than he entered the highway which
 leads from the city to Emmaus, while two of
 his disciples travelled before him at a little
 distance, engaged in conversation about the
 various reports of the day. ‘I know not,’
 said Cleophas, ‘what to think of these
 ‘things, what can they mean by reporting
 ‘that we have stolen the body; such an
 ‘idea never once entered into our minds,
 ‘I heard nothing of it until this morning;
 ‘they affirm also that they were asleep; this
 ‘story contradicts itself and acquits us, the
 ‘other is more consistent, and seems to cor-
 ‘respond with the account of the women, an
 ‘angel could easily roll away the stone and
 ‘terrify the soldiers. Every thing surprises
 ‘and perplexes me; his conception and birth
 ‘were miraculous. An angel foretold them,

‘his life was full of miracles, so was his death,
 ‘and now his body is removed by a miracle.’
 ‘He was clearly the Messiah,’ said the other
 disciple, ‘yet the ignominious death he suf-
 ‘fered is a difficulty I cannot get over, it is
 ‘inconsistent with every description of the
 ‘Messiah’s kingdom; had he lived, there
 ‘is no doubt but he would have redeemed
 ‘Israel from the Roman yoke; but, alas! his
 ‘mournful and unexpected death have blast-
 ‘ed our expectations.’ Jesus having overtak-
 en them joined their company as a stranger.
 ‘What conversation is it,’ said he, ‘you are
 ‘engaged in? You appear very dejected, as
 ‘if you had received bad tidings or sustained
 ‘some considerable loss, pray what is the mat-
 ‘ter?’ ‘Is it possible,’ replied Cleophas,
 ‘that you can be ignorant of the wonderful
 ‘things which have occurred in Jerusalem.
 ‘within these few days, and are now the en-
 ‘tire subject of conversation?’ ‘What do
 ‘you allude to?’ replied Jesus. ‘I mean,’
 answered Cleophas, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, who
 ‘appeared as a great Prophet sent from God,
 ‘and one highly esteemed by the people on
 ‘account of his excellent doctrine and won-
 ‘derful miracles; but the Chief Priests and
 ‘Rulers, jealous of his reputation, combined

' against him, and contrary to every principle
 ' of justice and humanity, have put him to a
 ' most infamous death. We imagined indeed
 ' that he would have redeemed Israel, and
 ' even after his death we were very unwilling
 ' to give up our expectations ; but this being
 ' the third day, we are in the utmost per-
 ' plexity, and know not what opinion to en-
 ' tertain. Something very extraordinary in-
 ' deed has been told us this morning, and we
 ' are very solicitous concerning the event.
 ' Certain women who had conceived the same
 ' hopes, going early to visit the sepulchre,
 ' found that his body was removed, and what
 ' is still more surprising, they informed us
 ' that a vision of angels appeared, assuring
 ' them that he was risen from the dead.
 ' This appeared to us altogether groundless,
 ' until two of our friends went immediately to
 ' the sepulchre, and as the women had said,
 ' they found the stone rolled away from the
 ' door, the body gone, and the dead clothes
 ' lying within, but they perceived no angels,
 ' neither did they receive any further intel-
 ' ligence.

Jesus replied, ' to you these things appear
 ' unaccountable : Had you comprehended

' the ancient Prophets, you would have been
 ' relieved from your difficulties, for in all their
 ' writings you will find it clearly foretold of
 ' the Messiah, that through indignity, ré-
 ' proach, and contempt, from the malice and
 ' obstinacy of men, and at last by suffering
 ' an ignominious and cruel death, he should
 ' be exalted to a glorious and eternal king-
 ' dom. You imagined he would have re-
 ' deemed Israel, but what redemption did
 ' you expect? Deliverance merely from the
 ' Roman yoke? In this you were much mis-
 ' taken; know you not that the tyranny of
 ' Satan is infinitely worse than that of Cæsar;
 ' that everlasting death in another world is
 ' more dreadful than any servitude can pos-
 ' sibly be in this? The grand end of the com-
 ' ing of the Messiah is to deliver men from
 ' the power of Satan, from the dominion of
 ' sin, and everlasting death in the world to
 ' come. Attend to what Moses and the
 ' Prophets have said respecting the Messiah.

' When our first parents had sinned against
 ' God by the temptation of the devil in the
 ' form of a serpent, the Lord said unto him,
 ' I will put enmity between thee and the
 ' woman, and between thy seed, and her

‘ seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou
 ‘ shalt bruise his heel.*” These words were
 ‘ spoken with a view to console the guilty
 ‘ parents of the human race, and to give them
 ‘ hopes that whatever they had sacrificed by
 ‘ the malice and craftiness of Satan, they
 ‘ should recover by the seed of the woman,
 ‘ that is, they should be restored to life again,
 ‘ and to the enjoyment of everlasting bliss in
 ‘ the world to come. (The seed of the wo-
 ‘ man is the Messiah, the same person fore-
 ‘ told by the Prophet Isaiah. “ Behold a vir-
 ‘ gin shall conceive and bear a son, and
 ‘ shall call his name Immanuel.†” Have
 ‘ you never heard that Jesus of Nazareth was
 ‘ born of a virgin? Has he not laboured with
 ‘ indefatigable diligence to overturn the
 ‘ works of the devil, and deliver men from
 ‘ his authority and influence? By the malice
 ‘ of Satan he has undergone persecution and
 ‘ death, by the secret influence of the old
 ‘ serpent, Judas betrayed him, and the Jews
 ‘ have crucified him, they have bruised his
 ‘ heel, whilst in the interim his soul remains
 ‘ invincible, therefore he will assuredly over-
 ‘ come the power of Satan, and destroy the
 ‘ empire of death.

* Gen. iii. 15.

† Isa. vii. 14.

Is it not said by David in the person of the Messiah, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine eyes hast thou opened, burnt offerings and sin offerings hast thou not required: then said I, lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is written within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: Lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation; I have not concealed thy loving kindness and thy truth from the great congregation*.' Were not these words fully accomplished in the person of your master? Did he not preach righteousness to the whole nation? You are sensible he was a Prophet mighty in word and deed, before God and all the people, conformable to the words of Moses, the Lord thy God shall raise up a Prophet unto thee from among thy brethren like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say

* Psalm. xl. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

' unto you. Did he not suffer death with
 ' the utmost submission to the will of God,
 ' and with the kindest affection to the sons
 ' of men? Could any sacrifice be so accept-
 ' able in the sight of God as the patient and
 ' meritorious death of such a person? Be not
 ' astonished then, if Jesus of Nazareth whom
 ' ye took for the Messiah was so unjust-
 ' ly put to death; it is only what the Pro-
 ' phet Daniel foretold, ' After threescore
 ' and two weeks, shall the Messiah be cut
 ' off, but not for himself, and the people of
 ' the Prince that shall come, shall destroy
 ' the city and the sanctuary; and the end
 ' thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the
 ' end of the war desolations are determin-
 ' ed*;' the weeks are now accomplished, the
 ' Messiah has been cut off. The prophet
 ' Isaiah has spoken to the same purpose con-
 ' cerning him when he saith, "He was wound-
 ' ed for our transgressions; he was bruised for
 ' our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace
 ' was upon him; and with his stripes we are
 ' healed; like sheep we have gone astray:
 ' every one hath turned to his own way: and
 ' the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of

* Dan. ix. 26.

“ us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflict-
 “ ed; he is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter,
 “ and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb,
 “ so he opened not his mouth. He was taken
 “ from prison and from judgment; and who
 “ shall declare his generation? for he was
 “ cut off out of the land of the living; for the
 “ the transgression of my people was he
 “ stricken. It pleased the Lord to bruise him;
 “ he hath put him to grief: and made his
 “ soul an offering for sin*.” It is manifest
 ‘ that the Messiah ought to have suffered,
 ‘ you know that Jesus of Nazareth was treat-
 ‘ ed in this manner, Why then should you be
 ‘ under any difficulty? Remember also what
 ‘ David saith concerning him; ‘ Why doth
 “ the heathen rage, and the people imagine
 “ a vain thing? the kings of the earth set
 “ themselves, and the rulers take counsel to-
 “ gether against the Lord, and against his
 “ anointed †.’ You are surprised because
 ‘ Herod and Pilate, with the Roman soldiers,
 ‘ and the Jewish nation united in persecuting
 ‘ your master, when it is evident that the
 ‘ hand and counsel of the Lord determined
 ‘ that it should be done. Do you conceive

* Isa. liii. 5, 6, 7, 8, 10.

† Psal. ii. 1. 2.

' it strange that Jesus in whom you trusted
 ' should be despised and rejected, when the
 ' Prophet Isaiah has so clearly foretold that
 ' it should come to pass in these words, " He
 ' is despised and rejected of men ; a man of
 ' sorrows, and acquainted with grief : and
 ' we hid as it were our faces from him ; he
 ' was despised and we esteemed him not*.'
 ' You were surprised at the treachery of Ju-
 ' das, when he betrayed his Master for thirty
 ' pieces of silver ; but the prophet Zechariah
 ' foretold it would be so ; " So they weigh-
 ' ed for my price thirty pieces of silver, a
 ' goodly price that I was prized at of them†.'
 ' If Jesus was shamefully treated by his ene-
 ' mies, it corresponded precisely with the
 ' words of Isaiah in the person of the Mes-
 ' siah, ' I gave my back to the smiters, and
 ' my checks to them that plucked off the
 ' hair: I did not hide my face from shame
 ' and spitting.‡' Has not David described
 ' him surrounded with cruel persecutors, and
 ' thus complained? ' Thou hast brought me
 ' into the dust of death; for dogs have
 ' compassed me; the assembly of the wick-
 ' ed have enclosed me; they pierced my

* Isa. liii. 3.

† Zech. xi. 12, 13.

‡ Isa. l. 6.

“ hands and my feet ; I may tell all my bones.
 “ They look and stare upon me ; they part
 “ my garments among them, and cast lots
 “ upon my vesture*.” Did not your master
 ‘ suffer these things, and are not the circum-
 ‘ stances of his death clearly pointed out?
 ‘ How then can you hesitate whether he be
 ‘ the Messiah? You know with what cruel
 ‘ insolence, and contemptuous derision he was
 ‘ loaded in the agonies of death ; how justly
 ‘ might he have complained in the words of
 ‘ the Psalmist, which can allude to none but
 ‘ the Messiah, ‘ I am a worm and no man ;
 “ a reproach of men, and despised of the peo-
 “ ple. All they that see me laugh me to
 “ scorn, they shoot out the lip, they shake
 “ the head, saying, he trusted on the Lord
 “ that he would deliver him ; let him deliver
 “ him, seeing he delighteth in him †.” You
 ‘ must be sensible your master was greatly in-
 ‘ sulted whilst he hung upon the cross. This
 ‘ instead of raising your doubts should rather
 ‘ confirm your faith in him as the true Mes-
 ‘ siah. Did they not give him vinegar ming-
 ‘ led with gall ? and was not that foretold by
 ‘ David? ‘ Reproach hath broken my heart,

* Psal. xxii. 15, 16, 17, 18. † Psal. xxii. 6, 7, 8.

“ and I am full of heaviness: and I looked
 “ for some to take pity, but there was none;
 “ and for comforters but I found none. They
 “ gave me also gall for my meat; and in my
 “ thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.†”
 “ Did not your master suffer as a malefactor,
 “ and in the company of such men? and
 “ was not the Messiah to die in the same
 “ manner as it was foretold by the prophet
 “ Isaiah, ‘ And he was humbled with the
 “ transgressors.’” In what manner was he
 “ buried? Was it by the permission of the
 “ Governor who alone has the disposal of ma-
 “ lefactors? Was he buried honourably, and
 “ by any of the rich and powerful men of the
 “ nation? If so, the same was foretold of the
 “ Messiah, ‘ And he made his grave with
 “ the wicked, and with the rich in his death;
 “ because he had done no violence, neither
 “ was any deceit in his mouth ‡.” Did not
 “ one of the soldiers thrust a spear in his side?
 “ Think how minutely that corresponds with
 “ the prophecy of Zechariah, ‘ And they shall
 “ look upon me whom they have pierced, and
 “ they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth
 “ for his only son, and shall be in bitterness

† Ps. lxxix. 20. ‡ Isa. liii, 9.

“for him, as one that is in bitterness for his
“first born*.”

‘Now I appeal to your understandings
‘whether these prophecies do not evidently
‘apply to the Messiah. Their meaning is
‘obvious to every unprejudiced mind, and
‘you have observed them literally accomplish-
‘ed in the sufferings and death of that
‘person you so much lament; they do
‘abundantly confirm his title, and prove
‘beyond the shadow of a doubt that he
‘was the true Messiah. It was necessary
‘he should suffer previous to his entering
‘into the possession of his kingdom and
‘glory, for this end it was foretold that he
‘would rise again from the dead. Observe
‘what the prophet Isaiah says, “When thou
“shalt make his soul an offering for sin,
“he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his
“days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall
“prosper in his hands||.” How could he
‘prolong his days after his soul became an
‘offering for sin, or after he was brought un-
‘to the dust of death, if he did not rise again,
‘and live for evermore? Consider also the

* Zech. xii, 10.

|| Isa. liii. 10.

* words of David, to whom God had de-
 * clared, that the Messiah should descend
 * from his loins, and sit upon his throne.
 * Foreseeing this, he spoke of his resur-
 * rection: ‘ I have set the Lord always be-
 * fore me; because he is at my right hand,
 * ‘ I shall not be moved, therefore my heart
 * ‘ is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh
 * ‘ also shall rest in hope; for thou wilt not
 * ‘ leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou
 * ‘ suffer thine holy one to see corruption †.’
 * From which it appears, that his soul was to
 * return from the state of the dead, before any
 * corruption could seize his body. Every cir-
 * cumstance manifestly proves that the Mes-
 * siah was to suffer, to die, and rise again
 * from the dead, these things were foretold
 * by Moses and the Prophets: You have seen
 * them accomplished, therefore suffer not
 * your hearts to be distressed on account of
 * the ill treatment of your master. Did he
 * never inform you, that it behoved him to
 * suffer many things of the Chief Priests and
 * Elders, be put to death, and to rise again
 * the third day? The report ye have heard of
 * his resurrection is not void of foundation;

† Psalm xvi. 8, 9, 10.

‘ if some of your friends have examined the
 ‘ sepulchre, and found it as the women have
 ‘ testified; you have reason to imagine that
 ‘ he is actually risen from the dead, and may
 ‘ entertain the hopes of seeing him again,
 ‘ when your hearts shall rejoice, and all your
 ‘ perplexities be at an end.’

The disciples attended with the keenest anxiety, and were surprised to find a stranger, as they supposed, so well acquainted with the life and sufferings of their Lord; they were astonished at the manner in which he explained and applied the Scriptures. When they approached the village, they earnestly entreated him to remain with them that evening. At supper he took bread, gave thanks to God, brake it, and gave it unto them in the same manner as he was accustomed before his death. Their amazement was beyond description, they fixed their eyes upon his countenance, gazed with silent admiration, and at last perceived that it was their Lord. No sooner was he known, than immediately he disappeared. His departure tended so much the more to excite their astonishment, they turned round, and in silent wonder looked at one another. At length Cleophas said,

‘ He is certainly risen from the dead, we
 ‘ have seen him and heard him as distinctly
 ‘ as ever we did before his crucifixion. I am
 ‘ surprised how we could suppose him to be
 ‘ a stranger; did you not remark how accu-
 ‘ rately he repeated every prophecy relating
 ‘ to the Messiah? how clearly he explained,
 ‘ and how justly he applied them to the cir-
 ‘ cumstances of his death? His articulation
 ‘ was so distinct, and his sentiments delivered
 ‘ with so much dignity and energy, that our
 ‘ hearts were moved, our affections gained
 ‘ over, and our understandings enlightened
 ‘ to so great a degree, that none but himself
 ‘ could have done the same. His disappear-
 ‘ ing so instantaneously perplexes me, for I
 ‘ cannot conceive how a human body can be
 ‘ possessed of that power. My heart is so
 ‘ overcome with joy, that I shall enjoy no
 ‘ rest until we return, though late, and in-
 ‘ form our brethren of this miraculous inter-
 ‘ view; such tidings will confirm the testi-
 ‘ mony of the women, and fill their hearts
 ‘ with inconceivable bliss.’

After supper, they returned to Jerusalem,
 where they found the Apostles and several
 other disciples discoursing upon the resurrec-

tion, and particularly his appearing to the women and Peter on Mount Calvary. Afterwards they related his appearance, his conversation on the way to Emmaus, and the manner in which he discovered himself at supper. Upon that occasion every circumstance was investigated, and many questions proposed by those who had not seen him. During their conversation, in an instant Jesus appeared in the midst, and saluted them with his accustomed familiarity and kindness. They were all agitated, and exclaimed as though they had seen a spirit; perceiving their trepidation, he said, ‘What means this
 ‘groundless fear? Behold my hands and feet;
 ‘observe the print of the nails which fixed
 ‘me to the cross, feel them, and be convinced
 ‘that I am your master, risen from the dead
 ‘not with an apparent but a real body, even
 ‘the same which suffered on the cross, for a
 ‘spirit has not the substance which ye cannot
 ‘but be satisfied, I now have.’—They rejoiced exceedingly, yet they could scarcely believe the evidence of their senses; he then asked for meat, and they gave him some fish, which he eat in their presence; their doubts were then entirely removed. As soon as he was satisfied, he said, ‘Ye now see the ful-

‘fillment of my words; I frequently informed you that I should die at Jerusalem, and rise again the third day; these things have been accomplished as the prophets have foretold.’ He then briefly explained the Scriptures relating to himself, and instantly disappeared.

Thomas, one of the Apostles, being absent, was informed of the appearance of Jesus, he declared their senses had been imposed upon by an apparition, and that unless he could have ocular demonstration of the prints of the nails, and the wound in his side, he would not credit the resurrection.

After some days, they met again, and endeavoured to convince him by incontestable arguments of the truth, but in vain; when in an instant Jesus appeared, and after his usual salutation, pointedly addressed Thomas.

‘How is it possible you can reject the testimony of so many witnesses? Do you conceive their senses were absorbed by deception? If so, do you imagine this could have been done without a miracle? and can you suppose the Almighty would work one, with a view to make men believe a false-

‘ hood? Surely not; what other motive then
‘ could you have for rejecting my resurrection?
‘ Did you imagine they intended imposing
‘ upon you? You had no reason to suspect
‘ that. If you doubt the testimony of com-
‘ petent witnesses, in support of facts whether
‘ common or extraordinary, your knowledge
‘ must be confined within a narrow sphere.
‘ You must live in perpetual doubt and un-
‘ certainty in the most important concerns of
‘ this life. No revelation of the divine will
‘ can ever obtain credit among men, because
‘ a true revelation must necessarily suppose,
‘ and be founded upon extraordinary facts,
‘ which the testimony of credible witnesses
‘ can alone support. How many miracles
‘ have you observed performed by me? If
‘ you will not credit the evidence of your bre-
‘ thren, how can you suppose any person will
‘ credit yours? As your unbelief is not found-
‘ ed in obstinacy, but proceeds from a desire
‘ of obtaining the fullest conviction, I will
‘ remove every doubt. Observe my hands
‘ and feet, behold the prints of the nails, feel
‘ them; view my side, and mark where the
‘ spear pierced my heart; examine carefully,
‘ and be no longer faithless. You have now
‘ as strong evidence of my body as you could
‘ have before my death.

Thomas ashamed of his incredulity, exclaimed with ecstasy, ‘Thou art indeed my Lord, the same who died upon the cross.’ Jesus saith unto him, ‘Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed *.’—I have many things to say unto you, but it is not safe that you should remain any longer in this city; return therefore to Galilee, there I will meet you and give further instructions concerning the kingdom of God,’ and immediately vanished.

The disciples were desirous of seeing their Lord after their return into Galilee. At length, when Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, James, John, and others were fishing upon the lake of Tiberias, he appeared standing on the shore; he enquired what success they had met with; supposing him to be a stranger they replied, ‘Though they had laboured all night, they had caught nothing.’ He then commanded them to cast on the right side; they did so, and to their astonishment they enclosed such a multitude, that with difficulty they saved their net.

* John xx. 29.

John observed to Peter, that the person whom they conceived to be a stranger, could be no other than Jesus. Peter instantly plunged into the deep, and swam ashore, while the remainder secured the net in the boat. On making the shore, they were astonished to observe a fire and some loaves upon the grass. The necessary preparation being made, Jesus addressed them to the following effect.

‘Ye now behold, my friends, your success
 ‘ by attending to my advice; it is only the
 ‘ forerunner of greater, in matters of infinite
 ‘ importance: henceforth ye shall be fishers
 ‘ of men, and wonderful shall be your success
 ‘ in the world. Be but zealous as I have been,
 ‘ and your reward shall be unspeakably great.’
 Turning to Peter, he said, ‘Simon, is your
 ‘ love towards me beyond that of the rest of
 ‘ my disciples?’ ‘Truly, my Lord,’ he replied,
 ‘you know full well the sincerity of my affec-
 ‘ tion;’ ‘let that appear then, in your con-
 ‘ duct,’ returned Jesus, ‘especially in promot-
 ‘ ing the salvation of my church and people.’
 A short time after he asked the same question,
 and received a similar answer; and then a
 third time, when Peter appeared much griev-

ed, and again replied, ‘ Lord thou knowest
 ‘ the secrets of all hearts; thou knowest that
 ‘ I love thee.’ I know it indeed,’ said Jesus,
 ‘ and every kind action you do to them in my
 ‘ absence, I esteem as done to me: I know
 ‘ you will do so, at the hazard of your life;
 ‘ for the time approaches, when you who
 ‘ girded yourself willingly, and stretched
 ‘ out your hands to me on the water, shall
 ‘ in your old age be girded by others,
 ‘ and stretch out your hands upon the cross,
 ‘ where you shall die for my name’s sake.
 ‘ Arise and follow me, for I have somewhat
 ‘ else to say.’—He went accordingly, when
 turning round he perceived John; he then
 said, ‘ Lord, what shall become of him whom
 ‘ you always treated with peculiar friendship?’
 Jesus answered, ‘ That concerns not you,
 ‘ follow me. What if he should remain un-
 ‘ til I come to take vengeance upon the Jew-
 ‘ ish nation. I once informed you, there are
 ‘ some among you, which shall not see death,
 ‘ until they behold the kingdom of God with
 ‘ power. I have many things of importance
 ‘ to communicate, but another time will be
 ‘ more expedient,’ and having appointed the
 ‘ place, he instantly disappeared.

The disciples went through the country, giving information concerning the truth of the resurrection. Every person anxiously expected the appointed time; when they assembled upon a mountain, in number about five hundred. Jesus appeared in the midst, and standing on an eminence, every eye was fixed upon him; admiration and fear closed their lips; when looking around he thus began.

‘ My friends, ye now perceive I am really
 ‘ alive, the very same who died upon the cross,
 ‘ ye have all the evidence of my resurrection
 ‘ that can be given. I was condemned and
 ‘ put to death as a blasphemer, for having de-
 ‘ clared I was the Son of God, the true Mes-
 ‘ siah, and King of Israel. My words are
 ‘ abundantly confirmed. God has sealed the
 ‘ truth of my doctrine, and the divinity of
 ‘ my mission, by raising me from the dead,
 ‘ as David foretold, ‘ I will declare the de-
 ‘ cree: the Lord hath said unto me, thou
 ‘ art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.*’
 ‘ Though you believe I am the Messiah, hi-

* Psalm ii. 7.

‘ therto ye have been ignorant of my king-
 ‘ dom; it is highly necessary that ye rightly
 ‘ understand it.

‘ Since the days of Abraham, the kingdom
 ‘ of God has been confined within the limits
 ‘ of the Jewish nation; ‘ He sheweth his
 ‘ word unto Jacob, his statutes and his
 ‘ judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt
 ‘ so with any nation: and as for his judg-
 ‘ ments, they have not known them*.’ The
 ‘ nations were ignorant, they were seduced
 ‘ by Satan to the worship of idols, to the
 ‘ grossest superstition, and every species of
 ‘ wickedness. The ceremonial law was en-
 ‘ joined as a partition, to separate the Jews
 ‘ from every religious intercourse with the
 ‘ Gentiles;—the time approaches when all
 ‘ ceremonies shall cease, and the dispensation
 ‘ of Moses be at an end. The kingdom of
 ‘ God shall be enlarged, and every nation
 ‘ brought under his authority, as it is written
 ‘ by the prophet Daniel; ‘ And in the days
 ‘ of these kings shall the God of Heaven set
 ‘ up a kingdom, which shall never be de-
 ‘ stroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left

* Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20.

“ to other people, but it shall break in pieces
 “ and consume all these kingdoms, and it
 “ shall stand for ever*,” and in me shall
 ‘ these words be accomplished, ‘ I have given
 “ thee for a light to lighten the Gentiles, and
 “ the glory of thy people Israel†.’ The same
 ‘ promise was made to Abraham; ‘ In thy
 “ seed shall all the families of the earth be
 “ blessed.” The Jews expect a Messiah that
 ‘ will conquer the world, and reign over every
 ‘ nation in the greatest pomp and splendour,
 ‘ but they know not the Scriptures; I despise
 ‘ dominion obtained by force, ‘ My people
 “ shall be willing in the day of my power.”
 ‘ Neither the allurements, nor terrors of this
 ‘ world shall ever be employed in making
 ‘ proselytes to my authority. ‘ Rejoice great-
 ‘ ly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter
 “ of Jerusalem, saith the prophet, 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;
 “ and I will cut off the chariot of Ephraim,
 “ and the horse from Jerusalem, and the
 “ battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall
 “ speak peace unto the heathen; and his do-

* Dan. ii. 44.

† Luke ii. 32.

“minion shall be from sea even to sea, and
 “from the river even to the ends of the
 “earth.*” My kingdom is indeed universal,
 “for all power in heaven and on earth is given
 “unto me; therefore I have appointed you
 “to preach the gospel unto all nations, teach-
 “ing them to observe all things whatsoever I
 “have spoken unto you. He that believeth
 “on me, and by baptism enters into an obli-
 “gation to obey me, and lives accordingly,
 “shall be saved: but he that rejects the gos-
 “pel through obstinacy, or lives in opposition
 “to it after he has received it, shall assuredly
 “perish. Observe that none of your own in-
 “ventions be added to the doctrines I have
 “taught you; and whatsoever ye leave upon
 “record, let it be the dictates of the Holy
 “Ghost, that every succeeding age may en-
 “joy the same gospel which I have delivered
 “unto you; for if men search with diligence,
 “and practise with integrity, what is contain-
 “ed therein, truth and righteousness shall pre-
 “vail in my kingdom. As soon as they in-
 “troduce their own doctrines and make their
 “own inferences the rule of faith and practice
 “for others, then shall arise strife and conten-

* Zech. ix. 9, 10.

' tion, hatred and persecution ; then shall the
 ' terrors and allurements of this world be em-
 ' ployed as engines to establish an awful tyran-
 ' ny over the consciences of men. By such
 ' means, shall the purity and simplicity of the
 ' gospel be lost amidst a boundless multitude
 ' of superstitious inventions : for as the Jews
 ' have rendered the ordinances of God of
 ' none effect through their traditions, so shall
 ' it be in future ages among my disciples, till
 ' at length, oppressed with intolerable bon-
 ' dage, they shall see their terror, shake off
 ' the yoke, and return again to the pure and
 ' corrupted fountain of truth and righteous-
 ' ness. By slow and imperceptible degrees
 ' shall this corruption be introduced, and re-
 ' moved after a series of time ; then all the
 ' ends of the earth shall turn unto God, and
 ' all the kindreds of the nations bow before
 ' him ; then shall the world enjoy a state of
 ' purity, peace, and happiness. They " shall
 ' " beat their swords into plough shares, and
 ' " their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall
 ' " not lift up sword against nation, neither shall
 ' " they learn war any more*." Then the spirit
 ' of error and iniquity shall revive, but it shall

* Isa. ii. 4.

‘ not prevail; for suddenly will I appear in
 ‘ the clouds of heaven with power and great
 ‘ glory. Then will I raise the dead, judge the
 ‘ world in righteousness, and render unto
 ‘ every one according to his works. There-
 ‘ fore, my friends, let nothing discourage you
 ‘ in the important work I have committed to
 ‘ your charge: for the Almighty will assist
 ‘ you by his spirit, and confirm your doctrine
 ‘ by a variety of extraordinary gifts and asto-
 ‘ nishing miracles. Be faithful unto death,
 ‘ and I will give you a crown of life. You
 ‘ are sensible I was once dead, am now alive,
 ‘ and live for evermore, and have power over
 ‘ hell and death. As my body was once like
 ‘ yours, frail and mortal, so shall yours become
 ‘ like mine, incorruptible and immortal. My
 ‘ kingdom shall be your everlasting habita-
 ‘ tion, and unspeakable joy the reward of
 ‘ your labours.

Having completed his instructions he be-
 came invisible; all were astonished at his elo-
 quence, and amazed at his sudden departure.
 Immediately they descended from the moun-
 tain, fully convinced that he was risen from
 the dead; some few however were doubtful

of the reality of his body, because he disappeared so instantaneously.

In the mean time, while Jesus instructed his disciples upon the mountain, Satan, disguised in the form of a serpent, lay concealed in the cavity of a rock, listening with attention to every thing that passed: from thence, like a vulture keen for blood, he mounted the liquid sky, and precipitately rested in Gadara, upon the same precipice from whence the swine had perished in the waters. There his angels were instantly assembled: when their powerful Chief thus endeavoured to console their desponding hearts.

‘ Attend, my friends, whilst I relate what
 ‘ may banish fear, raise our hopes, and ani-
 ‘ mate our zeal. Not long since we thought
 ‘ the day of vengeance near at hand, when
 ‘ hostile power compelled us to retire before
 ‘ the Son of God, and dread his awful word.
 ‘ But now the danger is far removed, I anti-
 ‘ cipate his deep designs; he intends to
 ‘ estrange our subjects in every nation from
 ‘ our obedience. With this view he has se-
 ‘ lected a few ignorant fishermen of Galilee,
 ‘ whom he intends sending into every corner

of the world, with the gentle force of per-
 suasion, and the power of miracles, in ex-
 pectation of a general conquest. From the
 description I have heard him give of his
 kingdom, and the instructions he delivered
 to his disciples, I can easily judge of the
 measures necessary to defeat his designs.
 As for the Jews, we have only to strengthen
 their former prejudices; for while they ex-
 pect a temporal Prince like the mighty men
 of this world, they will never believe, and
 therefore they will treat his disciples as they
 have treated him. We have every proba-
 bility of success, whilst pleasure, riches, and
 honour have any influence upon their hearts.
 The allurements of the world are with us;
 few will be inclined to enquire into the
 truth of doctrines, the belief and profession
 of which must be attended with poverty,
 shame, persecution, and death. The Jews
 have rejected the Messiah notwithstanding
 the miracles done by him in the most pub-
 lic manner; how then can they believe a
 miracle they never saw? for I am informed
 he never yet appeared to any but his dis-
 ciples; and we may naturally expect that
 the testimony of such mean and despicable
 persons will be little regarded, in opposition

' to public authority, and the deep rooted pre-
 ' judices of the people. As for the kingdoms
 ' of this world, which we have governed
 ' for so many years, we have no reason to
 ' imagine they will be seduced by a few con-
 ' temptible fishermen. Our divinities have
 ' been established, and held sacred for ages.
 ' The multitude are strongly attached to our
 ' interest: Our solemn rites are calculated to
 ' flatter their inclinations, and gratify their
 ' passions. The influence of the Priests, the
 ' ingenuity of the poets, the subtle reason-
 ' ing of the philosophers, together with the
 ' authority of the civil magistrates, are all
 ' united in support of our cause. By the
 ' force of argument, and the power of mira-
 ' cles, the fishermen will appeal to the reason
 ' of mankind. Reason we know has but a
 ' small scope in the conduct of men; their
 ' appetites and passions, strengthened by ha-
 ' bit, confirmed by education, by examples,
 ' by established laws, customs and manners,
 ' are the springs of human conduct, the prin-
 ' ciples of all their actions. These are en-
 ' gaged in support of our authority, and in
 ' direct opposition to our adversary. But let
 ' us suppose the world should abandon our
 ' interest, and submit to the Messiah; yet

' there is a possibility of corrupting his reli-
 ' gion, and rendering it useless. I am in-
 ' formed he is in perpetual fear of such an at-
 ' tempt. His subjects will then be within the
 ' pale of our influence. His doctrines will be
 ' left upon record, as the only rule of faith
 ' to all succeeding ages; we must therefore
 ' exert every method in our power to inspire
 ' his followers with pride, ambition, covetous-
 ' ness, mutual hatred, and discord. Persons
 ' of that temper will esteem their own judg-
 ' ment in religious matters, as superior to all
 ' others; their opinions will be held sacred by
 ' all their dependents. To support the credit
 ' of such opinions, rewards must be conferred
 ' upon those that believe, and punishments
 ' inflicted on all who oppose them. By which
 ' means the inventions of men may be mingled
 ' with the doctrines of Christ, and in process
 ' of time, the whole system of his religion may
 ' be so changed, as to defeat the original de-
 ' sign of it. By the traditions of the elders
 ' we have rendered the writings of Moses and
 ' the Prophets of none effect: By the same
 ' traditions we may render ineffectual the
 ' the writings of the Apostles. There is ano-
 ' ther point to be observed, we must endea-
 ' vour to introduce into the kingdom of Christ

‘ a general corruption of manners, and we
 ‘ need not be concerned, though men should
 ‘ be called by his name, when in the mean
 ‘ time their hearts and lives are subject to our
 ‘ authority. The design of his death and re-
 ‘ surrection will be entirely frustrated, even by
 ‘ his own disciples. If therefore we can per-
 ‘ suade them but to break but one of his laws,
 ‘ and obstinately persevere, we are safe, even
 ‘ though they should from motives of worldly
 ‘ interest obey all the rest. By such suc-
 ‘ cess our kingdom may be established even
 ‘ in those places where his authority is pub-
 ‘ licly acknowledged. I understand that in
 ‘ a short time he will quit this world, ascend
 ‘ to our ancient habitations, and take posses-
 ‘ sion of an everlasting kingdom in the hea-
 ‘ vens. I rejoice at the idea of his departure,
 ‘ and yet I cannot think of his ascension
 ‘ without the most envious resentment. He
 ‘ must pass through part of our dominions,—
 ‘ shall we suffer him to proceed without moles-
 ‘ tation, or can we make no opposition? Surely
 ‘ our native strength, our ancient courage is
 ‘ not yet exhausted. Let us summon our
 ‘ hosts in the upper region of the air; let us
 ‘ unite in close array, and hold the distant
 ‘ war with flaming thunderbolts cast down

‘ upon our foes thick as the rattling hail.
 ‘ If they advance, let shields and swords,
 ‘ and long extended spears of keen æthèrial
 ‘ temper, stand in firm opposition to their
 ‘ front; and whilst we engage, let the rapid
 ‘ wings of ten thousand angry cherubims
 ‘ awake the whirlwinds furious blast, and toss
 ‘ them to and fro in the troubled sky, or head-
 ‘ long plunge them to the earth in sad dis-
 ‘ grace and terrible confusion. What though
 ‘ we should not gain a victory, we may never-
 ‘ theless obtain some small revenge, and ob-
 ‘ struct their passage to the upper world. If
 ‘ ye agree, let us prepare for fiercest battle,
 ‘ and diligently watch the time of his de-
 ‘ parture.

The loud voice of hellish approbation sound-
 ed through the host, like distant thunder in
 the sky. No sooner had it ceased, than like
 a swarm of envenomed wasps they overspread
 the land, and with keen attention observed
 the point which favoured their designs, until
 within seven days of pentecost, when the ele-
 ven, according to appointment, assembled in
 Jerusalem. Jesus appeared, saluted them in
 the most tender manner, and thus proceeded.

' My dearest friends, this is the last time
 ' you will behold me upon earth; I am now
 ' upon the eve of ascending to my Father in
 ' order to take possession of my kingdom.
 ' for more than three years I have carefully
 ' instructed you; the very same instructions ye
 ' must deliver to the world; ye well know in
 ' what manner I have lived; I have set you
 ' an example; therefore do as I have done
 ' unto you. As the Father sent me into the
 ' the world, so I send you; my divine mis-
 ' sion was confirmed by miracles, so shall
 ' yours; my resurrection is the last and strong-
 ' est proof of my divinity, it is the basis, the
 ' immoveable foundation upon which my
 ' kingdom shall stand, it is also the proof and
 ' pledge of your resurrection to everlasting
 ' life, for as certain as I am risen from the
 ' dead, so shall ye. During forty days, I
 ' have frequently appeared, and fully instruct-
 ' ed you in all things pertaining to the king-
 ' dom of God. On the first day of the week
 ' I rose from the dead, from henceforth let
 ' the same be regarded with a sacred veneration
 ' by all my disciples. I have now ap-
 ' pointed you to be the only witnesses of my
 ' resurrection, and the publishers of my re-
 ' ligion among all nations; thi^e ye must do

‘ at the hazard of your lives, for ye shall be
 ‘ hated of all nations for my name’s sake.
 ‘ Be not dismayed, nor grieved at my absence,
 ‘ for the Holy Ghost whom I shall send from
 ‘ heaven, will always be ready to guide and
 ‘ support you. Let us depart from the city,
 ‘ for as ye have been witnesses of my resur-
 ‘ rection, so shall ye also of my ascension.’

Accordingly they followed him, unknown
 by the guilty and thoughtless inhabitants,
 until they entered the road leading to Be-
 thany. Scarce had they passed the Brook
 Cedron when Peter addressed his master.
 ‘ Lord, you perceive the mean and servile
 ‘ state of Israel, the chosen people of God,
 ‘ they are servants in the land of promise, and
 ‘ in bondage to the uncircumcised Romans ;
 ‘ we are sensible of your power over every
 ‘ thing in heaven and on earth, will you not
 ‘ therefore restore our ancient liberties, deli-
 ‘ ver us from oppression, and grant us pro-
 ‘ sperity as we formerly enjoyed.’ To which
 ‘ he answered, ‘ I have often told you that
 ‘ my kingdom is not of this world ; that it
 ‘ consists entirely in a chearful and universal
 ‘ obedience to the laws of God ; that external
 ‘ pomp and magnificence have no relation to

" it. Instead of restoring the Jews to their
 ' ancient liberties, the kingdom of God shall
 ' be taken from them, and the Gentiles who
 ' believe in me, shall be chosen in their place.
 ' But it is necessary first that the gospel
 ' should be offered to the Jews, ' for out of
 ' Zion shall go forth the law, and the word
 ' of the Lord from Jerusalem *,' though I
 ' was persecuted and put to death in that city,
 ' yet to them the first offers of mercy shall
 ' made, and after their rejection, they shall
 ' be rejected themselves, until after the revo-
 ' lution of many years, when their prejudices
 ' shall be removed, and their understandings
 ' enlightened; then all Israel shall be saved,
 ' and their nation restored as at the begin-
 ' ning. But it is not proper that ye should
 ' know the times and seasons, which infinite
 ' wisdom has appointed for the accomplish-
 ' ment of such events. As soon as I am as-
 ' cended into the heavens, return ye into
 ' the city, and there remain until the day of
 ' Pentecost, for there will be assembled de-
 ' vout men at that time, out of every nation
 ' under heaven; then shall the power of the
 ' Holy Ghost descend upon you in a visible

* Isa. ii. 3.

' and extraordinary manner, and ye shall
 ' publish the truth of my resurrection, and
 ' doctrines of salvation, to men of all nations,
 ' in their own languages, to the astonish-
 ' ment of all who shall hear you, and observe
 ' the wonderful works done in my name.'

Having reached the top of Mount Olivet
 near Bethany, he stopt, and while his disci-
 ' ples stood before him, he lifted up his hands
 ' and blessed them, saying, ' Now, my dear-
 ' est friends, I have given you a commission
 ' to preach the gospel among all nations. I
 ' have taught you by my doctrine, and led
 ' you by my example; ' Be thou faithful un-
 ' to death, and I will give thee a crown of
 ' life. And he that overcometh, and keep-
 ' eth my words unto the end, to him will I
 ' give power over the nations*.' Fare-
 ' well, my blessing be with you, the bles-
 ' sing of my Father be upon you; when I
 ' am departed I will remember you, in hea-
 ' ven I will be your friend, and when your
 ' work is finished, I will crown you with ever-
 ' lasting honour and glory.'

* Rev. ii. 10. 26.

Having concluded his exhortation, he ascended through the yielding air, whilst his disciples, with uplifted hands, dejected hearts, and wondering eyes, gazed upon him until the clouds intercepted their view. Two of the angelic host appeared in shining garments, and perceiving the disciples with their eyes uplifted, they said, ‘Ye men
 ‘ of Galilee, ye disciples of the exalted Mes-
 ‘ siah, why remain ye in such a posture,
 ‘ henceforward ye shall see him no more with
 ‘ mortal eyes. But the time shall come,
 ‘ when in the glory of his Father, and with
 ‘ all his holy angels, he will descend into
 ‘ the lower world, and render unto every one
 ‘ according to his deeds.

The angels disappeared, and the disciples returned to Jerusalem. Above the clouds which spread an obscure canopy over Judea, stood a chariot of divine workmanship; the bottom more refined than the purest æther, was solid, impenetrable, and transparent as chrystal. Upon it was placed a throne of inconceivable magnificence, the colour resembling the meridian sky. A canopy covered it, whose vaulted cornice displayed all the beauties of the rainbow. The Messiah

Being stated, upwards the grand procession moved in perfect order, in heavenly splendour, without envy, without ostentation, far distant, and as high as the fallen angels could ascend, they descried the infernal crew, and Satan in the front ready to intercept their march. Scarce were they seen, when distant thunders roared above their heads, and flaming thunderbolts descended, thick as the rattling hail upon the earth. Shields and helmets of celestial temper resisted all their force, for blessed angels are ever armed against their foes, nor can be conquered by apostate spirits. Ten thousand clarions sounded through the sky, and the vocal symphony of the heavenly train joined at once the martial song.

Let God arise in dreadful pomp of war,
 And let confusion scatter all his foes;
 Let yon rebellious, proud, infernal host
 Feel instant wrath, by his avenging hand:
 As dark'ned clouds of rolling smoke disperse,
 When furious tempests roar along the sky,
 Or like the wax, dissolv'd in glowing fire,
 So let our en'mies perish at his frown.

Far in the front the great Messiah's chariot drove; incessant lightning flash'd around his head. The rapid wheels of the incensed che-

rubins set heaven on fire, the bellowing thunders roared through all the host, and furious whirlwinds rose tempestuous from every angels wing.

Satan, trembling with fear beheld their approach; conscious of infernal strength, he knew it was in vain to fight, nor could he fly; to ascend the heavens was impossible, and to pass thro' the embattled squadrons of his invincible foes, he dreaded worse than hell; he found no way to escape, nor time to deliberate, for in an instant the burning chariot of the Messiah drove with irresistible fury over his guilty head; bruised and convulsed with agonizing pain, he lay prostrate, trodden under the wheels of ten thousand mighty angels. A dreadful consternation seized his impious crew, whilst the tremendous thunders roared along the heavens, and the pointed lightnings pierced the flying foe. Then had they perished in their bold attempt, had not the great Messiah for more important ends, reserved them to the general doom, when they and all rebellious men shall perish in the burning lake.

The thunders ceased, when the Victor's praise was sung in strains of celestial melody.

O great Messiah, glorious in thy power,
 As in thy grave; thou hast ascended high,
 And in triumphant majesty divine,
 Dispers'd thy foes, who led the captive race
 Of mortal men in strong delusive chains;
 Thou mad'st them free, whom Satan had made slaves,
 Thou mak'st them rich, whom Satan had made poor,
 And God shall reign where dæmons reign'd before.

Crowned with victory over hell and death, the Son of God ascended triumphant through the second heavens. At length the third and glorious one appeared, where the Almighty holds his throne. Swift as the rays of light, the great Messiah and all his train advanced near the splendid gates, too bright for mortal eyes to view. The walls of a transparent and impenetrable substance, were of immense height, and impossible for any created being to ascend. There were twelve gates pointing to the four quarters of the universe, of most exquisite beauty, and upon each was inscribed in blazing characters, THE JUST SHALL ENTER IN; one more particularly magnificent which pointed to the terraqueous globe, the Messiah approached, when the heavenly song began, on golden harps, joined by the vocal strain of all his saints.

Ye gates stand open, ye eternal doors
 Of boundless bliss and everlasting joy,
 Stand open now, disclose your splendid valves,
 The King of Glory enters with his train.
 But who is he you call the glorious King?
 That mighty Lord, the Prince of Angels bright,
 The great Messiah, glorious now from death,
 And crown'd with triumph over all his foes.
 Ye gates stand open, ye eternal doors
 Of boundless bliss, and never-ending joy,
 Stand open now, unfold your shining leaves,
 The King of Glory enters with his train.
 But who is he, that Glorious King renown'd?
 That mighty Prince, o'er Cherubims so high?
 The Lord of hosts, whose precious blood redeem'd
 The guilty world from Satan, sin, and death.

Instantly the ponderous gates spontaneous opened, when the chariot of the Messiah rushed in, followed by an immense retinue of saints, forming a procession at once grand and magnificent, beyond the capability of human thought to conceive. In solemn majesty he was conducted into the splendour of his Father's glory. Immediately the voice of God was heard from his awful throne, proclaiming, "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased;" for 'since the moment thou first laid aside thy glory, I have seen thine actions, and ap-

' prove them all; therefore sit thou at my
 ' right hand until I make thine enemies thy
 ' footstool. Ask of me and I will give
 ' thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and
 ' the uttermost parts of the earth for thy pos-
 ' session: for because thou hast humbled
 ' thyself, and become obedient unto death,
 ' even the death of the cross, therefore have
 ' I exalted thee, and given thee a name, that
 ' all things in heaven and on earth may sub-
 ' mit to thy authority, and confess that Je-
 ' sus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God
 ' the Father.*'

The Messiah having taken his seat on the
 right hand of God, the Almighty delivered
 to him an immense volume, written in myste-
 rious characters, which neither angels nor
 men could read, and sealed with seven seals,
 which none in heaven or on earth can open.
 The book contained the eternal decrees of
 unerring wisdom, the characters of angels
 and men, their past, present, and future ac-
 tions, the revolutions of states, kingdoms,
 empires, and worlds unknown; the laws of
 the divine government, with the various con-

* Phillipians ii. 8, 9, 11.

nections, relations, and final causes of all
 created beings. No sooner had the Messiah
 received the book, with the universal power
 and dominion annexed to it, than Enoch,
 Moses, Elijah, and others, who had borne
 testimony against prevailing corruption, and
 prophesied concerning the Messiah, fell down
 and worshipped him, saying, "Thou art wor-
 thy to take the book, and to open the seven
 seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast
 redeemed us unto God by thy blood, out of
 every kindred, and tongue, and people,
 and nation, and hast made us unto our
 God, Kings and Priests: and we shall
 reign on the earth.*" Immediately An-
 gels, Cherubims, and Seraphims innumera-
 ble, joined in one exalted chorus, exclaim-
 ing, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and
 power be unto him, that sitteth upon
 the throne, and unto the Messiah for ever
 and ever. And the four and twenty elders,
 fell down and worshipped him that liveth
 for ever and ever†."

* Rev. v. 9, 10.

† Rev. v. 13, 14.

BUNGAY:

PRINTED BY CHARLES BRIGHTLY.

1799.





Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01007 7883